



Private Lemuel Morey (Regimental Number 1967) is buried in Wellman's Cove & Paddock's Bight United Church Cemetery.

His occupations prior to military service recorded as being those of both *paper-maker* with the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company in Grand Falls – for which he was earning a monthly twenty-six dollars – and *seaman*, Lemuel Morey was a volunteer of the Eighth Recruitment Draft. He presented himself at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on November 2 of 1915, for a medical examination. It was a procedure which was to pronounce him as being...*fit for Foreign Service*.

It was to be on the day of that medical assessment, the same November 2, and at the same venue, the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road, that he was also to enlist. Lemuel Morey was thereupon to be engaged...*for the Duration of the War... at the daily private soldier's rate of a single dollar, to which was to be added a ten-cent per diem Field Allowance.**

(continued)

**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. Was Private Morey an exception?*

Only a further few hours were now still to pass before there then came the final formality of his enlistment: attestation. On that November 2 he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Lemuel Morey entered into the service of the King.

Private Morey, Number 1967, would not sail to the United Kingdom until a further twenty weeks and two days had then elapsed. What the reasons might have been for this delay, or how he was to spend the lengthy waiting-period after his attestation, appear not to have been documented. It may therefore be that he returned to work temporarily and was also perhaps to spend time with friends and family at his home in the Notre Dame Bay community of Boot Harbour, Hall's Bay – but of course, these conclusions are a little bit speculative* and he may have simply chosen – or been chosen – to remain to be quartered in St. John's and to undergo training.

**It is almost certain that some of the recruits, those whose home was not in St. John's or close to the city, or those who had no friends or family to offer board and lodging, were to be quartered in the curling rink at Fort William in St. John's, a building which was to serve as a barracks.*

When he eventually took ship, it was as a private soldier of the second contingent of 'H' Company that he embarked for...overseas service...onto the SS *Sicilian* in St. John's Harbour on March 23-24, 1916. The vessel did not sail from Newfoundland until the morrow, the 25th, to reach the United Kingdom some two weeks later - a slow crossing*.

**It was surely not because she was in a slow-moving convoy as this system did not come into being until 1917. The fact that she was carrying a large quantity of fish from St. John, New Brunswick - and had sailed from there on March 18 - to supply the needs of the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the United Kingdom was likely not a factor either.*

For whatever the reason – perhaps the annual spring ice had been a problem - it was nevertheless a slower than normal voyage: the date of disembarkation – the port is not named* - and the date of the contingent's arrival at the Regimental Depot in Scotland are recorded as being the same April 9.

**Possibly Liverpool from where 'Sicilian' was to sail twelve days later carrying wounded Canadian soldiers to Québec.*

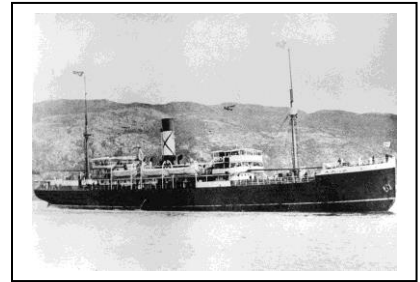


(Right above: *The image of 'Sicilian' is from the Old ship Picture Galleries web-site. Some sixteen years previously - as of 1899 when she was launched – the vessel, originally built for the Allan Line, had been requisitioned as a troop-ship and transport carrying men, animals and equipment to South Africa for use during the Second Boer War. It seems that*

during the Great War, even though she was often to carry troops, it was as a part of her commercial business and not as a requisitioned vessel.)

* * * * *

Some nineteen months prior to that April 9 of 1916, in the late summer and early autumn of 1914, the newly-formed Newfoundland Regiment's first recruits had undergone a period of training of five weeks on the shores of *Quidi Vidi Lake* in the east end of St. John's and elsewhere in the city, and were formed into 'A' and 'B' Companies.



During that same period the various authorities had also been preparing for the Regiment's transfer overseas.

(Right above: The image of 'Florizel' at anchor in the harbour at St. John's is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.)

This first Newfoundland contingent was to embark on October 3, in some cases only days after a recruit's enlistment and/ or attestation. To become known to history as the *First Five Hundred* and also as the *Blue Puttees*, on that day they had boarded the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* awaiting in St. John's Harbour.

The ship had sailed for the United Kingdom on the morrow, October 4, 1914, to its rendezvous with the convoy carrying the 1st Canadian Division overseas, off the south coast of the Island.

(Right below: Fort George, constructed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, still serves the British Army to this day. – photograph from 2011)

Once having disembarked* in the United Kingdom this first Newfoundland contingent was to train in three venues during the late autumn of 1914 and then the winter of 1914-1915: firstly in southern England on the *Salisbury Plain*; then in Scotland at *Fort George* – on the *Moray Firth* close to Inverness; and lastly at *Edinburgh Castle* – where it was to provide the first garrison from outside the British Isles.



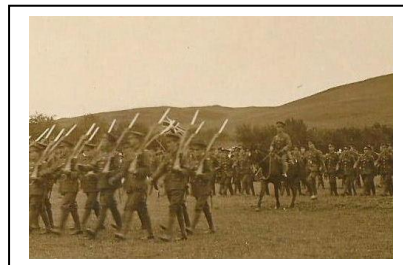
Only days after 'A' and 'B' Companies had taken up their posting there, on February 16 of 1915, 'C' Company – the first re-enforcements for the original contingent - would arrive directly – through Liverpool of course - from Newfoundland. On the final day of the month of March it had been the turn of 'D' Company to arrive – they via Halifax as well as Liverpool – to report...*to duty...*at Edinburgh, and then 'E' Company five weeks less a day later again, on May 4*.



