



Forget-Me-Not

Fallen Boy Soldiers



Royal Newfoundland Regiment
World War One



*In the event of my
death I give the
whole of my estate
to my brother...*

Gary F. Browne

Forget-Me-Not
FALLEN BOY SOLDIERS

Royal Newfoundland Regiment

WORLD WAR ONE

By Gary F. Browne, M.O.M.

Epigraph

*They shall not grow old as we that grow old;
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We shall remember them.
We shall remember them.
(For the Fallen, Laurence Binyon.)*



Newfoundland Regiment Cap Badge - WWI

I cannot help feeling that the rock stratum has in this case a significance and a fitness peculiar to the land we live in. It is typical of the ruggedness, the hardness, and the strength of character of the people of our Island Home. It appropriately represents the will of an indomitable race whose fore-bearers, during several hundred years, struggled with the forces of nature, and, notwithstanding well nigh insuperable difficulties, overcome them, and gave to our oldest colony, the proud distinction she holds today in the Imperial diadem. These same characteristics handed down to succeeding generations permitted our men to achieve those wonderful deeds of valour and heroism in the Great War.... (Newfoundland Governor – His Excellency Sir William Allardyce, K.C.M.G. “The Veteran Magazine.” January 1924: 54 – opening remarks at the 1923 Official Blasting at the construction site of Newfoundland’s National War Memorial on Water Street.)

Praise for Gary Browne's books:

"Forget-Me-Not: Fallen Boy Soldiers"... The problem with remembrance is that society forgets. With generational skip, memories of our fallen are lost. As the Commanding Officer of this famed unit, I am convinced most of our province is on the precipice of forgetfulness. The antidote is an aggressive charge to educate and increase awareness as we approach the centennial of the First World War. Our generation has a no-fail mission: We must remember, as their blood runs in our veins. Gary Browne is leading that charge. As a historical researcher, his job is to present facts so we do not forget. His details would have caused a stir during those war years. His heart-breaking facts regarding boy soldiers, added with his probing open-ended questions, force a reader to draw out deductions. By the end of the book, a reader will have an insatiable hunger for more. The topics in his book are gems for readers to discover. This book identifies those young men and their heart-wrenching stories. Best enjoyed with time to yourself, this book will not let you go until you have devoured the last page.

Alex Brennan, B.A. , CD
Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Officer First Battalion
The Royal Newfoundland Regiment

* * * * *

Gary Browne's book "To Serve and Protect" tells the little known story of the Newfoundland Constabulary during World War II. The book provides a richly documented and engaging look at this pivotal moment in Newfoundland history. With the passing of time, these stories of courage and sacrifice were in danger of being lost to us. Gary Browne has therefore done us all a great service.

Dr. Steven High
Canada Research Chair in Public History, Concordia University

* * * * *

"Soldier Priest in the Killing Fields of Europe," Gary Browne and Darrin McGrath's book about Padre Thomas Nangle, chaplain to the Newfoundland Regiment in WW1, is an accurate, complete and enthralling account of the life's work of one who served his fellow Newfoundlanders well.

The Honourable Edward M. Roberts, CM, ONL, QC
Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador 2002 to 2008
Honourary Colonel, Royal Newfoundland Regiment 2003 to 2008

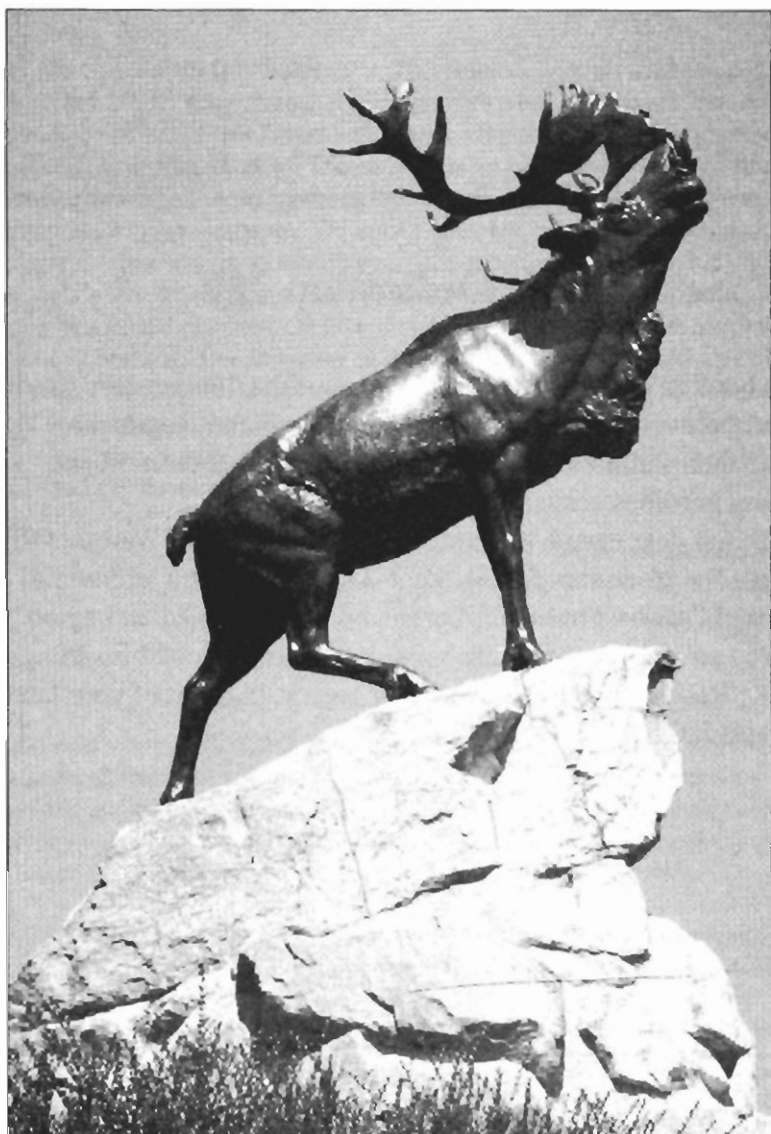


Dedication



This book is dedicated to the memory of the “Fallen Boy Soldiers” of our beloved and famed Royal Newfoundland Regiment – WW1, and to their families and loved ones, especially their mothers – war’s unsung heroines/casualties.

To my dear friend, the late Jerry O’Grady, Chief Warrant Officer, Royal Newfoundland Regiment (Retired) and Ceremonial and Protocol Officer, Provincial Command, Royal Canadian Legion, who wanted so much to read this book, but sickness took him from us in 2010. “Rest in peace, Jerry and your legacy, like that of your father’s, Captain J. O’ Grady, will live on.”



Beaumont-Hamel Caribou Memorial

It was a magnificent display of trained and disciplined valour; and its assault only failed of success because dead men can advance no farther." (General de Lisle - 29 Division comments on the Newfoundland Regiment's Beaumont-Hamel advance on July 1, 1916.)

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Acknowledgements

In the writing of *Forget-Me-Not: Fallen Boy Soldiers Royal Newfoundland Regiment World War One* and *Soldier Priest in the Killing Fields of Europe – Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Nangle* there have been literally hundreds of people who have assisted me in obtaining information on the Royal Newfoundland Regiment – WW1. Please be assured that I have truly appreciated every piece of information I have received, regardless of how big or small the contribution – thank you!

To name each and every person who has contributed over the years would be impossible, but you know who you are, and you have indeed assisted me in writing this tremendous up-until-now untold story, and like me, that should make you proud.

Firstly and most importantly, I thank my loving and truly understanding wife, Paula for her untold patience and steadfast support, because without it, this book would not have seen the light of day – thank you so much for what you have endured!

To my wonderful children: Chris and Pam, Danielle, Greg and Pippa, thank you for all the constant and unconditional support and motivation you have so lovingly given to “the old fella” - you will never truly appreciate its needed value and strength. Much thanks to our youngest son, Greg, who designed the front and back covers of this book.

To my siblings and their spouses: Noel and Jeanette, Lorraine and Jimmy, Keith and Rose, David and Liz and all their children thank you for being there, and for the no-strings-attached love and support. I am sorry for all the impromptu family occasions and fishing trips I missed because I was working on this book – I will make it up.

It is said that people can count their fortunes by the number of

friends they have, and in that case I am truly a very rich man. To my many friends, thank you so much for the personal support given to me over the course of researching and writing this book. It would be remiss of me, if I didn't make special mention of Brigadier-General (Retired) Ed Ring, Captain Joe Prim, Professor Fred Hawksley (MUN), Dr. Rob Shea (MUN), and John Fleet – thanks guys for the constant encouragement, support, frequent valuable conversations, and of course, your humorous e-mails, which helped keep my sanity. To John Fleet, thank you so much for the 2009 week-long salmon fishing trip to the renowned and spectacular Harry's River on the beautiful West Coast of Newfoundland; the peace and tranquility truly rejuvenated me, and those bottled moose-fry-up memories helped me get through a demanding winter and spring of research and writing.

To my publishers Peter and Jean Edwards Stacey of DRC Publishing thank you for your counsel, friendship, support, tolerance and patience.

I give special recognition and acknowledgement to the following people/groups: Hugh Nangle, son of the late Lt. Colonel Thomas Nangle; Jim Miller, Project Manager, and Dean Bailey of The Trinity Historical Society; Barry Porter – By the Bay Museum, Lewisporte; Larry Dohey, Archivist – Roman Catholic Archdiocese, St. John's; Edith Samson – Coaker Foundation; Neachel Keeping, City of St. John's Archives; Joan Anderson, White Elephant Archives, Makkovik; Cathy Elliott, Corner Brook Museum; Jessie Chisholm; Dr. David Facey-Crowther; Chris Butt; Lt. Colonel Aubrey Halfyard – Chair RNR Museum Committee; Dr. Graham Skanes and Lt. Colonel Norm Bull, RNR Museum Committee; Colonel Adrian Heffernan, Church Lads Brigade; Major William Tilley, Archivist – Church Lads Brigade, St. John's; Captain Bernard Davis, Church Lads Brigade; Michael Barrington, Executive Assistant Church Lads Brigade; Lieutenant Terry Hissey, Church Lads Brigade, England; Brendan Collins, historian – Placentia; Ian Walsh, Royal Canadian Legion – Placentia; Anita O'Keefe, Town of Placentia; Gale D. Warren; Deceased Executive Members of The Great War Veterans Association; Jane (Cron) Lynch; Heather (Cron) Moores; Gerry

O'Brien; Andrew F. Brown – Salvage; Gail (Brown) Hancock; Reverend Father Paul C. Thoms – Salvage; Joe Dobbin, historian – St. Joseph's, SMB; Mary (White) Valencic; William White; Tony McAllister; Frank Petten, Owner/Publisher, Shoreline News – Conception Bay South; Carol Anne Dawe, Shore Line News – CBS; Darrell Hillier; Loretta Ward; Chris Morry and family; Professor Christopher (Chris) Sharpe, MUN; Newfoundland and Labrador Studies Executive Board; Councilor Frank Galgay; Frank Gogos; Morgan MacDonald; Ross Traverse; John Maunder; Bill O'Gorman; Giles Muir – Toronto; William Crosbie; Eugene Ellsworth; Mike Wert; Dries – Talbot House, Belgium; Department of Veterans Affairs – Canada.

I cannot say enough about the professional assistance given to me by the very capable and approachable management and staff of the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador – The Rooms Corporation; the same can also be said of the management and staff of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies – Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am also indebted to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for its timely and professional assistance, which contributed much to my research findings.

To those persons of whom I may have forgotten/omitted, and in this exhaustive process, I am sure there are some, I truly apologize, for it was not by design that I have forgotten.

Message of Commendation

Brigadier General Edward P. Ring (Ret.) Canadian Forces

As a proud Newfoundlander and Labradorian and 34-year veteran of the Canadian Forces, I am very pleased to commend this book on such an important and deserving subject. Having known the author for eighteen years, I have witnessed firsthand the dedication and passion that he brings to his work. These qualities are clearly evident in *"Forget-me-not: Fallen Boy Soldiers."* The accounts contained in this volume are heartrending. But the stories of these young fighting men, and the words and actions of their mothers, also demonstrate the deep pride and devotion which Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have always had for each other. Those described in this work were children thrown into the inferno of combat, but they persevered through their profound love for their families at home, and for their comrades in battle. It has been said that a nation knows itself by its deeds. I thank Gary for not only his enormous effort in producing this book, but for preserving such an important part of our national historical record. I see Newfoundland and Labrador today as a more prosperous and successful place than ever before. Where we stand today is linked by the invisible thread of history to the courage, loss, pain, and hope described in these pages.



A regiment is a living entity, bound together by the deeds and sacrifices of those who have gone before. Newfoundland and Labrador has similarly been shaped by all those who have fought, and died, in our wars. *"Forget-me-not: Fallen Boy Soldiers"* tells the story of some of these young heroes, who earned the title – ***"Better Than the Best"*** while they were but boys.

Foreword

Fred Hawksley, Professor, Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

In this book, Gary has presented us with the opportunity to engage with moments of great humanness through the true stories lived out by the youngsters who served with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in the Great War, a time when what it meant to be human was severely tested, attested to, explored and expressed at the highest level. This is how Gary's work engages us.

The title Gary has chosen for his work on the child soldiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in the Great War matches the significance of his work. The forget-me-not flower resonates, through the heavenly stars its petals represent, with the children of Newfoundland who were given by their country in service to a Mother Country from which their souls originated. In the continuing research of Newfoundlanders in the Great War, these "kids", for the first time, now take their special place as a result of Gary's work.

I met Gary, on an autumn afternoon some four years ago in the Student Café at Memorial University in St. John's when he was working on the book "Soldier Priest." During our meeting I immediately knew we both shared a passion for the Great War and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Gary is the epitome of energy, determination and passion. It has inspired me ever since and we have become comrades through the desire to understand, and share with others, the Great War and the significance of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment's role in it. As we have shared countless energized conversations, sometimes, in our excitement having to mute our voices in the quiet of The Rooms-Provincial Archives, we have been constantly reminded that there is no end to the story or the need for the telling.

The legacy of the Regiment continues as members serve today in foreign postings in Afghanistan and in so many other parts of the world.

For many, the act of remembrance is an end in itself, but not for Gary. He knows that with each new discovery, a new story emerges, and he sets himself the task of working at the scene, seeking out the clues, and so the way forward.

Newfoundlanders stand where those who went before them stood. We all walk too in the shoes of those who gave themselves in the Great War. Gary's work connects us with them and contributes dimension to our understanding of their experience.

In his new work, Gary takes a bold step into a little known part of the story of The Regiment as he takes us into the lives of children of Newfoundland who were in various ways encouraged to go to war as child soldiers. We have seen through various media reports stories of child soldiers in other parts of the world in recent times, but know little of our own child soldiers in the Great War until now.

Have you seen the skateboarders on the Memorial, and listened to the debates about why "these kids" show little recognition of where they are skating? As you watch them, or your own sons and daughters playing basketball or soccer with their team mates, put yourself back in 1914, and see them marching down Water Street, proud as punch, ready to do whatever ordered, to do the unimaginable things they were asked to do and to witness.

Through Gary's painstaking and dedicated research he has invited us into the lives of Newfoundland's child soldiers of the Great War. And, when we get to the end of Gary's work, he asks us not only to wonder at them, their bravery and courage, but to wonder also how a country, and so any country, could have sent its young to such horror and to give, as is here in Gary's work, all of their young lives in so doing. Such giving was in equal dimension shown by the Mothers of the young who served.

As a young WW1 soldier lay dying, he called, as did so many, for his Mother. The Voluntary Aids Detachment Nurse attending him said, "I'll be your Mother tonight." But with all the courage and bravery of these young V.A.D.'s, some as young as the boy soldiers themselves, as they attempted to bring comfort and solace to the final moment, they were painfully aware they could never take the place of the "Mother" called out for.

The inclusion of Mothers' letters, desperate to seek information

about their beloved children, so far away from their Newfoundland home, and the impact of the dreaded word “missing”, is another powerful dimension of Gary’s work. He connects us to the voices of Mothers and Fathers through the letters sent by them to the War Department, searching, begging for information, anything, to help them make sense of the catastrophe that had befallen their boy and so their families.

During the difficult recruitment times of the Great War, Mothers were targeted through the subtle, and not so subtle, propaganda machinery of Government. Imagine the sheer forces under which Mothers faced propaganda letters in the Newspapers encouraging them to repeat to their own children, “Go my Son”, or, “I don’t want you to go, but if I were you, I would go”. Constructed with precision by writers working for the department of propaganda these fictitious Mothers’ letters were intended to encourage Mothers to give their children to the Mother Country to bolster and encourage recruitment.

Gary has provided powerful new material that will make all of us sit back as we engage with their stories, the sense of loss growing and deepening as one moves through the pages, then the complete loss of words in the moment when the faces of these boys, or as one old soldier calls them these “kids”, beam out at the reader in youth and innocence. Soldiers of the Great War but children still, in need of the loving care and safety of a Father figure to look after them and finding it amongst the horror of the trenches in men like Private Howard L. Morry who calls one young boy he takes care of “My little buddy.” The young were the ones the Army wanted. They followed orders easily, were easy to condition, and they were of course immortal, like all teenagers. Gary has made these forgotten children of Newfoundland live again, and has helped us to know them in the context of their teenage playground of trenches, mud, blood and horror of the Great War. In our hearts and minds now, as we near the centennial of the Great War, they have become, through Gary’s careful research and poignant imagery, the heavenly stars of the forget-me-not flower. They had no chance to blossom into the tenacious Newfoundlanders they might have become, to return and take their place, like the forget-me-not, to cling to the hard and unforgiving rock of their beloved island home.

Through Gary’s new and groundbreaking work, he has helped us come to know them, and remember them.

Introduction

For those who have read *Soldier Priest in the Killing Fields of Europe* I am sure you are wondering - what is the motivational force that is driving the author, in such a short period, to write a second book, which also deals with war-related death and suffering? What causes the author/researcher to spend three years of his retirement delving into war graves' reports, death notices, obituaries, hundreds of military personnel files, reading many heartbreaking letters from soldiers' mothers, and so on, to tell the story of our heroic war dead – World War One?

Well, the answer, in my mind, is quite simple – it is my profound pride of people and of place, and I continue to be awe-struck with the heroic deeds of our brave soldiers, many of whom were only boys, who left their North Atlantic home during World War One to fight in “The War to End All Wars.” The more I learn, the more I am spell-bound by their heroism, bravery and total devotion to duty in the face of unimaginable enemy fire-power and overwhelming strength. I am also amazed with the, often unheralded, relentless suffering they endured. The “Boy Soldiers” of whom I write, were those youthful warriors who were teenagers at the time of their death during WW1.

I must strongly state that this book in no way attempts to diminish the tremendous legacy of all those Newfoundlanders who fought with the Allied Navy, Army, Flying Corps, Merchant Marine, and those who so diligently served with the Newfoundland Forestry Corps., Nursing Units, the Red Cross, and those on the Home Front during World War One (WW1). These groups all have a distinct and illustrious history of bravery, commitment, and accomplishment, well beyond the call of duty.

Throughout this book, I will profile a number of “Boy Soldiers”

whose stories I have reviewed through a process of “random sampling.” It wasn’t feasible to profile all the “Boy Soldiers” who fought in the Regiment during WW1 because there was a significant number who had very little information in their war personnel files, and a considerable number of the stories are very similar. The daunting task of attempting to identify all the fallen “Boy Soldiers” was greatly challenged by the fact that they lied about their true ages.

I have also taken the liberty of including additional information and related nuances concerning WWI, which, I am confident, will interest and intrigue the reader. Now, come along with me, on this untold story, as I retrace “The Trail of the Caribou” taken by these youthful Newfoundland heroes of WW1.

Gary F. Browne, M.O.M.

“Forget-Me-Not” Newfoundland’s Remembrance Flower

Newfoundland became unique in the world when, in 1918, our Great War Veterans Association officially made the beautiful little blue “Forget-Me-Not” our “Remembrance Flower.” To the best of my knowledge, the Newfoundland “Forget-Me-Not” was the first war related commemorative flower to be formally adopted, years before the poppy. The flower was worn every year on July 1, Commemoration Day, starting in 1917 when Church and State honoured the men who served and died in World War One. July 1 was, of course, the date of the infamous 1916 Battle of Beaumont-Hamel where our Regiment was nearly annihilated. Following the adoption of the “Poppy” as the Allied Remembrance Flower, the “Forget-Me-Not” was worn on July 1, and the Poppy on November 11.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Forget-Me-Not was worn on July 1 up until about 2000. I believe our province should once again make the “Forget-Me-Not” the July 1 – Remembrance Day Flower, and bring back this great commemorative tradition in honour of the Newfoundlanders who participated in “The War to End All Wars.” I think the Royal Canadian Legion, of which I am a long time proud member, should seriously consider re-introducing the selling of this small and appropriate floral tribute as a fundraiser for military veterans and their families, as was so faithfully done by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Great War Veterans Association for many years.

This poem by an unknown author in Captain C. S. Frost's scrapbook album in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment's museum expresses it all in relation to the iconic little "Forget-me-not."



A Mother Remembers

*"Please wear a "forget-me-not" the lady said
And held one forth, but I shook my head.
Then I stopped and watched as she offered them there,
And her face was old and lined with care;
But beneath the scars the years had made
There remained a smile that refused to fade.*

*A boy came whistling down the street,
Bouncing along on care-free feet.
His smile was full of joy and fun,
"Lady," said he, "may I have one?"
When she pinned it on he turned to say,
"Why do you wear a forget-me-not today?"*

*The lady smiled in her wistful way
And answered, "This is Memorial Day,
And the forget-me-not there is the symbol for
The gallant men who died in war.
And because they did, you and I are free-
That's why we wear a forget-me-not, you see."*

*"I had a boy about your size,
With golden hair and big blue eyes.
He loved to play and jump and shout,
Free as a bird he would race about.
As the years went by he learned and grew
And became a man – as you will, too.*

*"He was fine and strong, with a boyish smile,
But he'd seemed with us such a little while*

*When war broke out and he went away,
I still remember his face that day
When he smiled at me and said, 'Goodbye,
I'll be back soon mom, so please don't cry.'*

*But the war went on and he had to stay,
And all I could do was wait and pray.
His letters told me of the awful fight,
(I can see it still in my dreams at night),
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed wire,
And the mines and bullets, the bombs and fire.*

*"Till at last, at last, the war was won –
And that's why we wear a forget-me-not, son."
The small boy turned as if to go,
Then said, 'Thanks, lady, I'm glad to know.
That sure did sound like an awful fight
But your son -- did he come back alright?'*

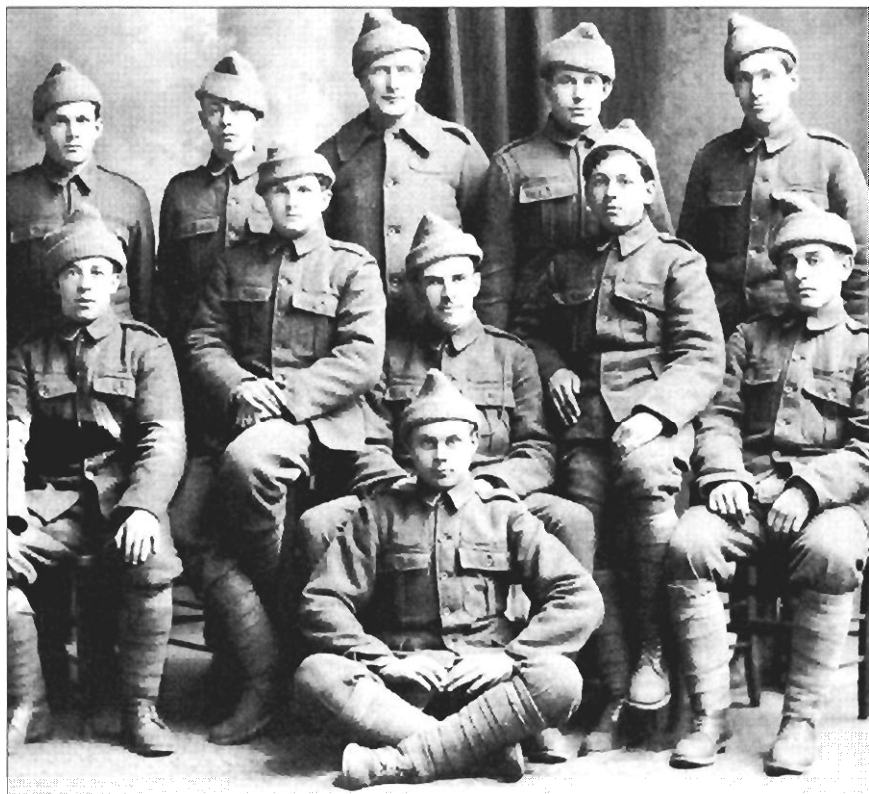
*A tear rolled down each faded cheek,
She shook her head but didn't speak.
I moved away in a sort of shame
And if you were me you'd have done the same;
For our thanks, in giving, is oft delayed,
Though our freedom was bought – and thousands paid.*

*And so when you see a forget-me-not worn,
Let us reflect on the burden borne
By those who gave their very all
When asked to answer their country's call
That we at home in peace might live.*

**See Appendix 2 for further information on the Forget-Me-Not*



WWI Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery - France



"Boy Soldiers" pictured with other members of the Newfoundland Regiment circa 1914 (Courtesy of Morry Family)

Chapter One

“Boy Soldiers”

- He is a mere child..... Thomas Trask

Thomas Trask of Elliston was so upset about his 16-year-old son, Norman, joining up to fight in the First World War, that he took it upon himself to write a letter to Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary, Richard Squires, asking him to send the underage boy home. He noted that Norman had been attested into the Newfoundland Regiment on October 24, 1917, by the local magistrate at Grand Falls.

