

Private Alfred William Augustus Hare (Number 883429) of the 50th Battalion (*Calgary*), Canadian Expeditionary Force, having no known last resting-place, is commemorated in the stone of the Menin Gate, Ypres (today *Ieper*): Panel reference 24-28-30.

(Right above: *The image of the 50th Battalion (Calgary) shoulder-patch is from the bing.com/images web-site*)

His occupations prior to military service recorded as those of both *student* and *farmer*, Alfred William Augustus Hare – the first-born? - at some time soon after his birth in 1897 in the capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, appears to have begun to travel with his family as far as the Canadian province of Alberta. A brother was born in Nova Scotia in 1899, a sister in Ontario in 1901 and another brother, Rupert, in Earlville, Alberta, in 1907*.

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**Apparently there were to be nine children in all.*

It would appear that it was in Alberta – the community of Tees is often cited* - that the parents decided to settle down as, some nine years after Rupert's birth, in 1916, it was there that Alfred William Augustus presented himself for enlistment.

**Tees is entered as his and his parents' address on his attestation papers*

It was on June 27 of that year, the venue the community of Red Deer, in the local armoury, that he underwent a medical examination which found him...*fit for the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force*. He was attested on the same day by a magisterial representative before the proceedings were brought to a close by the Commanding Officer of the 187th Battalion (*Central Alberta*), Lieutenant Colonel Luke White Robinson, when he declared – on paper – that...*Alfred William Augustus Hare...having been finally approved and inspected by me this day...I certify that I am satisfied with the correctness of this Attestation.*

Private Hare's first pay records show that June 27, 1916, was the day on which the Canadian Army* began to remunerate him for his services – thus confirming this as the day of his enlistment; and they also document that it was on this date that he was *taken on strength* by the same 187th Battalion (*Central Alberta*).

**Curiously perhaps, the term 'Canadian Army' was not to become official until 1940.*

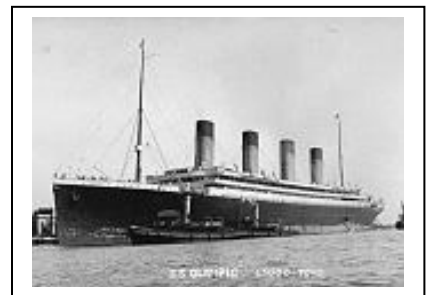
The 187th Battalion had been recruiting already since the winter of 1915-1916 in the area of Red Deer where it was based. In fact, by the time of Alfred William Augustus Hare's enlistment, the unit had already been presented with its colours – gifted by the population of Innisfail – on June 16.

It was not to be until that December, some six months after the presentation of its colours, that the 187th Battalion would take ship – after a likely week-long train journey across some eighty percent of the continent - in the east-coast harbour of Halifax.

Not only was the Battalion personnel to spend a week in a railway carriage, but it appears that it was to also pass seven days on board ship before sailing. Private Hare's unit is recorded as having embarked on December 13*, 1916, to be followed by other units on subsequent days before the vessel was finally to weigh anchor on December 20.

**A second source has December 15, therefore five days spent on the ship.*

The vessel to carry Private Hare and his Battalion was His Majesty's Transport *Olympic*, sister ship of *Britannic* sunk the previous month by a mine in the eastern end of the Mediterranean, and also of the ill-starred *Titanic*. Requisitioned by the British government from the *White Star Company* for the duration of hostilities, she regularly carried well over six-thousand troops.



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(Preceding page: The image of Olympic, one of the largest vessels afloat at the time, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.)

The twenty-four officers and seven-hundred seventy-four *other ranks* of Private Hare's 185th Battalion were not to travel alone: also taking passage for the United Kingdom on *Olympic* were personnel of the 199th, 211th, 226th and 239th Battalions of Canadian Infantry as well as the 1st Draft of the 213th Battalion and the 10th Draft of the Canadian Army Service Corps Training Depot Number 2.

