



**Private John Joseph Bradbury (Number 415882) of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles, Canadian Expeditionary Force, is buried in Passchendaele New British Cemetery: grave reference VII. B. 29..**

**(Right: *The image of a cap badge of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Canadian Mounted Rifles, is from the Wikipedia Web-site.*)**

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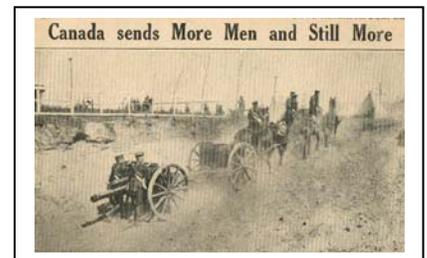
His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a mine surveyor – and also as a mine-sweeper! - there is a suggestion in *ancestry.ca* files that John Joseph Bradbury left Newfoundland as an adolescent with his family in the year 1901 to move to Nova Scotia.

It is also documented that John Joseph Bradbury presented himself for a medical examination and also enlisted, both on the same day, in Halifax on August 9, 1915. It was to be at this time that he was taken on strength by the 40<sup>th</sup> Overseas Battalion (*Nova Scotia*) of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He then underwent attestation three days later, on August 12.

Four days later again, Private Bradbury was *officially* attached to the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion, by which time he had already reported to duty for training to the Mobilisation Camp at Valcartier, Québec\*. There the Commanding Officer of the Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel A.G. Vincent declared – on paper – that... *having finally been approved and inspected by me this day...I certify that I am satisfied with the correctness of this Attestation.*

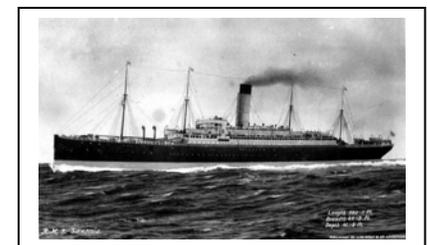
*\*The 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been mobilized at Camp Aldershot on May 11 of 1915 and had commenced its training there. On June 21 it had been transferred to Valcartier where it remained until it took passage overseas.*

(Right: *Canadian artillery being put through its paces at the Camp at Valcartier. In 1914, the main Army Camp in Canada was at Petawawa. However, its location in Ontario – and away from the Great Lakes – made it impractical for the despatch of troops overseas. Valcartier was apparently built within weeks after the Declaration of War. – the photograph from *The War Illustrated* was taken at later time of the War)*



Interspersed with his training, Private Bradbury was to undergo medical treatment at Valcartier on two occasions: from August 26 to 28 he received attention for gastritis; and from October 6 to 9 he was hospitalized for vomiting with, at times, an amount of blood involved. Only nine days after his release on the latter occasion, he began the trans-Atlantic crossing during which voyage the condition apparently corrected itself, at least temporarily.

On October 18, 1915, just over two months after Private Bradbury had enlisted, the 40<sup>th</sup> Overseas Battalion embarked in the port of Québec onto His Majesty's Transport *Saxonia*\*. The vessel sailed on that same day, subsequently to dock in the English south-coast naval port of Plymouth-Devonport on the 28<sup>th</sup>, some ten days later. The 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion and Private Bradbury had not taken passage alone on *Saxonia*: there was at least one other military unit on board, the 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion of Canadian Infantry.



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*\*Apparently, two other drafts of the same 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion departed Canada on other ships and from other ports, in June of 1915 and in the same October.*

*(Previous page: The image of the R.M.S. – Royal Mail Ship - Saxonia is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries.)*

Having disembarked in England, the personnel of the 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion was immediately transported by train to a military camp. This was the complex recently-established in the vicinity of the Hampshire villages of Liphook and Bramshott where Private Bradbury's Battalion was reportedly the first Canadian unit to be stationed there. One of the only files pertaining to Private Bradbury during his posting at Bramshott records the award of ten days *confinement to barracks* for a twenty-five-minute *absence without leave* reported on January 16 of 1916.



