



Private Edgar Charles Whitten (Regimental Number 1117) is interred in Auchonvillers Military Cemetery – Grave reference: II. F. 12.

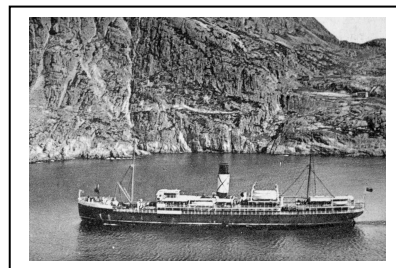
His occupation prior to his military service recorded as that of a *steward* and earning thirty dollars per month, Edgar Charles Whitten presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* on Harvey Road in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on February 11 of the year 1915. It was a procedure which was to pronounce him as...*Fit for Foreign Service*.

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It was to be only a single day following his medical assessment, on February 12, that Edgar Charles Whitten returned to the *CLB Armoury* to enlist – engaged at the private soldier’s rate of a single dollar per diem plus a daily ten-cent *Field Allowance*.

However, whereas attestation for others had come about on the day of enlistment, he was now to await a further twelve days, until February 24, before *that* final formality would come to pass and thereupon he became...*a soldier of the King*.

For Private Whitten, Number 1117, there was now to be yet another, and last, waiting period of three weeks plus three days before he would be summoned to...*overseas service*. How he occupied himself during that time is not recorded among his papers; he may, of course, have temporarily returned to work, but this is only speculation.



(Right above: *The image of the Bowring Brothers’ vessel ‘Stephano’, sister-ship of ‘Florizel’, as she passes through ‘the Narrows’ of St. John’s Harbour is from the Provincial Archives.*)

Unlike the two previous contingents to have departed Newfoundland (see below) for...*overseas service*, Private Whitten’s ‘D’ Company was not to sail directly to the United Kingdom. On March 20 it, he a soldier of the Number 6 Platoon, embarked onto the Bowring-Brothers’ vessel *Stephano* for the short voyage to Halifax, capital city of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, where it was thereupon to board a second vessel, the newly-launched *Orduña* for the trans-Atlantic crossing*.



(Preceding page: *The image of Orduña is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. The vessel was not to be requisitioned during the Great War but would be used by the Cunard Company to operate on its commercial service between Liverpool and New York.*)

Having then sailed from Nova Scotia on March 22 for Liverpool, Private Whitten and his draft landed there eight days later, on the 30th. Once disembarked in Liverpool, the two-hundred fifty men and officers of ‘D’ Company were thereupon transported on the same date by train directly to Edinburgh, the Scottish capital, to join the Newfoundland Regiment’s ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ Companies.

These units were by this time stationed at the historic Castle, ‘A’ and ‘B’ having recently been posted from Fort George and ‘C’ having arrived directly from home (see further below). After ‘D’ Company’s arrival at the end of that month of March, the Newfoundlanders were now to remain at Edinburgh for the following six weeks.



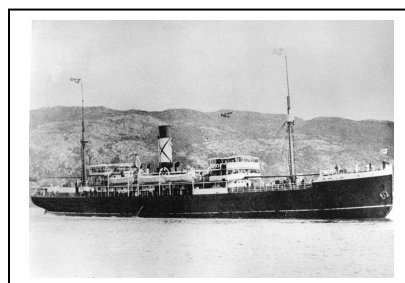
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(Preceding page: *From its vantage point on Castle Hill, the venerable fortress overlooks the city of Edinburgh where in 1915 the Newfoundlanders were to provide the first garrison to be drawn from outside the British Isles. – photograph from 2011)*

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Five to six months 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 – these 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 was to embark on October 3, in some cases only days after a recruit's enlistment and/ or attestation. To become known to history as the *First Five Hundred* and also as the *Blue Puttees*, on that day they had boarded the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* awaiting in St. John's Harbour.



The ship had sailed for the United Kingdom on the morrow, October 4, 1914, to 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.*)

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



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, as recorded beforehand, it was to provide the first garrison from outside the British Isles.

Only days after 'A' and 'B' Companies had taken up their posting there, on February 16 'C' Company – the first re-enforcements for the original contingent* - would arrive directly from Newfoundland.