**These five Companies, while a contingent of the Newfoundland Regiment, was not yet a battalion and would not be so for a further five months – as will be seen below.*

(Preceding page: *The venerable bastion of Edinburgh Castle dominates the Scottish capital from its hill in the centre of the city. – photograph from 2011*)

Seven days after the arrival of 'E' Company in the Scottish capital, on May 11 the entire Newfoundland contingent had been ordered elsewhere. On that day, seven weeks into spring – although in Scotland there was apparently still snow - the unit had been dispatched to *Stobs Camp*, all under canvas and south-eastwards of Edinburgh, close to the town of Hawick.



(Right above: *The Newfoundland Regiment marches past on the training ground at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915. – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and of Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)

Two months less a day later, on July 10, 'F' Company would march into *Stobs Camp*.

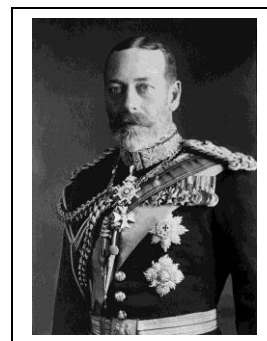
This had been an important moment: the Company's arrival was to bring the Newfoundland Regiment's numbers up to some fifteen hundred, establishment strength* of a battalion which could be posted on...active service.



**A number sufficient for four 'fighting' companies, two re-enforcement companies and a headquarters staff.*

(Right above: *The men of the Regiment await their new Lee-Enfield rifles. – original photograph from the Provincial Archives*)

From *Stobs Camp*, some three weeks after the arrival of 'F' Company, in early August 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', the four senior Companies, having now become the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, had been transferred to *Aldershot Camp* in southern England. There they were to undergo final preparations – and a royal inspection – before the Battalion's departure to the Middle East and to the fighting on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



The later arrivals to the United Kingdom, 'E' and 'F' Companies, were to be posted to the new Regimental Depot and were eventually to form the nucleus of the soon to be formed 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment.



(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 – the photograph is from Bain News Services via the Wikipedia web-site.*)

(Right above: *An aerial view of Ayr, likely from the period between the Wars: Newton-on-Ayr, where were quartered the 'other ranks', is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal*

Borough, where were housed the officers, is to the right. – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)

(Right below: *The High Street in Ayr as shown on a postcard of the time, the imposing Wallace Tower – it stands to this day (2017) - dominating the scene – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs Lillian Tibbo.*

The Regimental Depot had been established during the summer and the early autumn of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland, there to serve as a base for the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – as of November of 1915 – that the new-comers went in drafts, at first to *Gallipoli* and subsequently to the *Western Front*, to bolster the four fighting companies of the 1st Battalion*.



That November 15 of 1915 (see above) was to see not only the departure of the 1st Reinforcement Draft from Ayr to the Middle East and to the fighting of the *Gallipoli Campaign* but also, only five days prior, the arrival from Newfoundland of ‘G’ Company which would be obliged to take up quarters at *Gailes Camp*, some sixteen kilometres up the coast from Ayr itself – but just over sixty if one went by road.

A further seven weeks plus a day were now to pass before the first one-hundred personnel of ‘H’ Company, having sailed in mid-December as recorded in an earlier paragraph, were to present themselves at the Regimental Depot on January 4, some of them to be affected, even fatally, by an ongoing measles epidemic of the time.

After that there was now to be an interlude of three months plus several days before Private Morey’s detachment reported on the aforesaid April 9 to the Regimental Depot.

Note: Until as late as the spring of 1916 it had been the intention to form a 2nd Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment to fight on the Continent. In fact it would seem that Private Mugford’s contingent of one-hundred sixty-three recruits was to form the nucleus of that unit, while the personnel already at the Depot by this time would form a reserve battalion to serve as a re-enforcement pool for both the fighting units.

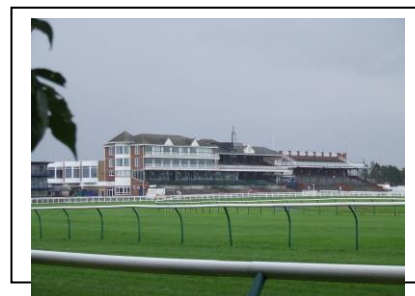
It could not have been long before a change of plan came about as very soon, men of Private Morey’s contingent (the second half of ‘H’ Company) were being sent – although not Private Morey himself – to strengthen the 1st Newfoundland Battalion already on the Continent – maybe Beaumont-Hamel had something to do with it.

* * * * *

During the winter of 1915-1916 the men of the soon-to-be 2nd Battalion (Reserve) had been lodged in several venues, at a nearby military camp at Gailes and also as far afield as the one at Paisley Barracks, some sixty-five kilometres distant. However, by the spring of 1916 the difficulty had been overcome by housing the men in a school, in a tented community and in the Ayr Racecourse Grandstand, all in the district of Newton-upon-Ayr.