*(Right above: Royal Canadian Legion flags amongst others adorn the interior of St. Mary's Church in the English village of Bramshott. – photograph from 2016)*

The 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion had been authorized and recruitment had taken place with the original intention that the unit was to be sent overseas on *active service*. However, upon its arrival in the United Kingdom, it had then been used as a reserve pool for other battalions. Eventually the unit was to be designated as a *reserve* battalion (see below) before being finally disbanded in 1917.

At some time before March of 1916 the unit was designated as the 40<sup>th</sup> Canadian (*Reserve*) Battalion and its base – and thus Private Bradbury - relocated from Bramshott to East Sandling, a part of the large Canadian military complex of Shorncliffe in the county of Kent, and adjacent to the English-Channel town and harbour of Folkestone.



The next records concerning Private Bradbury are once more a propos his health: he was again suffering from gastric problems and was admitted into the Moore Barracks Military Hospital at Shorncliffe – no further details appear to be documented.

*(Right above: Little remains of Shorncliffe Military Camp today apart from a barracks occupied by Gurkha troops. The Military Cemetery almost alone serves as a reminder of the events of a century ago. – photograph from 2016)*

*(Right: A view of the coastal town of Folkestone almost a century later as seen from the white cliffs of nearby Dover – photograph from 2009)*



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Private Bradbury was discharged from hospital back to *duty* on March 28. A short month afterwards, on April 21, he was transferred – at least on paper – to the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion (*Victoria Rifles of Canada*) which was by then already serving on the Continent. On April 23, 1916, Private Bradbury was one of a draft to sail from England to France, likely from nearby Folkestone to the French port of Boulogne on the coast opposite some two hours' sailing-time away.



(Right above: *An image of the French port of Boulogne at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

The draft was thereupon sent to the Canadian Base Depot at Le Havre and there *taken on strength* on the next day, the 24<sup>th</sup>. It was to be a further three weeks before it was then despatched, on May 13, to the parent unit of the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion *in the field*. Private Bradbury is recorded as having reported to *duty* on the following day – although there appears to be no mention of it made in the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion War Diary – to Camp 'D' in Belgian Flanders, some dozen kilometres to the south-west of Ypres to where the unit had temporarily withdrawn.



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

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The 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion (*Victoria Rifles of Canada*) was an element of the 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade, itself a component of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division. The Division, in that spring of 1916, was a relative newcomer to the Great War, having only been formed as late as December of 1915.

*\*While a number of its future units had already been serving on the Continent in a somewhat ad hoc manner by that time, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division did not officially come into being until the mid-night of December 31, 1915, and January 1 of 1916.*

The 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion had *also* passed through Le Havre on its way to the front, and had been sent by train immediately in the direction of the Franco-Belgian frontier. It was still to be another nine days before the unit received the orders to cross the border to nearby billets and a further four weeks before being assigned its first posting into the trenches.



(Right above: *Troops on the march towards the Front somewhere on the Continent during the early days of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

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The theatre in which the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion was to be serving by the end of March – and in which it was still serving at the time of Private Bradbury’s first experience of the trenches in mid-May - was the *Ypres Salient*, a lethal sector at the best of times – of which there were few - and a place which was to be fought over constantly from October of 1914 until October of 1918, during almost the entirety of the *Great War*.

On May 16, two days after Private Bradbury had reported to Camp ‘D’, the Battalion was sent forward - by a circuitous five-hour route - to relieve the Royal Canadian Regiment in the trenches at *Maple Copse* and in the area of *Sanctuary Wood*, both in the south-east vicinity of Ypres.

(Right: *An artist’s impression of the centre of Ypres in the year 1915: By the end of the Great War not much of what is shown here was to be left standing.* - from *Illustration*)



During the remainder of the month of May there was little concerted infantry action to report in the *Ypres Sector*, apart from local patrolling and raids carried out by both sides; most casualties were caused by enemy artillery – reported as heavy on most days – and by enemy snipers.

(Right: *Remnants of Canadian trenches dating from 1915-1916 at Sanctuary Wood* – photograph from 2010)



After this tour the unit left the area of the front line at the end of the month and retired to Camp ‘A’. However, late in the evening of June 2, the Battalion was ordered to move forward in support of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion... *in proposed counter-attack against enemy who had possession of our old front line and support trenches...* (Battalion War Diary).