Some six days after clearing Halifax, on December 26, Boxing Day of 1916, the ship docked in the English west-coast port-city of Liverpool. From there it appears that Private Hare's unit was immediately transported by train to *Witley Camp* in the southern extreme of the county of Surrey.

And it also appears that upon his arrival at Witley, on December 28, Private Hare was sent to hospital suffering from *parotitis*. In fact, it would seem that it was soon to be diagnosed as a case of *infectious parotitis* – mumps.

Seaforth Hospital to which he was then transferred, was back in the area of Liverpool where he was now to remain for more than a month, until the final day of January of the New Year, 1917. But apparently there were further medical problems in store for Private Hare: measles. He was subsequently to undergo treatment at the 1st Western General Hospital, Liverpool, for three weeks until his discharge from there on February 22.

In the meantime, the 187th Battalion, less than two months after having set foot on English soil, had ceased to exist: on February 20, just days before Private Hare's release from medical care, its personnel had been absorbed by the newly-forming 21st Canadian Reserve Battalion*.

**Before the end of the Great War, Canada was to despatch overseas two-hundred fifty battalions – although it is true that a number of these units, particularly as the conflict progressed, were below full strength. At the outset, these Overseas Battalions all had presumptions of seeing active service in a theatre of war.*

However, as it transpired, only some fifty of these formations were ever to be sent across the English Channel to the Western Front. By far the majority remained in the United Kingdom to be used as re-enforcement pools and they were gradually absorbed, particularly after January of 1917, by units that had by then been designated as Canadian Reserve Battalions.

The 21st Canadian Reserve Battalion had been organized in early January of 1917, and was based in the vicinity of the English south-coast town of Seaford which is where Private Hare reported to *duty* on February 23*, 1917.

**In fact, he had already been transferred bureaucratically – on paper - from his former unit to the 21st Canadian Reserve Battalion, on February 20 while he was still in hospital.*



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(Preceding page: *The community cemetery at Seaford in which are buried a number of Canadian soldiers, including two Newfoundlanders: Frederick Jacob Snelgrove and Ebenezer Tucker* – photograph from 2016)

But he was not yet done with hospitals. Only two months further on, on May Day, Private Hare was once more to be admitted with another medical complaint: fortunately for him, it was not to prove as serious as was for a while feared.

While his earlier-dated papers report the hospital in question as the *Connaught* which was serving the British Army complex of Aldershot in the not distant county of Hampshire, the later ones show him to have been admitted into the Canadian Military Hospital serving *Camp Bramshott*, a Canadian military establishment also in Hampshire.



(Right: *Royal Canadian Legion flags amongst others adorn the interior of St. Mary's Church in the English village of Bramshott.* – photograph from 2016)

While at first diagnosed as suffering from influenza and later from an accompanying case of bronchitis, Private Hare was soon submitting to a series of sputum tests, these to indicate the presence of tuberculosis. These all returned from the laboratory recorded as being negative and he was released from care on June 6.

Now bureaucracy took over for a short period: upon his discharge from hospital of June 6, Private Hare, *struck off strength* from the 21st Canadian Reserve Battalion, remained at *Camp Bramshott* for two days as a soldier attached to the Alberta Regimental Depot. Then on June 8 – but still on the nominal roll of the Alberta Depot - he was forwarded to the 2nd Canadian Command Depot on the south coast and close to the seaside town of Hastings.

The *raison d'être* of the Command Depots was to supervise wounded or sick military personnel upon release from hospital and perhaps convalescence, and to ascertain what future employment – if any – the Army might be able to offer. If none were to be found, the soldier in question might well be re-patriated.

In the case of Private Hare, the decision was forthcoming five weeks afterwards, on July 13. He was thereupon ordered returned to the 21st Canadian Reserve Battalion at Seaford in order to prepare for *active service* on the Continent.