(Preceding page: *Wellington Square seen here almost a century after it hosted the officers of the Newfoundland Regiment – photograph from 2012*)



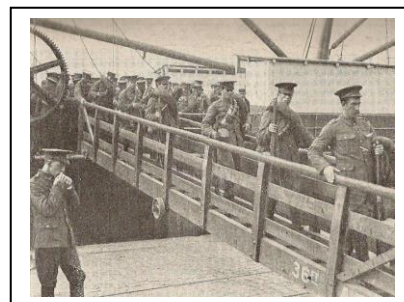
(Right: *The new race-course at Newton-upon-Ayr - opened in 1907 – where the men of the Regiment were sometimes billeted and where they replaced some of the turf with a vegetable garden; part of the present grandstand is original – photograph from 2012*)

It was to be at *the Racecourse* at Newton-on-Ayr that Private Morey was prevailed upon to re-enlist on June 30, 1916*, but there was now to be a long pause before he would be called to...*active service...*on the Continent.

**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 signed on for the 'Duration' at the time of their original enlistment.*

During this prolonged posting to the Regimental Depot, Private Morey was to spend some two-and-a-half months in medical care: he was to be a patient in *Heathfield Hospital* at Ayr from June 25 until July 25 receiving treatment for diphtheria, and then from August 9 until September 30 in the 4th Scottish General Hospital at Stob Hill, Glasgow, with an apparently undisclosed problem with the metatarsal(s) in one of his feet for which it had been necessary to remove the bone in question.

The 18th Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr, Private Morey among its ranks, embarked in the English south-coast port of Southampton on December 12 of 1916, and arrived to report in Rouen on the following day. The contingent was then to spend time in final training and organization* at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot there before being ordered to proceed to a rendezvous with the parent unit in the field.



(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen at an earlier time of the Great War on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

**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.*

It seems to have been on Christmas Day that Private Morey – one of a re-enforcement draft of fifty *other ranks* ordered from Rouen – reported...*to duty...*with the Newfoundland Battalion at Camps-en-Amienois, to the south-west of the city of Amiens. Whether the detachment presented itself in time to partake of the turkey dinner – apparently to be washed down with *real ale* – is not documented.

* * * * *

By the time of that Christmas of 1916, the first contingent of the Newfoundland Regiment had already been serving overseas for some two years and two months. The 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had been formed – in the spring of 1916 - and multiple drafts had been dispatched from Ayr to supplement the strength of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at *Gallipoli* and subsequently on the Continent (see immediately below).

(Right: *Some of the personnel of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915, prior to its departure to active service on the Gallipoli Peninsula – from The Fighting Newfoundlander by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)*



As Lemuel Morey, by that December 25, 1916, he had been a soldier of the Newfoundland Regiment for four-hundred eighteen days.

The four senior companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', had become in the summer of 1915 the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment and had thereupon been attached to the 88th Infantry Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. The force had soon been dispatched from *Camp Aldershot* to...*active service*.



(Right above: *The image of Megantic, here in her peace-time colours of a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.)*

On August 20 of 1915, the Newfoundland Battalion had embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport onto the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks.



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

There, a month later – having spent some two weeks billeted in British barracks in the vicinity of the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, the 1st Battalion was to land at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(continued)

(Preceding page: ‘Kangaroo Beach’, where the officers and men of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is to be seen in the distance at the far end of Suvla Bay. The remains of a landing-craft are still clearly visible in the foreground on ‘A’ Beach. – photograph taken in 2011)

(Right: A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla Bay, and where the 1st Battalion was to serve during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)



When the Newfoundlanders had landed from their transport ship at Suvla Bay they were to disembark into a campaign that was already on the threshold of collapse.

Not only in the area where the Newfoundland Battalion would now serve but, even ever since the very first days of the operation in April of 1915, the entire Gallipoli Campaign, including the operation at Suvla Bay, had been proving to be little more than a debacle:

Flies, dust, disease, the frost-bite and the floods – and of course the casualties inflicted by an enemy who was to fight a great deal better than the British High Command* had ever anticipated – were eventually to overwhelm the British-led forces and those of their allies, the French, and it would finally be decided to abandon not only Suvla Bay but the entire Gallipoli venture.

***Many of the commanders chosen were second-rate, had been brought out of retirement, and had little idea of how to fight – let alone of how to win. One of the generals at Suvla, apparently, had handed in his resignation during the Campaign and had just gone home.**



(Right: This is Anzac Bay in the fore-ground with the Salt Lake in the centre further away. The bottom of Suvla Bay is just to be seen on the left and adjacent to the Salt Lake, and further away again. The hills in the distance and the ones from which this photograph was taken were held by the Turks and formed a horse-shoe around the plain surrounding the Salt Lake - which was where the British and Newfoundlanders were stationed. – photograph from 2011)

November 26 would see what perhaps was to be the nadir of the Newfoundland Battalion’s fortunes at Gallipoli; there was to be a freak rain, snow and ice-storm strike the Suvla Bay area and the subsequent floods had wreaked havoc amongst the forces of both sides. For several days, survival rather than the enemy was to be the priority.



(Right above: No-Man’s-Land at Suvla Bay as seen from the Newfoundland positions – from Provincial Archives)

(Right below: *An un-identified Newfoundland soldier in the trenches at Suvla Bay – from Provincial Archives*)

There were to be many casualties on both sides, some of them, surprised by the sudden inundation of their positions, fatalities who had drowned in their trenches – although no Newfoundlanders were to be among that number. Numerous, however, had been those afflicted by trench-foot and by frost-bite.



