



**Corporal George Goudie (Regimental Number 2242), is interred in the Commonwealth Plot in Vevey (St. Martin's Churchyard) Cemetery, Switzerland.**

**His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a timekeeper (at the *Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company* paper mill in Grand Falls) George Goudie was a recruit of the Ninth Draft. He presented himself at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's both for medical examination and for enlistment – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – on March 9, 1916, before attesting on the following day, March 10.**

***\*A second source records him attesting on the day of his enlistment.***

**By the time that he sailed for the United Kingdom, Private Goudie had already been promoted on two occasions: on May 9 to the rank of lance corporal; and a month later, on June 9, to that of acting corporal.**

**(continued)**

Corporal Goudie 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.

*\*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 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-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*)

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.

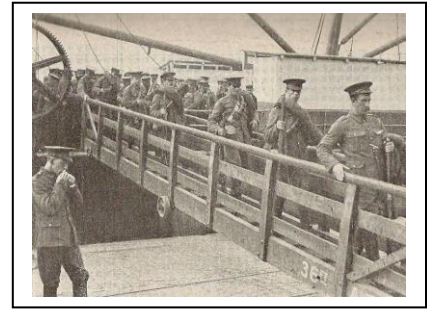


(Right above: *the new race-course at Newton-upon-Ayr - opened in 1907 – where the men of the Regiment were sometimes billeted and where they replaced some of the turf with a vegetable garden; part of the present grandstand is original – photograph from 2012*)

The 12<sup>th</sup> Re-enforcement Draft – Corporal Goudie one of its non-commissioned officers - 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.

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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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



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

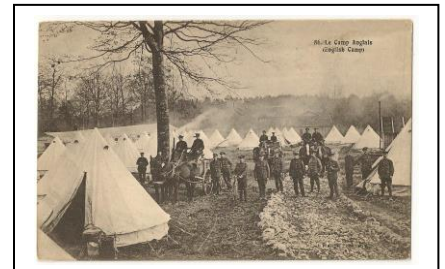
*\*Apparently, the standard length of time for this final training at the outset of the war had been ten days – although this was to become more and more flexible as the War progressed - in areas near Rouen, Étapes, LeHavre and Harfleur that became known notoriously to the troops as the Bull Rings.*

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



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

After the episode of October 12 at Gueudecourt, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had 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 above: *a British encampment somewhere on the Continent, apparently during the winter season – from a vintage post-card*)

Unfortunately for Corporal Goudie, the celebrations as such were followed by a visit to the 88<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance on Boxing Day, where he was diagnosed as suffering from enteritis. Apparently his case was not too serious as he was reporting back *to duty* on January 5 of the New Year.

After that welcome six-week Christmas-time respite away from the front lines, the Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

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The only infantry activity involving 1<sup>st</sup> 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.



(Right above: *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(?)*)

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 even had the pleasure of a visit from the Regimental Band, and also one from the Prime Minister of Newfoundland, Sir Edward Morris (right), the latter on March 17, St. Patrick's Day.



On March 29 that 1<sup>st</sup> 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, its march to finish amid the rubble of a village called Monchy-le-Preux.



(Right adjacent: *the remnants of the Grande Place in the city of Arras in early 1916 – from Illustration*)

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



(Right above: *the Canadian National Memorial which stands on Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to play its part in the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at a 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, Monchy-le-Preux was to prove the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' war, four-hundred eighty-seven casualties on April 14 alone.



(Previous page: *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*)

It was on that April 14, at Monchy-le-Preux, that Corporal Goudie was at first reported as *missing in action* while serving with 'C' Company. However, a subsequent report from the Geneva Red Cross of April 21(?) documented him as being a prisoner-of-war and as receiving treatment in St. Clothilde Hospital in the occupied French town of Douai for wounds to the left heel, right leg and the hip\*. The first that his parents heard, nonetheless, was apparently by a telegram dated June 15.

*\*The dates are somewhat confusing in that they seem to report him in a POW camp in Germany before receiving treatment in Douai. Perhaps it was simply that prisoners in that area of France (Douai) were under the administrative control of Westphalia where Corporal Goudie was registered on April 23.*



(Right: *The Caribou at Monchy-le-Preux stands atop the remains of a German strongpoint in the centre of the reconstructed village. – photograph from 2009(?)*)

Later reported to be in a prisoner-of-war camp on or before August 6, 1917, Corporal Goudie was also a patient in the Barbara Hospital for an unspecified reason at Hamborn am Rhein on or before August 28. The next records are a notification by the Canadian Red Cross – received November 30 - of him being in Camp #17, Hameln (Soltau) - obviously before that date - and still on December 13.

During the War, exchanges of prisoners were at times made, usually for medical reasons, through the neutral country of Switzerland. Apparently Corporal Goudie was chosen from among many – although the reason is not specified – and he was transferred across the frontier on or about December 27, St. Stephen's Day, of 1917, to be interned until repatriation.

On December 28 he was documented as being interned at the Hotel Bruning at Interlaken, a town and area well known as a tourist destination – even before the Great War – and almost in the centre of Switzerland. On July 7 he was moved into the Hotel du Nord just next door.

Apparently Corporal Goudie played sports (he had a choice of two) – including rowing on the lake – and took afternoon tea each day. Soon he had run up a bill of one-hundred ninety-three Swiss francs – which he finally left unpaid!

**Corporal Goudie was received here on the 28<sup>th</sup> October suffering from grippe\* he made slow improvement up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> when he developed double pneumonia and toward the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup> he lost consciousness and in spite of 24**

**hours constant attendance by the Doctor he died on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> without suffering any pain as he did not regain consciousness**

**P W Rhodie  
Lieut. R.N.  
i/c Hospital**

**\*influenza, there being an epidemic in 1918**

**The son of Elias Goudie and Mary Jane Goudie (née Longdon) – to whom he had allocated a daily allowance of fifty-five cents from his pay - of Northern Arm, Botwood – his own address recorded as 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Grand Falls – he was also brother to Otto and to (adopted) Harold.**

**Corporal Goudie died in the *Hôtel des Alpes* (requisitioned as a hospital) in Interlaken, in the Canton of Bern, on November 6, 1918. The cause of death was cited as influenza, pneumonia and meningitis.**

**George Goudie had enlisted at eighteen years, eight months of age: date of birth, July 27, 1898.**

**His remains were transferred to where they rest today, on or about January 7, 1924.**

**(Right above: *Corporal Goudie's grave is the first on the left of the front row facing the camera. – photograph from 2013)***

**(Right above: *The sacrifice of Corporal Goudie is honoured on the War Memorial in Grand Falls. - photograph from 2010)***

**Corporal George Goudie was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).**