It was the beginning of the action to become known to Canadian history as *Mount Sorrel*.

(Right above: *The Canadian memorial which stands atop Mount Sorrel just to the south-west of the city of Ypres (today Ieper) whose spires and towers may be perceived in the distance.* – photograph from 1914)

The Germans had successfully captured the Canadian positions on June 2 after a heavy artillery barrage and had turned the captured positions into strong-points. The Canadian counter-attack of the next day was a hastily- and ill-conceived affair: the forward progress of the troops to their starting positions had been impeded by heavy enemy artillery bombardments and machine-gun fire. The attacks had gone in piecemeal and the assaulting troops were cut to pieces.



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**(Preceding page: *Maple Copse, the scene of heavy fighting in June of 1916, and its cemetery wherein lie numerous Canadians – photograph from 2014*)**

The Germans again attacked on June 6, aided on this occasion by the detonation of four mines in the area of the village of *Hooge*, and captured the front lines. These positions remained in their hands as by then the Canadian Commander, Sir Julian Byng, had other things in mind. From June 9 to 12, the Canadian artillery bombarded the German positions, at times ceasing fire to allow the enemy to anticipate an attack – an attack which did not come until the very early morning of June 13.

When it finally was unleashed, the assault retook the positions that had been surrendered to the Germans eleven days earlier. Things were thus back to the way they had been before the action started. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion was withdrawn to rest to Camp 'A': it had been in the front or in support lines almost continually for thirty-two days.

**(Right: *Railway Dugouts Burial Ground (Transport Farm) today contains twenty-four hundred fifty-nine burials and commemorations – photograph from 2014*)**



During the period from June 2 to 7 inclusive, the unit had incurred a total of three-hundred forty-five casualties.

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



There apparently being no evidence to the contrary – no mention of sickness, wounds, leave or any other incident is to be found in his records - it must be presumed that Private Bradbury served on the *Western Front* from that month of May, 1915, until October of 1917. The only subsequent entry is that concerning his transfer to another unit in April of 1917.

**(Right: *Hill 60 a century after the great War, today preserved - as much as nature will allow - by the Belgian Government – photograph from 1915*)**



Until August 26, 1916, the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion was still stationed in the area to the south-east of the city of Ypres and more particularly, when posted to the forward trenches, to *Hill 60* which still was receiving a great deal of attention from the German artillery and from marauding German patrols.

It was also during that month that the Battalion, as it was many other Canadian units, received the British Short Lee-Enfield to replace the Canadian-made Ross Rifle which had proved problematic when used in front-line conditions.

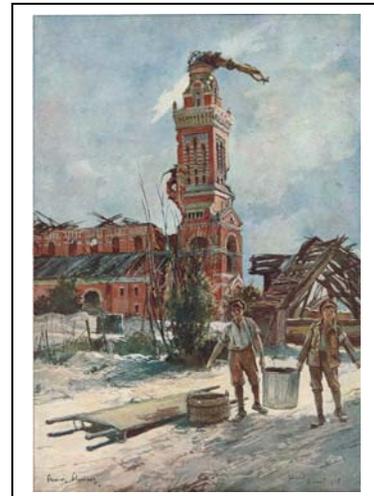
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On September 27 the 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade, to which the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion was attached, was the last unit of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Canadian Division to withdraw from the *Ypres Salient*. This reprieve, however, was to be of short duration: the Canadians were to be transferred south, to France, and to be thrust into the British offensive of the summer of 1916, a campaign to become known as the *First Battle of the Somme*.

For the period of eleven days from August 27 until September 7 Private Bradbury's unit trained in the area of the northern French town of Steenevoorde. On the latter date, busses took the Battalion to Arques where it entrained for Auxi-le-Chateau, north-east of Abbéville, from where the troops were to proceed on foot.

Thus, from eight o'clock in the morning of September 8 until six-thirty in the evening of September 14, the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion was to march towards its destination, a military camp in the area of the *Brickfields Camp (La Briqueterie)*, itself in the near proximity of the provincial town of Albert.