By this time the situation there had daily been becoming more and more untenable, thus on the night of December 19-20, the British had abandoned the entire area of *Suvla Bay* – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, to form a part of the rear-guard.

Some of the Battalion personnel had thereupon been evacuated to the nearby island of *Imbros*, some to *Lemnos*, further away, but in neither case was the respite to be of a long duration; the 1st Battalion would be transferred only two days later to the area of *Cape Helles*, on the western tip of the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right: *Cape Helles 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*)

The British, Indian and *Anzac* forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was also to serve at *Gallipoli* – had by now simply been marking time until a complete withdrawal of the *Peninsula* could be undertaken.

This final operation would take place on the night of January 8-9, the Newfoundland Battalion to furnish part of the British rear-guard on this second occasion also.



(Right: *'W' Beach at Cape Helles under shell-fire only days before the final British evacuation – from Illustration*)

****Lieutenant Owen Steele of St. John's, Newfoundland, is cited as having been the last soldier of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to step into the final small boat to sail from the Gallipoli Peninsula.***

(Right: *'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces in that January of 1916 and by the Newfoundlanders who were to be the last soldiers off the beach: Vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen. – photograph from 2011*)



Immediately after the British evacuation of the *Gallipoli Peninsula*, the Newfoundland unit had been ordered to the Egyptian port-city of *Alexandria* and beyond.

On January 14, the Australian Expeditionary Force Transport *Nestor* had arrived there with the 1st Battalion on board. The vessel was to sail just after mid-day on the 16th, on its way southwards down the Suez Canal to Port Suez where she had docked early on the morrow and where the Newfoundlanders had landed and marched to their encampment.

There they were to await further orders since, at the time, the subsequent destination of the British 29th Division had yet to be decided*.

**Bulgaria had entered the conflict on the side of the Central Powers, and Salonika was already becoming a theatre of war.*

(Right: The image of the Blue Funnel Line vessel *Nestor* is from the *Shipspotting.com* web-site. The vessel was launched and fitted in 1912-1913 and was to serve much of her commercial life until 1950 plying the routes between Britain and Australia. During the Great War she served mainly in the transport of Australian troops and was requisitioned again in 1940 for government service in the Second World War. In 1950 she was broken up.)



(Right: The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The men of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment were among the last to leave on two occasions, at both Suvla Bay and Cape Helles. – photograph taken from the battleship *Cornwallis* and published in *Illustration*)



After a two-month interim spent in the vicinity of Port Suez, the almost six-hundred officers and *other ranks* of the 1st Battalion were to board His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* at Port Tewfiq, on March 14 to begin the voyage back up through the *Suez Canal* en route to France.



(Right: *Port Tewfiq* at the south end of the *Suez Canal* just prior to the *Great War* – from a vintage post-card)

The Newfoundlanders would disembark eight days afterwards in the Mediterranean port-city of *Marseille*, on March 22.

Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train was to find its way to the small provincial town of *Pont-Rémy*, a thousand kilometres to the north of *Marseille*.



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

It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having inexcusably travelled unused in a separate wagon.

Having de-trained at the local station at two o'clock in the morning, the Newfoundlanders were now still to endure the long, dark march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

(Right: *A languid River Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy – photograph from 2010*)

It is doubtful if many of those tired soldiers were to pay much attention to the slow-moving stream flowing under the bridge which they had then traversed on their way from the station.

But some three months later *the Somme* was to have become a part of their history.

On April 13, the entire 1st Battalion had subsequently marched into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy - where it would be billeted, would receive re-enforcements from Scotland via Rouen and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.

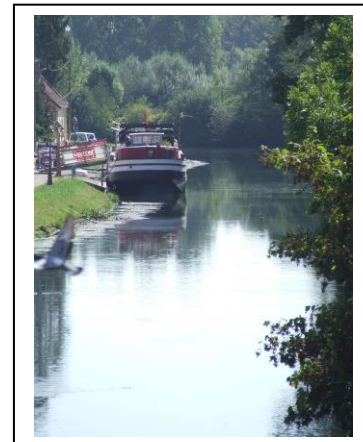
(Right below: *A part of the re-constructed trench system to be found in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)

Just days following the Newfoundland Battalion's arrival on the *Western Front*, two of the four Companies – 'A', and 'B' – were to take over several support positions from a British unit* before the entire Newfoundland unit had then been ordered to move further up for the first time into forward positions on April 22.

**It should be said that the Newfoundland Battalion and two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles who were serving at the time in the 2nd Lincolnshire Regiment Battalion, were then the only units at the Somme from outside the British Isles - true also on the day of the attack on July 1.*

(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 to the right in the photograph – photograph from 2009*)

Having then been withdrawn at the end of that April to the areas of Mailly-Maillet and Louvencourt where they would be based for the next two months, the Newfoundlanders had soon been preparing for the upcoming British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river, *the Somme*, that flowed – and still does so today – through the region.



(Preceding page: *Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery Number 2 in the Newfoundland Memorial Park* – photograph from 2009(?))