It was on September 15, 1917, that he was *struck off strength* once more by the 21st CRB and transferred very temporarily to *Camp Bramshott* in preparation for travel with a draft to the Continent on that same night. At the same time he was apprised that his new unit on the Western Front was to be the 50th Battalion (*Calgary*) already in France.



(Right above: *A view of the French port-city of Le Havre at or about the time of the Great War* – from a vintage post-card)

(continued)

His draft travelled overnight likely via the ports of Southampton on the English side of the Channel and Le Havre on the French. From the latter it was not a long journey by train that September 16 to the west-coast town of Étapes where by this time much of the Canadian administration had been re-established.

At Étapes, Private Hare reported to the 4th Canadian Infantry Base Depot before, on the morrow, being ordered to - and travelling - the newly-formed Canadian Corps Reinforcement Camp at Villers-au-Bois at a distance of some ninety kilometres to the east.

Before Private Hare would leave its jurisdiction, the Reinforcement Depot was to re-locate to Calonne-Ricouart, twenty kilometres or so to the north-west. Thus it was to be from there, after twenty-six days had passed, that he was despatched to his new unit on October 13, likely by bus.

He joined it four days later again: the date October 17, 1917**.

**There was soon to be a railway built from there to supply the needs in men of the Canadian Divisions which would very soon be fighting at Passchendaele.*

***This date apparently recorded by – or on behalf of – the 50th Battalion Commanding Officer, although the event has not been entered in the War Diary.*

* * * * *

The 50th Battalion (*Calgary*) was a component of the 10th Canadian Infantry Brigade, itself an element of the 4th Canadian Division, and had landed in France at Le Havre – which the War Diarist consistently spells as HARVE - on August 11 of 1916.

On the night of August 10-11, 1916, the forty-six officers and one-thousand twelve *other ranks* of the 50th Battalion had embarked onto two vessels, *Marguerite* and *Courtfield*, in the port of Southampton in the late afternoon of the former date, to arrive in Le Havre on the estuary of the River Seine at four o'clock the following morning. From there the unit had marched to a rest camp more than six kilometres (four miles) distant.



(Right above: *The French port-city of Le Havre at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

On the morrow, August 12, the Battalion entrained at Le Havre, the *other ranks* travelling in cattle trucks – thirty to each – the officers likely having better facilities, for the twenty-three hour journey northwards to the area of the Franco-Belgian frontier. There the unit was billeted in the area of the French community of Steenvoorde where it remained to train and to become familiar with the use of gas helmets (*gas masks*) until August 19 when it moved a few hundred metres into a less-comfortable tented camp.

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The 50th Battalion was now to be stationed in the *Kingdom of Belgium*. All four of the Canadian Divisions upon arrival on the Continent had been sent there*, to the front in Flanders and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Divisions had served in and about the *Ypres Salient*. The 4th Canadian Division was to remain in the rear area for only a few brief weeks before it would follow the other three back southwards and into France.

**The Canadian Division – later re-designated as the 1st Canadian Division – had at first been posted, for two months, just south of the Franco-Belgian frontier in the Fleurbaix Sector. It had then moved up to Ypres just in time to face the first gas-assisted offensive of the Great War.*



(Right: *Entitled: Bombardement d'Ypres, le 5 juillet 1915 – from Illustration*)

***The 5th Canadian Division remained in the United Kingdom to serve for training new arrivals from home, and as a reserve pool.*

As the 4th Canadian Division was arriving in Belgium in mid-August of 1916, the other three Canadian Divisions already stationed had been preparing to go elsewhere. The British High Command had need of their services in its summer offensive further down the *Western Front* in France, a campaign which by that time was not proceeding altogether as had been planned.

By September of 1916, the *First Battle of the Somme* had been ongoing for two months. It had begun with the disastrous attack of July 1, an assault having cost the British Army fifty-seven thousand casualties – in the short span of only four hours - of which some nineteen-thousand dead.