****This contingent, while a part of the Newfoundland Regiment, was not yet a battalion and would not be so for a further five months – as will be seen below.***

* * * * *

As seen in a previous paragraph, for the month of April and the first days of May of 1915, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies, now united, were to furnish the garrison – the first troops from outside the British Isles to do so - of the guardian of Scotland's capital city. Then,

during the first week of May, 'E' Company was to report there...*to duty*...from home. Four days later again, on May 11, the Newfoundland contingent was ordered elsewhere.

On that day, some seven weeks into spring – although in Scotland there was apparently still snow - the entire Newfoundland unit was dispatched to *Stobs Camp*, all under canvas and south-eastwards of Edinburgh, in the vicinity of the town of Hawick.

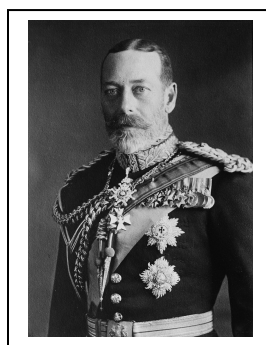
It was to be at *Stobs Camp* that the Newfoundland contingent would eventually receive the re-enforcements from home – 'F' Company which arrived on July 10, 1915 - that would bring its numbers up to that of British Army establishment battalion strength*. The now-formed 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland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

(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*)



**This was approximately fifteen hundred, sufficient to furnish two re-enforcement companies and a headquarters staff.*

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', were then 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, now the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, was thereupon attached to the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.



Meanwhile the two junior Companies, 'E' – last arrived at Edinburgh - and the aforementioned 'F', were ordered transferred to Scotland's west coast, to Ayr, there to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.

(Right above: *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.*)

Private Whitten departed for Aldershot with his comrades-in-arms but he was not to parade before the King, nor was he to sail to the Middle East on this occasion with the 1st Battalion. On August 4 he was admitted into hospital at Aldershot where on the morrow he was diagnosed as having a venereal problem.

August 19 was the last day during that period in hospital which appears to have been recorded. Private Whitten was to receive an injection on that day but when he was subsequently to be discharged from medical care appears not to have been documented; nor was the date on which he was eventually to report to the Regimental Depot.



(continued)

At the end of this summer of 1915, the once-Royal Borough of Ayr on Scotland's west coast was to begin to serve 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*.

(Preceding page: *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.* – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)



(Right: *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.

It was not until the fourteenth day of November that the 1st Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr passed through the English south-coast naval establishment of Devonport – Private Whitten among its ranks - to embark onto His Majesty's Transport *Olympic*, sister ship of *Britannic* and the ill-fated *Titanic*, en route to *Gallipoli*.

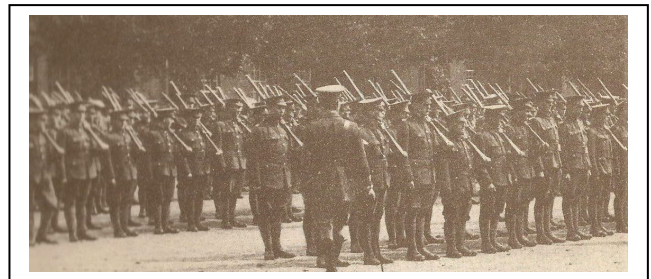
The new-comers were to land at *Suvla Bay*, via *Mudros*, on December 1.



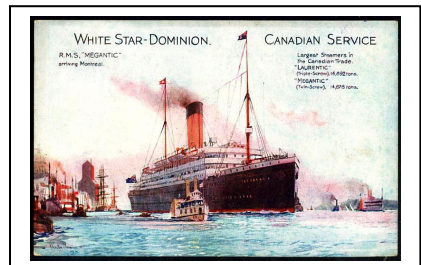
(Right: *HMT Olympic on the right lies at anchor along with HM Hospital Ship Aquitania, centre, at Mudros Bay in the autumn of 1915.* – from a photograph from the Imperial War Museum, London)

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(Right: *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, prior to its departure to active service on the Gallipoli Peninsula* – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)



In the meantime, on August 20, 1915, during the final days of Private Whitten's hospitalization at Aldershot, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment 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.



