



Lieutenant* Norman Aubrey Outerbridge is buried in Dury Crucifix Cemetery – Grave reference III. A. 47.

**Officers who were eventually promoted from the ranks may be identified from their Regimental Number. Other officers who were not from the ranks received the King's Commission, or in the case of those in the Newfoundland Regiment, an Imperial Commission, and were not considered as enlisted. These officers thus had no Regimental Number allotted to them.*

And since officers did not enlist, they were not then required to re-enlist 'for the duration', even though, at the beginning, as a private, they had volunteered their services for only a limited time – twelve months.

(continued)

His occupation prior to military service recorded as...*being with Harvey & Co.*, Norman Aubrey Outerbridge received an Imperial Commission on April 18 of 1916, this confirmed by order of the Governor of Newfoundland, at the same time Commanding Officer of the Newfoundland Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Walter E. Davidson. At the same time he was also appointed to the rank of second lieutenant.

Some of Norman Outerbridge's youth appears to have been spent in the United Kingdom. He and his older brother Herbert went to school there, the 1901 Census showing them at the ages of eighteen and sixteen, boarding at nearby *Littlefield* while attending *Marlborough College* in the county of Wiltshire. He later is recorded as having visited family members both in the United States and Bermuda.

On December 22 he was married to Miss Mary Evaleyn (further spellings appear among the records, this one from her baptismal documentation) Shea of St. John's, the couple wedded in St. Joseph's Chapel, Cathedral Square, in the city. Four years later, in August of 1914 and only days after the *Declaration of War*, they returned to Newfoundland from England, landing in Botwood from Liverpool – further details appear not to be recorded.

It may well be that by mid-July of 1916, by which time he had received his Imperial Commission, Second Lieutenant Outerbridge was already in Scotland. It was at Ayr (see below) that his wife was to arrive, having travelled from New York in August, and it was also from Scotland at the end of that month that Second Lieutenant Outerbridge was to address a letter, from The Green Hotel at Kinross, close to Perth, to the *Regimental Pay & Record Office* on Victoria Street in London.



(Right: *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. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

Since the summer of 1916, the once-Royal Borough of Ayr on Scotland's west coast had been serving as the overseas base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment from where – as of November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 - re-enforcement drafts from home were to be despatched to bolster the 1st Battalion's numbers, at first to the Middle East and then later to the *Western Front*.



(Right above: *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*)

He was then in London by October 26, some two months later, where he penned a short note to the same office pertaining to his imminent transfer to the Continent in the following few days, thus allowing us to see that by then that Mary Evaleyn Outerbridge, at least temporarily, was no longer north of the border:

...In the event of my becoming a casualty will you kindly notify my wife – Mrs. N.A. Outerbridge, c/o Mrs. Hutton, 6 The Paragon, Bath.

(Right: London – in fact the City of Westminster – in the area of Marble Arch, in or about the year 1913, just prior to the Great War – from a vintage post-card)



On October 28, 1916, Second Lieutenant Outerbridge embarked in the United Kingdom, after that brief stop in London, for the short sea-voyage to the Continent. The Regimental War Diary notes the date of his reporting* to duty with the 1st Battalion as November 11, after a short posting to Étaples – possibly to one of the Army training centres** there for a few days of final preparation. The Newfoundlanders at the time were attached to Corps Reserve where they were re-enforcing and re-organizing after the exertions – and casualties – of the action of October 12 at Gueudecourt.

**His brother Herbert*, to be later seriously wounded in the head at Sailly-Saillisel (see below), joined the Battalion in France at about the same time, on November 7, 1916.*

***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, Étaples, LeHavre and Harfleur that became known to the troops – and presumably also the officers - as the Bull Rings.*

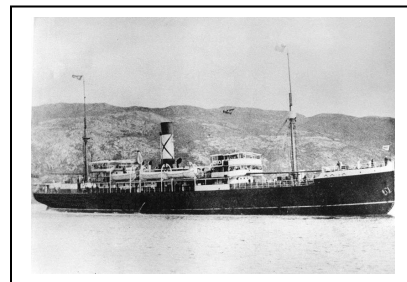
* * * * *

Some two years plus a month before that time, in the late summer and early autumn of 1914 there had been a period of training of some five weeks on the shores of *Quidi Vidi Lake* in the east end of St. John's for the newly-formed Newfoundland Regiment's first recruits - to become 'A' and 'B' Companies - during which time the authorities had also been preparing for the Regiment's transfer overseas.