(Right: *Dead of the Somme awaiting burial – an unidentified photograph*)

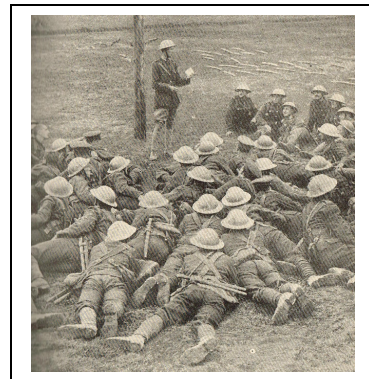
On that first day of *First Somme*, all but two small units had been troops from the British Isles, those exceptions having been the two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles serving in the Lincolnshire Regiment, and the eight-hundred personnel of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment which was to lose so heavily on that July 1 at a place called Beaumont-Hamel.



(Right above: *The Canadian Memorial which stands to the side of the Albert-Bapaume Road near the village of Courcellette – photograph from 2015*)

As the battle had progressed, other troops, from the Empire (*Commonwealth*), were to be brought in; at first it had been the South African Brigade (July 15), the Australians and New Zealanders (July 23) before the Canadians had entered the fray on August 30 to become part of a third general offensive. Their first major collective contribution was to be in the area of the two villages of Flers and Courcellette in that September.

(Right: *An image purporting to be that of a Canadian officer giving instructions to those under his command prior to the attack at Flers-Courcelette (see below), September 1916 – from The War Illustrated*)



It was not to be until October 3 that the 50th Battalion – after a sparse five days’ training in northern France to where it had been withdrawn – entrained at the town of St-Omer to travel south in its turn to the cauldron of *the Somme*. Having travelled all night to arrive in the community of Doullens, it then marched over the course of the next four days to arrive at the large *Brickfields Camp*, in the vicinity of the provincial town of Albert.

(Right: *Almost a century after the 50th Battalion passed through it on the way to the First Battle of the Somme, the once-splendid railway station in St-Omer is today in dire need of renovation. – photograph from 2015*)



On October 15 the Battalion had been posted into the trenches of *the Somme* for the first time. For the next month the War Diary entries report nothing out of the ordinary: *front, support* and *reserve*. The 50th Battalion has been not recorded as having played a direct major role in any concerted infantry action - but rather as having been regularly deployed in and out of the trenches – not, perhaps ironically, until *after* the battle had ostensibly drawn to its conclusion.



(Right: *Wounded troops being evacuated in hand-carts from the forward area during the First Battle of the Somme – from Le Miroir or Illustration*)

(Right: *Canadian soldiers at work carrying water in Albert, the already-damaged basilica in the background – from Illustration*)

The *First Battle of the Somme* has been *officially* judged by those set in authority over us to have come to an end on November 13-15, after the capture of the village of Beaumont* by the 51st Highland Division. This should, nevertheless, not suggest that there was no longer to be any fighting: an excerpt from the 50th Battalion War Diary entry of November 17 documents that... *Orders received for ‘A’ and ‘B’ COMPANYS with Twenty O.R. volunteers each from C and D COMPANYS to go over the top on the morning of the 18th...*



**This was the village of Beaumont, a part of the Commune of Beaumont-Hamel.*

(continued)

(Right below: *Burying Canadian dead on the Somme, likely at a casualty clearing station or a field ambulance – from Illustration or Le Miroir*)

The attack was to be in the vicinity of *Regina Trench*, a former strong-point in the German defences and a position which had already been attacked on several occasions before having been definitively captured by Canadian troops only days before, on November 10-11.

On this later occasion of November 18, the soldiers of the 50th Battalion were to advance under the cover of a barrage and had taken a small trench and several prisoners without heavy losses. However, as the Battalion had been beginning to consolidate these positions, it had come under an enfilading fire and would eventually be forced to retreat into *Regina Trench* itself.

Thus the episode had ended – with a casualty list of two-hundred fourteen all told. The unit had been withdrawn to Albert on the following day, the 19th, and, one week later again, on November 26, it was to march westward and away from *First Somme*.

