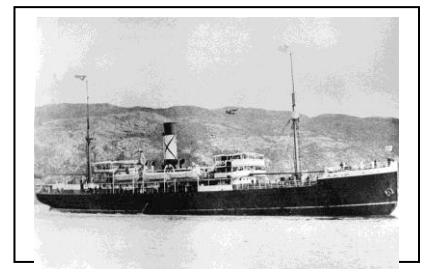


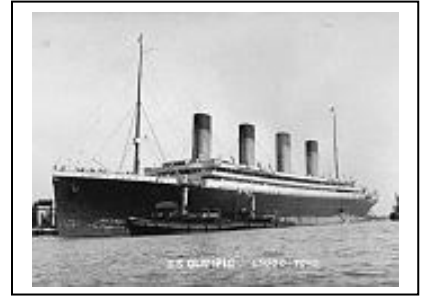
Private Charles E. Granger (Regimental Number 3646) is interred in Étapes Military Cemetery – Grave reference XXXI. B. 24A.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a tradesman earning a monthly \$40.00, Charles Granger was a recruit of the Fourteenth Draft. He presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on April 19, 1917, then enlisted - engaged *for the duration of the war* at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and also attested on that same day.

Private Granger was not to depart from Newfoundland for overseas service until May 19, when the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* (right) left en route to Halifax. His contingent of three officers and one-hundred eighty-two *other ranks*, and also ninety-nine recruits of the newly-formed Newfoundland Forestry Unit, then left Nova Scotia for the United Kingdom on board an unspecified\* vessel, on May 29.



*\*The ship in question may well have been the White Star liner Olympic (right) – sister ship to Titanic – requisitioned as a troop transport during the war, which sailed on June 2 from Halifax with Canadian military personnel as well – there are no other departures on or about this date. May 29 may have been the date of embarkation by the Newfoundland contingent.*



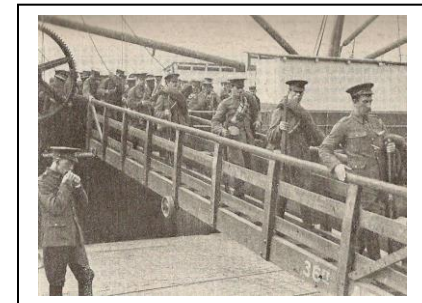
Arriving in the English west-coast port of Liverpool on June 9 the contingent entrained for the west coast of Scotland. By this time, the Regimental Depot at Ayr\* had already been in existence as the base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment for some two years. It was from here – since November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from home were being 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*)

*\*During the summer months of 1917, 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion was transferred from Ayr to not-so-distant Barry in the region of Dundee. Initially intended to be a permanent move, the protest from several quarters was so great that the Newfoundlanders were back in Ayr by the third week of September.*

It was then not to be until November 6, 1917, that Private Granger took ship again; on this occasion he was on his way to the Continent, passing through the English south-coast port of Southampton as a soldier among the one-hundred eleven other ranks of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Draft from Ayr. The Newfoundlanders disembarked in Rouen on the following day and made their way to the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot there for a few days of final training and organizing\* before making their way to a rendezvous with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen en route 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.*

(continued)

By that time, the Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had been withdrawn from the *Passchendaele* campaign, on October 17, in order to prepare for yet another upcoming offensive: *Cambrai*. The unit had been ordered back south from Belgium into northern France to re-enforce, to organize and to train in the vicinity of Berles-au-Bois, a rural community a dozen or so kilometres to the south-west of Arras.

It was there that, on November 14, four officers and one-hundred forty-one *other ranks* – one of them Private Granger – reported from Rouen *to duty* with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

That new offensive, 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 the penultimate day of the battle, December 3, while serving with the Re-enforcement Company during the fighting retreat of the day, Private Granger was wounded and evacuated from the field suffering from gun-shot injuries to the left thigh, complicated by a compound fracture of the femur. He was evacuated - there seem to be no details about his immediate treatment - to the 22<sup>nd</sup> General Hospital at Dannes-Camiers, on the same day, where he was deemed as being *dangerously ill*.



(Right above: *the railway station at Dannes-Camiers through which thousands of sick, wounded and convalescent military personnel passed during the Great War* – from a vintage post-card)

(Right above: *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)



(continued)

The son of Edmund T. Granger, carpenter, – to whom he had allocated a daily sixty cents from his pay – and Caroline\* Granger of Trinity - he was reported as having *died of wounds* at a quarter past five in the afternoon of December 5, 1917, at the same 22<sup>nd</sup> General Hospital. At home, it was the Reverend C.M. Stickings of Trinity who was requested to notify his family.

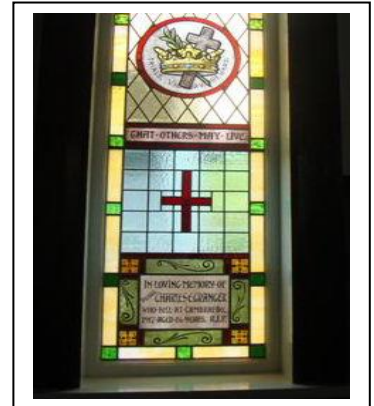
(Right: *The Trinity War Memorial honours the sacrifice of Private Granger.* – photograph from 2012)



Charles Granger had enlisted at the age of twenty-six years and one month.

*\*In the local cemetery, Edmund T. Granger is buried with his wife Jessie A. Granger. Information is hard to come by as to whether this could have been a second marriage - or perhaps not the family of Private Granger at all.*

(Right: *a window in the Anglican Cemetery Mortuary Chapel to the memory of Private Granger* – photograph from 2012, with thanks to Cyril Bennett)



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