As you are aware, my son Norman Trask has volunteered and he is only 16 years of age. I want you to please send him home, as he went against his father and mother, and besides he is too young for that. He is a mere child, if he was older I would not feel so bad over it, but I can't stand to see so young a boy go out in the World. Please do your best to put him back and send him to Grand Falls or home.

*Respectfully yours,
Mr. Thomas Trask*

On November 1, 1917, Major Montgomerie, District Officer Commanding Newfoundland Regiment, replied to an earlier letter that Reverend W. H. Dotchon, the Methodist minister at Elliston, had written on behalf of Private Norman Trask's mother:

...I am to say that it is not the desire of the Adjutant, that any young man under the age of eighteen years, be enlisted, as such are not fit for the work. It is noteworthy, however to note that it is the boys of this age, that are showing the only real spirit that is being manifested to-day.

There are numbers of young men in your community, and in every community in this colony, who have not been awakened to a sense of their responsibility, and it is necessary that every man of British blood should realize the responsibility that rests upon him in this matter, and show the men of their country their plain duty. ...I shall be glad if you will, as far as you can, place before your people their responsibilities in this matter. We do not want men under eighteen years of age, but we do want every man between eighteen and forty-one.

The irony, in relation to the adjutant's statement of not wanting young men under 18 years of age, is that those seeking enlistment were not required to show official proof of age. "Apparent Age" was the terminology used on all British Army enlistment forms. This lack of official proof of age allowed thousands of under-aged "Boy Soldiers" to join the British Fighting Services during WW1.

"There were Mothers, coming down to Headquarters (C.L.B. Armoury, St. John's), saying that their sons, who joined up, were under age." (A.J. Stacey, Memoirs of a Blue Puttee)

As a result of the campaign carried on his behalf, Private Norman Trask was discharged from the Regiment on November 1, 1917, after just 17 days service. Other "Boy Soldiers" were not as fortunate. In just one battle, the infamous Battle of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, a total of 39 "Boy Soldiers" from the Newfoundland Regiment gave up their young lives. Twenty-one have no known graves.

Private William Morgan, son of John and Sarah Morgan of St. John's, gave the supreme sacrifice on July 1, 1916, becoming the first 16-year-old Newfoundlander to lay down his life in battle. This plumber's apprentice-turned- soldier enlisted on January 2, 1915 after lying about his age – stating he was 19. Private Morgan, fair complexioned, 5' 5" tall, and weighing 126 pounds, first fought and was wounded at Gallipoli. At the time of his death he had served with the Regiment for 181 days. To add to his parents' grief, his body was never found.

Private Harold Hutchins, son of Philip and Louise Hutchins of Greenspond, Bonavista Bay, was 17-years-old when he was killed in action on July 1, 1916.

Private Norman Coultas, 17-year-old son of Myles and Maria Coultas of St. John's, was killed in action on July 1, 1916. Norman fought at Gallipoli in 1915 and was evacuated to hospital suffering from a bad case of frostbite following a vicious winter storm which left many Allied soldiers dead. Norman was a clerk working in St. John's before enlisting in the Regiment. Maria Coultas was widowed prior to her son's death. This mother had to face the tragedy of death and the agony of her son's body never being found.

Private Edward R. Winter, son of Thomas and Florence Winter of St. John's, was 18-years-old when he was killed in action on July 1, 1916. A clerk, he joined the Regiment on December 15, 1914. He was one of the many Church Lads Brigade (C.L.B.) boys who answered the call not long after the war began. He served in Gallipoli before losing his life at Beaumont-Hamel. Private Winter is buried in Ancre British Cemetery, about 1-1/2 miles from Beaumont-Hamel.

Private George Graham Crosbie of Bay Roberts was a 16-year-old student when he enlisted in the Regiment at St. John's on April 19, 1915. He was 17 when he died on July 3, 1916, from wounds received at the July 1 Battle of Beaumont-Hamel. This "Boy Soldier" from Conception Bay North was the son of Walter and Mary Crosbie.

Private Louis Brown, 16-year-old son of Henry and Hannah Brown of Bishop's Harbour (Salvage) lost his life to artillery fire on October 11, 1916, at Gueudecourt. This youthful fisherman joined the Regiment on December 20, 1915, after lying about his age. He laid down his life some 270 days later. Sadly, for his family, his body was never recovered.

Private Gordon Mullings, 18-year-old son of Joseph Mullings of St. John's, became the first "Boy Soldier" to lose his life in battle in 1917 - January 20. He was 16 when he enlisted.

Private Alfred Cake was 16-years-old when he lost his life at Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917. A former clerk at Ayre & Sons in St. John's, he was born in Tilt Cove, son of Manuel and Patience Cake. He joined the Regiment at St. John's on April 10, 1916, at the age of fifteen, after falsely declaring he was 18.

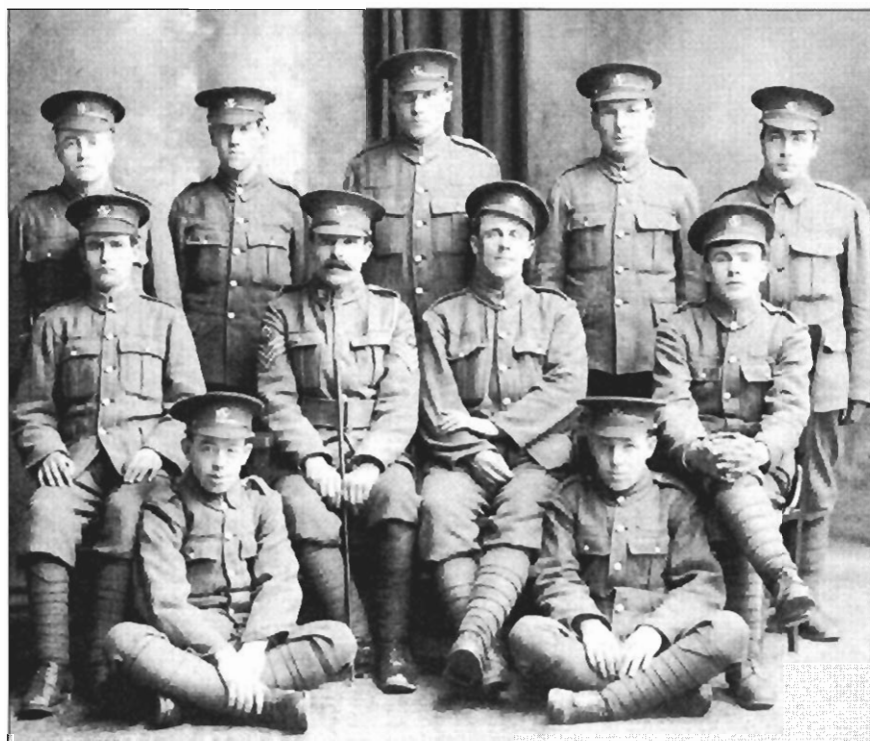
Private James Cron, son of James and Emma Cron of Harbour Grace, was 18 when he was killed at Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917. He enlisted in the Newfoundland Regiment on June 4, 1915. Private Cron fought at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, and was wounded in the hip.

Private Joseph Vaughan, son of Henry and Ellen Vaughan of St. John's, was 15-years-old when he joined up and 17 when he was killed at Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917. Private Vaughan had earlier fought in Gallipoli and at Beaumont-Hamel.

Private George Brinston of North Harbour, Placentia Bay, was 17-years-old when he was killed at Broembeek on October 9, 1917, and his body was never found. He joined the Regiment on August 9, 1915.

Private Leo Christopher, son of Michael and Catherine Christopher of St. Joseph's, was 17-years-old when he was killed at Broembeek on October 9, 1917. He joined up at age 15.

There were 1,305 soldiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who lost their lives in World War One, a number that includes several members of the Newfoundland Forestry Corps. A significant number of those who died in the war were “Boy Soldiers”- teenagers. Through my research, I have identified 272 of these boys.



*Platoon 2 Newfoundland Regiment circa 1914
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*



*Platoon 6 Newfoundland Regiment circa 1914
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

Chapter Two

Newfoundland Joins the War Effort

*-The surly drums beat terrible afar,
With all the dreadful music of war.Broome*

At 9:25 p.m. on August 4, 1914, Sir Walter Davidson, Newfoundland's British-appointed governor, received a telegram from the Office of the Secretary of State for the Colonies advising that Great Britain had officially declared war against Germany. The brief message received at Government House in St. John's would have a monumental effect on Newfoundland and its people for many years to come. Newfoundland, being a Dominion of the British Empire, was automatically jettisoned into WW1 the moment Great Britain declared war on Germany.

August 1914 was a typical summer's month in Newfoundland. In every harbour, cove and inlet fishermen were hard at work from dawn to dusk, attempting to catch as many fish as they could in order to feed and clothe their families through the cold North Atlantic winter. Other Newfoundland men were struggling to earn a living as farmers, miners and loggers.

Women - mothers, wives, and daughters - were busy salting cod-fish and laying it out to dry on the flakes, tending gardens, picking and preserving local wild berries, and toiling at home to ensure the family was ready for the onset of winter. These loving, caring and stalwart matriarchs, who contributed so much to all things family, were about to have their worlds and hearts torn apart by the ravages of war.

Religion, through Newfoundland's strong and distinct mixture of Irish, West Country England and Scottish culture, would play a major role in the lives of those affected by war, both overseas and on the home front. The people of Newfoundland would soon need all the God-given help that could be mustered in order to get through what was about to be savagely unleashed upon them.

In July of 1914, the families, and especially the mothers, of fifteen-year-old boys like Leo Christopher of St. Joseph's, Salomier; Thomas Brinton of Burin; Louis Brown of Bishop's Harbour; Alfred Cake of Tilt Cove; William Morgan of St. John's; and Francis Thistle of Gander Bay had no idea that these mere youngsters would, in the near future, lie buried in the far-off soil of France and Belgium.

With Newfoundland's automatic entry into WW1 as part of the British Empire, the gauntlet was dropped for citizens everywhere to raise land and sea fighting units in support of the Mother Country's battle against the well trained and aggressive Hun. The lead role in raising fighting units from Newfoundland was taken by Governor Davidson in consultation with Prime Minister Edward Patrick Morris.

Newfoundland had been without the services of an organized defence unit since the withdrawal of the British garrison in 1870. The only semblance of an armed force was a small colonial police force, the Newfoundland Constabulary, and a volunteer Royal Naval Reserve component.

On August 12, 1914, in an unprecedented move, Governor Davidson called together a group of fifty or so influential private citizens who quickly formed an organization to be initially known as the Newfoundland Patriotic Association (N.P.A). For the next three years, the N.P.A. would be totally responsible for the operation and administration of Newfoundland's wartime infantry establishment, the 1st Newfoundland Regiment. Davidson became Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding Officer of the Regiment, a position and rank he held until his departure from Newfoundland in 1917. The government of Newfoundland formed its own Department of Militia in 1917 and it eventually took over all responsibilities for the Newfoundland Regiment. The N.P.A. immediately took it upon itself to enlist and equip a regiment of some 500 men for overseas duty.

Chapter Three

Recruitment Begins

- Adventure beckoned to her children..... Capt. L.C. Murphy

On August 21, 1914, Governor Davidson sent out a recruitment plea, by public proclamation, for Newfoundlanders to come to the aid of the “Mother Country” by enlisting in the 1st Newfoundland Regiment:

Proclamation

**Your King and Country Need You!
Will You Answer The Call?**

At this very moment the Empire is engaged in the greatest war in the history of the World.

In this crisis your Country calls on her young men to rally round Her Flag and enlist in the ranks of her Army.

If every Patriotic young man answers Her call, Great Britain and the Empire will emerge stronger and more united than ever.

...We want to send our best, and we believe that Britain’s oldest Colony will again gain greater honour and glory for Her name.

If you are between 19 and 35 years old, will you answer your Country’s call? If you will, then go to the nearest Magistrate and enroll your name for service in the fighting line...Tickets to St. John’s will be provided by the Magistrate free of cost. The terms

of enlistment are: To serve abroad for the duration of the war, but not exceeding one year.... Volunteers from outports will be given free passage to St. John's.

Newfoundland promised to enlist, equip and dispatch 500 members of the Regiment to England. The proclamation declared the men would leave within one month of their enrollment, after receiving a course of instruction and training in St. John's. Each private would receive a rate of pay of \$1 per day and free rations from the date of enrollment until date of return, with a portion paid to dependents left behind, or allowed to accumulate. Rejected applicants would get their way paid back home.

The governor's proclamation garnered immediate results, with 74 volunteers enlisting on the first night. Within a week, 275 had enrolled. On August 25, the C.L.B. Armoury on Harvey Road in St. John's, which had been designated Regimental Headquarters and training facility, witnessed an emotional and patriotic show of solidarity when 40 members of the Catholic Cadet Corps arrived as a unit and enlisted. By September 2, the number of volunteers had climbed to 743, with more than 250 having been officially attested.

In 1914, under British military law, it was legal to enlist in His Majesty's Fighting Services at 18 years of age, but a serviceman had to be 19 to go overseas. There were specific exceptions to the legal age of 18; for example, 16-year-olds could join the Regiment band with the written consent of their parents.

Thanks to the efforts of vibrant local religious communities there existed in Newfoundland, at the outbreak of war, cadet corps and brigades. These cadet corps/brigades would prove to be an excellent pool of military-minded young men and officers who would become the foundation for our citizen-soldiers' Regiment – forever proudly known as “The Fighting Newfoundlanders.”

Those corps/brigades were as follows: The Church Lads Brigade (Senior Corps formed in 1892); The Catholic Cadet Corps; The Methodist Guards; and The Newfoundland Highlanders (Scottish Kirk). The Legion of Frontiersmen was the other brigade group (adult) whose membership provided some 150 recruits to the

Regiment in 1914. The outstanding war record of these boys and men from the respective corps/brigades will forever stand as a testimony to the bravery, commitment and sacrifice they so unselfishly gave in The Great War:

The city brigades, composed mostly of young, beautifully fit athletes from rowing crews, football and hockey teams, enlisted in a body. Every train from the interior brought lumbermen, fresh from the mills and forests, husky, steel-muscled, pugnacious at the most peaceful of times, frankly spoiling for excitement. From the out-harbours and fishing villages came callous-handed fishermen, with backs a little bowed from straining at the oar, accustomed to a life of danger. Every day there came to the (C.L.B.) armoury loose-jointed, easy-swinging trappers and woodsmen, simple-spoken young men, who in offering their keenness of vision and sureness of marksmanship, were volunteering their all. It was ideal material for soldiers. (Gallishaw, Trenching at Gallipoli)

The value of the Boys' brigades has been more clearly demonstrated in Newfoundland than in any other part of the British Empire. Had it not been for these Brigades and the fairly efficient military training of their members, it is very doubtful whether Newfoundland would have raised its own distinctive Regiment.... All the original officers of the Regiment and practically all the original non-commissioned officers were officers and non-commissioned officers of the different Boys' Brigades. (1920 letter to Newfoundland's Prime Minister Squires from Lt. Col W. Rendell. (The Rooms Archives MG 439)

Captain Leo C. Murphy of the Newfoundland Regiment offered his thoughts on early recruitment, the war, and what lay ahead for Newfoundland's sons who so quickly and eagerly answered the call to arms:

Adventure beckoned to her children. A larger nobler life seemed to be about to open upon the world. But it was, in fact, only Death! (Captain Leo C. Murphy's unpublished manuscript – The Rooms Archives)

Why did so many Newfoundlanders offer themselves for war duty? This is a question that has reverberated since time in memoriam, has caused much debate, and always begs to be considered when discussing Newfoundland's contribution in The Great War. I believe it is important to look at this recruitment phenomenon in relation to the "Boy Soldiers" for whom it was surely much more complex than "For King and Country." In my opinion, there is no one correct answer as to why so many Newfoundlanders enlisted, but let us consider some possibilities and speculate about others.

I believe there was a certain amount of community pressure created by the recruitment proclamations and other advertisements. Firstly, the proclamation appealed to Newfoundlanders' sense of patriotism – "*Your King and Country Need You – Will you answer your Country's call?*" If you don't answer the call, have you let your Country down in its time of need and crisis? The statement "*We want to send our best*" creates a certain amount of pressure. Then there were the enticements: free transportation and meals and pay for soldiers at a time when unemployment was high in Newfoundland. Needy families were enticed by the promise that a portion of a soldier's pay would be given to dependents. A further enticement was that the enlistment period was only for a year, making everyone think the war would be over in a year, when in fact, it lasted for four grueling years.

In *Trenching at Gallipoli*, John Gallishaw recalled a conversation that occurred between several soldiers and an officer in a wartime trench. The subject was enlistment:

'When I enlisted,' said a man with an accent reminiscent of Placentia Bay, 'I thought there'd be lots of fun, but with weather like this, and nothing to eat, there's not much poetry or romance in war any more....' 'Some of you enlisted so full of love of country that there was patriotism running down your chin, and some of you

enlisted because you were disappointed in love, but the most of you enlisted for love of adventure, and you're getting it.' A young officer interrupted 'Go to sleep you fellows—there's none of you know what you are talking about. There's only one reason any of us enlisted, and that's pure, low down, unmitigated ignorance.'

Private Michael J. Ezekiel of our Regiment summed up his feelings on why he enlisted in a poem featured in the June 1922 *Veteran's Magazine*:

“A POEM”

(Printed as Received)

*I always wished to see the world, I ad no chanst before,
Nor I don't suppose I should ave if there
and't been no war,
I used to read the tourist books, the shippin news also,
An I ad the chance o goin so I couldn't elp but go....*

*I always wished to see the world, I'm fond
o life an change-
But a bullet got me in the leg an this is
passin strange
That when you see Old Englands shore all
wrapped in mist an rain
Why, its worth the bloomin bundle to be
coming home again.*

(From “Happy – Though Wounded”)

Outside of the enticements put forth in proclamations and advertisements, there were the general reasons why men joined the war effort: the camaraderie, the pride and “esprit-de-corps” of being part of a unique band of brothers; the attraction of the uniform; a means by which a person could shine and show his individual worth; the longing for adventure and a chance to see the world; the excitement created by pomp and ceremony of military life; fighting for King and Country; fighting for the protection of peace and human

rights; dissatisfaction with work and conditions in the workplace; community, peer and family pressure to join the others; not wanting to be left behind etc.

The next point for consideration is why did the military want teenagers for the very tough, demanding and dangerous job of soldiering? British war historian Richard Van Emden, in his ground-breaking book *Boy Soldiers of the Great War* made some interesting observations: teens were very susceptible to propaganda; they were more willing to take orders; teens often believed in their indestructibility; and they had a general incomprehension of risk or danger.

I often think what wonderful kids they were. You take a lot of them were sixteen, seventeen and eighteen years old. I was thirty years old when I signed up in the Regiment. I was one of the old fellows and I often wondered at the bravery of them little kids. No stopping them at all, go wherever they were sent, do whatever they were told and laugh about it. (Private Howard L. Morry describing young soldiers he served with in the Great War)



Private H. Morry (2nd row, 3rd from right) with Boy Soldiers of the Regiment circa 1914

I believe that the many young Newfoundlanders who eventually enlisted were not easily scared or intimidated. They were physically tough from the work demands of every day life: fishing, logging, mining, seal hunting, and death, often brought on by the rigors of the North Atlantic, was no stranger to them. But in retrospect, nothing could have prepared these youthful citizen-soldiers for the horrors,

suffering and mass death which they would experience in WW1.

Renee White of Englee was among the young men who were eager to join up. On August 21, 1914, he wrote to Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary J. R. Bennett:

Dear Sir;

I read your Proclamation that you issued asking for the young men of this Country to volunteer to fight for their King and Country.

I would like very much to join the volunteer ranks. I am willing to fight for my King and Country and give my life if need be. The reason why I am writing to you is because I am 18 years old instead of 19, and I want to ask you if I prove satisfactory in other aspects, would my age make any difference. If it does not, please send me an answer and I will come to St. John's – the first chance I get. Will you please oblige me by answering my letter on return mail? I hope to be accepted, Sir – that I can be of some use to my King and my Country.

White enlisted in the Newfoundland Regiment on January 26, 1915, in St. John's. Private White bravely served his country, and twice received gunshot wounds to his face in France in 1916-17. He was wounded in the hand and leg in Belgium in October of 1918, and subsequently had to have a finger amputated at Wandsworth Hospital in London. He married a girl from Glasgow, Scotland on December 9, 1918. He was demobilized in St. John's February 14, 1919.

The overall rate of enlistment, regional patterns of enlistment, casualties, casualty rates, and the impact of the war on St. John's were addressed by Professor Christopher Sharpe, Department of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland in a paper he wrote for Newfoundland Studies (4, 1-1988 0823-1737):

...In Newfoundland, the initial (recruit) pool consisted of Newfoundland residents aged between 19 and 35 years. The population of Newfoundland and Labrador in 1911 was 242,619, including 122,578 males. Of these, 33,708 were age-eligible for active military service according to the original restrictions. However, by 1916, it had been decided that the age of 30 should be established as the upper limit, 'because it was considered appropriate to a sparse fishing population whose existence depended on a sufficient supply of able-bodied young men' (O'Brien, 121).... In total 11, 988 Newfoundlanders are known to have enlisted in some military or paramilitary force.... 26.6% of the eligible men in the colony voluntarily presented themselves for service in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment alone. What is also striking, even startling, is that nearly half of the would-be volunteers,... were found to be medically unfit for service... It was clear, however, that the rate of rejection was very high in Newfoundland as it was elsewhere... there is evidence that British recruiters faced similar problems...

