



Private Frederick Charles Roper (Regimental Number 1189) is *believed* to lie in Azmak Cemetery at Suvla – Grave reference Special Memorial 23.

A one-time member of the Methodist Guards Brigade and his occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a bank clerk working for an annual \$200.00, Frederick Charles Roper presented himself for medical examination in Bonavista on January 30, 1915. Having travelled to the capital city, he then enlisted at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury – engaged at the private soldier’s rate of \$1.10 per diem – some five weeks later, on March 8, before attesting eight days later again, on March 16.



Private Roper of ‘E’ Company embarked in St. John’s on board the Bowring Brothers’ vessel *Stephano* (right above – from the *Provincial Archives*) a further five later, on April 22, 1915.

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



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



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

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

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

When he was apprised of his transfer seems not to be recorded, but Private Roper was one of the few from 'E' Company who were to swell the ranks of the units posted to Aldershot - thus he became a soldier of 'A' Company. It was during the period while he was at Aldershot, and as was the case with the great majority of the Newfoundland troops, that Private Roper was prevailed upon to re-enlist *for the duration of the war*. This he did on August 15\*.

*\*At the outset of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist.*



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





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



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



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



The son of John Roper, magistrate, and Annie Roper of Bonavista, he had allotted a daily allowance of fifty cents from his pay to his sister Ethel. Private Roper was reported as having been *killed in action* at Suvla on November 27\*, 1915.

Frederick Charles Roper had enlisted at eighteen years of age.

*\*This was the day after the great flood at Suvla.*

(Right above: looking towards the Turkish positions at Suvla from the Newfoundland front lines – photograph from the Provincial Archives)



(Right: The sacrifice of Private Roper is honoured on the War Memorial in the town of Bonavista. – photograph from 2011(?))



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

(First page: The photograph was taken from the heights – occupied by the Turks – which overlook the Suvla Plain – and particularly that part of the Plain where the Newfoundland troops were posted. In the centre of the picture may be perceived a white horizontal trace: this is Azmak Cemetery in which there are to be found eleven Newfoundland graves. One of them is that of Private Roper. – photograph from 2011)

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