(Right above: *Regina Trench Cemetery and some of the area surrounding it which was finally wrested from the Germans by Canadian infantry in November of 1916 – photograph from 2014*)

During this same period, after having retired to the west, the Calgary unit had then turned northward in a semi-circular fashion behind and then beyond the city of Arras. By December 4 the 50th Battalion had marched some seventy kilometres as far as the area of Divion where it was then to remain in training for a further two weeks.

(Right above: *The remnants of the Grande Place (Grand'Place) in Arras had already been steadily bombarded for two years by the end of the year 1916. – from Illustration*)

On December 18 the Battalion would begin a transfer to Villers-au Bois where it had arrived on December 20 to undergo several days of training. Those who had counted on a peaceful Christmas Day were to be disappointed: on December 25 the 50th Battalion marched back into the trenches to relieve its comrades-in-arms of the 47th Battalion.

(Right above: *Villers Station Cemetery, Villers-au-Bois, is the last resting-place for just over one-thousand two-hundred Commonwealth military personnel and thirty-two former adversaries. – photograph from 2017*)



For the soldiers on both sides, the winter of 1916-1917 would be one of the everyday grind of life in and out of the trenches. There was to be little if any concerted infantry activity apart from the constant patrolling and the occasional raids.

In the Canadian sectors this latter activity was encouraged by the British High Command who felt it to be a morale booster which also kept the troops in the right offensive frame of mind – the troops who were ordered to carry them out in general loathed these operations.

(Right: *A detachment of Canadian troops going up to the forward area during the winter of 1916-1917 – from Illustration*)



There had been of course, a constant trickle of casualties, for the most part occasioned by the enemy artillery and snipers; yet it was mostly sickness and dental work that was to keep the medical services busy during this period.

Then it spring had arrived and with it the time for the campaigning season to begin. By April 1 the last of the 50th Battalion's personnel had been withdrawn from the trenches near Souchez, to *Vancouver Camp* at Chateau de la Haie.

(Right: *The village of Souchez during the period of French responsibility before the arrival of the British and then the Canadians in the sector, the photograph taken in 1915 – from Le Miroir*)



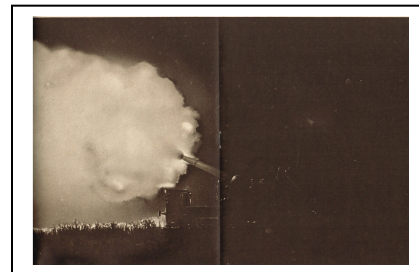
The reason for the move had been to undergo special – and in some cases novel – training for an upcoming British attack in the area of Arras. The Canadians were to be ordered to advance in an area where the ground sloped upwards, to the top of a German-occupied rise which dominated the entire Douai Plain. The crest of the rise was known as *la crête de Vimy – Vimy Ridge*.

Among these aforementioned training exercises were to be some original developments: the use of captured enemy weapons; each unit and each man to be familiar with his role during the upcoming battle; plaster-of-Paris scale models and the construction of ground layouts built, thanks to aerial reconnaissance, to show the terrain and positions to be attacked; the introduction of the machine-gun barrage; and the excavation of kilometres of approach tunnels, not only for the safety of the attacking troops but also to ensure the element of surprise.

As those final days passed, the artillery barrage had grown progressively heavier; on April 6, Good Friday, the War Diarist of another battalion was to describe it as...*drums*. By this time, of course, the Germans had been aware that something was in the offing and their guns in their turn had been throwing retaliatory fire onto the Canadian positions - and their aircraft had been very busy.