The Distaff, a 1916 womens' magazine, noted: *Recruiting is largely affected by the attitude of women, and it is noticeable that in Newfoundland the largest number of volunteers come from homes where the women have put selfishness aside and not placed obstacles in the way of their men, doing their public duty conscientiously.* (Centre For Newfoundland Studies-MUN)



*Private Josiah Squibb
Carbonear, killed in action in Gallipoli*



*Private James Joseph Tibbo
Lime Street, St. John's
Killed in action in Gallipoli*

Chapter Four

Propaganda and Recruitment

-the politics of grief..... Dr. Suzanne Evans

The following is a May 16, 1916, letter Colonial Secretary J.R. Bennett sent to St. John's newspapers, *The Evening Telegram* and *The Daily News*, concerning outrageous and barbaric treatment of British prisoners of war by the Germans:

I beg to enclose herewith a narrative received by His Excellency the Governor from the [British] Secretary of State of outrageously cruel mal-treatment of prisoners of war in the internment camp at Wittenberg, which was prepared by Honourable Mr. Justice Younger, one of the Judges of the High Court of Justice in his capacity as Chairman of the Government Committee on the treatment by the enemy of British prisoners of war. It was notorious that in this particular camp the most revolting barbarity had habitually been practiced by the guards on the unfortunate prisoners, but this account, as summed up by an eminent judge, shows that the cruelty practiced on these prisoners of war was vile almost beyond belief. In spite of the cruelty, insults, and neglect, the German Emperor has been pleased to confer a special honour on the arch-offender, Dr. Ashenback, by bestowing on him the Iron Cross and retaining him in his post. (The Rooms Archives)

Normally, I would not have questioned the Colonial Secretary's motive in writing this letter. But after reading Suzanne Evans' 2007 book *Mothers of Heroes, Mother of Martyrs: World War I and the*

Politics of Grief, I had to contemplate his rationale. Evans' book explores the role of the mourning mother in war and how maternal grief has been used for political gain. She says "*War propaganda, like martyrologies, came to rely on atrocity stories...If the enemy can commit ultimate evil, it follows that only an act of supreme sacrifice is powerful enough to defeat them and achieve ultimate justice.*" Bennett's public letter was guaranteed to bring forth outrage and hatred for the enemy, and at the same time hopefully create an "enlistment boom." The letter was also guaranteed to instill much fear and anguish in the hearts and minds of the soldiers' families, especially mothers, if and when their sons became prisoners of war.

A very aggressive and unsigned poem directed towards mothers, wives, and sweethearts of prospective recruits was featured in the July 15, 1916, edition of the St. John's *Daily News*:

The Woman's Part

*The boys in their khaki go out to the front! What are the
Women to do?*

*They say, 'Men must work, and women must sweep.' Is that
all that's left for you?*

*Don't believe it! The hardest part to play is the part of
mothers and wives;*

*To give your own life is a little thing! We give our men-
folk's lives.*

*The baby you borned and suckled, and put in his shortened
frocks –*

*The boy that you often scolded when you washed him and
darned his socks;*

*We bred them, and reared them, and loved them – and now
it's the woman's part*

*To send them to die for England – with a smile and a
breaking heart!....*

*Night passes! We'll welcome the morning with a smile
And a steadfast will;
If we haven't our boys to work for, we'll work for
our country still;
Be glad that your men are fighters – for shame that surely
hurts
Is to have a coward man-child, who hides behind women's
skirts.
Just clench your teeth when you read the lists of the
wounded and the dead,
And if the names that you love are there – be proud! And
hold up your head,
Don't cry! For they've climbed the pathway that heroes
and martyrs trod;
They sleep in the rest of heaven! They stand in the glory of
God!*

This poem put a considerable amount of stress and pressure on the women of Newfoundland, and on young males who were of eligible age for military enlistment. Just imagine the stigma of a man being referred to as a coward in the war years. I now wonder who was the author of the poem and was it a strategic implement of the British War Propaganda Department?

J.R. Bennett sent another hard hitting recruitment appeal to all newspapers in Newfoundland in 1917. It clearly targeted the families and friends of potential soldiers who were needed to fill the critical gap caused by the death and dismemberment of fallen soldiers of the Regiment:

An Appeal to the People of Newfoundland!

*....Therefore, I confidently appeal to the young men of the
Country, who are of Military age, to offer themselves as
recruits for a Regiment that every man, may he be
Newfoundlander or otherwise, might well feel proud of.
Do your duty: play the man's part, and never let it be*

thrown in your faces or the faces of your children that you failed in your duty to your Country, in her hour of greatest trial. I appeal to the mothers, to the fathers, to the sisters to help the boys realize their duty, and spur them on, to quit themselves like men, so that they may participate in the great victory that is surely coming, and which cannot be delayed much longer!

Your Brothers in Arms Are Calling! Your Duty is to Go!

(Newspaper article. Captain Sydney Frost Album – RNR Museum)

While researching this book, I was struck by the lack of material related to Newfoundland “Boy Soldiers.” As a frequent researcher of things regimental, I now have to ask was the lack of pre-war and post-war attention given to the “Boy Soldier” caused by design, or was it because people were so caught up in patriotism that it was blindly accepted, or did the government and military powers-to-be deliberately want to camouflage the entire very delicate and emotional matter? Maybe it was because the war-machine desperately needed warm bodies to put in uniforms and they had little choice but to enlist “Boy Soldiers,” something they didn’t want to advertise? Government and senior policy makers said nothing about “Boy Soldiers,” but at the same time a significant number of these people lost their young sons and teenaged relatives in battle. Due to the high casualty rate the ongoing recruitment process was critical in keeping the Regiment up to fighting strength:

The wastage of young men during the senseless slaughter of the First World War was enormous on both sides of the conflict. The casualty rate, because of the nature of the fighting, was, in many instances, very much higher in the First than the Second War, and was borne by a smaller population base.... In fact, the number of the First War fatalities in both the CEF (Canadian Expeditionary Force) and the RNR (Royal Newfoundland

Regiment) exceeds the total number of all types of Second War casualties, both fatal and non-fatal.... The statistics on fatalities are the most sobering, especially as they relate to the whole question of Newfoundland's post-war development. In the case of the youngest age group, fully a quarter of the men who enlisted were killed. This represented 14 percent, or 1 in 7 of the total number of all such young men in St. John's. A total of 48 percent of the enlistees of these ages were either killed or discharged as medically unfit. This represented 27 percent, more than 1 in 4 of all the 18- to 22-year-old men in the capital.... In the end, whether Newfoundland suffered the highest fatality rate in the Empire, or only the second, third, or fourth, is immaterial. What is important is that she suffered heavily as a result of the war, and the loss of such substantial percentages of men in the prime of their lives could not but hinder her demographic, social, and economic development in later years. (Christopher Sharpe. Newfoundland Studies 4, 1 (1988) 0823-1737)



*Regiment Recruiting Centre WWI – C.L.B. Armoury St. John's
(Courtesy of C.L.B.)*



*1st Contingent - "Blue Puttees" depart on SS Florizel October 3, 1914
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

Chapter Five

First Deaths and “Baptism by Fire”

Poor Little Kids!Private Howard L. Morry

On October 4, 1914, a mere two months after Britain had declared war on Germany, the first overseas contingent of some 538 members of the newly formed 1st Newfoundland Regiment set sail for the United Kingdom.

This famous contingent of Newfoundlanders became known as The First Five Hundred or “Blue Puttees.” This unique nickname, turned “badge of distinction,” came about due to uniform shortages which forced the Regiment to borrow blue coloured puttees from the Church Lads Brigade in St. John’s. Puttees, long strips of material, nine feet long with two feet of cotton tie-ups at the end, were used to wrap a soldier’s leg from ankle to knee for protection and support. When the Regiment reached the U.K. the blue puttees were replaced by regular British military khaki uniform issue, but their “badge of distinction” will forevermore be proudly and affectionately remembered by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

(For the sake of historical accuracy, there is one point concerning the First Five Hundred that, in my opinion, needs further discussion. After a long and very interesting conversation with local Regiment and military historian Chris Butt, I feel confident in using 538 as the actual number of Newfoundland Regiment members who were part of the famous Blue Puttee contingent.)

Many of the soldiers of the Blue Puttees went on to distinguish themselves on the battlefield, and a significant number gave the supreme sacrifice at Gallipoli, France and Belgium. More than one

quarter of the decorations earned by the Regiment were awarded to Blue Puttees – the actual number being 77 out of a total of 280. One in every seven Blue Puttee men won a decoration. The total number of decorations earned by the Regiment worked out at one in every eighteen:

“Blue Puttees” must be pardoned for feeling a pride in their record. When one considers that they were one ninth of the Regiment overseas, it must be admitted that they have to be proud of their share in gaining distinction for themselves and in helping to bring honour on their Regiment and their homeland. (The Veteran Magazine – W.F.R.)

The Evening Telegram of October 5, 1914, described the departure of the Blue Puttees – first contingent, land-force volunteers, as they were led through the streets of St. John’s to the harbour by the Catholic Cadet Corps Band:

Thousands marched from the (Pleasantville) camp with them and as they moved through the line of route, citizens joined the ranks and stepped to the music of the grand patriotic air rendered by the band. Very many people were assembled all along the line of march, and cheered the soldiers as they swung along to the strain of martial music. With buoyant step and cheerful face they exchanged greetings showered on them from every side, from mothers and fathers, wives and sweethearts, old men and women, and even some babes in arms, who waved with their little hands in farewell to the friends who used to speak kindly to them, and of whom their little children’s hearts felt proud.

The true spirit of patriotism was everywhere and at intervals from out the din of cheering came a weak voiced “Goodbye my son. God Bless You.” It was perhaps the farewell of some mother who had given all for the defence of the Empire. (Memoirs of a Blue Puttee. A.J. Stacey & Jean Edwards Stacey)

New Year's Day 1915, brought much sadness to the Regiment with the sudden death of teen soldier, Private John Fielding Chaplin – first member of the Regiment to die in Europe.

Private Chaplin, son of Mark and Amelia Chaplin of Circular Road, St. John's, died from a serious stomach illness while training in Scotland.



This 5'9," 120 pound red-haired boy was 17 when he enlisted. The former student-turned-soldier was 18-years-old at the time of his death, having served 102 days of military service.

Private Chaplin, who was very much liked by all members of the Regiment, was given a full military funeral and buried in Ardersier Parish Churchyard in Scotland. On April 27, 1915, Regiment Paymaster Capt. H. A. Timewell wrote to Regimental Headquarters – St. John's in relation to pay-funds in Chaplin's account:

I am not aware if there was any will, but since he was under age, assume that it will be quite in order to pay this amount to his parents.
(The Rooms Archives)

Private Chaplin's personnel file contained "Sale of Auction" correspondence, which stated that Company Sergeant Major Dicks had bought Chaplin's C.L.B. brown belt for six cents, and Private A. Stacey had purchased a number of his personal items. There was also a letter dated October 19, 1988, from a Robert Shanks of Inverness, Scotland to the Canadian Archives saying, "*I am curious as to how a lone soldier of the distinguished Regiment is buried in a fairly remote highland cemetery in Scotland.*"

On January 2, 1915, Private Chaplin's father wrote to Governor Davidson to inquire if his son's body could be brought home. He was advised it was not the policy of the British Military to repatriate the bodies of soldiers who died overseas during war.

From October 1914 to late August 1915, the Regiment was put through intensive hours of grueling training and physical fitness endeavours at Salisbury Plain and Aldershot, England, and Fort George and Stobs Camp in Scotland, in an attempt to get the soldiers battle-ready. Long and arduous route marches, up to 21 miles in full marching order, often greatly irritated the Newfoundlanders but it was done for their battle-fitness.

Many Newfoundlanders of the 1st and 2nd Battalions fell in love with Scotland and its people during the time the Regiment was stationed there in WW1. The Newfoundland Regiment was the only non-Scottish Unit to ever garrison Edinburgh Castle. During and following the war, a significant number of Newfoundland soldiers went on to marry Scottish girls.

By early August, 1915, the Regiment had been whipped into a “lean-mean-fighting-machine,” and its soldiers were very anxious to get into battle. Following his inspection on August 12, 1915, Lord Kitchener made the pronouncement: *I am sending you to the Dardanelles shortly, so be prepared, and sharpen those bayonets for the Turks, for when the order comes, it will come sharply.* He went on to say that the Newfoundlanders were just the type of men needed in Gallipoli.



*Regiment soldiers sightseeing in Egypt September 1915
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

On August 20, 1915, the 1st Battalion Newfoundland Regiment boarded the *S.S. Megantic* for Alexandria (Sept.1- Sept.13). From Alexandria they went to Cairo by train, and then on to the Allied Base at Mudros. From Mudros, the Regiment would finally arrive at Suvla Bay on the evening of September 19, 1915.

One can only imagine the culture shock and excitement that members of the Regiment, especially the “Boy Soldiers,” experienced in these sun-scorched lands of the Mediterranean. However, even though sightseeing was interesting they were anxious to get into battle. *“The Newfoundlanders’ comment was always the same, ‘It’s some place, but it isn’t the front. We came to fight not for sightseeing.’”* (Gallishaw, *Trenching at Gallipoli*)

The time for fighting wasn't long in coming. The *S.S. Prince Abbas* arrived in Suvla Bay in the late evening of September 19, 1915, and the 1st Battalion started putting its troops ashore. It was a perfect night for a surprise landing, with no moon to illuminate the troop movement. Our Battalion literally crawled into history as they physically became part of Sir Ian Hamilton's renowned British “Incomparable 29th Division.”

From 8 to 9 a.m. on the morning they landed the Newfoundlanders had their first taste of actual battle as they were shelled by Turkish artillery from a distance of some eight to ten miles away.

On the Regiment's first day at Gallipoli, fifteen men were wounded by shrapnel from Turkish artillery. *The shrapnel makes nasty, jagged hideous wounds, the horrible recollection of which lingers for days in the minds of those who see them.* (Gallishaw, *Trenching at Gallipoli*)

The soldiers, in their black-war-humour, commonly referred to the brutal and deadly Turkish artillery shelling as “Turkish Delight.” The soldiers joked but they knew Gallipoli was serious business:

...But what brought home to me most the seriousness of our venture was the solitary sheet of paper with its envelope, that was given to every man, to be used for a parting letter home. For some poor chaps it was indeed the last letter. (Gallishaw)

Try and imagine what was going through the minds of those young “Boy Soldiers” when they were given that one sheet of paper to write a letter home. There and then, they must have wondered what have I gotten myself into; was this why I joined; will I ever get back to my beloved Newfoundland; will I ever again see the sun go down on the beautiful salt-water beaches I left behind; will I ever again have a moose or rabbit “boil-up” in the woods near my home; will I ever again hold the hand of my sweetheart on a moonlit night in the harbour? Is this where I am going to die, far from my loved ones? How many people will remember our sacrifice after the war is over?

Soldiers were permitted to write letters once a week, but Gallishaw noted these letters were censored by his platoon officer, who sealed them and signed his name as a record of his passing them. Sometimes, the censor at the base would re-open letters for further scrutiny. For military intelligence and security purposes, no mention of military information, divisional identity, location and the like was permitted to be divulged in the soldiers’ personal letters.

On September 22, 1915, Private Hugh Walter McWhirter, age 21 years, son of Hugh and Lottie McWhirter of Humbermouth, Bay of Islands, died after being hit by a Turkish shell, becoming the first operational casualty of the Newfoundland Regiment.



On May 5, 1918, Private McWhirter’s sister, Mrs. Jacob Smith of Heart’s Delight, wrote a very patriotic letter to Newfoundland’s Colonial Secretary:

I see by the paper that there is a very urgent call for men for war, but I am sorry we haven't got any fit for war. Our oldest son is only four years old. But my husband would have been gone long ago but he is not fit...he has bad legs. My heart and his are with the soldiers because I have two brothers out there. One was killed at

Dardanelles, Walter (Hugh) and my other brother George is a prisoner of war, and I have one more younger brother who tried to volunteer last spring and was turned down.
(The Rooms Archives)

Mrs. Smith's letter was a testimony to the prevailing patriotism, loyalty and bravery of the women of this courageous little Dominion during the war years, and their willingness to sacrifice for the greater good, a characteristic instinctive to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to this very day.

On September 26, 1916, Private Michael J. Blyde, age 19 years, son of John and Mary Blyde of 49 Fleming Street, St. John's became the first "Boy Soldier" to give the supreme sacrifice. He died after serving for one year and two days. The following letter, dated October 9, 1915, was sent to Private Blyde's father by Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary:



Dear Sir;

I beg to tender, on behalf of the Government, as well as for myself, sincerest sympathy on the death from wounds, on the 26th of September, of your son Private Michael John Blyde, of the First Newfoundland Regiment. Your son's name will stand on the Honour Roll, he being the first to fall on the field of battle, yielding up his life, and, with such unselfish devotion, standing in the breach at the time of the nation's danger. He died for his King and Country, and in the defence of the principles of Righteousness and Justice. It will no doubt, be solace to you to realize that he did this to the utmost, and, his name will ever be kept in memory by those whom he went forth to defend, and for whom he ultimately gave up his life.*

(The Rooms Archives) *Private Blyde was actually the 4th soldier to be killed in battle at Gallipoli.

It seems remiss that the Colonial Secretary's letter was written and directed to Mr. Blyde, without any mention, in the address or in the actual correspondence, of Private Blyde's mother. Unfortunately, that was standard in those days, when, wrongly so, the mother (women in general) had little official status or entity. Lieutenant Colonel Padre Thomas Nangle, Chaplain to the Regiment-WW1, was very much aware of the mother's pivotal role in the lives of soldiers and worked tirelessly to ensure that the mothers were not forgotten. He went to the grave disturbed by the suffering endured by the mothers of these brave heroes.

In Memory of Private Michael John Blyde

By Dan Carroll

*The blue eyed drummer of the corps
Lies dead in Suvla Bay:
I saw him full of youthful grace,
It seems but yesterday.
A fairhead boy whose martial mien
Our admiration drew,
Whose drumbeat said "We go to aid
The old Red, White and Blue!"*

*I watched them on that Sabbath morn
Four hundred brave and young,
No head-dress save their sunny locks
As down the street they swung,
And there was one who leading then,
As leading now he died,
The blue-eyed drummer of the corps
Who rests by Suvla's tide.*

*Give him eternal peace, O Lord!
The crown of warrior souls,
Tho' o'er his clay*

*By Suvla's Bay
The tide of battle rolls;
And tearful mother lift thy head,
He sleeps among the brave,
The first, the fairest of the sons,
That Terra Nova gave.*

(Personal Album
Captain C. Sydney Frost, M.C. - RNR Museum)

Gallipoli marked the 1st Newfoundland Regiment's "Baptism of Fire." Before the Regiment left the Mediterranean it would eventually lose 45 of its brave soldiers: twenty-two killed in action; eight died of wounds; ten died from disease; and five more would later die at other locations from wounds received at Gallipoli.

War casualty "Death Notifications" for Newfoundland families would become a much too often utilized procedure during WWI and, like every procedure, mistakes would be made. Wrong families would be notified, or parents would be told that their son had died when indeed he was alive.

Newfoundland Constabulary Sergeant George Oliphant and his wife, like so many other parents, would suffer much grief while mourning the death of their son, and then, suddenly, be advised their soldier boy was alive. The Oliphant family's ordeal was the subject of an article which appeared in a local St. John's newspaper dated March 17, 1917:

Private Jack Oliphant Very Much Alive

It will be remembered that a few days ago Sergt. Oliphant of the Police Court, received two letters, both acquainting him of the death of his son, Private Jack Oliphant. The News at the time discredited the story because of no official information, and it now turns out that we were correct. Yesterday's casualty list conveys the

information that Pt. Jack Oliphant is at the 3rd Clearing Station, suffering from muscular rheumatism, having been admitted on March 3rd. Naturally, the news was joyfully received by Sergeant and Mrs. Oliphant, who had been mourning their son as dead.

Private Walter Andrews, 18, of St. John's was killed in action on November 20, 1917, and the wrong "Death Notification" procedure was carried out. Mrs. Doris Andrews received the official written notification of her son's death on the battlefield in the mail. This was contrary to written military policy which stated that the next-of-kin be first notified by a clergy or close friend of the family prior to official written notification. Colonial Secretary Richard Squires sent a sincere three page apology to Mr. and Mrs. Andrews on December 27, 1917:

...because of the error in the official list received by this Department, from the Headquarters, there should have been proper attending on the notification of your son's death. The harshness of the news being received by formal notice rather than by the adopted manner, namely by a clergyman or some intimate friend or family member...



*Private George Rankin Clarke
Brigus, died at the Front of Dysentery*



*Private Samuel Thomas Lodge
Catalina, died of wounds
received in Gallipoli*

Chapter Six

“Saving Private Ryan” – Brothers in War

*There are four of us here now and we may not
see each other again.....Private Herbert King*

During my research on the “Boy Soldiers” of the Regiment I came across a number of family stories that I feel rival Robert Rodat’s critically acclaimed and award winning story-turned-movie entitled *Saving Private Ryan*. One story I discovered through the efforts of Roman Catholic Basilica archivist, Larry Dohey, was that of the Carew family of St. John’s.

David and Carrie Carew gave four of their sons in service to the King in WW1: David and 26- year-old John lost their lives; 22-year-old William was wounded four different times and had to be invalided back to St. John’s in 1918.

The youngest boy, Private Thomas Carew, 17-years-old upon enlistment, was spared the rigors of overseas battle, thanks to the efforts of his mother, Archbishop Edward Roche, and the compassion of others.

Archbishop Roche, as senior church leader for the Roman Catholic faith in Newfoundland during WW1, dealt with numerous requests from mothers and other relatives trying to keep their boys from going into battle. On March 22, 1918, he wrote a letter to Newfoundland’s Minister of Militia, J.R. Bennett, in support of Carrie Carew’s request to have Thomas, then 18, exempted from overseas service:

*I may say that I have been asked over and over again
to plea with the Department of Militia by mothers and
others interested to have their relatives kept back, but I*

have never done so up to the present time. I think, however, that circumstances of the present case merit your very best consideration. Mrs. Carew has given up four sons to the Regiment. Two of them have already been killed. Another is at present with the Regiment in France, and now it is proposed to send away the fourth who is married and has a child. I think if any case merits consideration and would warrant an exception to be made; it is the case of this woman, who has sacrificed so much for the empire."
(Larry Dohey "Archival Moments" – March 22, 2010)

Bennett responded to Archbishop Roche's request saying, *"there are a number of similar cases in the Regiment and if any action out of the ordinary were taken, it would create an awkward precedent."*

In the end, however, compassion did win out and Private Thomas Carew was kept back at Regimental Headquarters in St. John's. He was demobilized at the end of the war on December 30, 1918.

Private David Carew, 18, joined the Regiment on December 17, 1914. He landed with our Regiment at Suvla Bay on the night of September 19-20, 1915. Less than three weeks later, on October 7, 1915, he was fatally shot in the head by a Turkish sniper. The young combatant had served with the Newfoundland Regiment for a total of 293 days prior to his death.



The story of the Carew's oldest son, Sgt. William Carew, a Blue Puttee, is one of great bravery and suffering. William fought in Gallipoli with the Newfoundland Regiment. He was wounded in the left side in a pre-battle raid at Beaumont-Hamel on June 28, 1916; wounded again on October 9, 1917; and then received a wound to the head on April 13, 1918, and had to be invalided back to St. John's. Sgt. Carew was demobilized on February 25, 1919. He was never able to work because of his war wounds. Thankfully, Sgt. Carew was able to die with dignity and first class care at the Veterans' Pavilion Hospital in St. John's in the company of his fellow comrades on July 22, 1964.

After David and John were killed in action, Carrie Carew wrote

several letters to the Regiment saying she was very upset at not receiving any of her sons' personal items. In 1920, she wrote again inquiring about pensions. The Military Pension Assistance Section, Department of Militia, subsequently turned down her request for a pension because she had one son who was working. The rejection came despite the fact that her husband was unable to earn a living because of a medical operation, the incapacity of another son from war wounds, and the war deaths of two other sons.