(continued)

(Preceding page: *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.*)

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 was to land 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*)



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



When the Newfoundlanders had landed from their transport ship at *Suvla Bay* on that September night of 1915 they were to disembark into a campaign that was already on the threshold of collapse.

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

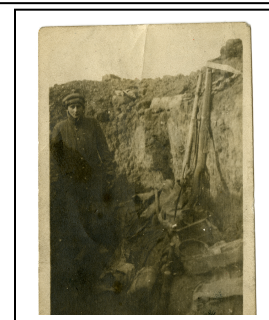
Flies, dust, disease, the frost-bite and the floods – and of course the casualties inflicted by an enemy who was to fight a great deal better than the British High Command* had ever anticipated – were eventually to overwhelm the British-led forces and those of their allies, the French, and it would finally be decided to abandon not only *Suvla Bay* but the entire *Gallipoli* venture.



(Right above: *No-Man's-Land at Suvla Bay as seen from the Newfoundland positions – from Provincial Archives*)

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

(continued)



****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: Here is seen Anzac Bay in the fore-ground with the Salt Lake in the centre further away. The bottom of Suvla Bay is just to be seen on the left and adjacent to the Salt Lake, and further away again. The hills in the distance and the ones from which this photograph was taken were held by the Turks and formed a horse-shoe around the plain surrounding the Salt Lake - which was where the British and Newfoundlanders were stationed. – photograph from 2011)



November 26 of 1915 had perhaps seen 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 had been those afflicted by trench-foot and by frost-bite.

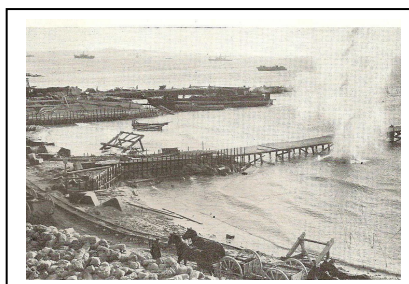


This then, was the situation into which the 1st Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr would step when it had set foot onto the sand and stone – mostly the latter – of Kangaroo Beach on the first day of December, 1915.

During the days that followed, the British positions at *Suvla Bay* – and thus also those of the Newfoundland unit - were to become yet more and more untenable and thus on the night of December 19-20, the area had been abandoned – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, to form a part of the rear-guard.

Some of the Battalion personnel were to be evacuated to the nearby island of Imbros, some to Lemnos, further away; but in neither case had the respite been of a long duration; the Newfoundland 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, Indian and *Anzac* forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was also to serve at *Gallipoli* – had by then only been marking time until a complete withdrawal of the *Peninsula* could be undertaken.

(Preceding page: *'W' Beach at Cape Helles as it was only days before the final British evacuation – from Illustration*)

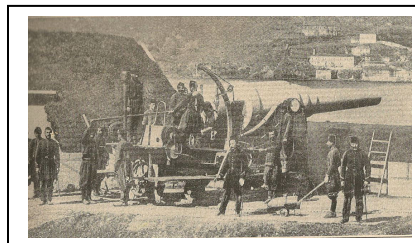
This final operation had taken place on the night of January 8-9, the Newfoundland Battalion to furnish part of the British rear-guard on this second occasion also.

**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 above: *'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces in 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*)

Private Whitten was wounded at Cape Helles, to be evacuated from there – possibly via the Greek island of Lemnos - on His Majesty's Hospital Ship Assaye. Having incurred injuries to the right foot inflicted by gun-fire, he was admitted into the 21st General Hospital in Alexandria, on January 7 of the New Year, 1917.