If there is one name and date in Newfoundland history which is etched in the collective once-national memory, it is that of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1 of 1916; and if any numbers are remembered, they are those of the eight-hundred who went *over the top* in the third wave of the attack on that morning, and of the sixty-eight unwounded present at muster some twenty-four hours later*.

**Perhaps ironically, the majority of the Battalion's casualties was to be incurred during the advance from the third line of British trenches to the first line from where the attack proper was to be made, and while struggling through British wire laid to protect the British positions from any German attack.*

(Right: *A grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland dead awaiting burial after Beaumont-Hamel – from...?*)



There are other numbers of course: the fifty-seven thousand British casualties incurred in four hours on that same morning of which nineteen-thousand were recorded as having been...*killed in action...or...died of wounds.*

It was to be the greatest disaster ever in the annals of the British Army...and, perhaps just as depressing, the carnage of the...*First Battle of the Somme...*was to continue for four and a half months.

(Right: *Beaumont-Hamel is a commune, not a village.* – photographs from 2010 & 2015)

In fact, Beaumont-Hamel was a commune – it still exists today – at the time comprising two communities: Beaumont, a village on the German side of the lines, and Hamel which was behind those of the British. No-Man's-Land, on which the Newfoundland Memorial Park lies partially today, was on land that separated Beaumont from Hamel.



After the events of the morning of July 1, 1916, such had then been the dire condition of the attacking British forces that it had been feared that any German counter-assault might well annihilate the shattered survivors of the British Expeditionary Force on *the Somme*.

The few remnants of the Newfoundland Battalion – and of the other depleted British units – had thus remained in the trenches perhaps fearing the worst, and at night searching for the wounded and burying the dead. It was to be July 6 before the Newfoundlanders were to be relieved from the forward area and to be ordered withdrawn to Englebelmer.

There were then a further two days before the unit had marched further again to the rear area and to billets in the village of Mailly-Maillet.

(Right: *The re-constructed village of Mailly-Maillet – the French Monument aux Morts in the foreground - is twinned with the community of Torbay, St. John’s East. – photograph from 2009*)



There at Mailly-Maillet on July 11, a draft of one-hundred twenty-seven re-enforcements – a second source cites one-hundred thirty – had reported...to duty. They had been the first to arrive following the events at Beaumont-Hamel but even with this additional man-power, the Regimental War Diary records that on the 14th of July, 1916, the 1st Battalion was still to number only...11 officers and 260 rifles...after the holocaust of Beaumont-Hamel, just one-quarter of establishment battalion strength.

Of course, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had not been the only unit in the British Army to have incurred horrific losses on July 1, 1916, even though it had indeed been one of the most devastated. But even with its depleted numbers, the Battalion was needed and, after that first re-enforcement, it had almost immediately again been ordered to man the trenches of the front line: as of that July 14, undermanned as seen above, the Newfoundlanders began another tour in the trenches where...we were shelled heavily by enemy’s 5.9 howitzers and a good deal of damage was done to the trenches (excerpt from the 1st Battalion War Diary).

A second re-enforcement draft from Rouen had then arrived days later, on July 21, while the Newfoundland Battalion was at Acheux and then, only three days afterwards – at the very time day that the Prime Minister of Newfoundland had visited the unit – a third draft of sixty other ranks had arrived in Beauval and reported...to duty.



(Right above: *The entrance to ‘A’ Company’s quarters – obviously renovated since that time – sunk in the ramparts of the city of Ypres, when the Newfoundland Battalion was posted there in 1916 – photograph from 2010*)

(Right: *The same re-constructed ramparts as shown above, viewed from just outside the city and the far side of the moat which still partially surrounds it – image from 2010*)



On July 27-28 of 1916, the Newfoundland Battalion - still under establishment battalion strength at only five-hundred fifty-four strong – maybe even fewer - even after still further re-enforcement – would move north and enter the *Kingdom of Belgium* for the first time.

The unit had been ordered to the *Ypres Salient*, one of the most dangerous pieces of real estate on the entire *Western Front*, there to continue to re-enforce and to re-organize after the ordeal of Beaumont-Hamel.

(continued)

(Right: *Canadian trenches in Sanctuary Wood, not far removed from the Newfoundland Battalion's positions during August and September of 1916 – photograph from 2010*)



The Salient – close to the front lines for almost the entire fifty-two month conflict - was to be relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders' posting there; yet they nonetheless would incur casualties, a number – fifteen? - of them fatal.

And it was to be there in *the Salient* in the sector of a place called *Railway Wood*, that the Newfoundland Battalion would soon be serving after its transfer from France.



(Right: *Railway Wood, the Newfoundland positions at the time, almost a century later – a monument to the twelve Royal Engineers buried alive there may just be perceived on the periphery of the trees – photograph from 2014*)

(Right: *The already-battered city of Ypres seen here towards the end of the year 1915 – and some eight months before the Newfoundlanders were to be posted there for the first time – from a vintage post-card*)



On October 8, 1916, after having served in Belgium for some ten weeks, the Newfoundland Battalion had been ordered to return southwards.

The unit was thereupon to be transported by train back into France, back into the area of the...*First Battle of – the Somme*.