(Right below: *A heavy British artillery piece spews its venom into the middle of the night during the course of the preparatory bombardment before the First Battle of Arras. – from Illustration*)

**It should be said that a great deal of the artillery used in the assault on Vimy Ridge was British and that a British Division also participated. Almost fifty per cent of the personnel who had been employed for that day were British, not to mention those whose contribution – such as those who dug the tunnels - allowed for it all to happen.*



(Right below: *The Canadian National Memorial which, since 1936, has stood atop Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

On April 9 the British Army had launched an offensive in the area to the north of the Somme battlefields; this was to be the so-called *Battle of Arras* intended to support a French effort elsewhere. In terms of the count of casualties, some four thousand per day, it was to be the most expensive operation of the *Great War* for the British, one of the few positive episodes having been the Canadian assault of *Vimy Ridge* on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday.



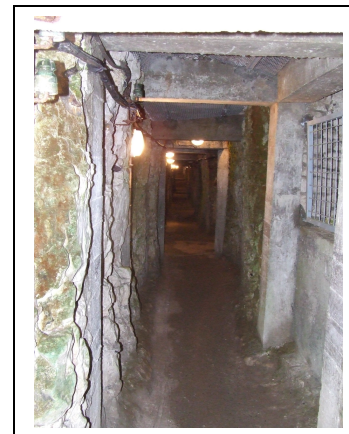
While the British campaign had proved an overall disappointment, the French offensive was to be yet a further disaster.

(Right: *Canadian troops of the 4th or 3rd Division equipped with all the paraphernalia of war on the advance across No-Man's-Land during the attack at Vimy Ridge on either April 9 or 10 of 1917 - from Illustration*)



On that April 9, in driving snow, the four Canadian Divisions, for the first time acting as a single, autonomous entity, had stormed the slope of *Vimy Ridge*, by the end of the next day having cleared it almost entirely of its German occupants.

Several kilometres of tunnel had been hewn out of the chalk under the approaches to the front lines of *Vimy Ridge*, underground accesses which afforded physical safety and also the element of surprise during the hours – and in some cases, days – leading up to the attack. The 50th Battalion War Diary, however, records that in fact the unit had been kept in reserve to support the 11th and 12th Battalions on April 9.



It was not to be until late in the evening that the unit had been ordered moved forward to the support line and thus it was not to avail of the protection that the tunnels had offered.

(Preceding page: *One of the few remaining galleries – Grange Tunnel - still open to the public at Vimy Ridge one hundred years later – photograph from 2008(?)*)

**This was the first occasion on which the Canadian Divisions were to act in concert as a Canadian Army Corps rather than being attached to a British force. In fact, as seen above, British forces were now placed under its command.*

On April 9, the 50th Battalion had incurred a total of six casualties, two *killed in action* and four *wounded*. However, on the following day, the unit was involved in the successful attack on *Hill 145**: casualties for April 10, sixty-two *killed in action*, one-hundred thirty-six *wounded*, and thirty-one *missing in action*.



**On top of which today stands the Canadian National Memorial*

(Right above: *Canadians under shell-fire occupy the third line of trenches on Vimy Ridge: the fighting of the next few days was fought under the same difficult conditions. – from Illustration*)

The Germans, having lost the *Ridge* and the advantages of the high ground, had retreated some three kilometres into prepared positions in front of the Canadians whose further offensives were to prove less successful than that of Easter Monday; while some progress at times would be made – at *Arleux-en-Gohelle*, for example - German counter-attacks had often re-claimed ground from the British and Canadian troops – as at *Fresnoy* in early May. And as ever, it had been a costly business.

As for the 50th Battalion, it would remain in support and then in the front lines after the attack on *Vimy Ridge* until April 13 when it had been retired to *Vancouver Camp* and then on to *Ottawa Camp*, ostensibly to rest, to re-organize and to re-enforce, but nonetheless, to supply work-parties on frequent occasions.

The re-enforcement had not been a great success, only eighty-three *other ranks* having arrived during this period. By the time that the unit moved from *Ottawa Camp* back to the forward area, on this occasion towards *Liévin*, adjacent to the mining centre and city of *Lens*, on April 24, the 50th Battalion's *marching strength* had been down to twenty-two officers and six-hundred fifty men.