This first Newfoundland contingent – not yet a battalion - was to embark on October 3, in the case of some soldiers only days after enlistment and/ or attestation.

To become known to history as the *First Five Hundred* and also as the *Blue Puttees*, on that date they had boarded the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* awaiting in St. John's Harbour.

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



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

(continued)

(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 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 would provide the first garrison from outside the British Isles – and where the first reinforcements would arrive from Newfoundland on February 16 of 1915.



(Right: *Edinburgh Castle dominates the city from its position on the summit of Castle Hill. – photograph from 2011*)

Some three months later, on May 11, and three weeks into spring – although in Scotland there had apparently still been snow - the entire Newfoundlanders unit was to be ordered moved to *Stobs Camp*, all under canvas and south-eastwards of Edinburgh, in the vicinity of the town of Hawick.



It would be at *Stobs Camp* that the Newfoundland contingent was to receive the reinforcements from home – ‘F’ Company which had arrived on July 10, 1915 - that would bring its numbers up to that of British Army establishment battalion strength*. The now-formed 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had thus been rendered eligible to be sent on ‘active service’.

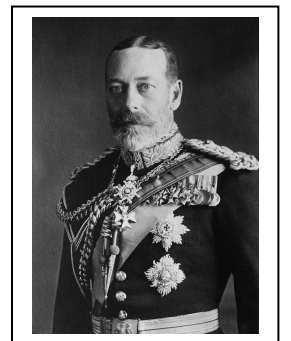
**This was approximately fifteen hundred, enough to furnish four ‘fighting’ companies, two re-enforcement companies and a headquarters staff.*

(Right: *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 Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



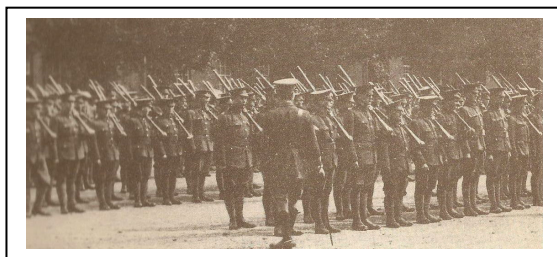
At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’, had then been sent south from *Stobs Camp* to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot.

This force, having become the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, had thereupon been attached to the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.



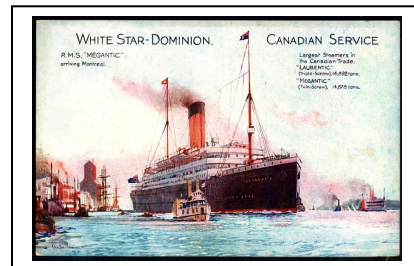
Meanwhile the two junior Companies, the later-arrived ‘E’ and aforementioned ‘F’, had been ordered transferred to Scotland’s west coast, to Ayr, there to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.

(Preceding page: *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: *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* – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)

On August 20, 1915, the Newfoundland unit 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. 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 had landed at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(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.*)

(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*)



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



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

(continued)

Flies, dust, disease, the frost-bite and the floods – and of course the casualties inflicted by an enemy which 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 the French, and it would finally be decided to abandon not only *Suvla Bay* but the entire *Gallipoli* venture.

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

**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.*

November 26 would see 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.



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.