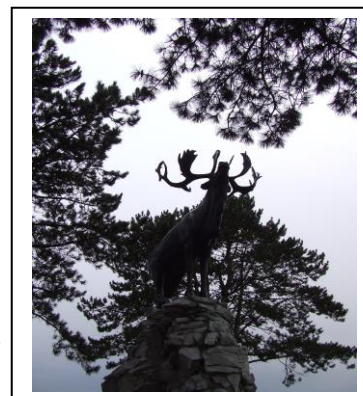


Just four days after unit's return to France from Belgium, on October 12 of 1916, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had again been ordered to take to the offensive; it was at a place called Gueudecourt, the vestiges of a village some dozen or so kilometres to the south-east of Beaumont-Hamel.

(Right above: *This is the ground over which the 1st Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some few managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon. – photograph from 2007*)

The encounter was to prove to be another ill-conceived and costly affair – two hundred thirty-nine casualties all told - for little gain.

(Right: *The Caribou at Gueudecourt stands at the furthest point of the Newfoundland Battalion's advance of October 12, 1916. – photograph from 2012*)



The Newfoundland Battalion was not then to be directly involved in any further concerted infantry action in the immediate area of Gueudecourt although, on October 18, it had furnished two-hundred fifty men to act as stretcher-bearers in an attack undertaken by troops of two British regiments, the Hampshires and the Worcestershires, of the 88th Infantry Brigade of which, of course, the Newfoundland unit was a battalion.



(Right above: *Stretcher-bearers not only shared the dangers of the battle-field with their arms-bearing comrades, but they often spent a longer period of time exposed to those same perils. This photograph was likely taken during First Somme. – from Illustration*)

On October 30, the Newfoundland unit had eventually retired to rear positions from the Gueudecourt area. It had been serving continuously in front-line and support positions for three weeks less a day.



The Newfoundlanders were now to spend two weeks retired to the area of Ville-sous-Corbie, re-enforcing and reorganizing. It was not to be until November 15 that the Battalion had started to wend its way back to the front lines.

(Right above: *A typical British Army Camp during rather inclement winter conditions somewhere on the Continent – from a vintage post-card*)

Back at *the Front* the Newfoundland unit continued its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties, almost all likely due to enemy artillery – during the late fall and early winter. It was to be a period interrupted only by another several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas season, encamped well behind the lines and in close proximity to the city of Amiens.

The parent unit had therefore begun to retire in anticipation thereof once again from *the Front* on December 8, although a goodly number of its personnel, two-hundred-sixty *other ranks* - more than fifty per cent of its strength at the time - was to be seconded on December 11 for several days' work at Carnoy and at Fricourt.

And as recorded in an earlier paragraph, it was on that Christmas Day that Private Morey and his re-enforcement draft from the Infantry Depot at Rouen reported...*to duty*...with the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment.

* * * * *

The festivities of the day – the aforesaid turkey dinner washed down with...*real English ale*...- having been completed, it was not to be until a further sixteen days had passed that on January 11 the Newfoundland Battalion would be ordered out of *Corps Reserve* and from its lodgings at *Camps en Amienois* to make its way on foot to the town of Airaines.

(continued)

From the railway station there the unit then entrained for the small town of Corbie where it thereupon took over billets which it already occupied for a short period only two months before. Days later again the Battalion continued its progress, once again on foot, back up to the forward area and to...*active service*.

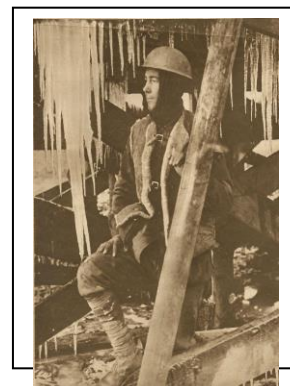
That recent six-week Christmas respite spent far to the rear by now a thing of the past, the Newfoundlanders were to *officially* return to...*active service*...on January 23, although they apparently had already returned to the trenches by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatalities – of 1917.

It was by then the beginning of the winter period. As had been and was to be the case of all the winter periods of the *Great War* – that of 1916-1917 would be a time of relative calm, although cold and uncomfortable – there was to be a shortage of fuel and many other things - for most of the combatants of both sides.

It would also be a time of sickness, and the medical facilities were to be kept busy, particularly, so it seems - from at least Canadian medical documentation - with thousands of cases of dental work.

This period also provided the opportunity to undergo training and familiarization with the new practices and the recent weaponry of war; in the case of the Newfoundland Battalion these exercises were at least partially undertaken from February 4 to 18 in the vicinity of the communities of Carnoy and Coisy.

(Right: A soldier of the Lancashire Fusiliers, his unit to be relieved by the Newfoundlanders on March 1, enjoys his cigarette in the cold of the trenches at Sully-Saillisel during the winter of 1916-1917. – from *Illustration*)



On February 18 the 1st Battalion would begin a five-day trek back from there to the forward area where it was to go back into the firing-line on February 23 to relieve a unit of the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers. It would be at a place called Sully-Saillisel and the reception offered by the Germans was both lively – and deadly: after only two days the Battalion had incurred four dead, nine wounded and three gassed without there having been any infantry action. The Newfoundlanders were to be withdrawn on February 25...to return just three days later.



The Battalion were by then carrying with it orders for a...*bombing raid*...on the enemy positions at Sully-Saillisel...to be carried out on March 1.

(Right above: *The fighting during the period of the Battalion's posting to Sully-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(?))

