



Private Peter Rose (Regimental Number 2474), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated beneath the Caribou in Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Peter Rose was a recruit of the Ninth Draft. He both presented himself for medical examination and enlisted *for the duration of the war* at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's – engaged at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 – on April 10, 1916, before attesting on the following day, April 11.



*\*A second document records him attesting on the day of his enlistment.*

Private Rose sailed from St. John's on July 19 on board His Majesty's Transport *Sicilian*\* (right). The ship - refitted some ten years previously to carry well over one thousand passengers - had left the Canadian port of Montreal on July 16, carrying Canadian military personnel.



It is likely that the troops disembarked in the English west-coast port-city of Liverpool; however, it is *certain* that upon disembarkation the contingent journeyed north by train to Scotland and to the Regimental Depot.

*\*Some sixteen years previously - as of 1899 when she was launched – the vessel had served as a troop-ship and transport during another conflict, carrying men, animals and equipment to South Africa for use during the Second Boer War.*

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



(Right above: *an aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on-Ayr is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough is to the right. – courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr*)

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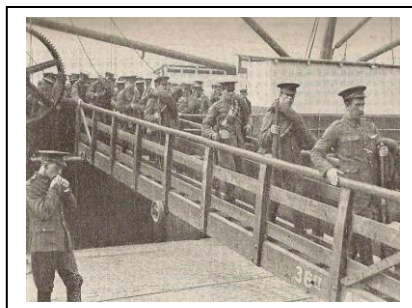
At the outset there had been problems at Ayr to accommodate the new arrivals – plus men from other regiments who were still being billeted in the area – but by the spring of 1916, things had been satisfactorily settled: the officers were in Wellington Square in Ayr itself, and the other ranks had been billeted at Newton Park School and either in the grandstand or in a tented camp at the racecourse in the suburb of Newton-upon-Ayr.



(Right above: *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*)

The 12<sup>th</sup> Re-enforcement Draft – Private Rose among its ranks - passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on October 11 of 1916 on its way to the Continent and to the Western Front.

The contingent disembarked in the Norman capital of Rouen on the next day, October 12, and spent time at the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot located there, in final training and organization\*, before making its way to a rendezvous with 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.



(Right: *British troops disembark at Rouen on their way to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)

\*Apparently, 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, Étaples, LeHavre and Harfleur that became known notoriously to the troops as the Bull Rings.

Private Rose's contingent comprised a single officer and two-hundred twenty-six *other ranks* by the time it reported *to duty* at the Bernafay Wood Camp on October 22. Still in the area of Gueudecourt, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had been relieved in the front line three days before, on the 19<sup>th</sup>.



(Right: *Bernafay Wood a century later – not being close to the front lines, the wood may well have resembled what is seen here – photograph from 2014*)

On month later, on November 21, Private Rose was admitted into the 39<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in the French coastal port-city of Le Havre. Diagnosed as suffering from enteritis, he remained hospitalized for just five days before being released into the 4<sup>th</sup> Convalescent Depot. From there, on December 1, he was moved to the Re-enforcement Camp at Rouen before being recorded as re-joining 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion on the 12<sup>th</sup>.



(Page preceding: *the French port-city of Le Havre at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

When this second rendezvous for Private Rose was effected it was in fact late in the day of December 11 – but, as seen above, late enough to be recorded as the 12<sup>th</sup> elsewhere. The parent unit had retired from the front but many of the men had been seconded for work at Carnoy and Fricourt. Those spared had marched on to Méricourt l'Abbé which is where the one-hundred seventy-three other ranks from Base Depot, Rouen – Private Rose among that number - reported to 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

After the episode of October 12 at Gueudecourt, then up until and after the time of Private Rose's hospitalization, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had remained in the same area of *the Somme* and was regularly into and out of the trenches. There were no infantry engagements during this period, but the incessant artillery action ensured a steady stream of casualties.

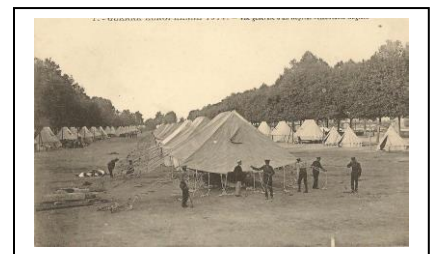
The Newfoundlanders were withdrawn from active service on or about the December 12 of Private Rose's return and were then to spend the following six weeks or so encamped well behind the lines and close to the city of Amiens.

(Right: a *British encampment somewhere on the Continent, apparently during the winter season – from a vintage post-card*)



After that welcome six-week Christmas-time respite away from the front lines, the Newfoundlanders of 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion *officially* returned to *active service* on January 23, although they had been back in the trenches already by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917.

However, on January 18 of the New Year, and just five days before 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to return to that *active service*, Private Rose was admitted into the 21<sup>st</sup> Casualty Clearing Station at nearby Corbie with the same complaint as previously: enteritis. On January 24 he was transferred into the 13<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital in Boulogne, before being discharged on February 2 to the 1<sup>st</sup> Convalescent Depot. From there he reported for duty on February 15 to the Base Depot in Rouen.



It was March 6 before Private Rose once more re-joined his unit.

(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*)

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1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had arrived only on March 5 at Meaulté, having been withdrawn from the line after days of hard fighting at a place called Sailly-Saillisel. Private Rose was one of the thirty-one *other ranks* accompanied by a single officer to report on the 6<sup>th</sup>, as did also the Regimental Band which had travelled all the way from Ayr.



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

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



It was on March 29 that 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion began to make its way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond, its march to finish amid the rubble of a village called Monchy-le-Preux.



(Right adjacent: *the remnants of the Grande Place in the city of Arras in early 1916 – from Illustration*)

On April 9 the British Army 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 it was the most expensive operation of the War for the British, its only positive episode being the Canadian assault of Vimy Ridge on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday.



The French offensive was a disaster.

(Right above: *the Canadian National Memorial which stands on Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to play its part in 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*.



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After Beaumont-Hamel, Monchy-le-Preux was to prove to be the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' war, four-hundred eighty-seven casualties on April 14 alone.

(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, to the east, away from the camera. – photograph from 2013*)

The nephew of Peter Clarke (fisherman) and Harriet Clarke (née Rose) of Twillingate – whom he had named as his *next of kin* and to whom he had allocated a daily allowance of fifty cents from his pay – he was also brother to Edward F. Rose who was living by then in East Braintree in the United States.



Private Rose was reported as *missing in action* on April 14, 1917, while serving with 'C' Company in the fighting at Monchy-le-Preux. Some thirty weeks later, on November 17, he was officially *presumed dead*.

Peter Rose\* was nineteen years and six months of age at the time of his enlistment. (Although a second source has twenty-four years.)

(Right above: *The Caribou at Monchy-le-Preux stands atop the remains of a German strongpoint in the centre of the re-constructed village. – photograph from 2009(?)*)



\**The only Peter Rose in the Twillingate Records of this time was born September 16, 1896, to Stephen Rose, fisherman, and Eliza Rose (née Stuckless) of Farmers Arm.*

(Right above: *A monument erected to the memory of Private Peter Rose by his uncle and aunt, Peter and Harriet Clarke, stands in the United Church North Side Cemetery in Twillingate. – photograph from 2013*)



(Right: *The sacrifice of Peter Rose is honoured on this plaque affixed to the United Church in Twillingate. – photograph from 2013*)

Private Peter Rose was entitled to the British War Medal (on left) and also to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