Carew brothers of St. John's who served with Regiment WWI

– David, William and John

(Courtesy of Royal Canadian Legion-Kelligrews, NL)

Young David Carew was mentioned in Private Howard Morry's diaries. (Thanks to Chris Morry for his permission to use his grandfather's diaries, an archival treasure on the Morry Family website):

My little buddy Davey Carew was killed by a sniper. He forgot and stood up to straighten his pack and lost his life by doing so. He was just 18, and only the night before he asked me if he could share his blanket with me because he felt lonely. I suppose that being older than him he

thought he was OK when he was with me. I missed him a lot. The next day his two brothers and I buried him under a big oak tree....Four or five of the young kids always hung around me; I was ten or twelve years older than them, and used to knocking around, and they seemed to think I'd keep them safe. Poor little kids. They were Dave Carew, Billy Short, Chan (Buchanan) Freebairn, and Harold Andrews. Chan died of some kind of fever on the Peninsula – only lived one day after having been taken out of the trenches.
 (http://web.ncf.ca/fr307/howard_morry.htm, Howard)

Private Morry of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment was invalided to Wandsworth Hospital in England just after the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel due to a variety of ailments related to trench warfare, and he never saw active service again in WW1. He returned home to Ferryland where he managed a lucrative family fishing business. Morry has been described as a wonderful raconteur, a teller of tall tales and a prodigious diarist.

Private Buchanan (Chan) Freebairn, who died at Malta, was honoured in a Memorial Book created by St. Bonaventure's College for their former students who paid the "supreme sacrifice" in WW1:



Buchanan Freebairn, eldest son of Dr. and Mrs. Freebairn, Ferryland, was a student of the College from 1901 to 1909....He impressed all by his winning disposition and refinement of manners which made him a model student and won for himself a place in the affections of students and teachers alike. Naturally clever he had little difficulty in winning a scholarship in 1908. The following year he completed his college course and left to work in his father's office where he was giving proof of

becoming a successful businessman. He joined the First Newfoundland Regiment and sailed for England with the first Contingent. He was unfortunately stricken down with dysentery of which he died at Malta on 23rd October, 1915... (St. Bonaventure' Colleges Memorial Book – Compliments of Father Stephen Boyd)

The King family of Newfoundland also had four sons who fought in WW1. Three of the boys served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and a third son, Herbert, was with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

William King, who served with the 4th Canadian Mounted Rifles and was married to Elizabeth Lundrigan of Upper Island Cove, was killed in action on October 26, 1917. His body was never found and his name appears on the Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium.

To the best of my knowledge, all four of the King boys were born in Newfoundland. Their mother, Mary, moved to Prince Edward Island after the loss of her husband.

Private Herb King was captured at the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917, after suffering a bayonet wound to his lower stomach. He remained a German POW until his release in 1918. Private King wrote a very powerful letter to his mother in 1916:

*Somewhere in France,
September 12th, 1916*

Dear Mother,

I received your welcome letter to-day, also the box, and you can bet it was a welcome thing to get out here. Well mother dear; you want me to tell you some of the things I am seeing and [going] through; I would tell you everything, but if I do the censor will take it out; so what is the use of wasting pencil and good paper? I had a letter from Art; he says he is not stuck on England. He would rather be over here in the trenches, but when he has seen as much as I have, he may not be so anxious to get here ,

and I have seen nothing compared to what John and Will have seen, who have been here since the war has started...

Mother dear, my mind is half on this letter and half on the German shells that are flying over our heads. I don't mind the shells, but when they send over the gas it gets on my nerves. Ask Albert how he would like to be trying to sleep in a dugout at night, when a rat as large as a rabbit starts to walk over your body. He will start at your feet, and when he gets to your shoulders and sees the badges, you can hear him say to the rat going over the other chap next to you: "Oh, these fellows are Newfoundland boys, let us beat it," and away they run. Then you get a chance to have a sleep.

Art said that they were inspected by a general a few days ago. The general said they were the finest lot of men he had ever seen. The 105th has got to go some if they are better than the Newfoundland boys and officers. You can lead them anywhere, but you can't force them. The people of Newfoundland must be horrified at the loss of so many of her brave sons. Good old Newfoundland, she is doing her bit as well as the best of them, don't you think so? You asked me if you could send some papers. Well, mother, if you can find a paper with peace declared in it that will be the most welcome one; but by the look of things I expect the war will last another year. The Canadians are sending over so many men that they must be expecting it to last some time yet. I am not worrying about myself, mother, it is John and the rest of them. There are four of us here now and we may not see each other again. Dear mother, do not worry too much; if I fall you will know I did my best. No man can do anymore, but I trust Almighty God will spare us to return to you again. I remain your loving soldier boy.
(Canadian Letters and Images Project – Dr. Stephen Davies)

On June 25, 1918, Mary King wrote a letter to a Miss Knox, whom I believe was the Red Cross Prisoner representative, concerning the sending of parcels to her son, Herb, who was in a German prisoner of war camp:

...I am glad to hear that my poor boy is getting his parcels now and that he is well. I had a letter from him last week, and Miss Maxwell sent me his photo which he sent to her to forward to me; there is a big change in him, he looks very thin and so sad looking. Dear Miss Knox, will you please intercede for him with whoever is highest in authority, and try and get my poor boy exchanged or released in some way, that he may be able to come home to me. You know before this that my dear Willie is dead since the 9th of April. John and Arthur are still in Hospital in Halifax since December; and I am sick with trouble and worry, so please try to get my poor Herbert home to me as soon as possible and I shall be ever grateful to you... It seems they are always moving him, whatever is the reason; this is the fifth address since he was taken prisoner. Please forward his letter at once.



Rats killed in trenches WW1 (Courtesy of Robert Ruggenburg)

Eugene and Mary Taylor of 5 Maxse Street, St. John's had three sons who laid down their lives in battle while serving with the Newfoundland Regiment during WW1: George, Richard and Eugene (Fred).

Lieutenant George Taylor joined the Regiment on September 2, 1914 and fought with the Newfoundlanders in Gallipoli. He was killed in action on July 1, 1916, at the age of 22 years. The following descriptive note was in his Regimental file:

"About 24, fair, clean shaven, medium size, five foot

seven or five foot eight, home St. John's, Newfoundland, was a clerk in stores. At 9:15 a.m. on July 1st, 1916 at Beaumont-Hamel the 1st Newfoundland went over. Enemy about 350 yards off. After attack, Lt. Taylor reported missing. Next morning Lt. Taylor's brother, Private Taylor of B Company, told the informant that his brother had been killed at the start of the attack.

Private Richard Taylor and his brother, Private Eugene (Fred) Taylor both lost their lives at the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917.

On November 8, 1917, Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary Richard Squires wrote a letter of condolence to Eugene Taylor regarding the loss of his three brave sons:

Dear Sir,

It is with the deepest regret that I have to intimate to you that a report has been received from the Newfoundland Pay and Records Office, London, to the effect that those brave men of the First Newfoundland Regiment who were reported missing on April 14th, 1917 are now believed to have been killed in that fateful action.

I fully realize all that this means to you. Your gallant son George, one of the bravest and most fearless in the Regiment, had already laid down his life in defence of the Empire, yet your two sons Richard and (Eugene) Frederick, did not falter; but came forward with quiet determination to carry on the work which their heroic brother had not been able to complete.

While our hearts mourn the loss of our bravest and our best, yet one cannot but feel proud that we have families that are able to produce such noble men, and that the quiet years of peace have not stifled the sense of honour, the spirit of manhood or devotion to country which inspired our ancestors. You as a father, and Newfoundland as a Colony, may well feel proud of the three splendid heroes who unselfishly gave their lives in this fight of the oppressed

against the oppressor:

In your great sorrow I desire to express to you and to your family, on behalf of the Government, as well, as for myself personally, the most sincere sympathy.

Let me assure you that the hearts of the whole community go out to you and yours at this your time of sorrow. I am able to sympathize with you all the more deeply, and join with you in your sorrow the intimately, because a number of those nearest and dearest to my own life have given their all on the fields of France and Flanders.

May He who is the Lord of the whole earth, as well as the Great Father of us all, give you, at this time of bereavement, His comfort and His peace.

George Turner, Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Mines with the Government of Newfoundland, was the father of five sons who served in His Majesty's Fighting Forces during WW1.

Alfred, Jack and George Turner fought with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, while Frank and Donald Turner were with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. Alfred was killed in action on September 5, 1916. The Turners are mentioned in a newspaper article in the papers of Captain Leo Murphy.

Mr. J. T. Morey, General Mining Inspector, of Boot Harbour, Halls Bay, was also the father of five sons who served in the King's Fighting Service during WW1.

The bravery of Newfoundland's fighting men didn't go unnoticed in England, and this was borne out in a *London Times*' article on May 1, 1917:

Praise for Newfoundlanders

There is a small community very remote from the world but the Island's fighting men in the British Army have

blazed its name upon the imperishable records of the Empire!

British journalist Philip Gibbs was also very impressed with the heroics of the Newfoundlanders, as reported in an article in the *British Daily News* in 1917:

Fought Like Heroes

Newfoundland may have been an unknown and isolated island in the Atlantic two years ago; but it is not so now, her isolation has been dissipated by the heroism of her soldier sons, whose valourous deeds have resounded throughout the world, and gained an envied place in the annals of Fame.

Captain Stair Gillion, a WW1 veteran who wrote the history of the 29th British Division, had this to say about the Newfoundlanders: *“These men from a far land spent their blood like water for their distant kindred, their love of Justice and the Pax-Britannica.”*

I feel confident in stating there were a significant number of native Newfoundlanders who died as “Boy Soldiers,” but who are unknown to us because they served with other non-Newfoundland Fighting Services.

A total of 3,296 Newfoundlanders served with the Canadian Expeditionary Force during WW1. One was Private John Cecil Pilot, son of Edward and Barbara Cullen-Pilot, and grandson of the late Cannon Pilot D.D. who had been Vice-Principal of Queen’s College in St. John’s. Young Pilot was only 15 years of age when he joined the Canadian Infantry (Quebec Regiment) in August of 1914. This youthful combatant took part in several battles and was badly wounded in April 1916. After recovering from his wounds he went back into the trenches and was killed in action on June 29, 1917. Mr. and Mrs. Pilot had three other sons – William, Edward, and Robert – who also served with the King’s Fighting Services in WW1. I don’t know their fate.

Chapter Seven

Sickness Takes a Deadly Toll

– *Their casualties have been many from bullets and sickness.....*
Brigadier-General D.E. Caley

Dysentery, enteric (disease of the intestines), jaundice and body lice took a major toll on members of the Newfoundland Regiment at Gallipoli.

By the middle of October 1915 the Battalion had lost one-third of its strength through sickness. A significant number of the soldiers who fought at Gallipoli, and returned home after the war was over, suffered from life-long sickness originally contracted in 1915.

Dysentery and enteric spread with amazing rapidity and played havoc with the forces. In front of the trenches held by our men were the corpses of hundreds of enemy. Clouds of flies swarmed over these as they decayed in the sweltering heat of the day.... The same flies preyed on the food and drink, carrying disease and death in their trail. Many of our men were invalided to hospitals, some going to England. (Cramm, The First Five Hundred)

The following “Boy Soldiers” lost their lives to sickness at Gallipoli:

Private George Clarke – son of John and Lydia Clarke of Brigus,
 Private Fred Ebsary – son of Newman and Sarah Ebsary
 of St. John’s,
 Private George Furey – son of George and Margaret Furey
 of Harbour Main,

Private Walter Murphy – son of John and Alice Murphy
of St. John's,
Private John Myrick – son of Patrick and Mary Myrick
of St. John's.

St. John's widow, Ellen Bewhey, felt that her son, 18-year-old Private Edward Bewhey, who lost his life at Gallipoli on November 30, 1915, was truly a hero fighting for his country. On January 23, 1920, she wrote Lt. Colonel Rendell:



Dear Sir;

Will you kindly accept my sincere thanks for the very beautiful Memorial I received in connection with my dear boy who gave his life in the Great War. Although his loss to me was indeed a very heavy blow, yet I feel that my loss was his Country's gain, and this assurance helps to lessen our sorrow.

Private John Myrick, a Blue Puttee, was 19 when he lost his life to diphtheria on December 10, 1915, after he was evacuated from Gallipoli. This baker-turned-soldier son of Patrick and Mary Myrick of St. John's was buried in Greece, far away from home. The Colonial Secretary for Newfoundland wrote a letter to the soldier's father on December 16, 1915:



...Your gallant lad certainly did his best, and he was amongst the first who so bravely responded to the call of King and Country. He has done his duty nobly and bore his part like a man, and we are proud to have such brave

young fellows who so loyally responded to the call and enlisted in the fight... Your boy never flinched, and though he has now laid down his earthly weapons, he wears instead the soldiers crown of victory...and it will be, no doubt, comfort to you to think he "did his bit"...

Private Frank "Mayo" Lind, Newfoundland's unofficial war correspondent, spoke of overlooked brave deeds Regiment soldiers carried out in Gallipoli in his May 19, 1916, letter to *The Daily News*:

*Sergeant (Gerald) Byrne was in charge of a party of men who went out and took over Caribou Hill (Gallipoli) the night after it was taken by Captain Donnelly and party. Never a word have we seen in print about Gerald and his men, a band of as true heroes as ever did anything on the Peninsula, but many things have been overlooked in the excitement of the moment, and only after it is all over and we have time to sit down and think, do the many brave deeds performed by our boys come to mind. (Lind. *The Letters of Mayo Lind*)*

Brigadier-General D. E. Caley, Commanding Officer of the 88th Brigade, had high praise for the men of the Newfoundland Regiment who served under him at Gallipoli:

...It has been the greatest honor and pleasure for me to have these gallant fellows in my brigade, whose traditions they have most worthily upheld. Their fellow-countrymen have every reason to be proud of them on their doings. Their casualties have been many from bullets and sickness. (Cramm)

Gallipoli gave the soldiers of the Newfoundland Regiment their first introduction to trench warfare, and the battalion won its first war bravery decorations at Caribou Hill on the night of November 4-5, 1915.

Those recognized for bravery in the face of the enemy were: Lieutenant James J. Donnelly of St. John's, who won the Military Cross; Sergeant Walter Greene, Cape Broyle, and Private R.E. Hynes, Fogo, both of whom won the Distinguished Conduct Medal (D.C.M.). All three of these dedicated heroes lost their lives in later battles. Lance Corporal Fred Snow of St. John's won a Military Medal for gallantry at Gallipoli. Private William Gladney of Portugal Cove won the D.C.M. for gallantry while serving in Gallipoli.

Sgt. Walter Greene, later to be promoted to lieutenant, was a member of the Newfoundland Constabulary when he signed up for the war effort. In 2006, I had the extreme honour, as chairman of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Advisory Council, and a retired member of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC), to kneel at his graveside in France, where he was killed in action. Joining me were three other members of the RNC who were also serving members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Newfoundland lost 45 of its soldiers at Gallipoli. They died, mostly from gunshot wounds to the head, which were inflicted by highly skilled Turkish snipers. Disease caused by the horrible conditions at Gallipoli also took its toll. As well, a vicious November storm took the lives of some 200 Allied soldiers, and saw upwards of 150 Newfoundland Regiment soldiers hospitalized for frostbite.

Gallipoli – roadless, waterless, broken with gullies, covered with scrub: sandy, loose and difficult to walk on; miles of sea coast – rough and steep; dominated at intervals by three hills, and these entrenched; beaches tangled with barbed wire. The men from Newfoundland, night after night, day after day, shaken by frost at midnight, weakened by disease, and broke by pestilence. Thus one fleeting impression of the peninsula. (Captain Leo M. Murphy, Newfoundland Regiment, The Rooms Archives)

The awful effect of trench-warfare on one boy soldier was described by WW1 poet/soldier Siegfried Sassoon:

Suicide in The Trenches

*I know a simple soldier boy
Who grinned at life in empty joy,
Slept soundly through the lonesome dark,
And whistled early with the lark.
In winter trenches, cowed and glum,
With crumbs and lice and lack of rum,
He put a bullet through his brain,
No one spoke of him again.
You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye,
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.*



Caribou Hill, Gallipoli where Regiment won its first WW1 Bravery Awards



Early Regiment WWI grave (Whitty Album)

Chapter Eight

Newfoundlanders Leave Gallipoli

– They have become our sons as well.....

Turkish Government – Anzac Memorial

Needing military strength to protect Serbia, Lord Kitchener ordered the reluctant Sir Ian Hamilton to evacuate Suvla Bay on December 20, 1915. This would be followed by a full evacuation from the peninsula on January 9, 1916, marking the beginning of the end for the Dardanelles Campaign. Both evacuations were finally completed when the small Newfoundland Rear Guard under Lt. Owen Steele boarded their landing vessel from Helles and headed for Mudros.

“The living dead” is a term often used by war historians when referring to the physically and mentally wounded soldiers who came home from war. An example of such suffering, related to a returned soldier who served in Gallipoli, is the moving story of Private Thomas Mouland of Bonavista which appeared in the *The Veteran Magazine* – June 1925:

What matters now grief’s darkest day?

The King has wiped those tears away.

Thomas Mouland, of Bonavista, late Private of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment (No. 448), has fought his last battle, and now he is at peace. He passed away, at the age of 35, on May 29th, leaving to mourn his loss, his mother, his wife, and child, and innumerable friends.

His brave example of bright heroism, in affliction,

brought many mourners to attend his passing, for he was a general favourite, ever cheerful and resigned.

Private Mouland, a member of the L.O.L. No.4, was a "Blue Puttee," and he crossed with the first five hundred. He served in Gallipoli and emerged from the cruel welter of the evacuation, on January 16th, with seventeen wounds, living but blind.

St. Dunstan's Training School for the Blind, founded by Sir A. Person, in London, next received him. All possible was done for him, but broken health forbade recovery of sight, and so he came back to Newfoundland, and reached his home in Bonavista, in May of 1921. Before leaving Stobb's Camp (Scotland) for the front, he met and became engaged to Miss Jessie Walters... Mrs. Mouland's devotion to her afflicted husband was a labour of love, which served in a myriad of ways to brighten the dark days of his declining life.... So passed another soldier, of whom it may be said as truly, that he gave his life for King and Country, as though he had fallen in Flanders' Field....

*"Farewell! Brave Comrade! Thou hast borne thy part,
With faith unshrinking, nor with faltering heart." – A.E.R.
(Bonavista, June 5th, 1925)*

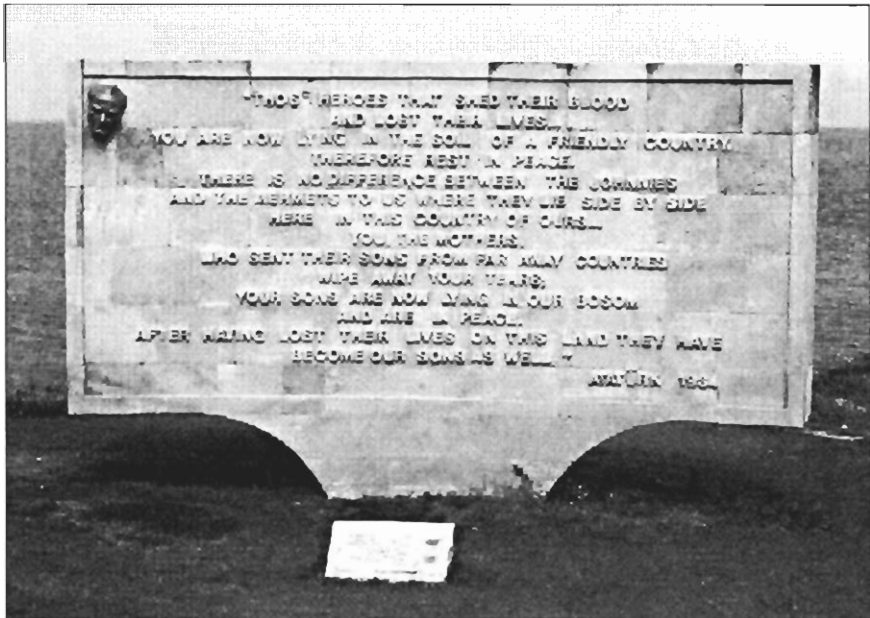
Newfoundland soldiers received their "Baptism of Fire" in Gallipoli. The young and often times innocent "Boy Soldiers" were quickly exposed to war and the hell that goes with it. They became hardened in a few short months, but Gallipoli could hardly prepare them for what was to come in France and Belgium before war's end.

Before leaving "The Trail of the Caribou" in the Mediterranean, there is, in my opinion, one more important matter which should be accentuated, and that is the need for people in this province, and all of Canada, to remember our Regiment's great history and sacrifice in Gallipoli. I know from many personal experiences over the years that few people are aware that our Regiment served with distinction in Gallipoli, as part of the 29th British Division.

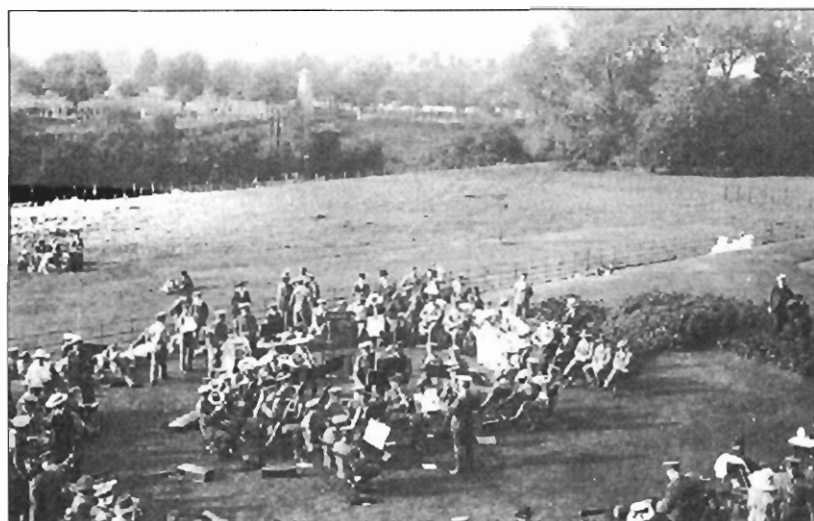
Practically everyone knows of the infamous carnage that

occurred during the Battle of the Somme – Beaumont Hamel on July 1, 1916, but there are so many other important WW1 battles where our Regiment paid heavy personal losses, and also made considerable contributions in the war effort, Gallipoli being just one of them. The Turkish government was very mindful of the great sacrifice given by the mothers of those brave soldiers who fought and died at Gallipoli, putting the following verse on their memorial at Anzac Cove:

*... You, the Mothers, who sent your sons from far
away countries wipe away your tears.
Your sons are now living in our bosom
And are in peace
After having lost their lives on this land
They have become our sons as well.*



*Turkish Government's Gallipoli Memorial
to the fallen of the Allied Forces WW1*



*Top and Bottom pictures of Regiment Band entertaining wounded and sick soldiers at Wandsworth Hospital, London, England
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

Chapter Nine

On the Road to Beaumont-Hamel

*– Those who desired to live, went out to death,
Dark underground their golden youth is lying
.....Abercombe*

Things were very busy back home in Newfoundland from late November 1915 and onward. The Newfoundland government adopted a very aggressive recruitment strategy intended to address future Regiment reinforcement and actual strength needs: government and Patriotic Association officials were astounded at the number of prospective new recruits offering themselves to the Regiment.

This enlistment boom was probably due to the very positive feedback finally beginning to filter back from Gallipoli – good operational reports and bravery awards highlights. Amongst the candidates offering themselves for enlistment were many under-aged boys who were, as in the initial recruitment drive in August of 1914, lying about their ages.

Meanwhile, overseas, members of the 1st Battalion Newfoundland Regiment were getting their strength back from the ravages of Gallipoli, and preparing for embarkation to France. During its two month stay in Egypt the Regiment continued a very rigorous training and drilling programs under the watchful eye of its commanding officer, Lt. Colonel Hadow.

He was a strict disciplinarian who demanded a great deal from his subordinates. His constant insistence on extremely long route marches in the sweltering Mediterranean sun continued to grate on his Newfoundland soldiers, until they actually booed him. There was

a dislike/guarded respect relationship between many of Hadow's soldiers and the overly autocratic commanding officer.