After the official conclusion of the *Battle of Arras*, on or about May 15, many of the Canadian units were now posted in sectors not far to the north, in the area of the mining centre and city of *Lens* and other communities. Others remained *in situ*, thus the Canadian Corps was to become more and more responsible for the area of the *Western Front* from *Béthune* in the north down the line almost as far as *Arras* to the south.



(continued)

(Preceding page: *Lens was to be treated in the same manner as was Arras, this image from a period late in the War. – from a vintage post-card*)

The British High Command had by this time decided to undertake a summer offensive in the *Ypres Salient*, Belgium. Thus, in order to divert German attention from this area – as well as his reserves - it had ordered operations also to take place at the sector of the front running north-south from Béthune to Lens.



The Canadians were to be a major contributor to this effort.

(Right above: *An example of the conditions under which the troops were ordered to fight in the area of Lens during the summer of 1917 – from Le Miroir*)

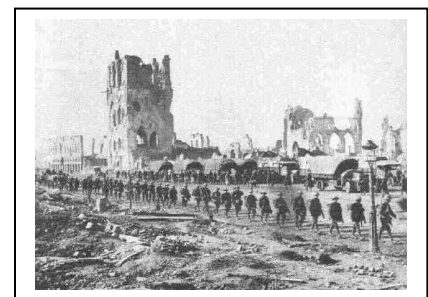
July was quiet, the entire month spent withdrawn behind the forward area. This apparently had carried over into August until the 17th when the unit had relieved the 54th Battalion in the trenches. Two days prior to this there had been the attack at *Hill 70*, a successful if costly operation. But this had been the responsibility of the Canadian 1st and 2nd Divisions; thus life for the 50th Battalion had continued in its routine manner.

After that early summer of relatively little infantry activity, this attack on August 15 in the area of *Hill 70* and the city of Lens had been intended to be the precursor of weeks of an entire campaign. However, the British offensive further north was proceeding less well than intended and the Canadians were to be needed there. Activities in the *Lens Sector* were to be suspended in early September and the Canadians were to begin training.



(Right above: *Canadian troops under fire in the forward area of Lens at some time during the summer of 1917 – from Le Miroir*)

It would not be until the final weeks of October of 1917 that the Canadian Corps had become embroiled in the offensive to the north-east of Ypres. Officially named the *Third Battle of Ypres*, the campaign would come to be known to history as *Passchendaele*, adopting that name from a small village on a ridge that was – *ostensibly* - one of the British Army's objectives.



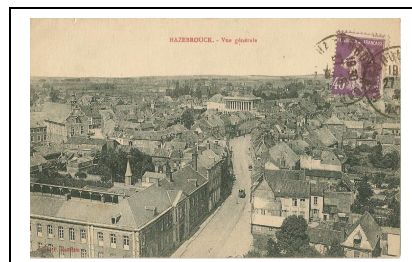
(Right above: *Troops file past the Cloth Hall and through the rubble of the medieval city of Ypres on their way to the front in the late summer of 1917. – from Illustration*)

From the time that the Canadians had entered the fray, it was they who would shoulder a great deal of the burden.

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For the week of October 26 until November 3 it had been the 3rd and 4th Canadian Divisions which were to spearhead the assault, with the 1st and 2nd Divisions in reserve. From November 5 until the official end of the affair – November 10 - the reverse had been true with troops of the 2nd Canadian Division finally having entered the remnants of Passchendaele itself.

It had been on October 11 that the 50th Battalion would be transported by motor vehicles to the area of northern France. It had remained there, in the area of the large centre of Hazebrouck, for the next ten days, in preparation for a further move into Belgium.



(Right: *The northern French town of Hazebrouck, likely at a time between the two World Wars – from a vintage post-card*)

And it was to be, of course, during this period – on October 17 according to his own papers – that Private Hare had reported *to duty*.