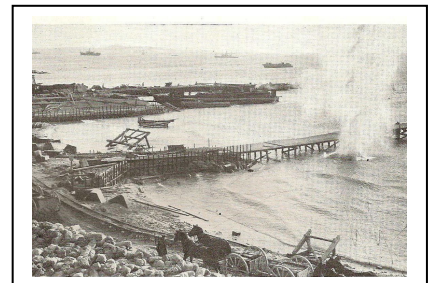
On the night of December 19-20, the British had abandoned the area of *Suvla Bay* – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, to form a part of the rear-guard. Some of the Battalion personnel had been evacuated to the nearby island of *Imbros*, some to *Lemnos*, further away, but 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 above: *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 and the *Anzac* forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was also to serve at *Gallipoli* – were now to be only 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 above: *'W' Beach at Cape Helles as it was 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 – with General Maude - 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)

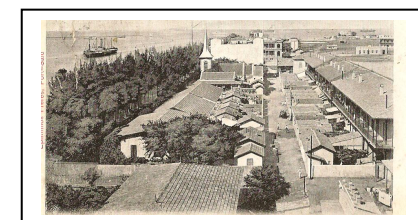
Immediately after the British had evacuated the entire *Gallipoli Peninsula* in January of 1916, the Newfoundland Battalion was to be ordered to the Egyptian port-city of Alexandria, arriving there on the 15th of that month. The Newfoundlanders were then to be immediately transferred southward to the vicinity of Suez, a port at the southern end of the Canal which bears the same name, there 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 soon to become a theatre of war.*

(Right above: 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)

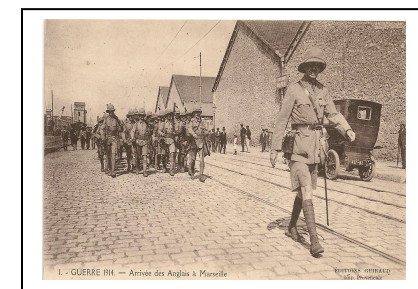
After a two-month interim spent in the vicinity of Port Suez, the almost six-hundred officers and *other ranks* of the 1st Battalion was to board His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* at Port Tewfiq, on March 14 to begin the voyage through the *Suez Canal* en route to France. The Newfoundlanders would disembark eight days afterwards in the Mediterranean port-city of Marseilles, on March 22.



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

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

Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train was to find its way to 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 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.

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 then marched on their way from the station. But some three months later *the Somme* would become a part of their history.

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

On April 13, the 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 reinforcements from Scotland via Rouen and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.

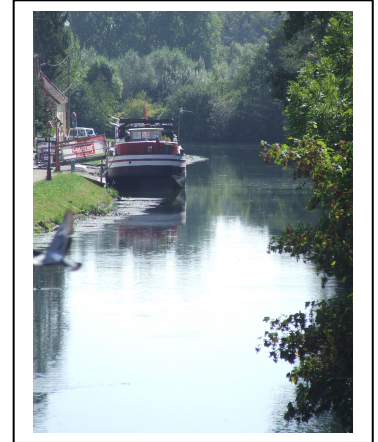
Just days following the Newfoundland Battalion's arrival on the *Western Front*, two of the four Companies – 'A', and 'B' – were to take over several support positions from a British unit* before the entire Newfoundland unit was to then be ordered to move further up for the first time into forward positions 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: *A part of the re-constructed trench system to be found in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)

Having then been withdrawn, at the end of that April after the completion of their first tour in the trenches to the areas of Mailly-Maillet and Louvencourt where they would be based for the next two months, the Newfoundlanders were soon to be preparing for the now-impending British campaign of that summer, this to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river, *the Somme*, flowing sedately – and still does so today – through the region.

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*.



(Preceding page: *Beaumont-Hamel: Looking from the British lines down the hill to Y Ravine Cemetery which today stands atop part of the German front-line defences: The Danger Tree is to the right in the photograph. – photograph taken in 2009*)

(Right: *A view of Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery Number 2 in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)



**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.*

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

It was to be the largest disaster ever in the annals of the British Army...and, perhaps just as depressing, the butchery of *the Somme* was to continue for the next four and a half months.



(Right above: *Beaumont-Hamel is a commune, not a village. – photographs from 2010 and 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.

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

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.

