



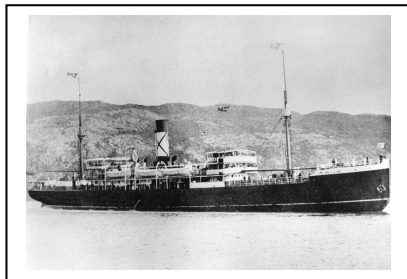
Lance Corporal William Noseworthy (Regimental Number 206) is *believed to be buried** in Cement House Cemetery: Grave reference, Special Memorial A. 2.

**This is inscribed on the gravestone.*

His occupations previous to military service variously recorded as those of *teamster, truckman* and *longshoreman* employed for a weekly wage of \$7.50, William Noseworthy enlisted on September 3 of 1914 at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland – engaged at the private soldier's daily rate of \$1.10 (including a daily ten-cent field allowance). He was a recruit of the First Draft.

Following that enlistment it was not until some four weeks later, on September 29 at the same location, that he was to undergo a medical examination, a procedure which found him to be...*fit for foreign service*.

Two days subsequent to that medical examination, Private Noseworthy attested on October 1 before then embarking two days later again with the others of *The First Five Hundred*, on October 3, onto the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* awaiting in St. John's Harbour.



The ship sailed on the morrow to its rendezvous off the south coast of the Island where she was to join the convoy transporting the 1st Canadian Division across the Atlantic.

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

In the United Kingdom Private Noseworthy trained with the Newfoundland contingent: firstly in southern England; then in Scotland at Fort George – on the Moray Firth close to Inverness; at Edinburgh Castle – where it provided the first garrison from outside the British Isles; and later again at the tented *Stobs Camp* near the town of Hawick to the south-east of Edinburgh.

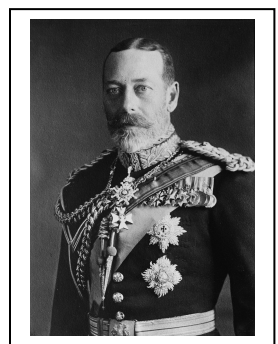


(Right above: *Fort George, constructed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, still serves the British Army to this day. – photograph from 2011*)

(Right: *The Newfoundland Regiment parades at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915. – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', were then sent south to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot; meanwhile the two junior Companies, the later-arrived 'E' and 'F*', were sent to Scotland's west coast, to Ayr, where they were to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.



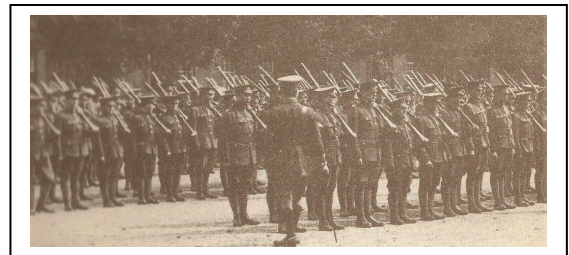
(Right: *George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India – photograph from Bain News Services via Wikipedia*)

(continued)

****On July 10, 1915, 'F' Company had arrived at Stobs Camp from Newfoundland, its personnel raising the numbers of the unit to battalion establishment strength, and thus permitting it to be ordered to active service. The 1st Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, comprising those four Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', was thereupon attached to the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.***

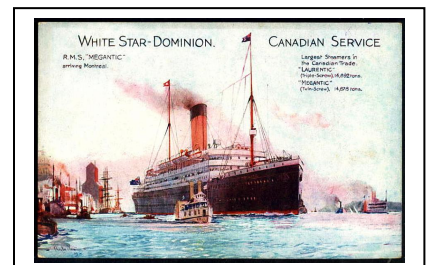
It had then been during that period spent at Aldershot that Private Noseworthy of 'A' Company – he was not alone in doing so - had been prevailed upon, he on August 14, to re-enlist for the duration of the war*.