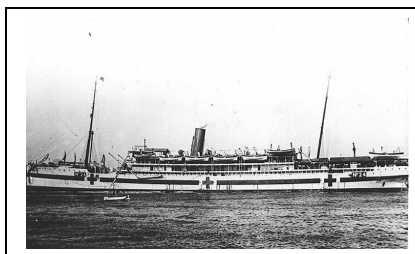


(Right above: *Turkish artillery positions on the northern side of the Dardanelle Straits at or about the time of the Great War – from Illustration*)

(Right: *The same positions as seen almost a century after the Gallipoli Campaign – photograph from 2011*)



(Right: *The image of HMHS Assaye clad in her war-time hospital garb is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. Built in 1899 for the P&O Company, it was not to be until 1908 the she made her first commercial sailings having been chartered as a troop-ship during those intervening years. Six years later again the vessel, in August of 1914, was hired again as a troop-transport before being converted for use as a hospital ship. Having survived the conflict, 'Assaye' continued to be used for these two purposes until the spring of 1928 when she sailed to Norway to be scrapped.)*



From either the *Montazah Palace Convalescent Hospital* or the *Mustapha Convalescent Depot* – both of which are recorded among his papers – to where he had been discharged on March 1 from the 21st General Hospital, Private Whitten was then released a week later, on the 7th, to duty at the Sidi Bishr British Base Depot.



(Preceding page: *The image of the Mustapha Convalescent Camp close to Alexandria – and much of it under canvas - is from the Australian War Memorial web-site.*)

He then embarked eleven days later again, on March 18, onto His Majesty's Transport *Lake Manitoba*, at Port Saïd, situated at the northern end of the Suez Canal, for passage to the French Mediterranean port of Marseille where he landed on the 26th.

(Right below: *The small town and harbour of Port Saïd at the northern end of the Suez Canal pictured just prior to the Great War - from a vintage post-card*)

He was not the only Newfoundland serviceman on board, and while his movements upon arrival in France seem not to be documented, those of some of his fellow passengers were. It is not unreasonable to suppose that he did likewise, in which case he next travelled from Marseille to the British Expeditionary Force Base Depot at Rouen. However, this is only speculation, and the facts may be altogether otherwise (see below).



On April 15, two officers and two-hundred eleven *other ranks* from Rouen reported...*to duty*...with the Newfoundland Battalion in the small village of Englebelmer, some three kilometres behind the front lines of the *Western Front*. Most of them were from the 3rd Reinforcement Draft from Ayr which had arrived at the Base Depot at Rouen from Scotland on March 30, but some were from other places – Egypt among them.

* * * * *

Three months before this time, and only days after Private Whitten's admission into hospital in Alexandria, the British – it will be remembered - had totally abandoned the *Gallipoli Peninsula*, and the Newfoundland unit had thereupon been ordered to the Egyptian port-city of Alexandria. On January 14, the Australian Expeditionary Force Transport *Nestor* had arrived there with the 1st Battalion on board. The vessel was to sail just after mid-day on the 16th, on its way southwards down the Suez Canal to Port Suez where she had docked early on the morrow and where the Newfoundlanders had landed and marched to their encampment.

(Right above: *The image of the Blue Funnel Line vessel Nestor is from the Shipspotting.com web-site. The vessel was launched and fitted in 1912-1913 and was to serve much of her commercial life until 1950 plying the routes between Britain and Australia. During the Great War she served mainly in the transport of Australian troops and was requisitioned once again in 1940 for government service in the Second World War. In 1950 she was broken up.*)



At Suez they were to await further orders since, at the time, the subsequent destination of the British 29th Division had yet to be decided*.

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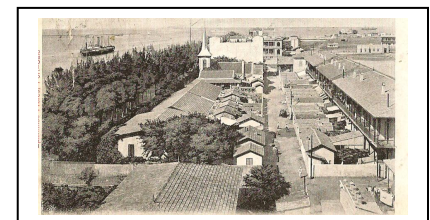
****Bulgaria had by this time entered the conflict on the side of the Central Powers, and Salonika was already becoming a theatre of war.***

(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)*



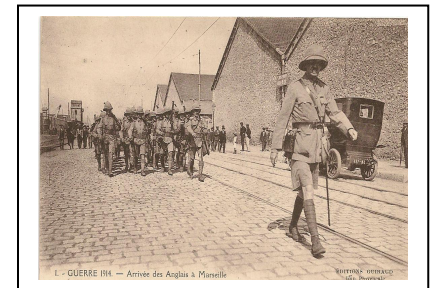
After a two-month interim spent in the vicinity of Port Suez, the almost six-hundred officers and *other ranks* of the 1st Battalion had boarded His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* at Port Tewfiq, on March 14 to begin the voyage back up through the *Suez Canal* en route to France.