(continued)

It had then been a further two days before the unit had marched further again to the rear area and to its 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 on July 11, a draft of one-hundred twenty-seven reinforcements – 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 manpower having arrived, the Regimental War Diary records that on the 14th of July, 1916, the 1st Battalion had 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 the *Kingdom of 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: *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*)

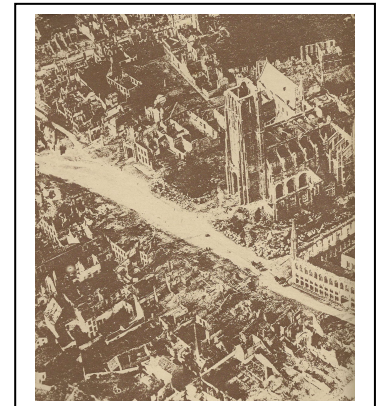


The Salient – close to the front lines for almost the entire fifty-two month conflict - was to be relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders' posting there; yet they nonetheless had incurred casualties, a number – fifteen? - of them fatal.

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

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

Four days after that return to France, on October 12, 1916, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had again been ordered 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.



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

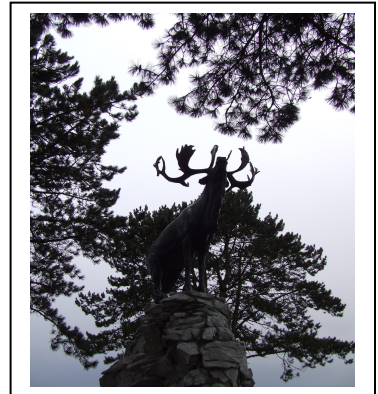
(Right: *This is the ground over which the 1st Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some few managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon.* – photograph from 2007)



(Right below: *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 to be directly involved in any further concerted infantry action in the immediate area of Gueudecourt although, on October 18, it would supply 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 Brigade.

(Right below: *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 been retired to rear positions from the Gueudecourt area. It had been serving in front-line and support positions for three weeks less a day.

The Newfoundlanders were now to spend two weeks withdrawn to the area of Ville-sous-Corbie, re-enforcing and reorganizing, with among of those aforementioned reinforcements having been two Second Lieutenants Outerbridge, Herbert and his younger brother Norman.

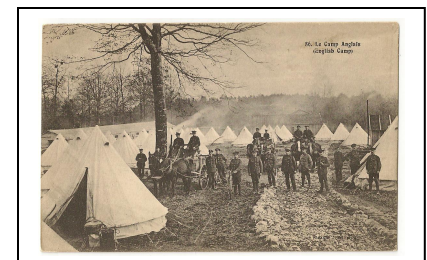


Four days after the arrival of the latter, on November 15 the Newfoundland Battalion began to wend its way back up to the front lines.

* * * * *

There it continued its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties – during the late fall and early winter, a period broken only by another several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas period, encamped well behind the lines and in close proximity to the city of Amiens.

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



After that welcome six-week Christmas respite spent in *Corps Reserve* far 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.

Those casualties, however, were only some of the daily thousands whom Douglas Haig casually referred to as *wastage*. The sole infantry activity *directly* involving the Newfoundland unit in that entire period – from Gueudecourt in mid-October, 1916, until Monchy-le-Preux in mid-April of 1917 – would be the sharp engagement at Sailly-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.

Before that altercation at Sailly-Saillisel*, however, during that month of February, on the 9th, during a twelve-day period while the Newfoundland Battalion was out of the line near the community of Coisy, that Second Lieutenant Outerbridge received the appointment to become (*Acting*) Adjutant.

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



**It would be at Sailly-Saillisel that his brother, Second Lieutenant Herbert-Arthur Outerbridge, was wounded, incurring injuries to the head. He would recover enough by November of 1917 to undertake light duties at the Regimental Depot, at first at Ayr before moving with the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion to Hazely Down in January of 1918.*

Further hospitalized in the spring of 1918 due to fainting fits, Second Lieutenant Outerbridge was granted an Honorary Commission as Captain on September 16, 1918, and was retired from service on that same day.