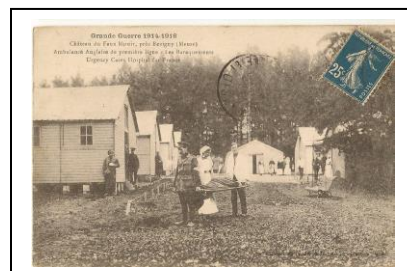
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The aforesaid planned raid of the German positions at Sailly-Saillisel was to go ahead a little later than scheduled as it appears that the enemy had also made plans. The reciprocal infantry action(s) had thus continued for the better part of two days, March 2 and 3.

In fact, that sharp engagement at Sailly-Saillisel was to be the sole infantry activity *directly* involving the Newfoundland unit during the entire period from Gueudecourt in mid-October, 1916, until Monchy-le-Preux in mid-April of 1917. The action would also serve to bring this episode in the Newfoundlanders' War – in the area of *the Somme* - to a close.

* * * * *

Private Morey was not, however, to serve during that encounter at Sailly-Saillisel. Although surely having been in the trenches in the vicinity ever since that afore-mentioned Christmas period, on February 26 he was admitted into the 14th Corps Rest Station with a P.U.O. – a *Pain of Unknown Origin*. Some eight days later he reported back...*to duty...*, likely as one of the draft of a single officer and thirty-one *other ranks* which arrived at the Newfoundland camp (see below) established to the rear of the front lines, in the area of Meaulté on that day.



(Right above: A *British Field Ambulance*, more permanent than some nearer to the Front, in north-eastern France at a later date in the War: These units were often also responsible for the Corps Rest Stations of which this photograph may well have been one. – from a vintage post-card)



That officer and thirty-one *other ranks* including Private Morey from ~~from KODEN~~ were not the only arrivals of that day. The Regimental Band had travelled from the Regimental Depot in Scotland to be with 1st Battalion for the following three weeks.

(Right above: *Some six months later, in September of 1917 – and led by Sable Chief, the Regimental Mascot – the Regimental Band is seen on parade at the Chelsea Barracks, London.* – photograph from *Provincial Archives*)

* * * * *

After the confrontation at Sailly-Saillisel, the Newfoundland Battalion had been ordered retired to the rear by train, to an encampment at Meaulté. There, and later at *Camps-en-Amienois* – even further behind the lines and where the unit had spent the preceding Christmas period – the 1st Battalion would spend almost the entire remainder of the month.

After Sailly-Saillisel the month of March would be a quiet time for the Newfoundlanders; having departed from the trenches, they were now to spend their time near those communities of Meaulté and Camps-en-Amienois re-enforcing, re-organizing, and in training for upcoming events.

(Right: *The Prime Minister of Newfoundland visiting the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, encamped at Meaulté – from *The War Illustrated**)



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

(Right below: *The remnants of the Grande Place in Arras at the time of the Great War, in early 1916 – from *Illustration**)



On March 29, the Newfoundlanders had commenced making their way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east, towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond, the march to finish amid the rubble of the village of Monchy-le-Preux.

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 major French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties – just over four thousand - this attack was to be the most expensive operation of the *Great War* for the British, its only positive episode to be the Canadian assault of *Vimy Ridge* on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday, 1917.



(Right above: *The Canadian National Memorial which has stood atop Vimy Ridge since its inauguration in 1936 – photograph from 2010*)

And while the British campaign would prove an overall disappointment, the French *Bataille du Chemin des Dames* was to be yet a further disaster.



(Right: *The village of Monchy-le-Preux as seen in 1917, from the western, 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*)

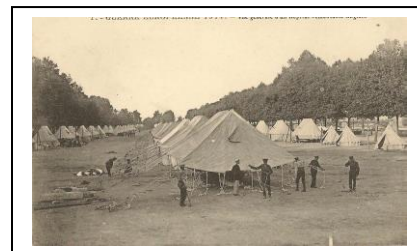
The 1st Battalion was to play its part during the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at the place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which would finish ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After Beaumont-Hamel, the ineptly-planned action at Monchy-le-Preux had proved to be the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' war: four-hundred eighty-seven casualties all told on April 14 alone*.



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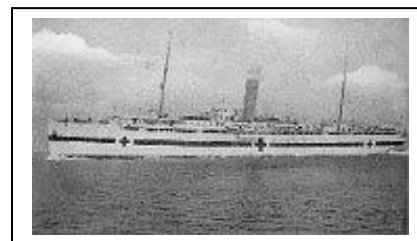
(Preceding page: *The Caribou at Monchy-le-Preux stands atop the vestiges of a German strongpoint in the centre of the re-constructed community. – photograph from 2009(?)*

It was during the fighting of April 14 at Monchy-le-Preux that Private Morey was wounded: he incurred gun-shot injuries to his left thigh and to both arms. He was evacuated from the field and by the following day had been admitted into the 8th Casualty Clearing Station in the small community of Agnez-les-Duisans to the north-west of Arras. Two days later again he was to be transferred to the 6th British Red Cross Hospital at the coastal town of Étaples.



(Right above: *A British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and when the necessity arose – being established somewhere in France during the early years of the War – from a vintage post-card*)

At Étaples it was soon decided that Private Morey should be sent back to the United Kingdom for further treatment. Thus it was on April 20, three days later, that he crossed the Channel on board His Majesty' Hospital Ship *Panama* and upon arrival in England, was transported to the 3rd London General Hospital in the Borough of Wandsworth. He was admitted there on April 21.