Following the war, some survivors credited Hadow with getting the Regiment up to scratch and battle-ready, albeit under very trying and anxious circumstances. Newfoundlanders, long known for their story telling ability through song and verse created a ditty about Hadow during WW1:

*I'm Hadow, some lad-o,
Just off the staff,
I command the Newfoundlanders,
And they know it – not half;
I'll make them or break them, I'll make the blighters sweat,
For I'm Hadow, some lad-o,
I'll be General yet.
(Nicholson. *The Fighting Newfoundlander*)*

In his diary, Private Howard Morry described an incident in which Lt. Col. Hadow had the men marching around in full battle order on a troop carrier ship, soon to be bound for France from the Mediterranean, causing them to get blisters on their feet. Morry said the Regiment's doctor intervened and suggested to Hadow that the marches stop immediately, and they did.



*Regiment soldiers resting in Scotland circa 1915
(Courtesy of the Morry Family)*

Our Colonel was Hadow a son of a bitch who was over troops in India all his life. Thought common soldiers were dogs or something. But we taught him different. We had a song about him... We would sing this on route marches, when we got 'March easy.' He sure hated our guts, and 'twas mutual, 'but there was not a thing he could do about it. He gave us very long route marches over desert, and we, being worn out from Gallipoli, were not able to take it. He was very unpopular; the men did not like him like other C.O.'s or General Cayley, who was our idol.
(Howard L. Morry Diary. Morry Family)

On March 14, 1916, at 1 p.m. the 1st Newfoundland Regiment was on the move again, leaving Egypt for France's Western Front. At approximately 7 a.m. on March 22, 1916, the Newfoundlanders docked at Marseilles, France. The Regiment remained part of the famous British 29th Division which, in the spring of 1916, was preparing for a very significant engagement, the Battle of the Somme.

From its arrival in Marseilles, until it reached the Front Line at the Somme on June 15, 1916, the Regiment passed through the French villages of Pont Remy, Buigny, Brucamps, Bonneville, Louvencourt, Englebelmer, and Mailly-Maillet. While the Regiment was in France its base depot was established in Rouen.

During late March, April and May of 1916, Lt. Col. Hadow pushed his soldiers very hard, getting the 1st Newfoundland Regiment ready for the upcoming Battle of the Somme. There were many long and physically demanding route marches, followed by gas and weapons lectures, numerous inspections, and personal weapon maintenance.

On Easter Saturday, April 22, 1916, the Regiment moved into the firing line just in front of the village of Beaumont-Hamel. An experienced, hardened and battle-savvy German regiment was a couple of hundred yards from the British front-lines at Beaumont-Hamel, making it a very dangerous place for all concerned.

For the next two months the Regiment would move between the

front-lines and the reserve at Englebelmer. Much time in the Reserve was spent in dry-run-training for the “Big Push,” which would soon come at Beaumont-Hamel, and sadly bring with it disaster for our Regiment.

Seventy-eight “Boy Soldiers” of our Regiment lost their lives during 1916. Sixty-two were killed in action; eight died of wounds; and eight died from sickness. Significant fighting took place at the French villages of Beaumont-Hamel, Ypres, Gueudecourt, Lesboeuifs.

The first “Boy Soldiers” to die in 1916, were: Private Alphonsus Fitzpatrick, 18, of Conche who passed away from sickness on January 29 while serving with the 2nd Reserve Battalion in Ayr, Scotland; and Private Patrick Holden, 19, of St. John’s, who died at Malta on January 29, as a result of wounds previously received in Gallipoli.



There were a significant number of teenage soldiers who died as a result of sickness while *Private Holden* serving with the Newfoundland Regiment during WW1, both on home soil and overseas. The most common diseases that took down these youthful combatants were measles, meningitis and tuberculosis. Did the desire to enlist as many soldiers as possible play a role in accepting young men who normally would not have passed more strict medical requirements? Or did other mitigating health circumstances, that were the norm at the time, become aggravated by war conditions?

The archival files of the Colonial Secretary at The Rooms Archives contain a letter dated June 22, 1918, which was written by the grief stricken father of an 18-year-old “Boy Soldier” who had recently died while home on leave.

Mr. John McGrath of Delby’s Cove, Trinity Bay, father of Private William McGrath, Newfoundland Regiment, was extremely upset with the doctors who had passed his son as being medically fit for the Regiment, and for war duty.

The father went on to tell how William, a sickly boy, had been suffering from consumption prior to enlistment. According to his father, he had always been a sickly boy who had been given much special care by his parents. Mr. McGrath said because of general poor health and sickness his son fully expected to be found medically unfit for service, but he still felt it was his duty to offer himself.

In early June of 1918, William was entitled to several days leave, and he went home to Delby's Cove to see his father and mother before he shipped out for Europe. Mr. McGrath stated that William had only just arrived at home on June 9 when *"he was taken very ill to his bed."*

On his death bed, the boy advised his parents that before he left St. John's he had told the doctor he was sick and had pain in his side. William said the doctor never examined him and told an officer to put him on duty.

Private William McGrath passed away at home on June 11, 1916. Mr. McGrath asked the Colonial Secretary how it was this sickly boy had been passed by doctors as being medically fit to serve. The father believed those medically responsible for his son's health while in the Regiment, should *"have a penalty for doing so."* He said he himself was not able to do any hard work and *"his boy was all the help he had."* In closing, the grieving father wrote *"I know that God will judge the Doctors according to these deeds with a righteous judgment."*

Private Heber J. Miles, 18-year-old son of Dugald Miles of Bonavista, died on March 16, 1916, after being hospitalized in the U.K. for 146 days. This young student-turned-soldier had been suffering from tubercular meningitis, originating from rheumatic fever. He had been medically evacuated from Gallipoli in mid-October of 1915.

Private Miles was given a full military burial at the Wandsworth Hospital Cemetery in England. One of those in attendance was Mr. E.R. Morris, chairman of the Visiting Committee, Newfoundland War Contingent Association, London, England, who subsequently

sent a letter to Newfoundland Governor Davidson. The letter is dated March 23, 1916:

Sir,

I feel sure that you and others in Newfoundland will be very interested in getting an account of the sad and impressive ceremony, at which several of us, so closely interested in the brave men of our oldest Colony, were present on Tuesday the 21st instant when we laid H.J. Miles to rest in the plot of ground at Wandsworth, that has been purchased by the Newfoundland War Contingent Association. The Contingent was represented by Lady Morris, Sir Edgar Bowring, Mr. Fenn, myself and Sergeant Bennett. About 20 of the men from Brookland Convalescent Home were brought to the Hospital in Mrs. Lock-King motors. The Cortege was then formed and consisted of 16 men of the London and Scottish Regiment, who led with arms reversed, followed by their Mounted officer, then the coffin covered with the Union Jack, in which were laid four beautiful wreaths from the Newfoundland War Contingent Association, Sir Edgar Bowring, Comrades from the Hospital and the Convalescent Home, Mrs. Locke-King, and a tribute of lilies from Lady Morris and myself.

After the coffin, followed Sir Edward Bowring's car with the mourners as aforesaid, then the three cars with the men from the Convalescent Home (where young Miles died), Mrs. Locke-King and two of the Nurses, followed by a number of men from the Wandsworth Hospital, and lastly the carriage with the Military Chaplain.

The first part of the service was read in the Little Chapel of the Cemetery, then the coffin was borne to the grave by 8 men from the London Scottish.

The words of Committal being said and the coffin lowered into the grave, the last post sounded and three volleys fired by the firing party of the London Scottish, and arms presented.

Needless to say there were few dry eyes at the farewell

to young Miles, for most of us had got to know him well in Hospital and he had endeared himself to his nurses and his visiting friends by his uncomplaining cheerfulness.

On May 7, 1916, Mrs. E. Locke-King of Brooklands, Weybridge, England, wrote a very complimentary letter to Governor Davidson in response to his praise of the British Red Cross Society. She also spoke of Private Heber Miles, saying his life had been laid down, not lost:

Dear Sir Walter;

I am exceedingly grateful to you for your letter of April 11th, which I received a few days ago. No thanks are due to us, for all that we can do is less than our duty to the men who are upholding our honour and safeguarding our homes.

In our own case, it is an unmixed joy to my husband and me that our home should be suitable for a hospital (Brooklands War Hospital) and that we should thus be able to live in amongst the men whom we are so proud.

The Newfoundland men are splendid. Though I now know some of them so well, I still marvel how they realized the need of the Country so quickly. The distance between the Old Colony and the Mother Country is great and it would have been natural had it taken some while for men absorbed in interest of their own lives to realize the urgency, but these men seem to have sprung forward as though they awaited the call.

I know how much they have suffered, but I am certain that such sacrifice is not wasted, and that even for young Miles, his life was laid down not lost. His death was bitter grief to us. He was such a bonny brave boy, and I longed so to send him healed back to the mother he loved. His cheerfulness and patience were beautiful. I never heard him complain, save of the sore disappointment that he had never actually been able to fight The King's enemies.

They are indeed a lot of men to be proud of, a straight clean-hearted set.

I know they have not had all the recognition given to some of the overseas men, but they have fought with and been counted as though they belonged to the Mother Country, and perhaps they will be the better men after the war for not having been selected for praise beyond the rest of those who are serving so bravely.

Sergeant Bennett, who I believe is the son of your Colonial Minister, and Corporal Christopher arrived here yesterday; but is not only the townsmen and more cultured Newfoundlanders we appreciate so much. Some of those who have spent their lives at sea and known the rougher side are so courteous gentlemen as I want to meet....



Newfoundland Regiment gravesite for soldiers who died at Wandsworth Hospital, England, WWI (Capt. G. Whitty Album)

While researching the boys who died in 1916 I came across a situation that must have been heart-breaking for the parents involved. Private George R. Curnew, 19 or possibly younger, was killed by sniper on April 24, 1916, at Beaumont-Hamel.

George was a slight (110 pound) lumberman from Bay of Islands (originally from Flower's Cove). His parents died when he and his brother Charles were very young boys. The boys were adopted by

John and Sarah Legge of Curling when George was seven years of age.

When a soldier died, the government, as policy dictated, would forward an official Memorial Scroll and King's Message to the next of kin. The Legges were sent both items following George's death. A short while later John Legge received a letter from the Regiment's chief of staff:

I have to inform you that the Memorial Scroll and the King's Message which you received from this Department some time ago, in respect to No.1587 Curnew, deceased, was forwarded to you in error: It should have gone to his brother Charles Curnew.

It is understood that you are his foster-father, and that Charles is his natural brother. The regulations governing the issue of these Scrolls rule that they should be sent to next of kin of the man concerned, and as Charles Curnew is the next of kin of this soldier, the Scrolls have to be sent to him.

I should therefore be grateful, if you will return it to this Department at your earliest convenience. (The Rooms Archives)

As a former Canadian Armed Forces soldier I understand military regulations, but as a father of three I also understand the emotional side of this requirement for his parents. Fred Roberts of Hermitage showed how important these memorial scrolls were to parents when he wrote Lt. Colonel Rendell of the department of militia in February of 1920, saying: "*It is hardly necessary for me to remind you what such tokens (scrolls) mean to a parent who has lost his only son.*"

In May and June of 1916, the Newfoundland Regiment, as part of the 88th Brigade and the 29th Division, worked hard preparing themselves for the upcoming Battle of Beaumont-Hamel by

constantly practicing carefully planned attacks, and meticulously studying topographical maps of the proposed battle-field.

Good reliable military intelligence is a must during war and, with that in mind, there were eight pre-battle raids conducted by the 29th Division in the last week of June 1916. Two of the raids were executed by the Newfoundland Regiment on the nights of June 26 and 27 respectively. Besides the gathering of intelligence, the raiding parties were expected to bring back prisoners for unit identification and for interrogation purposes. The first Newfoundland raid was unsuccessful and had to be aborted; the June 27th raid saw two Germans taken prisoner and enemy casualties inflicted. The Regiment raiding party suffered: 4 killed in action; 21 wounded; 3 missing in action and 2 taken prisoners of war. There were no "Boy Soldier" deaths documented during the raids.

In April of 1916, Marmaduke Winter of St. John's notified the commanding officer of the Regiment that Private Edward Winter's mother was critically ill and dying and wished to see her son. Governor Davidson forwarded the request to Regiment authorities in Britain. On April 19, 1916, he was advised that at present all leave was cancelled for members of the Newfoundland Regiment. Private Winter was therefore not granted leave and his mother passed away a short time later. The Winter family of St. John's was a very well respected family of means and with strong political ties, but not even connected people could break through the military's wartime policy.

A young boy's heartfelt prayers for his father, who was fighting in Europe in WW1, was the subject of a poem by Newfoundland writer Charles W. Quinton:

*Dear Saviour guard my Daddy,
'Cause he's all the world to me,
But his comrades called him 'over there'
To fight for liberty,
I only got my Daddy, Lord,
My Mammy, she is dead;
Please – don't let them shoot my Daddy,
Send him back to little Ted.*

*You know I lie awake each night;
In darkness – wrapt in prayer,
'Cause I know my Daddy thinks of me,
When fighting 'over there.'
I feel awful lonely sometimes,
And I try hard to forget,
But the last kiss Daddy gave me
Is burning my lips yet.*

*You know I love my Daddy, Lord,
And if he should be dead,
The birds and bees and butterflies
Would weep with little Ted.
And Gran 'ma too she's lonely,
'Cause I oft-times hear her moan:
"I wish the war was over;
And my darling boy, safe home."*

*I know, Lord, you'll protect him,
And from the bullets shield,
Cause Gran 'ma says you're merciful,
You'll hear my sad appeal.
You know he's my only Daddy,
And he loves me, so he said,
Please let the war be over,
And send me back my Dad.*

(Epitaph)

*Came the day – when on the horizon,
Appeared the dawn of Peace,
The mighty cannon ceased to roar,
The noise of battle ceased.
Thousands from these “blood washed fields”
To their loved ones sped.
And one hero of battle was greeted
By his little boy called “Ted.”
(The Veteran Magazine – May, 1931)*



*Doctors and Army Medics attending wounded soldiers at temporary
Field Dressing Station, France circa 1916.
(Courtesy of Robert Ruggenburg - Heritage of The Great War)*

Chapter Ten

Massacre – The Battle of Beaumont-Hamel

– The front was like a butcher shop in hell...

.....Private Howard L. Morry

At approximately 2:00 a.m. on July 1, 1916, the Newfoundland Regiment reached the St. John's Road support trench. At 6:25 a.m. on that fatal day an intense British artillery bombardment began against the front-line enemy trenches. This bombardment began the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel which forevermore would remain etched in the psyche of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The Newfoundlanders went over the top at approximately 9:15 a.m. and walked into one of the darkest times in British military history, forever known as a colossal disaster. Within a half hour it was all over for our Regiment. The first day of the Battle of the Somme saw more than 57,000 members of the British Expeditionary Force killed, wounded or missing, making it the worst single day of casualties ever experienced by the British Army in its long history.

Of the 790 officers and men of the Newfoundland Regiment who went over the top on July 1, 1916 there were only 68 who answered the roll call on the following day.

Killed/Missing/Died of Wounds

Killed in Action.....	12 Officers
Killed in Action.....	92 Men
Missing and Presumed Dead*.....	139 Men
Died of Wounds.....	2 Officers
Died of Wounds.....	27 Men
Total Killed.....	272 All Ranks

Wounded

Wounded no Death.....11 Officers

Wounded no Death.....427 Men

Total Wounded no Death.....438 All Ranks

Total Casualties July 1st, 1916.....710 All Ranks

*WW1 military policy dictated that before a soldier is officially “Missing and Presumed Dead” thirty days must elapse from the date “gone missing.”

Colonel Nicholson wrote about the Battle of Beaumont Hamel in *The Fighting Newfoundlander*:

One of the tragic ironies of the Newfoundlanders' participation in the battle that was fought on the opening day of the Somme offensive was that the task which was suddenly thrust upon the 88th Brigade on that fateful day was not the role for which it had trained, nor could it be carried out over ground made familiar by three weeks of assiduous study and carefully-practised attacks. It was not long before all ranks had a good working knowledge of the ground over which their assault was planned. The brunt of these rehearsals fell on the Newfoundlanders and the Essex (Regiment)...

Captain Syd Frost, M.C., a highly successful banker by profession and an extremely respected and decorated officer of the Regiment – WW1, was an eyewitness to the July 1 battle, and he pulled no punches in a 1916 interview with the St. John's *Evening Telegram*:

**“They Marched Till They Dropped
– The Generals Must Be Blamed”**

He says the Generals in charge of the battle must be blamed for the huge loss of life on account of their being

'misinformed or uninformed.' It was a terrible tragedy. It was hard to think that thousands of lives depended on Generals who had no information but who just hoped for the best. 'The decisions of the Corps Commander, the Divisional Commander and even the Brigade Commander were unwise. They were not made on information that had been confirmed. They were guessing. Our Battalion was wiped out before we got to our own front line.' (Captain Syd Frost Scrap Book, RNR Museum)

Private Howard Morry wrote a compelling account of what he observed at the July 1, 1916, massacre of the Newfoundland Regiment during the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel, and its after-effect on some of the "Boy Soldiers:"

It was a grand thing that mothers couldn't see how their sons died the way that they did. Boy! That was an awful site; the front line was like a butcher-shop in hell, with our wounded dragging themselves in and falling down in the trenches. All day long we were watching through glasses, and any of our chaps moving from anywhere they were lying, the Germans would shoot them. The big pieces of tin on their backs that was meant to spare life cost the lives of many of our chaps that day.

About 2 pm (July 2nd) Martin Kent and I were sent out to headquarters to bring in a draft of 13 men that had just arrived. And what a sight it was for these poor devils of kids fresh from home (Newfoundland). When we came to the first dead lying around and then the field hospital, with hundreds lying around, and the doctors and the Red Cross guys with their white suits blood all over, some of the kids got sick, others began to sweat and one kid turned and ran away. We let him go and never reported him, except to say he was missing, he came back three days afterward, and was a real good soldier. Poor kid. (Private Howard L. Morry Diary. Morry Family)

On July 11, 1916, Private William Wiseman, wrote his aunt in St. John's about the horrors of the tragic engagement of July 1:

Somewhere in France:

Just a word to tell you I am O.K. Only that I am in hospital with a bullet wound in my foot. That's nothing, Dear Aunt, I can't tell you much about the charge of Saturday, July 1st. We got over the parapet about 9 in the morning. I with a few others were going along until within a few yards of the German wire entanglements when bangs she goes. I lay for several hours in the grass, and when the opportunity came I managed to get back to the trenches. It was brutal to see the Germans killing our wounded when they were crawling back, and it looked so rotten that I did not care if they killed myself. I have the German bullet as a souvenir, and I hope some day to get the savage Hun that fired it. I will probably be some time in hospital, but don't worry I am being well treated.

Our Regiment's dead at Beaumont-Hamel included fourteen sets of brothers and four officers from the Ayre family of St. John's who were all killed on July 1, 1916. Thirty-nine "Boy Soldiers" also died on that terrible day.

Private Francis (Frank) Galgay of 235 Water Street, St. John's, son of Frank and Mary (Murphy) Galgay, and stepson of Minnie (Eagan) Galgay (second marriage), was 19-years-old when he gave up his life in the July 1, 1916, Battle of Beaumont-Hamel. The blond, blue-eyed, slight (117 pound) young combatant had also fought with his fellow Newfoundlanders at Gallipoli in 1915.



The grief suffered by the Galgay family was further complicated by the fact that Frank's body was never recovered. His name appears on the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial, which honours the Newfoundland servicemen with no known graves.

On November 23, 1916, Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary

wrote the following letter to Private Galgay's stepmother, Minnie Galgay:

Dear Madam,

For some time past the Imperial Government has been making enquiries in relation to those men of the First Newfoundland Regiment who have been reported missing since the action of 1st July (1916). I very much regret to state, however, that from the correspondence which has taken place, a copy of which I enclose, it is evident that none of them are prisoners of war in Germany, and authorities are, therefore, reluctantly forced to the conclusion that all these gallant men, whose names are given in the enclosed list, and one of whom was very dear to you, were killed in that fateful action on the 1st of July. I desire to express to you on behalf of the Government, as well as for myself, the sincerest sympathy in this time of sorrow. We feel the loss of our loved ones, but it will, no doubt, be some consolation to you to think that he, for whom you now mourn, willingly answered the call of King and Country, did his part nobly, and fell, facing the foe, in defence of the principles of Righteousness, Truth, and Liberty. Though he has laid down the earthly weapons of warfare, he now wears the Soldier's Crown of Victory, and his name will be inscribed upon the Glorious Roll of Honour, and be held in fragrant memory by all his fellow-countrymen. When the victory is won, and Peace again reigns upon the earth, it will be comforting thought to you that in this glorious achievement he bore no small part. I trust that you may have the Grace and consolation of the Great father of us all at this time.

*With sincere sympathy, believe me to be,
Your obedient servant, Colonial Secretary*

Private Frank Galgay's older brother, Nicholas Augustus (Gus)

Galgay, was a member of the famous “Blue Puttees,” and was one of the first to answer the call when he enlisted in the Regiment at the C.L.B. Armoury in St. John's on September 7, 1914.

Gus served with distinction at Gallipoli and France and was wounded at the battles of Beaumont-Hamel and Monchy. He survived the Great War and was demobilized at St. John's on August 15, 1919, with the rank of regimental sergeant-major.

Gus named one of his sons “Francis” after his father and his brave young brother.

Both Frank and Gus Galgay were members of the Catholic Cadet Corps at Holy Cross prior to WW1. Frank Galgay, retired educator, author, and long-time St. John's city councilor, is the proud nephew of Frank and Gus Galgay.

The November 23, 1916, letter the Colonial Secretary wrote Mrs. Galgay, advising her that Frank was actually killed on July 1, 1916 and was not a German prisoner of war, was prompted by the fact that there had been a tremendous amount of desperate false hope in Newfoundland for the many soldiers who were missing in action after the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel.

Several parents of missing soldiers published letters in local papers saying the missing might still be alive as prisoners of the German Army. Newfoundland Governor Davidson referred to these letters in correspondence he had with Major H.A. Timewell of the Regiment's Records and Pay Office in London:

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 11th January on the subject of the publication of the list of Missing on July 1st who were officially reported through the Foreign Office as not prisoners of war and therefore presumably killed in action.

The correspondence arose by reason of a sudden emergency. A Mr. Snow of Pleasant Street published a statement based on correspondence with a Society in

Switzerland which implied that a number of the Missing on July 1st were Prisoners of War in Germany. Mr. Snow read a wrong construction in the information which he received; but his letter to the Mail and Advocate was calculated to raise hopes on insecure foundation and to disturb the minds of many households which had gradually become reconciled to the belief that their sons had been killed in action, although the positive proof by identification was still wanting.

It was of the first importance that this feeling of hope should be gently removed from the public mind; so I applied through the official channels for authority to tranquillize the public mind.

It will be some satisfaction for Mr. Snow – who refused to discuss this matter personally with me – to learn by your Telegram...that his son No 685 Lance Corporal F.E. Snow who fell on the 1st July and who was posted as missing, has received the posthumous honour of the Military Medal for conspicuous gallantry on the day of his death. (* Lance Corporal Fred Snow won the Military Medal for his gallant actions at Caribou Hill in Gallipoli on the night of November 4 /5, 1915. His body was never recovered.)*

Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army on the Western Front, paid high tribute to the Newfoundlanders who fought in the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916: *The heroism and devotion to duty they displayed on that occasion has never been surpassed.*

Those members of the Regiment who were fortunate enough to survive the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel felt a great sense of loss for the many close friends and comrades who were casualties on that fateful day.

Private Victor Carew, from Shores Cove, Cape Broyle, wrote to his mother following the battle: *It is quite lonesome here now. All my*

buddies and chums are gone. I suppose it will be my turn next. I don't much care. I am satisfied to die for my King and Country.