(Right: *The fighting during the period 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 a quiet time for the Newfoundlanders; having departed from the trenches, they now spent their time near the communities of Meaulté and Camps-en-Amienois re-enforcing, re-organizing, and training for upcoming events.

They were even to have 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.

(continued)

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



On March 29, the Newfoundlanders began to make 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.

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



On April 9 the British Army was to launch an offensive in the area to the north of the Somme battlefields; this would be the so-called *Battle of Arras*, intended to support a major French effort elsewhere.

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



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

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 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*)



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 would prove to be the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' war, four-hundred eighty-seven casualties all told on April 14 alone*.

**It was also an action in which a DSO, an MC and eight MMs were won by a small group of nine personnel of the Battalion – the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) awarded to the unit's Commanding officer. An MM for the same action was also presented to a private from the Essex Regiment .*

(continued)

‘Commanding 15 Platoon of ‘D’ Company in the second wave of the attack, after three hundred yards Lieutenant Outerbridge, already wounded in the leg, was the only remaining officer. He took over the remnants of ‘D’ Company and continued. After one hundred yards the Company was machine-gunned...there was no sign of Outerbridge.’ – from records at Provincial Archives: ‘D’ Company was eventually surrounded and overrun by enemy forces at about nine o’clock in the morning.

The son of Sir Joseph Outerbridge, of *Harvey & Co.*, and Lady Outerbridge (née *Maria Harvey Tucker*) – the couple married in 1881 – of St. John's, and husband of Mary Evaleyn Outerbridge (née *Shea*) of 36, Monkstown Road in St. John's, he was also brother of Philip-Edward, of Herbert-Arthur and Leonard-Cecil*, of Basil and of Lilian.

Second Lieutenant Outerbridge was at first recorded as *wounded and missing in action* on April 14, 1917, during the fighting at Monchy-le-Preux. On October 14 of 1917, some six months later, he was officially *presumed dead*.

****His brother (Sir) Leonard Cecil Outerbridge, having served in a British regiment and then with the Canadian Forces during the Great War – and to be decorated with the DSO and Mentioned twice in Despatches - was later to become the second lieutenant-governor of the fledgling Province of Newfoundland, from 1949 until 1957.***

For a while there had been hope that he might have been one of the many captured on the day. However, later eye-witnesses, Private J. Joy – his report dated 28/8/1917 - and Sergeant J. P. Moakler – his report (see on a subsequent page) dated September 14, 1917 - both having been made prisoner, reported from prisoner-of-war camps that Lieutenant Outerbridge had been wounded and undoubtedly killed. His personal record was subsequently amended – apparently on October 17 of 1917 - so as to read *killed in action***.

He died at thirty-three years of age: date of birth at *Hillbro* (the family home?), St. John's, Newfoundland, December, 6, 1884 (from the Newfoundland Birth Register).

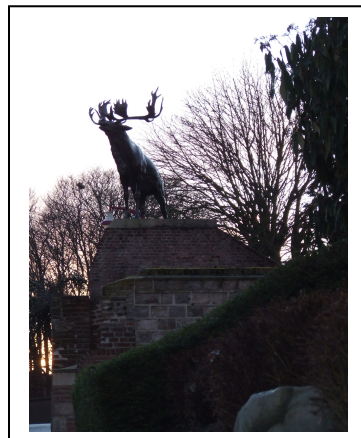
(Right above: The Caribou stands atop the vestiges of a German strong-point in the centre of the village of Monchy-le-Preux.)

His promotion to the rank of First Lieutenant was issued on April 18, just four days after he had been reported as...*missing*.