(Right: *Canadian soldiers at work in Albert, the already-damaged basilica in the background – from Illustration*)



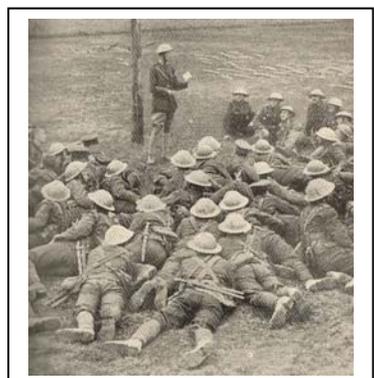
By September of 1916 the *First Battle of the Somme* had been ongoing for some two months. It had begun with the disastrous attack of July 1, an assault which had cost the British Army fifty-seven thousand casualties – in the short span of only four hours - of which some nineteen thousand dead.

On that first day all but two small units of the attacking divisions had been from the British Isles, the exceptions being the two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles serving in the Lincolnshire Regiment, and the eight-hundred personnel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment which lost so heavily on that day at Beaumont-Hamel.

As the battle had progressed, troops from the Empire (*Commonwealth*) were brought in; at first it had been the South African Brigade (July 15), then the Australians and New Zealanders (July 23), before the Canadians entered the fray on August 30 to become part of a third general offensive.

Their first major collective contribution was to be in the area of the two villages of Flers and Courcellette on September 15.

(Right above: *An image purporting to be that of a Canadian officer giving instructions to those under his command prior to the attack at Flers-Courcellette, September 1916. – from The War Illustrated*)



(Right above: *The Canadian Memorial which stands to the side of the Albert-Bapaume Road near the village of Courcellette. – photograph from 2015*)



In the early morning of September 15, and only hours after the arrival of Private Bradbury's Battalion at *La Briqueterie*, a general attack ordered by the British High Command was undertaken, the Canadians playing an important role in this offensive.

The 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion was placed in Corps Reserve on that September 15 while the first assaults were under way and spent that day and the ensuing night at *Usna Hill Camp* and in the morning moving into position in an area known as the *Chalk Pits*.



(Right: *Wounded troops being evacuated in hand-carts from the forward area during the 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of the Somme – from Le Miroir or Illustration*)

On that day, September 16, it was the turn of the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion to be thrown into the cauldron. The unit was... *given an operation order covering an attack to be made at Zero hour, 6:30 pm...* the objective being a German trench system. The Battalion attempted to make its way forward to its attacking positions but, before it could do so, news came that other units' earlier attacks had failed and it could be seen that the troops were already retiring to their jumping-off positions. It was therefore decided simply to use the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion to reinforce the 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion which was in need of them.

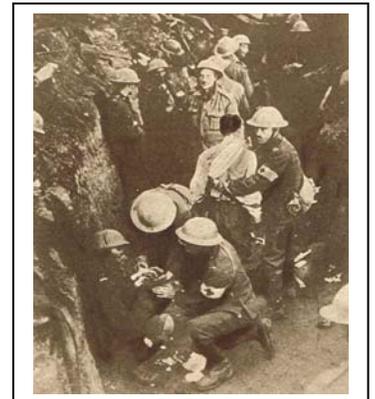


(Above right: *Burying Canadian dead on the Somme, likely at a casualty clearing station or a field ambulance – from Illustration or Le Miroir*)

In fact the entire offensive, with a few exceptions – one being the Canadian capture of Courcellette - had failed to live up to expectations, and the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion remained more or less *in situ* for the following two days, supplying men for patrols and for working parties. It was relieved from the forward area on the night of the 23<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, having incurred some three-hundred casualties.

From that time until October 9, the Battalion was posted at first into Brigade Reserve and subsequently to Brigade Support, close enough to the front lines to suffer a further number of casualties. On that October 9, late in the night, it was relieved for a last time; on the next day, after a parade, the unit began its march away from the 1<sup>st</sup> *Battle of the Somme*.

(Right: *Canadian casualties receiving preliminary treatment before being sent further back to one of the larger and better-equipped medical centres – from Le Miroir*)



By the end of October, Private Bradbury's Battalion was back in action; having made a circuitous journey from *the Somme*, the 60<sup>th</sup> was now posted to the sectors just to the north of the city of Arras, in the mining area of Lens.