****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.***



(Right above: Some of the men of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915 – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)

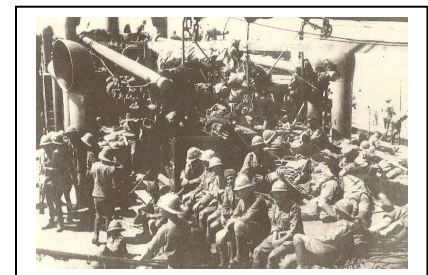
(Right: The image of Megantic, in peace-time a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.)



On August 20, 1915, Private Noseworthy and his comrades-in-arms 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 where, a month later – having spent two weeks billeted in British barracks in the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, he disembarked with the 1st Battalion at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right: Kangaroo Beach, where the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, 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: 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)

(continued)

The *Gallipoli Campaign* was to be a debacle: Flies, dust, disease, frost-bite, floods – and 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 it would 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 above: *A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Noseworthy was to serve in the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011*)

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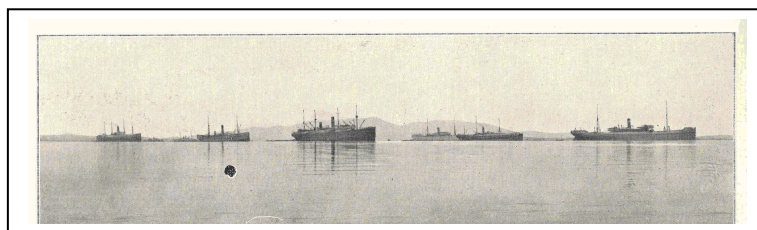
On December 8, 1915, Private Noseworthy was evacuated to the 54th Casualty Clearing Station at *Suvla Bay*, and thereupon diagnosed as suffering from jaundice; it would then appear that he was transferred on the morrow, December 9, *from* there – but *to* where has seemingly not been recorded. Logically it would have been for further treatment as the 54th CCS at *Suvla Bay* was operating in a very exposed position and, what is more, the whole area was to be abandoned in ten days' time.

He was likely sent to the area of *Mudros Bay*, on the Greek island of Lemnos, where the French and British and Empire (*Commonwealth*) force had not only a base but multiple medical facilities. What is more, there are later-dated documents which show that, by December 30, Private Noseworthy had been admitted there into the Lowland Convalescence Depot.



(Right above: *Portianos Military Cemetery on the Greek island of Lemnos wherein lie three Newfoundlanders, two soldiers and a sailor who died in service during the Great War. – photograph from 2011*)

(Right: *Mudros Bay and its minuscule harbour in the summer and fall of the year 1915 was full of the ships of the Allied nations, there to nurture the Gallipoli Campaign. – image from Illustration*)



(Right: *The same Mudros Bay – devoid of any shipping - almost a century later – photograph from 2011*)

The documentation for Private Noseworthy does not appear to include the date of his eventual discharge from medical care, but the majority of military personnel released from hospital was sent to the Sidi Bishr Base Depot at Alexandria.

He is next recorded as having embarked on March 2 – likely from Port Saïd at the northern end of the Suez Canal - to join the British Expeditionary Force in France.

If this is so, he then would have disembarked in the French Mediterranean port-city of Marseilles some eight days later, on or about March 10. He was likely then despatched to the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot in the vicinity of Rouen on the Atlantic coast to await the arrival of a contingent destined for the 1st Battalion – the unit was at the time still in Egypt awaiting orders and an eventual transfer to the Western Front (see below).



Eventually it would be a re-enforcement draft from Scotland via Rouen with which he would rendezvous with the parent unit.

(Right above: *Port Saïd at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)



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



Thus it was that, about one month later, on April 15, a re-enforcement draft, most of its number of two-hundred eleven *other ranks* accompanied by two officers having arrived in Rouen from Ayr, was sent from Rouen to report *to duty* with the Newfoundland Battalion, the unit by then already billeted in the village of Englebelmer some three kilometres behind the lines of the *Western Front*.