Private Carew did indeed give up his life for his King and Country on November 20, 1917, at the Battle of Marcoing, France, and his body was never recovered.

Major R. H. Tait, M.C. who fought with our Regiment in WW1, summed up his feelings on the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel in his 1933 book of verse entitled *The Trail of the Caribou: The Royal Newfoundland Regiment 1914-1918*:



Major R.H. Tait

*O Beaumont Hamel! Newfoundland!
Now made twin soil by heavy hand
Of carnage on that summer morn.
The one the land where we were born,
The other holding in its keep
Last resting place of those who sleep
Forever 'neath its sacred sod,
Whose souls have winged their flight to God.
Our gallant comrades! It was ye
Who wrote a page of history
For Terra Nova on that day;
Your glory shall ne'er pass away.
May we who did not pay your price
Be worthy of your sacrifice.
Your deeds won glory for our race
Which time nor tide can e'er efface.
You did not falter 'gainst the foe
Whose withering fire laid you low.
You strove to live, you dared to die
'Neath Beaumont Hamel's blackened sky.
Your comrades all full tribute give
To you who died that we might live.*

Many young Newfoundlanders were working in Canada when

war broke out and they subsequently joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force (Army), and fought with Canadian regiments and other military units during WW1. One such young man was Private Joshua Thomas from the south side of Carbonear. In July of 1916, as the Battle of the Somme raged in France, he wrote his mother back home in Newfoundland outlining his personal feelings on war, its devastation and its effect on soldiers:

Dear Mother

– just a few lines to let you know I am still alive.... I suppose you heard that I was wounded for the second time, but I am still with my good old regiment.... I went through it all and I got wounded in the arm but took no notice of it, and the next day I got it in the knee and still stuck with my regiment. They wanted me to go to hospital, but I refused to go, at that time I wouldn't leave if I had half myself blown away. I will always refuse to run from a German. It was the heaviest [fighting] that was ever known on the British Front... Words can't express what it was like... I can tell you it was awful, but we all stuck to it like men; hell is all I can call it, and if hell is anything like that, I never want to see it.... It is hard to see one's chums getting killed by one's side... I won't tell you anymore about the battle now, as it brings tears to my eyes to think about it. When a person thinks on what he has gone through, it makes him feel bad, especially if he has seen two men fall, one on either side of him.... I saw lots of that but I never took any notice of it then. I have paid some of them for it [Germans], and I am living in hope of paying more of them yet, so you can imagine what this war is like. Words cannot express it.... I always like to get letters from home but it is hard for me to answer because I haven't got night or day to myself... (Daily News, St. John's July 15, 1916)

Private George Graham Crosbie was 17-years-old when he died on July 3, 1916, from wounds received at the July 1 Battle of Beaumont-Hamel. Years later, his nephew, Bill Crosbie, wrote of a strange occurrence which happened on the evening of George's death in France. The article appeared in the November 7, 2009, edition of *The Shoreline News*:

His mother Mary Rebecca (Babe), far, far away in Bay Roberts, Newfoundland felt anxious for her beloved son, and on the night of July 3rd, 1916 heard a knock on the back door. She quickly rose from her bed, in a bedroom far away at the back of the two storey house, and hastened to the door, calling his name as she went, 'Graham, I'm on my way, I'm coming!' When she got to the door, there was no one there. She believed to her dying day that had she gotten to the door sooner, her son would not have died.

The article also mentioned the photograph of the handsome young soldier which still hangs near the fireplace in the old Crosbie family home in Bay Roberts. Mrs. Crosbie, on hearing of her son's death, placed the picture there and charged that it never be removed.

Military historian David Facey-Crowther told of another premonition that a member of the Regiment and his mother had about his death in a 1999 lecture he gave to the Newfoundland Museum group:

...Private Lester Barbour died as a result of wounds sustained on March 10th during the Battle of Passchendaele. Less than a week before he died, both he and his mother had a similar dream that he was home, in his khaki uniform but it was dirty and he wanted to put on his civilian clothes. His mother found his good clothes and put them on him. When he came down the stairs he saw people all dressed up and the tables spread with flowers and food. He thought it was for a wedding but discovered it was for him. He was so glad that he awoke. It was probably a premonition of his wake.

Captain Leo C. Murphy, decorated WWI Royal Newfoundland Regiment veteran, wrote about still another death related token which occurred at the bedside of a dying young Newfoundland soldier in hospital in France:

More recently we heard of the mother of a young soldier who came to him in a hospital ward in 1917 when he was calling for her. The woman suddenly appeared sitting in a chair by her son's bedside a few minutes before he died. He opened his eyes and recognized her, and she left as mysteriously as she came. The nurse who had been in attendance, stated that three of the orderlies in the hospital saw the woman sitting in the chair. (The Veteran Magazine, December 1940)

These type of premonitions, and “death related tokens,” although unexplainable, are well known to Newfoundlanders and are a strong part of our folklore. A considerable number of our people believe in these death related phenomena.

In August of 1916, Walter Crosbie wrote to the Regiment requesting information about the gravesite of his son, Private George Graham Crosbie. Sgt. H.C. Janes wrote back to Major Timewell in response to the enquiry:

Sir:

Re: Graves of Crosbie and Wheeler

I write to ask if you will kindly inform the relatives of the above mentioned soldiers, now deceased, that the grave site of their sons has been put in splendid form during the past fortnight, also that flowers and foliage planted will stand the cold weather, and bloom again next year. There has also been placed on each of these graves a nice artificial wreath of white roses with an inscription

“Dernier Devoir,” a token from some French Society. These are the only two of our brave fellows who had been buried in this town, and my only regret is that it is not possible for me to visit the other towns... The cemetery in which the two men in question are buried is known by the name St. Sever Cemetery, Rouen, and up to the present it contains some 3000 British soldiers, each of whom is allotted a separate grave site. Also, there is a small wooden cross at the head of each, bearing the soldiers Regimental No., Rank, Name, and name of his Regiment.

Padre Nangle had earlier written to Newfoundland's prime minister outlining the procedure followed by his Graves Registration Unit:

Whenever one of our graves was found it was tidied, a cross erected and if possible photographed, copies of these photographs will be sent to you for your distribution to the next-of-kin. When the bodies have been interred in proper military cemeteries and the IWGC (International War Graves Commission) headstone erected they will be photographed again.

In 1920, Walter Crosbie wrote a letter to the commanding officer of the Regiment asking to have the wooden cross with plate, which was used as a temporary grave marker, sent back to the family in Bay Roberts.

A few weeks later, he received a reply advising him that the Newfoundland government had made a recommendation to the Imperial War Graves Commission in the U.K. that the temporary metal plates on the wooden crosses be sent back to the next-of-kin in Newfoundland, but no decision had yet been made.

On November 9, 1922, Padre Nangle advised Newfoundland Prime Minister Richard Squires that the first shipment of 16 wooden crosses had been shipped on August 14, 1922, by Furness-Withy Shipping Lines. To the best of my knowledge, the procedure of sending crosses home to next-of-kin was discontinued shortly after the initial shipment.

Chapter Eleven

From Beaumont-Hamel to Gueudecourt

— only the request of a mother to see her child..... Bridget Knox

Due to its severe losses at Beaumont-Hamel, the Regiment needed time to recuperate, rebuild its personnel strength, reorganize, and train new prospective officers, sergeants, and corporals. As a result, the Regiment basically spent several months in rest camps reconstructing trenches and transportation routes, and integrating the new drafts of Newfoundlanders from the 2nd Reserve Battalion in Scotland. The Battle of The Somme would relentlessly rage on until the third week in November, 1916.

The Regiment suffered some loss of life during the late summer and early fall of 1916, both in France and in Belgium, with three “Boy Soldiers” dying of wounds, and two killed in action.

The Newfoundlanders were diligently working, along with other 8th Army Corps Units reconstructing fire-trenches in the Menin Road area in Belgium, when the enemy unleashed a deadly gas attack:

*It was on the final night of this stint, August 8th, that the Germans followed up a heavy bombardment by launching a gas attack against the Eight Corps. The effects of the deadly phosgene were heaviest in the Potijze area, where all the transport horses of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers died the next day. It was the first time that the Newfoundlanders had been subjected to cloud gas...The fact that the Battalion (Newfoundland) did not sustain a single casualty in this attack speaks well for the quality of the anti-gas training. (Nicholson. *The Fighting Newfoundlander*)*

A significant number of Newfoundland veterans who survived the First World War would suffer much pain and even early death from the after-effects of being gassed.

Just prior to the Battle of Gueudecourt, the Newfoundlanders enjoyed a three day rest and relaxation respite at Poperinghe, Belgium, frequenting the very popular café, La Poupee, affectionately known to servicemen as “The Broken Doll.” The small café was renowned for its afternoon teas and delicious dinners. There was an old piano in the café, and the Newfoundlanders would often strike up a sing-song to ease the pain of war. The Regiment officers held a pre-battle farewell dinner at “The Broken Doll” on the evening of October 7, 1916. After much fun and merriment the Newfoundlanders ended the special evening with the midnight singing of “Auld Lang Syne.” Their hearts were likely filled with mixed emotions of joy, apprehension and sadness because they knew what lay ahead at Gueudecourt. It was general knowledge at the time that members of the Newfoundland Regiment badly wanted revenge for comrades/buddies who had been massacred at Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916.



La Poupee Restaurant (Whitty Album)

Reverend G.H. Maidment, Newfoundland Regiment Church of England Padre, who spent fourteen months overseas with our troops during WW1, wrote of a place that gave much enjoyment, peace and solitude to weary soldiers serving in Belgium:

We had come back from the line in Paschendale to spend 'a rest' in Popenaugh (sic- Poperinghe), about 20 klms from the trenches. Prowling around this town I saw the sign 'Talbot House' over a fine old house in the Rue de hospital. The Reverend P.B. Clayton was in charge, and a very wonderful person he was... I speedily made it the headquarters of my Newfoundland and Hampshire regimental activities. The institution itself was called 'Talbot House' in memory of the son of the Bishop of Winchester. It consisted, as I said, of a whole house in the principal street of Popenaugh (sic). On the ground floor was a canteen, and opposite this was a kitchen. A music room lay to the back of the kitchen. At the rear of the room was a concert room, and gardens...

Many soldiers, including those of our Regiment, utilized Talbot House as a resting place from all the terrible aspects of war, and as a haven to write letters to family members back in Newfoundland. There was a chapel in the loft where soldiers could make peace with their minds and their God, a place likely visited by some of the "Boy Soldiers" while they rested in Poperinghe. The wartime founder of Talbot House, Padre Clayton, referred to it as "*a place where friendships could be consecrated, and sad hearts renewed and cheered, a place of light and joy and brotherhood and peace.*"



*Soldiers relax at Talbot House - 1917
(courtesy of Dries-Talbot House, Belgium)*

The next significant battle and loss of life for the Newfoundlanders would come with the Battle of the Transloy Ridges, October 7-20, 1916. The Newfoundland Regiment arrived back on the Somme at Gueudecourt on October 10, 1916. The following day there were many casualties suffered by our Regiment as a result of heavy enemy artillery shelling. On October 12, the Regiment won much praise for its gallant advance, for inflicting enemy casualties, and for its capture of enemy prisoners and trenches. When the successful operation finished on the evening of October 12, the Regiment had paid a considerable price for its achievements – 239 casualties, a figure that included thirteen “Boy Soldiers” killed in action.

Significant gallantry awards were won by the Newfoundlanders at Gueudecourt on October 12. And, despite sorrow for the many casualties, there must have been a strong feeling of pride, and a sense of retribution on behalf of their fallen comrades and friends at Beaumont-Hamel. For the Newfoundlanders, the Battle of Gueudecourt was their last major engagement in the Battle of The Somme. But they remained in the area of Gueudecourt and Lesboeufs until they were relieved on December 9, 1916.

On November 2, 1916, Mrs. Bridget Knox (Roost) wrote Regiment Paymaster Capt. Timewell requesting that her son Private William Roost be permitted to come home on furlough as she was not well:

Dear Sir,

I sincerely trust you will excuse me for troubling you but I want to know if it would be so good as I use your influence in getting my son William Roost # 76 of the 1st Newfoundland Regiment, sent across to England with the 1st 500 men, who has not had a furlough since... I am sorry to trouble you but my health of late is not good and I would like to see him just once again. You will ever have my gratitude if you would just try and grant my request. I feel

I am intruding too much on your valuable time but you know it is only the request of a mother to see her child. Again thanking you in anticipation.

*I am earnestly,
Bridget Knox.*

Unfortunately, Mrs. Knox never saw her son again. Private William Roost was killed in action on March 2, 1917, at Sailly-Saillisel, France.

On December 8, 1916, Corporal Herbert Wills, 18-year-old son of Frederick and Mary Wills of Grand Falls, was killed in action near Lesboeufs, France. This brave young soldier's body was never recovered and his name appears on the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial honouring those Newfoundland servicemen with no known graves. On February 27, 1920, the Regiment's chief staff officer wrote Private Wills' father a rather terse letter:

Dear Sir:

I am returning herewith Cemetery Register Form, as you omitted to fill in space (A). This space is intended for a Personal Inscription or Text not exceeding sixty-six letters, less the number of spaces between the words. If you desire to have an inscription engraved on the stone, I should be glad if you would fill in same, and return Form to this Department.

As yet we have received no information concerning the burial place of your son, the late 2185 Cpl. H. Wills, but should we be informed by the Imperial War Graves Commission of anything in this connection, it shall be immediately forwarded on to you.

Every family, or the immediate designated next-of-kin, was sent the Cemetery Register Form which permitted loved ones to choose an appropriate text to be placed on the soldier's headstone, if the

body and burial place had been found. The text had to fit the space allotments as dictated by the Graves Commission. This allowed some sense of personal closure for the families of the fallen, but sadly that personal touch could not be granted to the families of the hundreds of soldiers with no known graves.

Newfoundland poet C.W. Quinton's poem, *Some Mother's Boy*, appeared in *The Veteran Magazine* in December 1930. There is a strong possibility that Quinton, who was from Bonavista Bay, was related to one, or both, of the two young Quintons, Private Albert Quinton and Private Augustus Quinton, both from Bonavista Bay, who died with our Regiment in WW1.

Some Mother's Boy

*The sun is rising gloriously,
And shines on a virgin field,
Of fruit and herbs agrowing,
Presents a gorgeous scene;
From each side two armies come,
Arrayed for battle strife,
And the peaceful morn seems mocked and scorned,
It's man for man and life for life....*

*And in a dugout-a dying youth,
In years quite young-and fair;
Surrounded by dead comrades,
Is wrapped in silent prayer;
The blood is flowing from his breast,
Drawn by steel so cruel and cold,
And as he takes a last glance on the field of death,
He hears his dying comrades groan.
The moon wanes down upon him,
A light that's pale and cold,
He looks up for a moment,
And smiles so brave-so bold;*

*And like all gallant soldiers,
He lies calmly back and dies,
Way out-in far off Flanders,
Just some poor mother's boy.*

In December of 1916, members of the Regiment in Europe celebrated their third Christmas overseas as best as they could under war conditions. They thoroughly enjoyed a much loved and sought after feed of fish-and-brewis sent from Newfoundland, followed by a feast of Christmas turkey, organized by Padre Thomas Nangle. Again, one can only imagine the mixed emotions that must have filled the hearts of these soldiers of Terra Nova, especially "the kids," who were so far away from home and loved ones. In my mind's eye, I can envisage one of the many "Boy Soldiers" trying to sleep. As he lies quietly in a tent on Christmas Eve, 1916, his mind is deeply troubled and his young heart is much saddened by the death and carnage he has witnessed. For a fleeting moment his heart fills with joy as he thinks of his family back home in Newfoundland, but he is quickly jolted back to reality by the sudden scream of another young soldier whose nightmare tears at his very soul. Tragically, because of what was to follow on the battlefields of France and Belgium in 1917, this would be the last Christmas for many of these young combatants.



*RNR soldiers receiving Christmas Gifts
from home – Dec. 1916 (G.W.V.A.)*



Private Michael White



Private George Crosbie

Chapter Twelve

1917: A Time of Loss and Triumph

*– Pardon me if today, fulfilling my duty,
I must make you cry..... Captain Padre Pirot, CF*

The Newfoundland Regiment was behind the lines in France for most of January, 1917. It was a time of reconstruction, and preparation for the numerous significant battles that would follow: Le Transloy, Sailly-Saillisel, Monchy-Le-Preux, Yser Canal, Steenbeek, Broembek, and Marcoing-Masnieres.

1917 would be a tough but rewarding year for the Newfoundland Regiment as our brave soldier-heroes “Fought the Good Fight.” This new battle-year would see approximately 95 “Boy Soldiers” losing their lives.

Private Samuel Reid of Heart’s Delight, Trinity Bay, son of Solomon and Alvina Reid, was the first “Boy Soldier” to die in 1917. He passed away in Rouen, France on January 5, from bronchial pneumonia, after serving only 282 days in the Army. This 16-year-old fisherman joined the Regiment on March 30, 1916, after declaring he was 21 years of age. He joined the Regiment in the field just after the Battle of Gueudecourt on October 14, 1916.

Private Gordon Mullings was 16 when he enlisted and 18 when he lost his life in battle in January 20, 1917 and his body was never found. On February 9, 1917, his brother, Private J. F. Mullings, who was serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in Europe, wrote the War Office in London requesting details on the death of his younger sibling. He wondered too if his parents in St. John’s had been notified of Gordon’s death. On February 13, 1917, Major

Timewell advised Private Mullings that his brother had indeed been killed on January 20, 1917, but he had no further details on the circumstances of his death. Timewell further advised that a telegram had been sent to the Newfoundland government in relation to the parents being notified. In closing his letter, Major Timewell suggested that Private Mullings write Padre Nangle for more details on his brother's death.

There was a fitting write-up for Private Mullings in the St. Bonaventure's College tribute to fallen heroes of the First World War:

His business career was of short duration, however, for though not seventeen years old, he nobly responded to his country's call and volunteered in the First Newfoundland Regiment. Amongst the gallant young soldiers was his school chum, Jack Oliphant. The boy attachment ripened under associations of barrack, camp, trench and battle... They fought side by side in France and were wounded about the same time... Gordon made the supreme sacrifice of his life for the cause of the Empire... Death makes true friends all the dearer to each other. (St. Bonaventure's WW1 Memorial Tribute)

By January 19, 1917, the Regiment was back in the front-line at Le Transloy, France, and for the next month and a half there would be small engagements with the enemy near Sailly-Saillisel and Lesboeuufs.

Private Gordon Campbell Lewis of St. John's died at Sailly-Saillisel, along with six other members of the Regiment, on January 28, 1917.

A steward by trade, Gordon was 16, but falsely declared his age to be 18 years and 5 months when he joined the Regiment on March 25, 1916, as a regimental band drummer. Like many of the "Boy Soldiers" who lied about their ages in order to enlist, he kept his original month and day of birth so that he would quickly remember it, if asked.

Private Lewis had stowed away on the troop carrier *S.S. Sicilian* as it left St. John's for the U.K. with a full contingent of Newfoundland soldiers. On July 29, 1916, Governor Davidson sent a note to the Regiment's paymaster: "*For your information – Lewis is, I understand, a drummer who contrived to get on board and has been missing since the S.S. Sicilian left St. John's. This message is dated July 28th but has been delayed in transmission.*" Captain G. Carty replied with a short note from England: "*All well. Lewis with us.*"

Young Lewis had his mind set on getting over to Europe with the Regiment, and indeed his youthful ingenuity won out in the end, but unfortunately, enemy shells do not discriminate when it comes to the age of combatants.



*Private Gordon C. Lewis, Regimental Band Drummer; centre front row
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

The Lewis family lost two boys to the war effort. Private Gordon Lewis' older brother, Charles, lost his life while serving in the Royal Navy. In 1918, his ship *Calgarian* was torpedoed and sunk off the coast of Ireland by a German submarine. (Giles Muir's Family History Paper.)

On April 4, 1921, Annie Lewis, mother of Gordon and Charles, wrote Lt. Col. Rendell of the Regiment asking for some financial

assistance, through the military separation allowance process, until her husband got back from the seal hunt:

Dear Sir:

Just a word to ask you if I may have a few dollars as I have not had any wages this month, my husband being to the ice-fields. As you will remember he is an engineer on the S.S. Terra Nova, and we lost both of our eldest boys through the war, Charlie and Gordon. I have six small children under 15 years of age. You mentioned to me some time ago that I might put in a claim, Mrs. Patterson came to see me on the death of my last boy. She thought the same, when I went to see her she was out of town, however I would be very grateful for any assistance you may let me have at the present time.

This letter, yet again, depicts the tough plight families had back home in Newfoundland during WW1, mainly due to the loss of their breadwinner sons. It also shows the critical leadership role women took on as they tried to raise and feed their families during a very challenging time in Newfoundland history; they cannot be commended enough for their extraordinary efforts.

Not all young Newfoundlanders were interested in going to war, and this was highlighted in the February 17, 1917, edition of the *Twillingate Sun* newspaper:

It is reported that a young man, a native of St. John's, who left here for New York in September of last year has been arrested for a breech of neutrality. The man in question was at no time over-flowing in his love for King and Country, and gave his reason for leaving home was that he feared conscription.

Chapter Thirteen

Monchy-le-Preux

*– war is like some dreadful nightmare
that we cannot shake off.....RC Archbishop E.P. Roche*

On March 28, 1917, the Newfoundland Regiment was given its marching orders to move on to Arras. Upcoming battles for the Newfoundlanders would include the critical Battle of Monchy-le-Preux, and the famous Battle of Vimy Ridge for the Canadians.

On April 11, 1917, Private William Harris, 17, a former fisherman and son of Job and Sarah Harris of Brooklyn, Bonavista Bay was killed at Monchy-le-Preux, and his body was never recovered.

The Harris family was distraught as they looked for answers concerning the whereabouts of their youthful dead hero. In June of 1917, Mary Harris wrote a letter to Mr. Squires, Colonial Secretary, inquiring about her brother's remains. Three years later, in July of 1920, the Rev. E. Nicholas of Brooklyn, B.B. wrote another letter on behalf of Private Harris' widowed father. He said Mr. Harris wondered if the respective authorities would erect a headstone for his son in Brooklyn, next to his mother's grave. In July of 1920, Rev. Nicholas received a reply from the Regiment's chief of staff:

It is noted that the father of this soldier desires in the event of the body not being recovered, that a headstone be erected in the cemetery at Brooklyn. It is regretted that this wish cannot be acceded to, as in cases where search for

missing body is unsuccessful, a mural tablet will be placed in the cemetery registry, on which will be inscribed particulars regarding each member whose remains will not have been located. (The Rooms Archives)

This was one of many cases involving efforts on behalf of the families of dead soldiers, families who were desperately seeking closure. Job Harris wanted a suitable marker in the cemetery at Brooklyn, which would be placed next to the mother who had borne and raised this brave “Boy Soldier.” It would serve as a fitting place for Job to pay tribute to his deceased wife and soldier son but, as it was, military regulations prohibited this request from being carried out.

On April 12, 1917, the Newfoundland and Essex Regiments, as part of the larger 29th Division, were ordered to relieve the troops at the French village of Monchy-le-Preux, and to continue attacking German positions in an effort to push the enemy farther back from the village. The Newfoundland and Essex Regiments were the same units who suffered so many casualties at the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, and here they were again, about to fight shoulder- to-shoulder at the critical Battle of Monchy-le-Preux.

While the Newfoundland Regiment was preparing for the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux there were young Newfoundlanders in the same area fighting with other components of the British Expeditionary Force. The following is an excerpt from a letter Padre Pirot, Chaplain to the Forces (CF), wrote to a Mrs. Myler in Newfoundland concerning the death of her son, who died of gunshot wounds in hospital on April 12, 1917. The letter is in Captain Leo Murphy's papers at The Rooms Archives:

I have seen many boys dying, and I love them all dearly, for they are so brave! War is a terrible thing for mothers and sisters. Pardon me if to day, fulfilling my duty, I must make you cry.