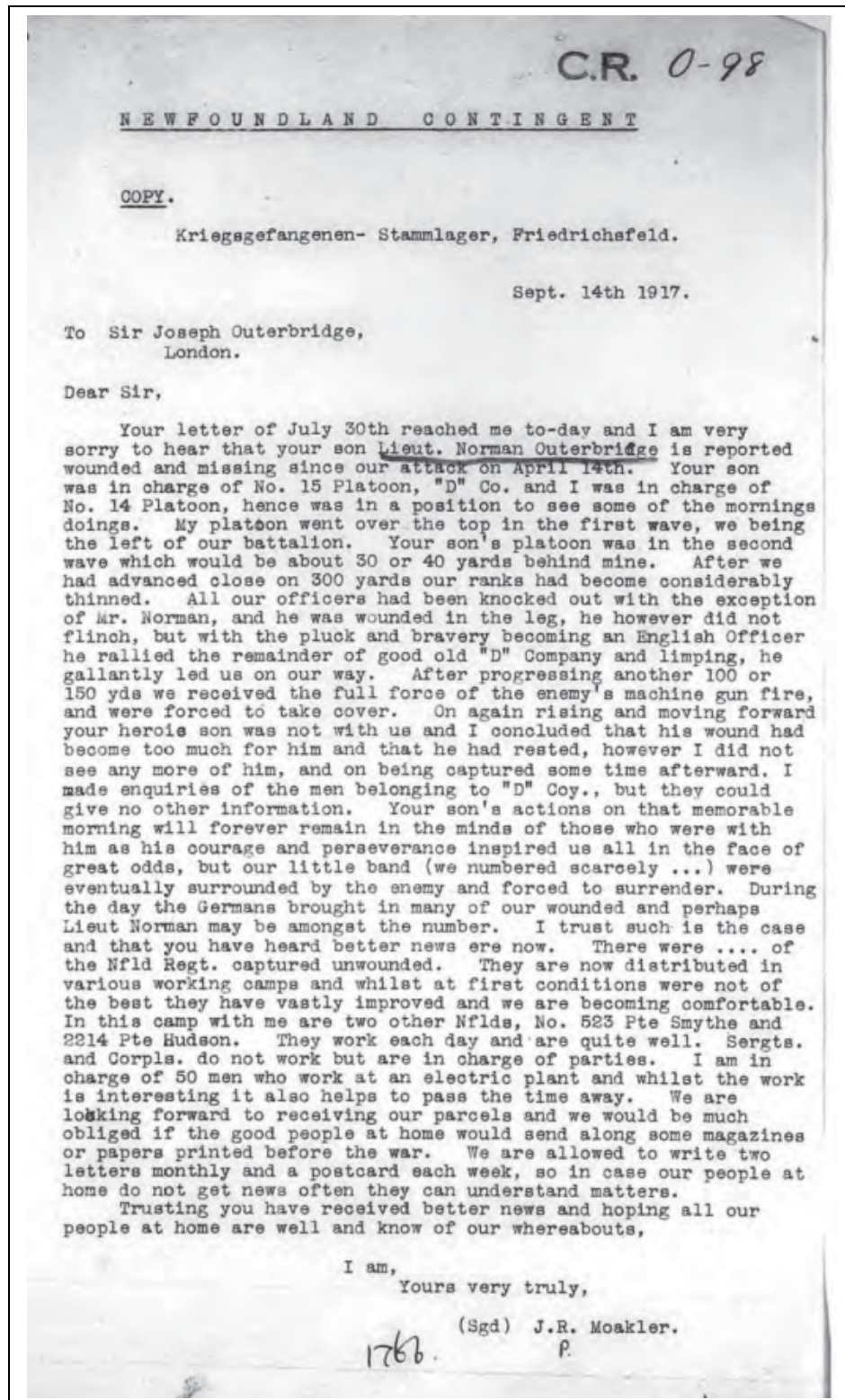
*****Also subsequently, of course, confirming the eye-witness report, his remains were to be found and identified.***

The above photograph of Second Lieutenant Norman Outerbridge is from the Provincial Archives.

Second Lieutenant Norman Aubrey Outerbridge was entitled to the British War Medal and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



Note: Joseph Outerbridge (later Sir Joseph) was born in Bermuda and moved to Newfoundland at a young age. For that reason certain sources have considered him and his family to be Bermudians rather than Newfoundlanders.



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 11, 2023.