Private Noseworthy is documented as being among that number, a contingent which included not only those from Ayr, but also others from the Middle East such as he, whose departure from there had either been delayed or otherwise disrupted.

* * * * *

Only days after Private Noseworthy’s presumed departure to *Mudros Bay*, on the night of December 19-20, the British were to abandon *Suvla Bay* – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, were to form a part of the rear-guard.

Some of the Battalion personnel was to be evacuated to the nearby island of Imbros, and some to Lemnos, further away, but in neither case would the respite be of a long duration; the 1st Battalion had been 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 in the picture. – photograph from 2011*)



The British and the Anzac forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps were also to serve at Gallipoli – had now been only marking time until a complete withdrawal of the Peninsula would be undertaken. This operation had taken place on the night of January 8-9, and the Newfoundland Battalion was to provide some of the rear-guard for this second withdrawal as well*.



(Right above: 'W' Beach at Cape Helles as it was 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.*

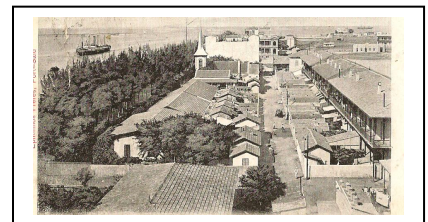


(Right: The same 'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces and by the Newfoundlanders who were the last soldiers off the beach: vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen. – photograph from 2011)

(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* from *Illustration*)



After the British evacuation of the entire *Gallipoli Peninsula* in January of 1916, the 1st Battalion had been sent to Alexandria, having arrived there on the 15th of that month. The Newfoundlanders were thence to be immediately transferred southward to Suez, one of the ports at the southern end of the canal which bears the same name, there to await further orders as, at the time, the subsequent destination of the Battalion's 29th Division had not yet been decided*.



**Bulgaria had entered the conflict on the side of the Central Powers and Salonika was soon to become a theatre of war.*

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

On March 14, the Newfoundlanders had taken ship through Port Tewfiq, also at the southern end of the *Suez Canal*, for the French port of Marseilles, and had disembarked there on March 22, en route to the *Western Front*.

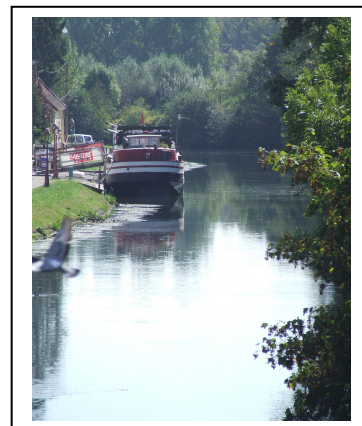
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Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train would arrive at the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy, a thousand kilometres to the north of Marseilles. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having travelled unused in a separate wagon. De-training at the local station at two in the morning, the Newfoundlanders still were to have a long march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

(Right: *The 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 over which they had marched on their way from the station. But some three months later, *the Somme* would have become a part of their history.

It was to be there, in the French *Département de la Somme*, on April 15, 1916 – only two days after the arrival there on April 13 of the parent unit - that Private Noseworthy and his re-enforcement draft from Rouen were to report *to duty* with the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment in the village of Englebelmer.



* * * * *

The days following Private Noseworthy's return to his battalion had been taken up with work in the nearby communication trenches. Only days later again, two Companies – 'A' and 'B', and thus Private Noseworthy – had taken over some support positions from a British unit* before the entire Newfoundland unit moved 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 the only units at the Somme from outside the British Isles. This was also true on the day of the attack on July 1.*

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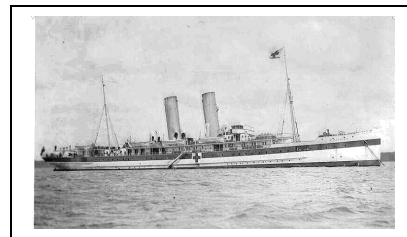
On April 29, while the 1st Battalion was undertaking that tour in the trenches, Private Noseworthy was admitted into the 88th Field Ambulance suffering from scabies; he was then discharged *to duty* on May 12. Eight days later, on May 20, he was again evacuated to the 88th FA, then forwarded on that same date to the 4th Casualty Clearing Station at Lillers with the well-known PUO (*Pain of Unknown Origin*).