(Right above: *The image of 'Panama' clad in her war-time hospital-ship garb is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. A passenger and cargo ship built in 1902 for the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, in 1915 she was requisitioned and converted for use as a hospital ship capable of the accommodation of four-hundred eighty-four sick and wounded. Having served as such from July of 1915 until November of 1919 she was soon thereafter bought by the Royal Navy to continue her role as a hospital ship which she did for the following twenty-eight years, a period during which, of course, the Second World War was fought.*)

(Right: *The main building of what was to become the 3rd London General Hospital during the Great War had originally been opened, on July 1st of 1859, as a home for the orphaned daughters of British soldiers, sailors and marines. – photograph from 2010*)



(Right adjacent: *A party of Newfoundland patients dressed in hospital uniform but otherwise unfortunately unidentified, is seen here convalescing in the grounds of the 3rd London General Hospital at Wandsworth – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



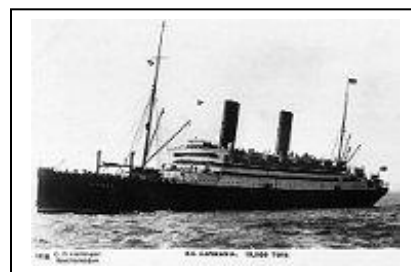
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The following is an excerpt from Private Morey's medical documentation while he was hospitalized at Wandsworth: *GSW (gun-shot wound) left wrist, perforating; GSW left thigh, perforating sciatic nerve, palsy; GSW left foot, fracture of phalanges; May 4, operation to remove pus from middle finger.*

At some time, the date apparently unrecorded, Private Morey was transferred to the *Weir Hospital* (also known as the *Kensington Red Cross Hospital*) in nearby Balham – maybe for the operation of May 4 as the *Weir Hospital* was by that time reputed for its expertise. However, on July 17, he was re-admitted into the 3rd LGH where, on August 16, it was decided that he was...*unfit for further service.*

It was thereupon recommended that he be repatriated home to Newfoundland.

Discharged on or about August 24, Private Morey embarked* on or about August 26 – maybe as late as the 28th, according to a second source - for passage from Liverpool to Halifax*, Nova Scotia. He apparently arrived in Newfoundland from there on September 13.



**Perhaps it was on Carmania (shown at right) which sailed from Liverpool on August 31 to dock in Halifax on September 9. – photograph from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site*

Almost immediately upon his return home, on September 17 Private Morey was returned to hospital, to the General Hospital in St. John's where he was to remain for almost two months. He was then discharged from there and sent on the same November 7 to the *Military & Naval Convalescent Hospital* on Waterford Bridge Road in St. John's.

Released from there on December 19, he thereupon reported two days later to the Regimental Depot in the capital city for further orders. It was then to be yet a further two weeks before, on January 2 of 1918, a Medical Board deemed him to be...*medically unfit...for further service.*

When he was finally released from service does not seem to be clear.

Having apparently expressed his future intention to reside in the community of Springdale, Private Morey returned home during that winter of 1918. On March 21, Doctor Killan(?) of the *International Grenfell Association* who was attending him, reported that his foot had turned black and hard and was swollen. No diagnosis of his condition appears to be available among his documents.

The son of John Thomas Morey (deceased in 1921 – confirmation required) and of Mary Ann Morey (née *Wellman**, deceased of 'inflammation' on February 19, 1903), he was also brother to Adolphus, Newfoundland Naval Reserve, Number 1743x; Sydney, Newfoundland Regiment, Number 4328**; John-Robert, American Army; Roland, refused enlistment twice; George, refused enlistment thrice; Phillip, Newfoundland Forestry Corps, Number 8209***; Henry-Gordon; William-Henry; Charles-William and to Martha, to whom he had allotted a daily sixty cents from his pay*.

(continued)

****The couple had been married on Sunday Cove Island on December 27 (St. Stephen's Day) of 1875.***

Lemuel Morey* was reported as having...*died in hospital...of pneumonia...*, on Pilley's Island on June 23, 1918. Date of birth in Sunday Cove Island, August 16 of 1892 (from the Newfoundland Birth Register) – although he had enlisted at the declared age of twenty years and one month.

He was still being referred to as Private Morey and also as ex-Private Morey on official documents several months following his discharge in January of 1918.

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



* * * * *

*****Sydney Morey enlisted on January 25, 1918, and was promoted to the rank of lance corporal on June 10 of that year. He was granted a discharge on 'compassionate grounds*' and was then 'struck off strength' on November 2, 1918.***

As seen above four Morey brothers were to serve with His Majesty's Forces and one with the Americans, thus leaving his widowed father by himself. Private Morey was granted three months leave without pay during that Autumn prior to his ultimate requested discharge.

******Philip Morey enlisted on April 28 of 1917, to attest four days later on May 2. He was to sail for overseas service in Scotland, likely having left Newfoundland in either June or August of that year. The only report of that period is of an a disturbance in the cook-house at Dunkeld in which Private Morey, Forester, participated and for which he was reprimanded.***

He had returned to Newfoundland by April 1 of 1919 and was discharged as being medically unfit two days later, on April 3.

* * * * *

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 30, 2023.