* * * * *

On October 21, Private Hare's 50th Battalion moved northwards into Belgium, having been bussed to Ypres before then proceeding on foot to the area of Potijze, a small community just to the north-east. There the personnel was fed and equipped before moving on further into support lines to relieve an Australian unit. On the 22nd the 50th Battalion was ordered to move up into the front trenches.



(Right above: *Somewhere – it might have been anywhere or everywhere – on the Passchendaele battle-field – from Illustration*)

(Right: *Canadian troops – not having proper bathing facilities - performing their ablutions in the water collecting in a shell hole at some time during the last month of Passchendaele – from Le Miroir*)



Private Hare's unit was to remain there for five days before being relieved, in much that same area with little to report other than some local patrolling and enemy artillery activity - except on October 26. Total casualties for the tour, *killed and wounded*, were to amount to one-hundred ninety-four.



(Right: *The Canadian Memorial on Passchendaele Ridge – photograph from 2015*)

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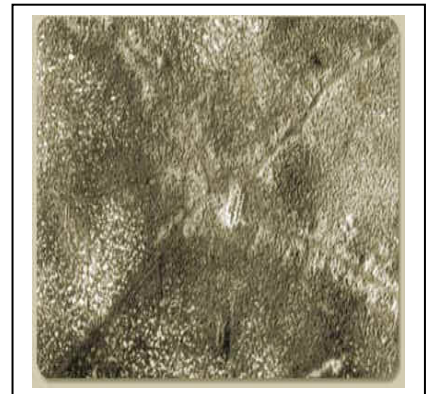
On that October 26, the Canadians in conjunction with British and Australian troops attacked the *Passchendaele Ridge*. From the 10th Canadian Infantry Brigade it was to be the 46th Battalion which spearheaded the attack and it was apparently only later, in the afternoon, that Private Hare's 50th Battalion was ordered forward to...*move up to support and assist the 46th Battalion...*during a German counter-attack.

(Right: *The village of Passchendaele as seen from the air in 1916, after two years of war – from Illustration*)



(Right below: *The village of Passchendaele as seen from the air in 1917, after the battle of that name – from Illustration*)

The following are excerpts from the 50th Battalion (*Calgary*) War Diary entry for October 26, 1917: *At 1.30 P.M. the enemy artillery increased in intensity and our machine-gun Companies started heavy and prolonged fire. Men of the 46th Bn. were seen to be withdrawing but this was checked... Our men held their posts despite the movement through them of the other troops.*



That night Battalion was relieved... After rest parties were sent out to search area for and bring out all wounded and killed, but their work was much hampered by enemy artillery.

(Right: *In the stone of the Menin Gate at Ypres (today Ieper) there are carved the names of British and Empire (Commonwealth) troops who fell in the Ypres Salient during the Great War and who have no known last resting-place. There are almost fifty-five thousand remembered there; nevertheless, so great was the final number, that it was to be necessary to commemorate those who died after August 16 of 1917, just fewer than thirty-five thousand, on the Tyne Cot Memorial. – photograph from 2010*)



The son of Alfred Allison Hare (originally from Halifax, deceased in Alberta in 1918) and of Jessie Isabella Hare (born St. John's, Newfoundland, née *Withycombe*) – to whom he had allocated as of December 1, 1916, a monthly fifteen dollars from his pay – he was one of nine children, the others: Rupert-Weldon, Kathleen-Marion, Nora, Norah, Alice, John, Marie and Gerald-deCourcey*.

**In 1916 the family was living in the area of Strathcona, Alberta.*

Private Hare was reported as having been *killed in action* on October 26, 1917, during the fighting of the *Third Battle of Ypres: Passchendaele*.

(continued)

Alfred William Augustus Hare had enlisted at the apparent age of nineteen years and four months: date of birth at St. John's, Newfoundland, February 15, 1897 (from attestation papers and the original Newfoundland Birth Register).

Private Alfred William Augustus Hare was entitled to the British War Medal (left) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to criceadam@yahoo.ca. Last updated – January 23, 2023.