(Right above: *A British field ambulance, of a more permanent nature than some – from a vintage post-card*)



(continued)

From the 4th CCS Private Noseworthy was transferred to the 12th General Hospital in Rouen on May 22nd. There it was decided to return him for further treatment to the United Kingdom. He was thereupon placed on board His Majesty's Hospital Ship *St. Patrick* on June 7 for the journey back across the English Channel.



(Right above: *The image of HM Hospital Ship St. Patrick is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. The vessel survived the Great War, only to catch fire in 1929 and to be destroyed.*)

On the following day again, June 8, Private Noseworthy was admitted into the 3rd London General Hospital in the Borough of Wandsworth for attention to what by then had been diagnosed as an inner-ear inflammation.

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



(Right below: *A group of Newfoundland patients, most of them unfortunately unidentified, with some of the staff at Wandsworth: There is a Joseph, apparently the fourth from the right in the second row. – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



Private Noseworthy was to remain at Wandsworth under medical care until July 4, on which date he was granted the customary ten-day furlough - in his case until July 13 - a period of leave accorded to military personnel upon release from hospital. He was then subsequently posted to 'E' Company at the Regimental Depot in Scotland where he reported *to duty* on July 15.

Once at Ayr he would soon require more medical attention, although on this occasion for another problem – venereal in nature. The subsequent course of treatment in four different hospitals lasted intermittently from that September 9 until January of 1917 – and there was to be no furlough granted afterwards.

The Regimental Depot had been established during the late summer of 1915 in the Royal Borough of Ayr on the west coast of Scotland to serve as a base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion. It was from there – since November of 1915 up until January of 1918 – that the new-comers from home were to be despatched in drafts, at first to *Gallipoli* and later to the *Western Front*, to bolster the four fighting companies of the 1st Battalion.



(continued)

(Preceding page: *An aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr, where the ‘other ranks’ were to be quartered, is to the left of the River Ayr, and the Royal Borough, where lived the officers, is to the right. – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

On February 25 of 1917 the 22nd Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr - Private Noseworthy one of its number – having travelled south by train, embarked through the English south-coast port of Southampton, to land in the Norman capital of Rouen on the following day.



The detachment then was directed to the nearby British Expeditionary Force Base Depot, there to spend time in final training and organizing* before leaving to rendezvous with the parent unit.

(Right above: *British troops disembark at Rouen en route to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

**Apparently the standard length of time for this final training was 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 as the Bull Rings.*

On April 11 Private Noseworthy was reported as being back in hospital once more, in the 1st Stationary Hospital in Rouen for a common problem diagnosed simply as NYD (*Not Yet Determined*). His documents seem not to include any further report of the condition, but it was to be more than a month – the date May 22 – before he was discharged *to duty* at the Base Depot in Rouen. He was then to remain there for a further three weeks.

May of 1917 had been a period when the Newfoundlanders were to be ordered hither and thither on the *Arras Front*, in and out of the trenches. Apart from the ever-present artillery duelling, there appears to have been little infantry activity undertaken by the unit – apart from the marching. At the beginning of June, the 1st Battalion retired from the forward area to Bonneville and was to spend its time re-enforcing, re-organizing and training for the upcoming British offensive of the summer – and as it transpired, of the autumn as well.