It now reverted to the everyday drudgery of trench warfare\* – nevertheless, drudgery was by then no doubt preferable to what it had just experienced.

(Right: *The remnants of the City Hall and its clock-tower in Arras soon after the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)



*\*During the Great War, British and Empire (later Commonwealth) battalions had their time more or less divided into three postings: in theory a week was to be spent in the front lines, at times little more than a few metres separating them from the enemy forward positions; a second week was then served in support positions, perhaps a hundred metres or behind the front; the unit was then withdrawn into reserve – either Brigade, Divisional or Corps Reserve, the former nearer to the forward area, the latter the furthest away.*

*Of course, things were never as neat and tidy as set out in the preceding sentences and troops could – and did - find themselves in a particular position at times for weeks on end.*

(Right: *Canadian troops in support positions somewhere on the Somme in late 1916 – from Illustration*)



The winter of 1916-1917 was one of that everyday grind of life in and out of the trenches. There was to be little if any concerted infantry activity apart from the constant patrolling and the occasional raids by both sides. This latter activity was encouraged by the High Command who felt them to be a morale booster which also served to keep the troops in the right offensive frame of mind – in general, the troops who were ordered to carry them out loathed these operations.



(Right above: *A detachment of Canadian troops going forward during the winter of 1916-1917 – from Illustration*)

The unit spent the first five days of April in trenches in front of an enemy-held ridge and, further behind the opposing lines and also in territory occupied by the Germans, the village of *Vimy*. On April 5 the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion retired to Villers-au-Bois, some several kilometres to the west, to prepare for the upcoming British offensive to be undertaken a few days hence.

During the late evening of April 8, the 60<sup>th</sup> moved forward to assembly trenches in the area of the Arras-Béthune Road where the unit arrived at half-past midnight. There the Battalion – designated as reserve troops – were to wait for hours in the mud, the wet and the cold – it was to snow - rather than in any of those well-documented tunnels, kilometres of which had been hewn out of the subterranean chalk for reasons of both surprise and safety.

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Private Bradbury and his comrades-in-arms were to remain waiting there for almost eleven hours before being ordered to move forward into the former British front-line trenches – there to be just as exposed to the inclement elements as in the positions that they had just abandoned – and also there to remain for a further two days, until the 11<sup>th</sup>.

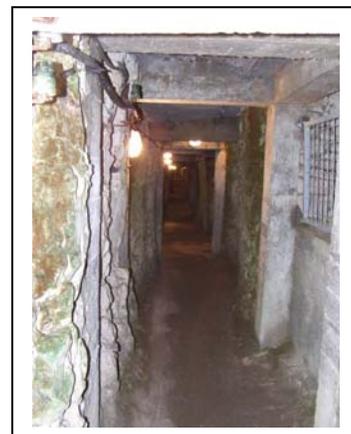
On April 9 the British Army launched that offensive in the area to the north of the Somme battlefields; this was the so-called *Battle of Arras* intended to support a French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties, some four thousand per day, it was to be the most expensive operation of the War for the British, one of the few positive episodes being the Canadian assault of Vimy Ridge on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday.



While the British campaign was to be an overall disappointment, the French offensive was a disaster.

(Above right: *the Canadian National Memorial which, since 1936, stands on Vimy Ridge – photograph from 2010*)

On that April 9, in driving snow, the four Canadian Divisions, for the first time acting as a single, autonomous entity – indeed, on this occasion, British troops were under *Canadian* command - stormed the slope of Vimy Ridge, by the end of the next day having cleared almost its entirety of its German occupants.



(Right: *One of the few remaining galleries – Grange Tunnel - still open to the public at Vimy one hundred years later – photograph from 2008(?)*)

(Right: *Canadian troops of the 4<sup>th</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Division equipped with all the paraphernalia of war on the advance across No-Man's-Land during the attack at Vimy Ridge on either April 9 or 10 of 1917 - from Illustration*)



On April 11 the 60<sup>th</sup> Battalion moved forward to relieve Canadian troops in newly-constructed trenches on Vimy Ridge and was then ordered to prepare for an attack on the community of Vimy itself, an objective which was yet to be taken. However, this attack was cancelled and the unit remained where it was for the rest of the day.