Rev. Father Pirot told how Private M. Myler, Canadian Infantry – Quebec Regiment, service number 488728 died at # 2 Stationary Canadian Hospital in France. There was no information on Private Myler's parents, his home address in St. John's, or his age at the time of his death. But, I believe, from the context of the letter that he was a "Boy Soldier" who had more than likely lied about his age upon enlistment. Padre Pirot went on to say he had seen Rosary beads on Private Myler's bed, and he had put a scapular (a Roman Catholic religious pendant made of cloth) over the young soldier's neck.

At 5:30 a.m. on April 14, 1917, the somewhat weak British artillery creeping-barrage began as the Newfoundlanders started their advance towards German positions, just outside the village of Monchy-le-Preux. Because of its strategic position and high elevation, Monchy was an extremely important ridge, which allowed a strong advantage for the occupiers of this most fought after piece of geography.

The British attack had soon run into failure, mainly because of not having sufficient troop strength to push the Germans back. The enemy surrounded the Newfoundlanders and inflicted 460 casualties on our Regiment: seven officers and 159 other ranks killed/died of wounds; 163 men wounded; 153 men taken prisoner and 28 of them would die of wounds. The Battle of Monchy was costly for the Newfoundlanders. There was much grief and confusion for the families and loved ones back in Newfoundland due to the many prisoners taken by the Germans at Monchy. There were 33 "Boy Soldiers" killed in action or died of wounds in the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux.

Newfoundland's Roman Catholic Archbishop Roche wrote a public letter on the effects of war in 1917:

*We here in Newfoundland have felt the effects of war...
The dreadful reality of war has come to too many families
throughout the land. And there are few districts in the*

Island which are not mourning... sons lost on the field of battle. The war is an absorbing topic, it is never absent from our thoughts. It is like some dreadful nightmare that we cannot shake off. Our prayers and desires are for a speedy end of the war, for an early peace, but for a peace at the same time, which will render impossible another such world calamity as that which we are suffering now. (Dohey. R.C. Basilica Archdiocesan Archives)

The story of Private Joseph Vaughan, son of Henry and Ellen Vaughan of St. John's, demonstrates the kind of suffering our "Boy Soldiers" experienced during the war. Joseph was one of four Vaughan sons who joined the Regiment and fought in WW1.

Joseph, age 15, borrowed his older brother's clothing when he went to enlist at the C.L.B. Armoury on Harvey Road. But even then he looked so young that Capt. Montgomerie sent him home to his parents for their written consent. On December 20, 1914, Joseph's father, Henry, wrote Capt. Montgomerie:

Sir:

Joe tells me that you want to get the consent of his parents before you accept him for the Regiment. He seems to want to go, under those circumstances, if you find him fit, his mother and I will be willing to let him go.

After his initial training in Scotland with the 2nd Battalion, Private Vaughan was posted to the Regiment. He landed in Gallipoli with the Newfoundlanders on the late evening and early morning of September 19/20, 1915. He was admitted to hospital on January 1, 1916, suffering from frostbite and invalided to Wandsworth Hospital in England. After some 3½ months of convalescence he re-joined his Regiment in Rouen, France. Shortly afterwards, he suffered from a glandular infection and ended up back in hospital for two more months. He re-joined the Regiment on June 20, 1916, some ten days before the July 1 Beaumont-Hamel massacre.

Private Joseph Vaughan became one of the numerous casualties of July 1, ending up back in hospital suffering from gunshot wounds in both his legs. After spending several months in hospital, he was sent on leave to the 2nd Battalion in Scotland. He re-joined our Regiment on March 6, 1917. On April 14, 1917, the brave young Newfoundlander went shoulder-to-shoulder into battle with his comrades, and was killed at Monchy-le-Preux.

*Frank**Oscar**Joseph**Herbert*

On her “Separation Allowance Form” application, Mrs. Vaughan stated her son, Joseph, was 17-years-old when he was killed. How can we not have total admiration for this young soldier who joined our Regiment some three years under the legal age and finally paid the supreme sacrifice? Before the war was over, the Vaughans would lose three of their four sons who served with the Regiment: Francis, Oscar and Joseph.

Private James M. Cron, “Boy Soldier,” was 18 when he died at Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917. James, 5’4” tall and weighing just 115 pounds, was the son of James and Emma Cron of Harbour Grace. He joined the Regiment on June 4, 1915, after falsely declaring his age to be 19 years.

On May 19, 1916, James was admitted to hospital in England suffering from German measles. On July 1, 1916, at age 17, he was wounded in the hip at Beaumont-Hamel. Some nine months after Private Cron joined the Regiment, his sister, Frances, shipped out for Europe with the Women’s Patriotic Association as a graduate nurse.

Frances wanted to be near her young brother and to care for injured soldiers. She went on to serve on a British military hospital ship which ran between France and South Hampton.

The regimental files at The Rooms Archives show a significant trail of letters and regimental memoranda concerning the Cron family's inquiries and bewilderment about the whereabouts of their son's body and personal effects. Private Cron's mother, Emma, wrote a letter to Lieutenant Hugh Anderson of the Regiment on July 1, 1917:

Will you kindly give me all the particulars of Private James M. Cron's death on April 14th – No. 1585, that you can. Every little (sic) is so much to me, – his Mother. He was so young and yet so brave like many another Mothers boy. Tis hard to know that when war has ceased, and the little band of heroes comes marching back that ones loved ones will not swell the ranks. Do please find out if you can, where he lies, how he was wounded and if any little thing remains to remind us of him. Yours very sincerely,

Signed: Emma Cron

On August 2, 1917, Regiment Paymaster Major H. Timewell replied to Mrs. Cron's letter:

Madam: 1585, the late Private J.M. Cron

In reply to your letter of the 1/6/17 to Lieut. Anderson: I beg to tell you that I have submitted the enquiry regarding your son to the authorities in France, hoping that they may be in a position to furnish some particulars regarding his death. Owing to the great activity which prevailed on the front at the time your Son fell, it is feared that little information will be forthcoming, as, unfortunately, so many were killed on that day.

I am also asking Captain Tom Nangle, Chaplin, if he knows or can find out any details.

All Private Cron's personal effects (some letters and cards) which reached this Office were sent to Newfoundland on 6/7/17, and should any others come to hand in the course of time, they will also be forwarded.

A further letter was sent to Mrs. Cron from the Records Office in London. Dated August 16, 1917, the letter stated there was little information forthcoming regarding her son's death. It also stated that Padre Nangle could not assist her in any way in regards to new information, other than to say that Private Cron was last seen entering the village of Monchy on the day of the attack with the rest of the Battalion, and no one could say what became of him after that. His company commander remembered seeing the young soldier in the trenches before the attack, but he could not recollect seeing him after that. The letter concluded:

I greatly regret that the result of my enquiries have been so fruitless, but it is feared that, on the day your son died, many other gallant Newfoundland soldiers fell, particulars of whose glorious death may never come to light.

On August 31, 1917, James Cron replied, on behalf of his wife, to Lt. H. Anderson, Regiment Records Department. Mr. Cron's letter expressed the family's dissatisfaction with the information they had received:

It does not seem very clear to us (and we would like to be satisfied on this question) whether our boy's body was found or not? And we reason it out this way. Surely someone must have recorded his death, for we were notified on the publication of the casualty lists after the Monchy attack that he was missing, and 24 hours after notified he was killed in action. Someone must have seen some proof that he was killed for the authorities to transfer his name from Missing to Killed in Action List.

We do not want to be troublesome but you must know

it is only natural for us to wish to have our mind set at rest on this point...

James Cron went on to tell of the soiled and worn picture-postcard and letter which young James had received from his mother and that had been forwarded to the family by the Regiment's London Office. The parents wanted to know whether the items were taken off his body or taken from elsewhere. James concluded his letter, seemingly crying out for more definitive information:

It would be a satisfaction to us if we could only find out how he died? If his body was found? If he got Christian burial? You see he is very dear to us. He was very young and we could at least have kept him back for eighteen months, had we tried, and so are apt to blame ourselves.

As the months went by, there was still no peace for the Cron family, as can be seen in a letter James Cron sent to the Regiment on January 7, 1919:

Have you heard anything else since Private James M. Cron's (No. 1585) disappearance at the Battle of Monchy? If only a slight relic of him from either the base in France, Beaumont-Hamel or Monchy could be got for me, how very grateful I would be, if not too much bother. His sister Nurse Cron (Mrs. James Beveridge) may be in to see you from Salonica. You may communicate with her as she expects to be in Harbour Grace shortly.

On November 13, 1917, Major Timewell sent a memorandum to J.R. Bennett, Newfoundland's Minister of Militia, quoting a response from Lt. Col. Hadow regarding Private Cron's death:

No. 2489 J. Mahon states that Private Cron was wounded on April 14 and that while making his way back 2 shells pitched quite close to him and he disappeared. I

do not know through what channel his papers were forwarded...

On December 11, 1917, Lt. Col Hadow sent a note to the Records Office regretting no further information could be obtained owing to the large number of casualties since Cron's death. Because of heavy fighting going on at the time, he said it was impossible to say if Cron had been buried.

On March 21, 1919, a still grieving James Cron wrote a long letter to Minister of Militia Bennett on behalf of a number of citizens who had asked for his help in trying to get monies owed to the families from the estate of "*the boys who had been killed*" in WW1.



Private James Cron and his sister, Nurse Frances Cron (Beveridge) circa 1915. (Cron family photo courtesy of Chris Butt)



*Regiment soldiers take time out to eat – France circa 1916.
(Whitty Album)*

Chapter Fourteen

Steenbeek/Broembeek/Marcoing-Masnieres

*– I am going to meet Leo, I hope he will be there to welcome me...
..... Michael Christopher (dying father)*

Private William C. Coish of Ladle Cove, Fogo District, son of William and Maud Coish, was 19-years-old when he died in battle in Belgium on September 28, 1917, after only 331 days of service. This young fisherman joined the Regiment on November 2, 1916, at St. John's.

The war caused much sadness and grief for the Coish family. Some fourteen months before William's death, his older brother Harold, age 24 and also with our Regiment, was killed on July 1 at Beaumont-Hamel, and his body was never recovered.

William joined up nearly three months to the day of Harold's death, and one has to wonder did he join to avenge the death of his older brother, or did he want to help finish the job of defeating the Germans in Harold's honour? The answer is forever lost to a graveyard in far off Belgium.

On November 6, 1916, only four days after William Coish joined the Regiment at St. John's, his father sent a telegram to the Newfoundland Minister of Justice and Defence stating: *My son Private (William) Clyde Coish has volunteered. Mother quite sick. Son killed in France (Harold). Clyde my son only support. Secure release.*

Unfortunately, the father was unable to get his son released and William subsequently went on to fight and die in Europe. In an April

13, 1918, letter to the acting Colonial Secretary of Newfoundland, a grieving but very proud mother, Mrs. Maud Coish, wrote:

Dear Sir;

In such times as these, when our country, yes, when every person in this Island home of ours, is being asked to do all that is in his or her power to stand up for the cause of Right and Justice, I think it an honour, though a very severe loss, to be able to say I had sons who were willing to give up their lives in order to "Keep the old Flag flying." When I read of others who have given their all, I feel that I am not alone. I have indeed given my all, being the mother of two sons, who have made the supreme sacrifice for King and Country. Although its such a heavy blow, I feel proud of them and know that they will never fill dishonoured graves. For my dear boy "Private Harold Coish," whose name was added to the Roll of Honour, as missing on that memorable July 1st, 1916, I have received a certificate and memorial card from the Patriotic Association. I had another dear boy, who made the supreme sacrifice on September 28th, 1917 "Private William C. Coish." I would like to know if a certificate is given for each soldier, if so I should very much like to have one in memory of my other dear boy as well... (Trinity Historical Society – Virtual Exhibit, 2007)

On February 16, 1925, Lt. Colonel Thomas Nangle wrote a memorandum to Major Howley of the Regiment requesting that he notify the Coish family that the grave of Private William Coish had been located, and that the soldier's remains had been exhumed and re-interred in Artillery Cemetery, just north of Ypres, Belgium:

Will you also acquaint the next-of-kin that the removal is much regretted but was unavoidable on account of an agreement with the French and Belgium Governments to

have all scattered graves removed to a suitable place for permanent retention. You may give the next-of-kin every assurance that the work of re-burial has been carried out carefully and reverently.

Private Patrick Farrell, who was 19 when he died of pleurisy on October 1, 1917, was honoured in a memorial book created by St. Bonaventure's College:

During the first week of October we were apprised of the sad death of Private Patrick Farrell who was gazetted in the casualty List of October 1st, as having succumbed to an attack of pleurisy which he contracted in the trenches in Flanders. We have no particulars of the part he took in the Regiment after going to the Front, nor his last illness at Wandsworth Hospital but from his previous record we know that he acted his part nobly and died as a true and brave Catholic soldier should. The deceased was born in Ferryland and entered the College as a boarding student in 1913... On leaving College he took charge of the school at Cape Broyle and according to reports from the authorities of that place gave general satisfaction and did much to raise the tone and standard of the school....His patriotism, however, overcame his enthusiasm for teaching... His letters home were most descriptive and interesting, and always showed a spirit of courage and self-sacrifice typical of a noble character.... (St. Bonaventure's Memorial Book, Father Stephen Boyd)

Private George Brinston, 17, of North Harbour, Placentia Bay was killed in action on October 9, 1917, during the fighting at Broembeek, and his body was never recovered. The young lumberman-turned-soldier was the son of Robert and Amelia Brinston.

Brinston joined the Regiment at St. John's on August 9, 1915,

and, up until his death, had served for two years and 62 days. The “Boy Soldier” was in hospital on several occasions suffering from severe cases of influenza and bronchitis. On December 20, 1916, his father wrote a letter to the Regiment asking for his 16-year-old son’s medical discharge:

Dear kind Sir:

We received your telegram on the 15th of December and were very sorry to hear of our boy being sick. Will you kindly please send Private George Brinston home as soon as his health recovers enough, as he is too young for the service.

From a legal perspective, Private Brinston, at 16 years of age, was too young to be in the Regiment and to be fighting in Europe. However, his parents’ request was never acted upon and he would give the supreme sacrifice some ten months after his father’s letter.

Corporal Leo Christopher of St. Joseph’s, Salmonier, St. Mary’s Bay was only fifteen when he joined the Regiment in St. John’s on August 23, 1915. The fisherman-turned-soldier son of Michael and Catherine Christopher joined the Regiment without his parents’ permission. He lost his life in battle on October 9, 1917.

Leo’s oldest brother, Thomas, had earlier enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He fought with the 44th Canadian Infantry during WW1 and distinguished himself for his leadership, fitness and fighting prowess in France.



Leo Christopher

Catherine Christopher wrote Governor Davidson several times in 1917 (March and June) in an effort to obtain a six month furlough for Leo, who was still too young to be in the military. She had earlier tried, unsuccessfully, to get leave for her older son, Thomas. She wrote the following letter concerning Leo on March 25, 1917:

Your Excellency,

I am presuming to write you asking you to use your influence to obtain leave for my son Lance Corporal Leo Christopher. He enlisted two years ago without his father's permission or mine, but as our country needed him we did not oppose his going.

He enlisted on August 23rd, 1915 and has been nine months on active service in France. He will not be 18 years old till next November and I think a boy of his age is entitled to a furlough of at least six months. We have another son in the Canadian Regiment. He also is in France on active service for the past nine months and we are very anxious to get six months furlough for our boy Leo....Trusting to have a favorable reply from your Excellency.

Corporal Christopher's niece, Mary (White) Valencic, said every November 11, like clock-work, her mother would tell stories about Leo. One was about how he had sulked for two full days after his parents refused to give him permission to join the Newfoundland Regiment. A short time later he packed up and left for St. John's to enlist.

Mary's mother also described arriving home from school and being met at the door by her own mother who told her of Leo's death. When the young girl went to Leo's room she saw her father kneeling on the floor, with his arms outstretched over his dead son's bed and crying uncontrollably.

On his death bed in 1919, Leo's father, Michael, told his daughter Madeline, who had just arrived home from Halifax to be with him,

that he had waited until she came, and he also said, *"I am going to meet Leo. I hope he will be there to welcome me."* The Christopher family feels that Leo's father died of a broken heart over the loss of his soldier son. Adding to the family's grief was the fact that their "Boy Soldier's" body was never recovered.

A verse in a poem entitled *"In Memoriam"* that was written by Lieutenant Ewart A. Macintosh (a British officer who had just lost two soldiers in a raid on German trenches in WW1 and was 24 when he lost his own life at Arras on November 21, 1917) speaks of the type of grief experienced by Michael Christopher on the day he was told of his son's death:

*So you were David's father,
And he was your only son,
And the new-cut peats are rotting
And the work is left undone,
Because of an old man weeping,
Just an old man in pain,
For David, his son David,
Who will not come again.*

It was her brothers going off to fight that inspired Madeline Christopher to get involved in the war effort:

Enlisted with Canadian Expeditionary Force

In a Halifax paper of recent date the following is published:- Miss Madeline Christopher of St. Mary's Bay, Newfoundland, now residing in Halifax received news that her brother Thomas Christopher, who enlisted in a Winnipeg Battalion, and went overseas in April of 1916, has been wounded in action and is now in a hospital in France. Another brother, Leo Christopher, enlisted when he was but 15 years of age and he too is in a French hospital.... Since learning of her brothers' wounds, Miss

Christopher has decided to train as a nurse and hopes she will be given the opportunity to go overseas.

Mary Valencic's mother said her brothers, Thomas and Leo, joined the war effort for adventure. She described Leo as a typical light-hearted youth who dearly loved to go on troutng trips with his father.

As the author of this book, I wanted to visit the home of one of these "Boy Soldiers," and stand on the same ground where they lived, worked and played as children. Joe Dobbin, retired teacher and local community historian, was kind enough to show me exactly where Corporal Leo Christopher lived in St. Joseph's, Salmonier. It was a beautiful sunny day when Joe took me on a tour of the land where the old Christopher homestead had been located. Joe left me alone with my thoughts for a short while on that sunny day in 2009; I stood gazing at the spectacular view and looking out at St. Mary's Bay where Leo fished with his father as a young boy. It saddened me that Corporal Leo Christopher, a brave young Newfoundlander, was never able to return home. I then imagined how terrible it must have been for his family, especially his mother who had given birth to him, that they would never again see his youthful face or be able to visit his gravesite.

The commitment to freedom and service to one's country certainly has been past down through the generations in the Christopher clan, with three direct descendants of Privates Leo and Thomas Christopher having served and/or are presently serving with the Canadian Armed Forces. Several relatives have also served in Bosnia and Afghanistan. I salute all of the Christophers who have truly taken the torch from their descendants, and have held it high. Thank you so much, and God bless you for attempting to make the world a better place in which to live.

The Battle of Cambrai, November 20-December 7, 1917, is a significant event in the annals of Newfoundland history because it

was following this battle that the King would honour our proud and brave fighting Regiment by bestowing on it the prefix “Royal.”

It was a signal mark of the Royal favour in recognition of the splendid performance of the men of Newfoundland in the Ypres and Cambrai battles. This was a unique honour, for no other regiment of the British Army was to have such a distinction awarded to it during the First World War while fighting was still in progress. Indeed, in the whole history of British Arms, only two previous instances are recorded of the prefix “Royal” having been conferred while the nation was still at war – one in the year 1165..., and in 1885...(Nicholson. The Fighting Newfoundlander)

Undoubtedly, the “Boy Soldiers” of our Regiment played a significant role during the Battles of Cambrai and Ypres, and in the winning of the prefix “Royal.” Approximately 20 or more “Boy Soldiers” lost their lives during the Battle of Cambrai, and significant others were wounded.

Private George B. Lacey of St. John’s, who joined the Regiment on March 28, 1916, after declaring he was 19 when indeed he was only 17, had his heroic actions in Belgium described in the *London Gazette* on October 18, 1917:

For Bravery in the Field:

In the attack on the enemy near Langemarck on the 16th August 1917, when his company was held up in front of a road by rifle fire, this man with two others went out on their initiative, crossing from shell hole to shell hole, and finally getting in the rear of the road, bombed out small dugouts containing two and three men each. They killed about 19 of the enemy and signaled to their Company to advance on completion of this act.”

The other two soldiers accompanying Lacey were Corporal Harry Raynes and Private John Peddle, all hailing from St. John's. For their heroism Raynes won the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the French Croix de Guerre while Peddle and Lacey were awarded the Military Medal. Lacey and Peddle both lost their lives in November of 1918.

On November 20, 1918, Private George Lacey was killed during the Battle of Marcoing in France. He died before he had the opportunity to officially receive his Military Medal for bravery at Langermarck in 1917.

Private Lacey was buried in the British Cemetery at Marcoing where he is interred near Lieutenant Walter Greene of Cape Broyle, a former officer of the Newfoundland Constabulary and Distinguished Conduct Medal winner at Gallipoli, who was also killed on November 20, 1918.

Lacey, son of Martin and Catherine Lacey, embarked for the United Kingdom on July 7, 1916, and had only been there for a few weeks when his father suddenly passed away, leaving behind a wife and seven children. Private Lacey himself became very sick from dysentery and was admitted to hospital on January 19, 1917, for a considerable convalescence period. He finally rejoined the Regiment on June 7, 1917.

On March 8, 1918, the Acting Minister of Militia for Newfoundland wrote the following letter to Private Lacey's mother, Catherine.

Dear Madam:-

Re. # 2344 Private G.B. Lacey

The Military Medal so gallantly won by the above named soldier has now come to hand and I shall be glad to know your wishes with regard to having this medal presented. If you would like this medal sent to you by registered post, your wishes will be complied with, but I should prefer to have the medal presented publicly by His Excellency the Governor, before the troops on parade. If you will agree

to that arrangement, I shall be glad to hear from you at an early date, and I can then let you know the place and date on which the presentation will take place. There will be one or two other medals presented at the same time....

On March 12, 1918, Catherine Lacey responded:

Dear Sir:

I beg to acknowledge with many thanks your letter of the 8th instant re. The presentation of the Military Medal won by my dear son, George. I shall be glad to comply with your request that the presentation be made publicly by His Excellency the Governor. I remain yours faithfully...

One can only imagine the pride and sorrow Catherine Lacey felt as she received the Military Medal her son had earned in Belgium. She surely would have gladly exchanged the medal to have her “Boy Soldier” back in Newfoundland with her and the family, but fate would not have it as such.

Private Chesley Bennett of Lewisporte, son of James and Alice Bennett, was 17 when he lost his life on November 20, 1917, the first day of the Battle of Cambrai. At the time of his death, the young soldier had only 260 days military service, and just nine days of actual field experience. He joined the Regiment at St. John's on March 6, 1917, when he falsely declared his age to be 18 years/8 months.

On November 11, 1918, Armistice Day, Private Bennett's anguished father penned the following letter to J.R. Bennett, Newfoundland's Minister of Militia:

Will you kindly give me the necessary information regarding my son Private Chesley Bennett, Regimental No.

3519. I received a message June 18th, 1918 stating he was killed somewhere in France. This doesn't seem to satisfy us, as he was missing November 1917.

Our neighbours who have had their sons killed, have received fully official statements re. The death, burial etc., and because of this, we are anxious to ascertain all particulars regarding him. Awaiting your reply.

Private James Croucher of Point Verde, Placentia Bay, son of Thomas and Mary (Bailey) Croucher was 19 when he lost his life on November 20, 1917, during the Battle of Cambrai. At the time of his death he had served one year and 203 days with the Regiment.