(Right above: *Newfoundland troops on the march in the community of Berneville – not Bonneville - in early May, perhaps the 7th, of 1917 – from The War Illustrated*)

It was during this latter period, on June 19 of 1917, while the 1st Battalion was at Bonneville, that Private Noseworthy re-joined his unit. He was one of the draft of one-hundred eighteen *other ranks* to report *to duty* on that date.

* * * * *

Since Private Noseworthy's departure for medical attention on April 29 of 1916, the 1st Battalion had served in three of the major confrontations of the Newfoundlanders' war.

The first of these was to come about only some two months afterwards, and was to be a small part of the larger offensive for which it had been decided by the High Command back in the earlier part of the year to order the Newfoundland Battalion's British 29th Division back from the Middle East to the *Western Front*.

For the remainder of the spring of 1916, the Newfoundlanders were to be preparing for the British campaign of that upcoming summer, the battles to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river flowing through the region, and over which the parent unit of the 1st Battalion had marched only some few weeks previously at Pont-Rémy, *the Somme*.



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

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 sustained while advancing 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: 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)



(Right: *Beaumont-Hamel* is a commune, not a village (see below). – 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.



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 would prove to be the biggest disaster ever in the annals of the British Army...and, perhaps worse, it was to continue for the next four and a half months.

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 a German counter-assault might well annihilate what had managed to survive 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. It had then been a further two days before the unit had marched to Mailly-Maillet.



(Right above: *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 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 having arrived, the Regimental War Diary records that on the 14th of July, 1916, the 1st Battalion still numbered only...*11 officers and 260 rifles*...after the holocaust of Beaumont-Hamel, just one-quarter of establishment battalion strength.

On July 27-28 of 1916, the 1st Battalion - still under battalion strength at only five-hundred fifty-four strong, even after further re-enforcement – had moved north and entered into Belgium for the first time. It 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.



(Right above: *The entrance to 'A' Company's quarters – obviously renovated since that time - in the ramparts of the city of Ypres when it was posted there in 1916 – photograph from 2010*)

(Right: *An aerial view of Ypres, taken towards the end of 1916: it is described as the 'Ville morte'. – from Illustration*)

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



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Then on October 8, after having served in Belgium for some ten weeks, the 1st Battalion had been ordered to return south, back into France and back into the area of – and the battle of – *the Somme*.

Four days after its return to France, on October 12, 1916, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had again been ordered to the offensive at a place called Gueudecourt, the vestiges of a village some dozen or so kilometres to the south-east of Beaumont-Hamel.

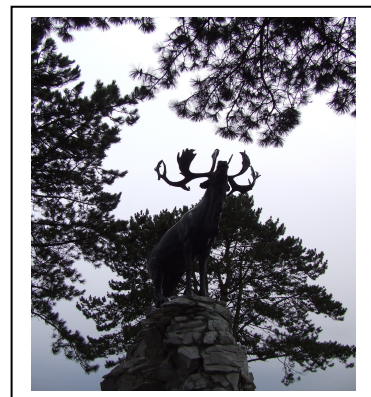
The encounter had proved to be another costly affair – two hundred and thirty-nine casualties all told - for little gain.

(Right: *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*)

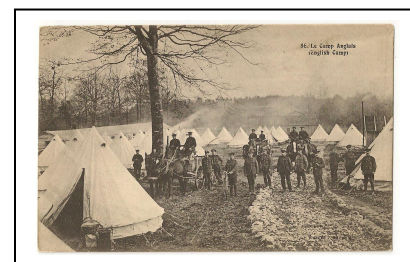


After Gueudecourt, the Newfoundland Battalion was to continue its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties – during the late fall and early winter, a period to be broken only by the several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas period. It was a time during which the Regimental personnel was to be encamped well behind the lines and in close proximity to the city of Amiens.

(Right: *The Caribou at Gueudecourt stands at the furthest point of the 1st Battalion's advance of October 12, 1916. – photograph from 2012*)



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



After that welcome six-week Christmas respite spent in *Corps Reserve* well to the rear, the Newfoundlanders were to *officially* return to *active service* on January 23, although they had apparently already returned to the trenches by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917.