Patrols were sent out on the following morning and encountered considerable opposition from enemy machine-guns. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, despite being heavily shelled, the Battalion occupied a by-now abandoned Vimy and pushed forward both to the north and to the east.

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On the 14<sup>th</sup> the unit stayed where it was until relieved later on in the day.

(Right: *Canadians under shell-fire occupy the third line of trenches on Vimy Ridge: the fighting of the next few days was fought under the same conditions. – from Illustration*)



During this entire period, the Battalion's casualties, when compared to those of other units, had been mercifully light: seven killed and sixty-one wounded.

(Right: *A German machine-gunner who also gave his all, dead at his post – from Illustration*)



On April 24, while the unit was encamped and in training once again at Villers-au-Bois, the Battalion War Diarist made the following entry: *Received intimation that the Battalion is to be disbanded and absorbed by the 5<sup>th</sup> C.M.Rs. and 87<sup>th</sup> Canadian Battalions respectively. Full details to follow.*

The *intimation* was correct and on the final day of that month of April\*, eleven officers and three-hundred thirty-three *other ranks* – one of them Private Bradbury – were transferred to the strength of the 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion\*\* which unit was also stationed at Villers-au-Bois at this time.

*\*Although, in Private Bradbury's file, his transfer is recorded as having happened on the 24<sup>th</sup> of the month.*

*\*\*The Canadian Mounted Rifles were by that time 'mounted' in name only, having been unhorsed towards the end of 1915. On January 1, 1916, the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>d</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Regiments of the CMR became the four CMR Battalions of the 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade.*

Meanwhile, the *Battle of Arras* was still ongoing and, on May 5, the 5<sup>th</sup> CMRs were ordered forward to relieve troops at Vimy, in defences created in anticipation – as so often happened – of a German counter-attack. The War Diary reports one such enemy operation being caught in the open by Canadian artillery while forming up. It was an attack which was thus never to materialize.

On the 12<sup>th</sup>, the 5<sup>th</sup> CMR Battalion moved back to *Winnipeg Camp* at Villers-au-Bois and remained there until the 27<sup>th</sup> when it was ordered forward into support. There it supplied parties for both carrying and salvage work.



(Right: *A Canadian carrying-party loading up, one of the many duties allocated to troops not serving in the front line – from Le Miroir*)

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The British High Command had by this time decided to undertake a summer offensive in the *Ypres Salient*, Belgium. Thus, in order to divert German attention – and also his reserves - from this area, it had also ordered operations to take place at the sector of the front running north-south from Béthune to Lens.

The Canadians were to be a major contributor to the effort.

(Right below: *An example of the conditions under which the troops were ordered to fight in the area of Lens during the summer of 1917 – from Le Miroir*)

However, any involvement by the 5<sup>th</sup> CMR Battalion during these operations\* by the Canadian Corps appears to have been minimal, the Battalion War Diary reporting a succession of tours in the front lines, in support, in reserve, and back into the forward area. Casualties during the summer period were reported as being light.



Thus passed the summer and also the early days of the autumn of 1917 for the 5<sup>th</sup> CMR Battalion and for Private Bradbury. In fact, on September 18 – two days before Private Bradbury reported back *to duty* after a ten-day period of leave in the United Kingdom - the unit was to be withdrawn from the forward area for almost an entire month, to spend it resting and training in the vicinity of Maisnil-Bouche, west of the mining centre of Lens.



(Right above: *Canadian troops advancing across No-Man's Land in the summer of 1917 – from Le Miroir*)

*\*In fact, this Canadian-led campaign had been intended to continue into the month of September and even beyond. Despite some promising results, however, the British High Command was to decide otherwise: the affair at Passchendaele was not going well, casualties were high and there was now a shortage of reserves. Thus the Canadians were ordered to prepare to move into Belgium and the fighting in the Lens-Béthune Sectors came to a premature end.*

On October 15 the Canadians of the 5<sup>th</sup> CMR Battalion were transferred north by train to St-Sylvestre Cappel in the area of the French town of Hazebrouck. From there they would be ordered to Belgium and, once more, to the *Ypres Salient*.