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



The Newfoundlanders would disembark eight days afterwards in the Mediterranean port-city of Marseille, on March 22.

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

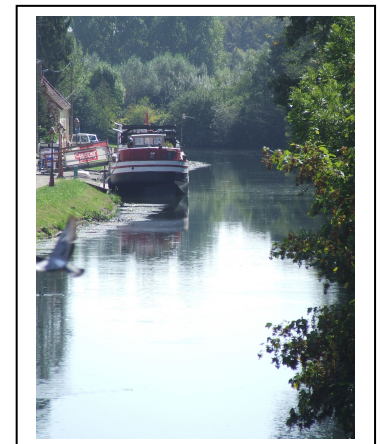


Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train was to find its way to the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy, a thousand kilometres to the north of Marseille. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having inexcusably 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* was to have become a part of their history.

(Right: *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 re-enforcements from Scotland and elsewhere via Rouen – one of whom may have been Private Whitten - and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.

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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 then 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 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 upcoming British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river, *the Somme*, that flowed – 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*.

(Right above: *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.*



(Preceding page: *Wounded at the Somme being transported in hand-carts from the forward area for further medical attention – from Le Miroir*)

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

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

But where was Private Whitten on July 1, 1916? One of the available lists names him as one of the wounded of the day who later...*died of wounds*. On the other hand, his personal files on several occasions cite him as having been...*killed in action*...and had he been wounded for sixteen days he would have almost assuredly been further removed from the front than the village of Auchonvillers where he was buried - and there would surely have been supporting records.



Nor does he figure on the list of those few who survived the fighting and who answered that well-known roll call of the following morning. Had he been seconded to another unit on that day, or to the ten per cent reserve held back at Louvencourt, the name of Private Whitten would surely appear on another official list to be officially documented on July 4.

But it does not.

The few remnants of the Newfoundland Battalion – and of the other depleted British units – now remained in the trenches perhaps fearing the worst, and at night searching for the wounded and burying the dead.



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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 further again to the rear area and to billets in the village of Mailly-Maillet.

(Preceding page: *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 at Mailly-Maillet 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 had still numbered only...*11 officers and 260 rifles*...after the holocaust of Beaumont-Hamel, just one-quarter of establishment battalion strength.

Unfortunately there seems to be no nominal roll of this detachment and the question remains unanswered as to where Private Whitten was or had been. But by that time he was apparently serving with the Newfoundland unit...

...and it would seem that the unit was now considered strong enough for the *Regimental War Diarist* to report that on the same July 14 that the Newfoundlanders had been ordered back into the trenches.

The Germans were to welcome them with a heavy bombardment.

The son of Margaret Jane Whitten (née *Sheppard*)* and of George Charles Whitten of the Southside, St. John's (later of 19, Queen's Street? – certainly some mail was addressed to there), he was also brother to Austin Sheppard , to Edith and to Robert.

**The couple had married on January 5 of 1893.*

Private Whitten was also husband to Sarah Mabel* (née *Sharpe*) of 25, Barter's Hill, then of the Southside, St. John's, whom he had married on December 6, 1914, and to whom he had allotted a daily seventy cents from his pay and also, on January 1 of 1916, had willed his all. The couple had no children.

**By March of 1915 Sarah Mabel Whitten had moved from the Southside to Bonavista and, following Private Whitten's death, would later re-marry – to Ernest Mercer - and moved to 7, Ferry Street – then Townsend Street - Sydney, Cape Breton.*

Private Whitten was reported as having been...*killed in action* - almost certainly during the enemy shelling of the Newfoundland trenches near Beaumont-Hamel - as recorded in the *Regimental War Diary* - on July 16, 1916, and was buried by a Reverend C. H. Mosse attached to the 88th Brigade.

Edgar Charles Whitten had enlisted at a *declared* twenty-two years of age: date of birth in St. John's, Newfoundland, May 10, 1893 (from Newfoundland Vital Statistics).



(Right above: A further view of the reconstructed trench-work which is today to be found in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel - photograph from 2007(?))

Private Edgar Charles Whitten 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).



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 – January 29, 2023.