The only infantry activity directly involving the 1st Battalion during that entire period – from the action at Gueudecourt in mid-October of 1916, until Monchy-le-Preux in April of 1917 – was to be the sharp engagement at Saily-Saillisel at the end of February and beginning of March, an action which would bring this episode in the Newfoundlanders' War – in the area of *the Somme* - to a close.



(continued)

(Preceding page: *The fighting during the time of the Battalion's posting to Sailly-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(?))

After Sailly-Saillisel the month of March was to be a quiet time for the Newfoundlanders; having departed from the trenches, they had now spent their time near the communities of Meaulté and Camps-en-Amienois re-enforcing, re-organizing, and training for upcoming events. They even had had the pleasure of a visit from the Regimental Band, and also one from the Prime Minister of Newfoundland, Sir Edward Morris, the latter on March 17, St. Patrick's Day.



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

On March 29, the 1st Battalion had begun to make its way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east, towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond. The march was to finish amid the rubble of a village called Monchy-le-Preux.



(Right above: *The remnants of the Grande Place of the city of Arras in early 1916 after some eighteen months of bombardment – from Illustration*)

On April 9 the British Army had launched an offensive in the area to the north of *the Somme* battlefields; this was the so-called *Battle of Arras*, intended to support a French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties this attack was to be the most expensive operation of the *Great War* for the British, its only positive episode having been 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 on Vimy Ridge since 1936 – photograph from 2010*)

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

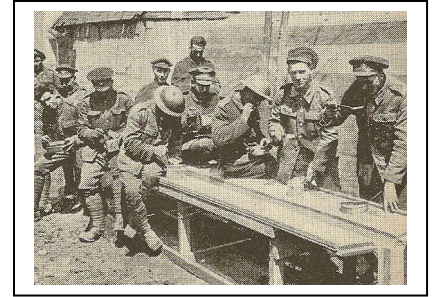


The 1st Battalion was to play its part during the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at a place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which would finish ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After *Beaumont-Hamel*, the ineptly-planned action at Monchy-le-Preux would prove 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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**It was also an action in which a DSO, an MC and eight MMs were won by a small group of nine men of the Battalion and one from the Essex Regiment .*

(Preceding page: The village of Monchy-le-Preux as seen today from the western – in 1917, the 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)



(Right: Newfoundland troops at ease just after the time of Monchy-le-Preux – from The War Illustrated)

The final action in which the Newfoundland Battalion was to be involved during the *Battle of Arras* would be the already-noted confrontation of April 23 at *Les Fosses Farm*. The engagement was in fact an element of a larger offensive undertaken at the time by units of the British 5th, 3rd and 1st Armies. It was apparently not to be a particularly successful venture, at least not in the area of the 1st Battalion, several of the adjacent units reporting having been driven back by German counter-attacks and accompanied by heavy losses.

Late on that same evening the Newfoundlanders had retired to the relative calm of Arras.

May of 1917 had then been a period when the Newfoundland unit was to be ordered hither and thither on the *Arras Front*, in and out of the trenches. Apart from the ever-present artillery duelling, there appears to have been little infantry activity undertaken by the unit – apart from the marching. At the beginning of June, the 1st Battalion retired from the forward area to Bonneville and was to spend its time re-enforcing, re-organizing and training for the upcoming British offensive of the summer – and as it transpired, of the autumn as well.

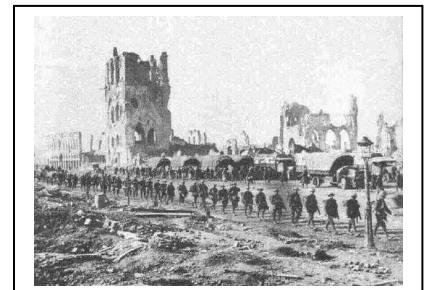


(Right above: Newfoundland troops on the march in the community of Berneville – not Bonneville - in early May, perhaps the 7th, of 1917 – from The War Illustrated)

It was also at this time, as seen on an earlier page, that Private Noseworthy, on June 19, would arrive to join the Battalion from Rouen as one of a re-enforcement draft of one-hundred other ranks.

