



Seaman Anthony Joseph Lamb (also found as *Lambe*, notably on his enlistment papers), Number 2424x, is buried in Belvedere Roman Catholic Cemetery Military Plot in St. John's – although a copy of Newfoundland Vital Statistics cites Mount Carmel Cemetery as the location of his grave.

Having decided to answer the call of the naval authorities for volunteers, he thereupon travelled from the Burin Peninsula community of Lord's Cove, Lamaline, to St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland where, on May 17 of 1918, Anthony Joseph Lamb reported...*to duty*...on the Naval Reserve training ship, HMS *Briton*, moored in the harbour (see below).

On that mid-May day he enlisted\* for the first time into the Reserve (see further below), was signed on to serve for the...*Duration of the War*\*\*...and underwent the required

medical assessment on the morrow. He also likely attested at this time, pledging his allegiance to the King-Emperor, George V.

*\*May of 1918 was the month during which the Newfoundland Military Service Act (conscription) came into effect. From May 11 through to the end of the War, the Department of Militia was to call a total of 1,470 men into active service. However, nothing amongst his papers appears to suggest under which circumstances – as a volunteer or a conscripted man – Edward Tilley was to be taken into service. In fact, it is difficult to ascertain that conscription was ever to become necessary for Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve.*

*Whatever was the case, it appears that no Newfoundland conscripts were ever to see ‘active service’.*



*(Right above: George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India: as a boy and young man he had served in the Royal Navy from 1877 until 1891 and always retained a fondness for the Senior Service. – The photograph of the King attired in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet is from the Royal Collection Trust web-site and taken in or about 1935.)*

*\*\*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. Later recruits – as of or about May of 1916 - signed on for the ‘Duration’ at the time of their original enlistment.*



*(Right above: The White Ensign has been flown by the Royal Navy in its present form since about the year 1800 although other naval ensigns had existed for at least two centuries. It consists of a red St. George's Cross – the national flag of England - on a white field with the Union Flag\* in the upper canton.)*

*\*The Union Flag is commonly referred to as the ‘Union Jack’; this is, in fact, a misnomer since a flag is referred to as a ‘Jack’ only when flown from the bow of a ship.*

*Note: During the years preceding the Great War the only military force on the Island of Newfoundland – apart from a handful of ill-fated local attempts – was to be the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland). Even so, it was to be some thirty years after the withdrawal of British troops from the Dominion in 1870 before the Reserve came into being in 1902.*

*Just fewer than four-hundred men were sought to enroll as seamen – apparently automatically at the rank of Able Seaman - and to present themselves annually in St. John's for five years in order to train for a period of twenty-eight days per annum. Allowed to report at a time of their own choosing, it is perhaps not surprising that these volunteers*

– mostly fishermen – were to opt to train during the winter months when fishing work was minimal.

Expenses were apparently defrayed for the most part by the British (Imperial) Government and an attempt was made to ensure the number of recruits would be kept constantly at a maximum. This practice and policy was then to be continued up until the onset of hostilities some twelve years later.

Of course, the purpose of having a reserve force at any time is to provide a trained force ready at any time to serve at a time of need or crisis. Thus in August of 1914, upon the Declaration of War by the government in London, hundreds of those men of the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland) were to make their way to St. John's, from there to take passage overseas to bolster the ranks of the Royal Navy.

An elderly vessel, HMS 'Calypso', having become surplus to the Admiralty's needs, had been provided to the Dominion of Newfoundland by the Royal Navy in 1902 for training purposes. After some debate it was eventually decided that she would be permanently moored in the harbour of the capital, her superstructure reduced, and a wooden shelter built on her upper deck to provide training facilities and living quarters for the prospective naval recruits.

(Right above: HMS 'Calypso' in full sail. She was to be re-named 'Briton' in early 1916 when a new 'Calypso', a modern cruiser, was about to be launched by the Royal Navy. – This photograph, taken of the 'Newfoundland Calypso' by the Royal Navy in 1898, is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum)

(Right above: Naval reservists from Newfoundland, during the early days of the Great War, before their departure for the United Kingdom - from *The War Illustrated*)

(Right: The newly-constructed C-Class cruiser 'Calypso' of 1916, seen here on an un-recorded date during the later years of the Great War, was to be sunk by an Italian submarine in 1940. – from Wikipedia)

It could have been only days after he had reported to the Reserve drill-ship that Seaman Lamb was to report sick – no date appears to have been recorded – and soon after that he was to be hospitalized in the Hospital for Infectious Diseases (Fever Hospital) in St. John's to be treated for Scarlet Fever. In the days before anti-biotics this malady was potentially highly infectious and dangerous.

(continued)

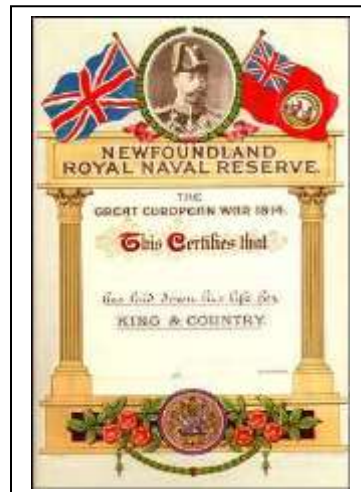




(Preceding page: *The photograph of Seaman Anthony Joseph Lamb taken during his brief service on HMS 'Briton', is from the Virtual War Memorial, Veterans' Affairs Canada.*)

The son of William Lamb, fisherman, and of Mary Ann Lamb (née *Tarrant*\*, possibly she deceased of consumption on September 19 of 1901), of Sandy Cove, Lord's Cove, Lamaline on the Burin Peninsula, he was also brother to Clement-Joseph (but also see below).

*\*The couple was married in St. Lawrence on June 13, 1895. Given that crucial pages are missing from the Vital Statistics Records, the following may well be speculation: that William married soon after Mary Anne's presumed demise, to Josephine, the couple subsequently having nine children.*



(Right above: *A Memorial Scroll, a copy of which was distributed to the families of those who had sacrificed their life while serving in the Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve*)

Seaman Anthony Joseph Lamb is reported as having died of pneumonia following scarlet fever in the Fever Hospital, St. John's, on June 21, 1918, at the *recorded* age of eighteen years: date of birth in Roundabout, Lawn, Newfoundland, April 15, 1900 (from his enlistment papers but in the month of January in Royal Navy Records).

*Seaman Lamb served only in the Royal Navy and was not in the service of Canada.*

Seaman Anthony Joseph Lamb was not to serve on either overseas service or active service (in a theatre of war) and was thus entitled to no 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](mailto:criceadam@yahoo.ca). Last updated – January 21, 2023.