



Private Joseph Hollahan (Regimental Number 1133), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation previous to his military service recorded as that of a cooper working for a weekly \$12.00, Joseph Hollahan presented himself for medical examination at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's on February 16, 1915. He then enlisted – engaged at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – on the following day, February 17, before attesting on February 27.



Private Hollahan of 'E' Company embarked in St. John's on board the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Stephano* (right above – from the *Provincial Archives*) some two months later again, on April 22, 1915.

The ship sailed to Halifax where his contingent took ship on His Majesty's Transport *Missanabie* (right) – likely with Canadian troops - for the crossing to Liverpool – the ship departed Halifax on April 25. From Liverpool they travelled by train to Edinburgh where the Newfoundlanders arrived on May 2. 'E' Company was to have but a few days to savor the charms of the Scottish capital.



Only nine days later, on May 11, the entire Battalion was posted for training from Edinburgh to a tented Stobs Camp near the Scottish town of Hawick.

(Right: *the Regiment on parade at Stobs Camp on June 10, the day it received its Colours* – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)



From Stobs, some thirteen weeks later again, in early August, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', the senior Companies now become 1st Battalion, the Newfoundland Regiment, were transferred to Aldershot in southern England. There they were to undergo final preparations – and a royal inspection – before departing on active service to the Middle East and to the fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

'E' and 'F' Companies – the latter having arrived at Stobs Camp on July 10 - were to be posted to the new Regimental Depot and were to form the nucleus of the newly-formed 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.

When he was apprised of his transfer seems not to be recorded, but Private Hollohan was one of the few from 'E' Company who were to swell the ranks of the units posted to Aldershot - thus he became a soldier of 'D' Company. It was during the period while he was at Aldershot, and as was the case with the great majority of the Newfoundland troops, that Private Hollohan was prevailed upon to re-enlist *for the duration of the war*. This he did on August 14 or 16*.

**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.*

On August 20, 1915, Private Hollohan took ship on board the requisitioned passenger liner *Megantic* (right above) for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting in Gallipoli where, a month later – of which two weeks had been spent billeted at the British barracks at Abbassia, near the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, 1st Battalion landed on the beach at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

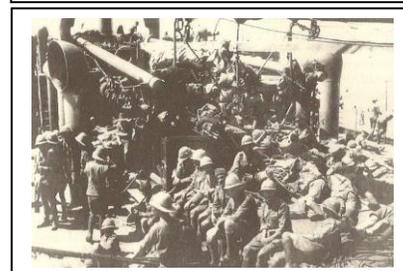
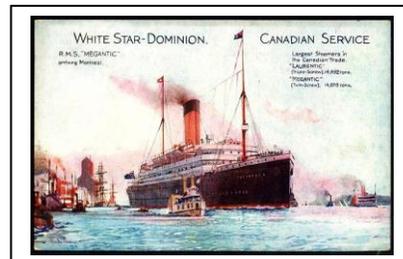
(Right adjacent black & white: Newfoundland troops on board a troop-ship anchored at Mudros, either *Megantic* on August 29, *Ausonia* on September 18, or *Prince Abbas* on September 19 – Whichever the case, they were yet to land on Gallipoli. – from Provincial Archives)

(Right: 'Kangaroo Beach', where 1st Battalion landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is in the distance at the far end of Suvla Bay. The remains of a landing-craft are still visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph from 2011)

(Right: almost a century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Hollohan served during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)

(Right: Cape Helles (see following paragraphs) 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)

On the night of December 19-20, the British abandoned their positions and withdrew from Suvla Bay, the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, forming a part of the rear-guard on that occasion.



1st Battalion was transferred two days later to Cape Helles on the western tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Newfoundlanders were soon, on the night of January 8-9, to be abandoning Cape Helles as well.

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

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

When the British evacuated the entire Gallipoli Peninsula in January of 1916, 1st Battalion was sent to Alexandria, arriving there on the 15th of that month. From there the Newfoundlanders were transferred, almost immediately, south to Suez where they were to await further orders. To that point it seems that the theatre of the future posting of 29th Division was still uncertain.

(Right: *The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Newfoundlanders, employed as the rear-guard, were among the last to leave on two occasions.* – photograph taken from the battleship *Cornwallis* from *Illustration*)

(Right: *Port Tewfiq (see paragraph below) at some time just before the Great War* – from a vintage post-card)

On March 14, the officers and men of 1st Battalion embarked through Port Tewfiq at the southern end of the Suez Canal onto His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* (right) for the voyage to the French Mediterranean port of Marseilles, en route to the *Western Front*.

(Right: *British troops march through the port area of the French city of Marseilles.* – from a vintage post-card)

Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Battalion's train arrived at the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy.

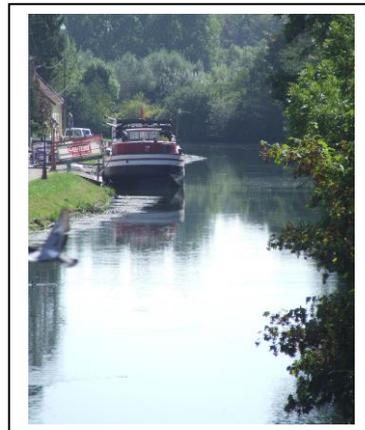
(continued)



It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for them travelling unused in a separate wagon. De-training at the station at two in the morning the Newfoundlanders still had a long march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

(Right: *the Somme seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy as it flows through the community* – photograph from 2010)

It is doubtful that any of those tired soldiers paid much attention to the slow-moving stream flowing under the bridge that they passed on their way from the station. Some three months later *the Somme* would be a part of their history.



On April 13, 1st Battalion marched into the village of Englebelmer – three kilometres behind the lines and perhaps some fifty kilometres in all distant from Pont-Rémy – where it was billeted, welcomed re-enforcements from Rouen on the 15th and, on that same day, was introduced into the British lines where the Newfoundlanders were then put to work making improvements to the communication trenches.

The Newfoundlanders were also soon to be preparing for the British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for that same meandering river which flowed through the region, *the Somme*.

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



The son of Samuel Hollahan, fisherman, and Julia Hollahan, Private Hollahan was also husband of Florence Isabella Hollahan - to whom he had allotted a daily allowance of eighty cents from his pay - of 89, Ford's Hill, Southside East in St. John's. The couple had married at Wesley Parsonage on April 4, 1912, and were parents to Herbert James who was two years old at the time of his father's enlistment.

(Right: *Beaumont-Hamel - 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)



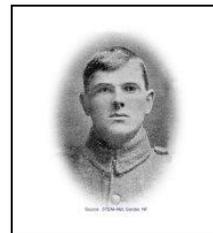
Private Hollahan was reported as *missing in action* at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, during the fighting of the first day of *the Somme*. Apparently his family received notification that he had been officially *presumed dead* only on February 1, 1917, the usual delay being six months (in other cases thirty weeks) after being declared *missing* - in the instance of Beaumont-Hamel, usually on December 31, 1916.



Joseph Hollahan had enlisted at twenty-three years of age: date of birth, June 28, 1891.

(Preceding page: a grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland dead awaiting burial after Beaumont-Hamel – from ...)

(The photograph of Private Hollahan has been donated to the Grand Banks Genealogy site by the family of the late Betty Ebsary Maloney.)



Private Joseph Hollahan was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