* * * * *

The Newfoundlanders had then soon once again been moving north into Belgium – at the end of June - and once again into the area of Ypres – *the Salient*. This low-lying ground had been selected by the High Command to be the theatre of the British summer offensive of 1917.



(Right above: Troops arriving from the railway station in single file, march past the vestiges of the historic Cloth Hall and through the rubble of the medieval city centre of Ypres on their way to the front in the late summer or early autumn of 1917. – from Illustration)

Officially designated as the *Third Battle of Ypres*, the campaign was to come to be better known to history simply as *Passchendaele*, having adopted that name from a small village on a not-very high ridge to the north-east that later was to be cited as having been – *ostensibly* - one of the British Army's objectives.

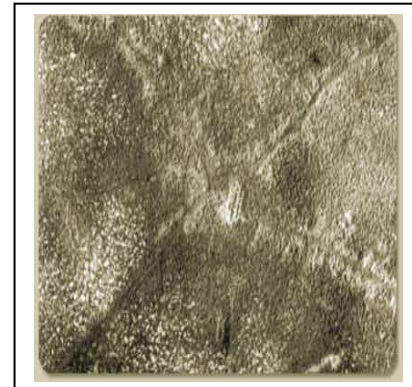


(Right above: *An unidentified – perhaps unidentifiable – part of the Passchendaele battlefield in the autumn of 1917 – from Illustration*)

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



The 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was to remain in Belgium until October 17, a small cog in the machinery of the British Army – as were to be by then the Australians, the New Zealanders and the Canadians – all of which had floundered their way across the sodden and shell-torn countryside of Flanders.



Notably the Newfoundland Battalion at *Passchendaele* was to fight in two major engagements: at the *Steenbeek* on August 16; and at the *Broembeek* on October 9. At the former it had incurred nine *killed in action*, ninety-three *wounded*, and one *missing in action*; at the *Broembeek* the cost had been higher: forty-eight *killed or died of wounds*, one-hundred thirty-two *wounded* and fifteen *missing in action*.

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

There being no evidence to the contrary, it must be assumed that Private Noseworthy played his anonymous role at the *Steenbeek*. Then a month and a day later, on September 17, he received a first promotion, to the rank of lance corporal.

(Right: *An otherwise innocuous-looking stream, the Broembeek overflowed its banks in the autumn of 1917, transforming its surrounds into a quagmire. – photograph from 2010*)



The son of Ambrose Noseworthy, sailor, fisherman and longshoreman, and of Elizabeth (known as *Eliza*) Noseworthy (née *Ryan*) of 78, King's Road in St. John's, he was also brother to Elizabeth, to Phillip-George, Mary-Ann, John-Henry and Edward-Charles.

(continued)

Lance Corporal Noseworthy was reported as having been *killed in action* on October 9, 1917, while serving with 'A' Company during the fighting at the *Broembeek**.



William Noseworthy had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty-one years: date of birth in St. John's, Newfoundland, August 7, 1893 (from Church of England Parish Records).

(The photograph of Private Noseworthy is from the Provincial Archives.)

**The bodies of #2226 Private W. Watts, of #206 Lance Corporal Noseworthy and of #2534 Private J. Mesh, all three killed in action at the Broembeek on October 9, 1917, had been brought in from where they at the time had been temporarily buried, to be re-interred in Cement House Cemetery. Subsequent fighting destroyed not only their graves but the graves of others and consequently many remnants were unidentifiable.*

Thus the inscription 'Believed to be Buried' on their gravestones.

Lance Corporal William Noseworthy was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



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 – February 12, 2023.