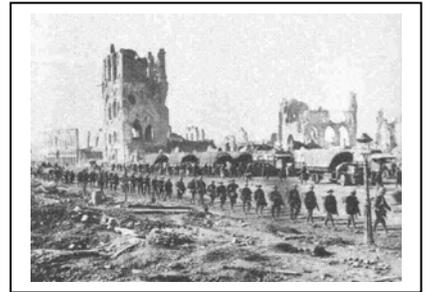
(Right: *Hazebrouck in the period between the wars – from a vintage post-card*)



It was not until those final weeks of October that the Canadian Corps became embroiled in the offensive to the north-east of Ypres. Officially named the *Third Battle of Ypres*, the campaign came to be known to history as *Passchendaele*, taking that name from a small village on a ridge that was – ostensibly - one of the British Army's objectives.

**(Right below: *Troops file through the rubble of the medieval city of Ypres on their way to the front in the late summer of 1917. – from Illustration*)**

From the time that the Canadians entered the fray, it was they who shouldered a great deal of the burden. For the week of October 26 until November 3 it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Canadian Divisions who spearheaded the assault, with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisions in reserve. From November 5 until the official end of the affair – November 10 - the reverse was true with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division finally entering the remnants of Passchendaele itself.



**(Right: *Somewhere, perhaps anywhere, on the battlefield of Passchendaele during the autumn of 1917. – from Illustration*)**

It was not until October 22 that Private Bradbury's Battalion left the relative comfort of the billets in St-Sylvestre-Cappel to march and then take a train to the battered remnants of Ypres. From the station the unit then continued, once more on foot, to the north-east outskirts of the city and to a new reserve camp at Wieltje.



There Private Bradbury's Battalion remained – on occasion being shelled and also bombed by enemy aircraft – before moving forward to a reserve area on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The period from then until the 29<sup>th</sup> was spent firstly... *pumping water out of the trenches to make them habitable...* and then in preparation for an attack to be delivered.



**(Right: *The railway station at Ypres (leper) in 1919 – from a vintage post-card*)**

**(Right below: *Canadian soldiers using a shell-hole and its contents as a wash-basin to perform their ablutions during the period of Passchendaele – from Le Miroir*)**

October 29 was apparently also spent in patrolling to determine the state of the opposition defences. In the Battalion War Diary record of the day is the following entry: *A prisoner was captured by 'A' Coy of the 5<sup>th</sup> CMRs. The prisoner was a private of the 10<sup>th</sup> Bavarians and was with a party of five others who evidently became lost, 415882 Pte Bradbury JJ was instrumental in the capture of the prisoner.*



The attack went in early on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup> but even before it began, the 5<sup>th</sup> CMRs had already suffered heavily. By mid-morning it was being reported that 'A' Company had failed to reach its objectives and that it had incurred many more casualties during the intervening period. By mid-day its losses were termed as *severe* and of the survivors, ordered to re-enforce another unit... *only six or eight men reached this objective.*

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(Right: *The monument to the sacrifice of the Canadians which stands in the outskirts of the re-constructed village of Passchendaele (today Passendale) – photograph from 2010*)



The son of William Bradbury, labourer, and of Margaret Bradbury (née *McGrath*), formerly of Hutching's Lane, Thomas Street and then Rossiter's Lane, St. John's, Newfoundland – later again of Barrington Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia – he was also brother to William-Joseph, Peter-Joseph, to Catherine, to Margaret and to Lydia\*.

*\*He was also apparently a good friend to a Mrs. Emma C. Bowser – she later Mrs. John Merritt of Winterton, Trinity Bay, to whom he willed his all.*

Private Bradbury was at first reported as *missing in action on October 30 - 31* while serving with the 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Mounted Rifles at *Passchendaele*. However, subsequent to a report of the identification and burial of his remains on February 19, 1918, by personnel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quebec Regiment, his record was amended so as to read...*killed in action*.

John Joseph Bradbury had enlisted at the age of twenty-nine years: date of birth in St. John's, Newfoundland, October 7, 1885.

Private John Joseph Bradbury was entitled to the British War Medal (left) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).