On December 19, 1917, following an inquiry made by Private Croucher's father, Padre Nangle and other members of the Regiment said that they had not been successful in identifying his burial site: "*exhaustive enquiries were made, but net result was practically nil... On November 20, 1917, there was much heavy fighting at the time and no one seems to remember the incident of Croucher's death.*"

Nangle's letter went on to say that Lance Corporal J. Lyons, while going forward, saw Private Croucher getting hit in the arm while he was carrying a Lewis gun. Lyons picked up the gun and carried on and didn't see Croucher again. Padre Nangle said the line where Private Croucher was shot was in enemy hands and no report had been forwarded advising that the young soldier's remains had been recovered. Nangle concluded: "*I am sorry I cannot say anything more, and regret there is so little for Private Croucher's father of a comforting nature.*"

In February of 1922, the Regiment finally sent the family a picture of the gravesite where Private Croucher was buried. More than likely, the remains had been discovered by Padre Nangle's Graves and Registration Unit while carrying out its post-war responsibilities.

Despite Thomas Croucher's grief at losing his own child he spent time helping other families in the Placentia area obtain information

relating to their sons' deaths. On April 9, 1919, he wrote Lt. Warren of the Regiment Records Office on behalf of John Donohue of Point Verde who was looking for pension monies owed to his family as a result of the death of his 18-year-old son, Private William Donohue.

Private Wilson Benson, 17 years of age, was killed in action during the Battle of Cambrai, on December 3, 1917. He was a young longshoreman when he joined the Regiment just days before Christmas on December 22, 1916. Wilson was the son of Newman and Sarah Benson of St. John's and like so many of the "Boy Soldiers," he lied about his age when he enlisted. On March 20, 1918, the young soldier's mother wrote a letter to Regiment Paymaster Major Timewell. She was still clinging to hope her son might be alive:

I received a message to the effect that he was passed as missing on December 3rd, 1917 and since that time I haven't received any further information concerning his whereabouts. I am his mother and anxiously waiting for some news concerning him. Will you please do your best to try and locate him for me.

Following the intensive fighting on the first day of the Battle of Cambrai, Padre Nangle had a burial party scour the area for remains. The bodies of those found were removed to the edge of Marcoing Copse where they were interred in temporary graves.

The King honoured the Newfoundland Regiment with the prefix "Royal" for their brave actions and fighting tenacity during the Battles of Cambrai and Ypres but, generally speaking, 1917 had turned out to be a bleak year for the Allied troops of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). The BEF saw approximately 38,000 of its troops killed and wounded, and 6,000 soldiers captured.

The fighting ability and effort of the 88th Brigade, which included the “29th Division” and our Regiment, at Cambrai in 1917 was noted by Brigadier-General Nelson: *I don't care what happens to me now; I have commanded the most wonderful troops in the world, who have fought the best fight any man can see and live. I feel my career has been crowned.*

Norm Christie, Canadian military historian, summed up the commendable actions of our Regiment during the Battle of Cambrai in his book *For King and Country*:

For the valiant Newfoundlanders the battle had been a costly one. Since the battle opened on November 20th until they withdrew on December 3rd the Battalion had lost 462 men, including more than 100 killed. But for the Newfoundland Regiment the defence of Masnieres was their greatest military feat of arms in the entire war. In recognition of their actions the King honoured the Newfoundland Regiment, by authorizing the prefix “Royal” to their title. In the entire First World War the Newfoundlanders were the only unit to be so honoured.

Due to intensive fighting during the Battle of Cambrai, which resulted in a significant amount of casualties suffered by the Newfoundlanders, our Regiment was withdrawn from the front-lines for a much needed period of rest and re-building.

In early December, as the Newfoundlanders were being transported to the rest camp by rail, German artillery shells bombed the Regiment as it was in the process of changing trains. The sad part of this incident was that 5,000 Christmas cards were destroyed and lost. The cards were ones which Padre Nangle had ordered for the soldiers to send home in hopes it would help alleviate some of the worry and loneliness of family and friends.

Despite this setback, the Regiment spent a fairly happy Christmas in the small French village of Fressin, which included a special Christmas dinner, followed by a regimental mess dinner. Captain Patterson said: *“It was the happiest Christmas spent on active service and the last for many who sat at the table.”*



*Regiment's Temporary Field Hospital, Pleasantville, St. John's 1914
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*



*Regiment's Training Grounds at Pleasantville, St. John's 1914
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

Chapter Fifteen

“Boy Soldiers” – Prisoners of War

– Newfoundland POWs – one of the silences in our history.....

Jessie Chisholm

There were 180 soldiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment who were taken as prisoners of war (POWs) by the enemy during WW1. One third of these prisoners were captured on a single day at the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux on April 14, 1917. Of the 180 POWs, 38 died while in enemy hands:

A significant number of Newfoundland prisoners were sent to “reprisal camps” established to retaliate against Allied mistreatment of German POWs behind French lines. Newfoundland POWs were not interned together; they were mixed with French, Belgium and Russian prisoners, as was the German policy, and thus isolated by cultural and linguistic differences. Frequently, POWs existed on near starvation rations, supplemented by parcels from the Newfoundland War Contingent Association and the International Red Cross. The POWs were moved frequently.... With the exception of officers, POWs were expected to work long hours in factories, mines, railroad yards, and on farms, frequently under harsh supervision... (This quote is from an eyewitness account given by Private Whitfield Bannister, Port Rexton. It was presented by Jessie Chisholm of The Rooms Archives Division in a collaborative presentation using archival records of The Rooms and the Trinity Historical Society Archives – Public History and Private Memory.

Chisholm, Arrangement and Description Archivist at The Rooms, feels very strongly about the untold history of Newfoundland POWs in WW1. She says:

"The private stories of these Newfoundland POWs have been missing from the official histories of the Regiment and are one of the silences in our history.")

Corporal Titus Small of Lewisporte, lumberman-turned-Boy Soldier, joined the Regiment on April 9, 1915. He served in Gallipoli and was later taken prisoner on April 14, 1917, during the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux. Corporal Small would remain in German hands until December of 1918. On March 26, 1919, he dictated the following Prisoner of War statement to Captain R. H. Tait, Royal Newfoundland Regiment Officer-in-Charge of Discharge Depot:

= 1389. Cpl. Titus Small – Lewisporte

Enlisted – April, Proceeded overseas – April 1915

Place and date of Capture – Monchy-le-Preux – April 14th, 1917

Circumstances of Capture – *We were scattered about in twos and threes in shell-holes and when the Germans broke through the Essex (Regiment) on our left we were completely surrounded. I was slightly wounded in the leg, and all my ammunition was gone, so I was taken prisoner.*

Details of Life & treatment under capture – *After being in Douai (France) for two days and Fort McDonald, (Lille, France), I was sent to work behind the German lines at Marquion for about two months where we were under our own shell fire. We had a very bad time of it there, long hours of hard work and practically no food, and we had no blankets or greatcoats (heavy British Army issue). We had to drink watery soup out of our steel helmets or tins, or anything of that kind that we could pick up, and we had one slice of black bread to do us for a whole day's ration. Then I shifted to Desnain for about*

five weeks road making where conditions were a little better. Then we moved to Anish for about a fortnight working at harvest. Then we were shifted back nearer to Monchy Court for about two months working on dumps and unloading trucks. I found out corporals were not supposed to do this kind of work and so I refused to do anymore. I was sent to the "clink" for seven days and fed on bread and water but I did not have to do any more work as long as I was a prisoner. I then went to Bouschesnes for a week, after which I was shifted to Friedericksville in Germany for three months. Then I was shifted to Parchim for two months and then to Springhurst about 50 kilometers from Hamburg where I was kept for the remainder of (unintelligible words) as a prisoner in Germany. I got parcels from the Red Cross and my letters from home fairly regularly every week I was in Germany, and when the parcels arrived, conditions were much better. About four days before the Armistice was signed two Australians and myself escaped from Camp and got to Hamburg where we met a German girl who had lived in England for 15 years. She hid us in the cellar of her house until the day the Armistice was signed, when she came and told us, and let us go out. The Revolution was on in Hamburg and so nobody took any notice of us in the streets. We went into a restaurant a couple of days afterwards where we got into a conversation with a German sailor. He told us that he was one of the crew of a German battleship that was sailing the next day to be handed over to England. We then persuaded him to smuggle us on board and so we sailed with the German fleet, and landed at Orkney Islands. On arrival there, we were taken by the English pilot of our ship to the "Revenge", the flag ship of the (British) fleet, where we were sent up before Admiral Madden. We told him our story and he made us his guests on board the "Revenge" for the night and did everything in his power to give us a good time. He supplied us with money, underclothes and cigars and sent us ashore at Scapa Flo, and put us on the Naval train to Ripon. We arrived in London on December 8th, 1918.

A note by Corporal Small, dated November 16, 1917, mentions that when he was a POW there were seven other Newfoundlanders in the camp with him: three sergeants, two corporals, and two privates.

Through my research, I discovered the names of eight “Boy Soldiers” who became prisoners of war during WWI and died in enemy hands: Privates Thomas Rodgers – April 17, 1917; Harold Jacobs – April 19, 1917; Cecil Knott – May 2, 1917; George Goudie – Nov 6, 1918; Frank Simms – Dec 3, 1917; Private Llewelyn Hillier – December 3, 1917; Martin Dwyer Dec 30, 1917; and Job Gilley – May 22, 1918.

Private Thomas Rodgers was a young butcher boy from St. John’s, son of Stephen and Anastasia Rodgers, who joined the Regiment on April 28, 1916, at the age of 17. He went missing at the Battle of Monchy on April 14, 1917, and was captured by the Germans and died of wounds on that same day. Private Rodgers had served in the Regiment for only 355 days. Private Rodgers’ personal items included: two pairs of Rosary beads, two prayer books and two medals, all of which were sent back to his parents in St. John’s. For many of the Newfoundlanders, especially the “Boy Soldiers,” strong religious beliefs served as a guiding light as they went through “The Valley of Death” during WWI.

Private Harold Jacobs, 17, was the youngest “Boy Soldier” of the Regiment to die as a prisoner of war. This young fisherman from Bay de Verde, son of David and Evelyn Jacobs, joined the Regiment on March 8, 1916. He was 16-years-old, but declared he was 18. Private Jacobs was wounded and captured at the Battle of Monchy on April 14, 1917. He died in enemy hands five days later from wounds received in battle.

Private Cecil Knott joined the Regiment on June 16, 1916. The 18-year-old former sailor, son of Robert and Mary Knott of Burgeo, went missing at the Battle of Monchy on April 14, 1917. He was captured that same day and died in enemy hands five days later. He was buried in Germany. In January of 1924, Robert and Mary Knott received a letter from Lt. Colonel Thomas Nangle, Newfoundland’s Director of War Graves Registration and Enquiries and former war-time Padre of the Regiment, saying their son’s body had been

exhumed at the Cemetery at Mulheim and re-interred at South Cologne.

Private Job Gilley of Stanleyville, Bonne Bay was another “Boy Soldier” who died in enemy hands after being wounded and captured on April 14, 1917, during the Battle of Monchy. Private Gilley was the son of John and Eliza Gilley of Gull Marsh, Bonne Bay. This 17-year-old former lumberman joined the Regiment at St. John’s on April 16, 1917, after declaring he was 18 years of age. The young soldier was shot in the back at Monchy, and spent over five weeks in a German prisoner of war hospital where he died on May 22, 1917, of complications from previous wounds. On May 2, 1917, he had written to the Regiment pay office in London, asking for clothing, cigarettes and parcels of food.

On July 2, 1920, Private N. Caravan, a “returned soldier” of the Regiment, wrote a letter to Newfoundland’s Minister of Militia, trying to get pension benefits for Private Job Gilley’s widowed mother, who was then at home with a ten-year-old child.

Private Frank Simms, son of Frank and Rose Simms, was a 17-year-old farmer of Kimberly Farm, Burin, when he joined the Regiment at St. John’s on July 14, 1916. He was first reported as “Missing in Action” on December 3, 1917, while fighting in the Battle of Cambrai. He was officially listed as “Killed in Action” on December 3, 1917.

Private Simms’ sister wrote a letter dated June 20, 1920, asking for a photograph of her brother’s grave. Lt. Col. Nangle replied advising her that her request was forwarded to the Imperial War Graves Commission for necessary action, but the photograph might be a long time coming.

On July 9, 1920, Frank Simms, still not having closure, wrote a letter to the Regiment looking for information on the nature of his son’s death. The Regiment advised it felt the Germans had passed along false information to the British Army concerning Private

Simms' burial site. There was no German field dressing station at Sergenvillers, Cambria as was stated by the enemy, nor was there any trace of the burial ground they had mentioned. Frank Simms was told the matter had been referred to the War Office for investigation. Private Simms' body was never found and the status to this very day is "having no known grave." One has to ask – what happened to Private Simms' body, and did the German's actually lie, and if so for what reason? There were very strong rumours throughout British Regiments who fought in WW1 purporting that the Germans were utilizing bodies for other reasons. Apparently, there was an investigation done after the war but nothing could be proven. An item in *The Veteran Magazine* mentioned that Padre Nangle had alluded to the missing bodies' phenomenon, and it seemed he was not totally convinced it was all rumour. I am still researching this matter.

Private Llewlyn Hillier, son of Edmund and Martha Hillier of Point aux Gaul, Lamaline, joined the Regiment in St. John's on August 18, 1916. The young fisherman falsely declared he was 18-½ years of age, when indeed he was just 16. This "Boy Soldier" joined the Regiment in the field on July 9, 1917, and went missing on December 3, 1917, during the Battle of Marcoing, after one year and 161 days of total service. The Regiment and family paper trail I followed showed that Private Hillier had been shot in the back on the day he was reported missing, and had been brought to hospital by the Germans. On March 4, 1918, his mother wrote to Newfoundland's Minister of Militia:

As my son Llewlyn Hillier has been missing since December 3rd, 1917, I wish to inform you I received postal from him on March 2nd. He is a prisoner of war in Germany. I am enclosing a postcard if you can find his whereabouts as I wish to be able to write him and send him some needs. You will please oblige to return the postal again to me. He has been wounded. Please reply...

The postcard Mrs. Hillier received must have been delayed because her son had died in hospital January 25, 1918, from a gunshot wound to the lungs. The family continued to search for more information, hoping against hope he was still alive. On April 11, 1918, Private Hillier's married sister from St. Lawrence wrote the Minister of Militia asking if it would be possible to write her brother and send him a parcel.

On April 15, 1918, a telegram was sent to Private Hillier's brother, Edgar: *Regret to inform you that Records Office reports today that # 3034, Private Llewlyn Hillier died in hospital at La Cateau on January 25. Reported by Geneva Red Cross on April 14, 1918. — signed by Acting Minister of Militia.*

Edgar replied on April 17, 1918:

As my mother is not feeling very well over the news she received about my brother 3034 Private Llewlyn Hillier of his death, when she was expecting good news from him every day. I thought I would write you a few lines to know if you could get any further news from the Red Cross concerning how he died. Was it from wounds or disease? You know it would be a consolation to everyone if they could hear some account of this Poor Boy's sufferings, especially when in the hands of the enemy. Please oblige by doing what you can for an anxious Mother.

Edgar wrote again on May 2, 1918:

I wish to know if you received any further particulars about my brother who died at Le Cateau in hospital on January 25th, 1918. If you could find out anything more from the Geneva Red Cross concerning his death, I would like to know if he died from wounds or not. We received a postcard from him saying he was wounded in the left leg, and my sister received a card from him but he did not write it himself. If we knew who wrote it and he could write a

few lines to tell me about him, how nice it would be. If you have any of his kit or anything belong to him, mother would like to get it in remembrance of him. Kindly let me if you can get any news that may comfort a Mother in her hour of trial and sadness.

The family was still looking for closure on February 10, 1919, when Private Hillier's sister wrote the Minister of Militia asking if he could possibly manage to get a snapshot of her brother's grave at Le Cateau.

On May 26, 1919, the chief staff officer of the Regiment wrote back confirming that Private Hillier was buried at Le Cateau. He said the Graves Registration Units were in that area and if they located the grave the information would be sent to her at the "first possible moment."

Private Hillier's mother stated in her "Separation Allowance Form," completed on March 27, 1919, that her son was 17-years-old when he was killed. The paper trail on Private Hillier ended without disclosing the final outcome for the family.

Another "Boy Soldier" listed as a prisoner of war was Private Martin Dwyer of Beach Hill, Bell Island, son of Thomas and Bridget Dwyer. This young 17-year-old miner-turned-soldier joined the Regiment at St. John's on April 11, 1916. On April 14, 1917, while fighting in the Battle of Monchy, and after receiving a gunshot wound to the knee, he was captured by the Germans. Private Dwyer would stay in enemy hands until his untimely death from pulmonary tuberculosis at a German prisoner exchange station at Aachen, Germany.

Shortly after being notified that Private Dwyer was "Missing in Action" at Monchy, his father, Thomas, sent photographs of his son to the Regiment in Europe, hoping the pictures could be used to find him if he had been wounded and was in hospital.

On June 21, 1917, the young soldier's father was notified through the German Red Cross that his son was a prisoner of war

and in hospital at Mulhiem, Germany, suffering from gunshot wounds. Private Dwyer would later die in enemy hands at the prisoner exchange station.

Following the war, Bridget Dwyer wrote the Newfoundland government concerning pension funds she hoped she would be entitled to because of the loss of her son, and because her husband was sick and the funds were badly needed by her family.

On January 7, 1924, Mrs. Dwyer received a letter from the Regiment advising her that Lt. Colonel Nangle, who would have personally known Private Dwyer and his family from his days as a Roman Catholic priest stationed at Bell Island prior to the war years, had exhumed the body of her son and the remains were re-interred in a cemetery at Cologne, Germany. Thomas Dwyer replied to Padre Nangle: *I am glad that you found where Martin's body is buried... whatever you wish to put on Martin's tombstone, please put it on...*

The final "Boy Soldier" I have as a prisoner of war is Lance-Corporal George Goudie, son of Elias and Mary-Jane Goudie of Grand Falls. Born in Botwood, he joined the Regiment on March 9, 1916, at St. John's. He was captured at the Battle of Monchy on April 14, 1917, after receiving gunshot wounds to his right leg and a shrapnel wound to his hip. He died on November 6, 1918, from pneumonia and meningitis, and his remains were buried in St. Martin's Cemetery in Switzerland.

On August 23, 1917, The Reverend W. Dunn, Methodist Pastor at Grand Falls, wrote Major Timewell in London on behalf of Lance-Corporal Goudie's parents concerning a considerable amount of money owed to the estate of the young soldier. Apparently, the cheque from the Regiment had been written but it was never delivered or cashed. Pastor Dunn also mentioned that George had written his parents pleading for a shaving-kit, a towel and "*some eats and smokes.*" He enclosed \$5 his mother was sending along for her son.

On November 5, 1924, Mary-Jane Goudie wrote a letter to Newfoundland's Minister of Militia concerning the wooden cross put on her son's grave:

I received the photograph in duplicate of my son's grave – the late George Goudie. Allow me to thank you. I must admit however that I was very much surprised to find that nothing better than a wooden cross marked the place where he lay.

Especially as it is nearly two years ago since I received, from the Director of Graves and Enquiries, a paper which I had to fill in. I was informed then that something more permanent than a wooden cross would mark the graves of British Soldiers.

I was asked to give the verse that I should like to have on the stone, and the symbol at the top, if I objected to the caribou head, which they intended. May I ask if this is all that is being done. You understand the interest a mother has in the grave of her boy.

From the many letters Regiment Paymaster Major Timewell wrote to the families of dead and missing families, I truly feel he was a very caring person who felt the pain of the survivors. The situation was difficult for Timewell, as well as for people like Padre Thomas Nangle who, as Director of War Graves, Registration and Enquiries, received enquiries throughout the war years, and for seven years afterwards, as he and his teams arduously searched for, and exhumed many graves from Gallipoli to Belgium. Nangle wrote Newfoundland Governor Davidson concerning letters he received following the July 1, 1916, Battle of Beaumont-Hamel:

Your Excellency,

Having received over two hundred letters of enquiry from the relatives and friends of our gallant lads who died on the 1st of July, it is impossible for me to answer all, so I thought it better to advise you of the graves I found....

Padre Nangle went on to describe the gravesites in and around

Beaumont-Hamel. One can imagine if there were over 200 letters sent to the Regiment after July 1, there must have been many hundreds more up until 1925 when Padre Nangle and his team finished their work of registration, enquiry and commemoration.

Bodies of those killed in WW1 were still being found almost two decades after the end of the war, as can be seen in this article from the July 1934 edition of *The Veteran Magazine*, referring to the Imperial War Graves Commission (now named the Commonwealth War Graves Commission):

– We Are Still Burying Our Dead –

We are still burying our dead – dead of the Great War. Last year (1933) no fewer than 872 bodies of British soldiers were found on the battlefields of France and Flanders, and were buried by the Imperial War Graves Commission....

Over 600 were discovered in the Somme area. It is 18 years since the “great push” started there on one July day in 1916. It makes one think.

For years to come the Commission will go on recovering bodies and burying them. But its burial work is now only one of its secondary activities. Its main work today is tending graves of which headstones are mellowing.



*British Padre praying over dead soldiers in fields of France, circa 1916
(Courtesy of Rob Ruggenberg – The Great War Heritage)*



*Early gravesite of Private R. Little
(Whitty Album)*

Chapter Sixteen

“Boy Soldier” Sentenced to Death by Firing Squad

*– I call this War outrageous murder from the beginning.
My poor child's blood money.....Deserter's Mother*

To say I was surprised when I found information on a “Boy Soldier” of our Regiment who was sentenced to death by firing squad would be an understatement. It was not because I hadn’t heard of the hundreds of incidents during WW1 where soldiers of all ages were shot for breaches of wartime military law. It was because it was a Newfoundland “Boy Soldier” who had suffered from “operational fatigue/post-traumatic stress,” or “shell-shock,” as it was then called. This young farmer-turned-soldier joined the Regiment when he was only 16-years-old. He was posted to the Regiment in France and saw the effects of the tragic massacre at the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1, 1916, where so many Newfoundlanders were killed and wounded.

It was strict disciplinarian Lt. Colonel Hadow, then commanding officer of the Regiment who, under the court martial general process, sentenced the boy to death for deserting the trenches while under shell fire. The penalty imposed by Hadow was death by firing squad. This lethal sentence was later commuted by brigade level court martial to ten years in prison, which was to be further reviewed in late 1917. The very sad part of this “Boy Soldier” story is that the young combatant was sent back into the trenches, apparently still suffering from shell-shock. He was killed in battle just twenty-two days before his court martial was to re-convene to review his ten year prison sentence.

Letters sent to the Newfoundland Department of Militia and the Regiment by the mother of the deceased young soldier were gripping and heart-wrenching. Her son had never learned to write and this added to his mother's frustration during his terrible ordeal. Shortly after his conviction for desertion, his mother wrote a letter to Major Timewell of the Regiment pleading with him to send her boy home on leave:

For God's sake, if not for mine... I heard he was sick... I am a poor woman but I don't care what it costs as long as I can hear a word from my poor boy. He is only 17 and he is too young to be out there, he should have been taken out of there... I am afraid he will be the curse of my life, fretting and grieving. I can't help it ... I cannot see how they could send out a poor boy that was so badly shell shocked, as lots of the boys that returned home told me he was.

On January 16, 1918, she wrote another letter to Major Timewell:

I call this War outrageous murder from the beginning. I would like you, if it is possible to try, and hunt the hospitals as much as you can if it is within your power, and the Salvation Army Huts, as you know some were back of the fighting line. My poor dear boy is not able to write as you know... I have been speaking to returned soldiers that have been reported killed for seven and eight months and their friends in mourning for them and today they are walking the streets of St. John's. So you see I cannot give up hope until his body is found and the tokens that are on him sent back to me. The tokens I mean are his brother's picture, a girl's photo, also the girl's ring and his wrist watch. My mind still tells me that he is still alive somewhere, he was a boy that had a wonderful roving mind... Now Major please try your best for a poor broken hearted mother by doing so...

Major Timewell replied, trying to explain matters from a war-time military perspective:

So great is the confusion wrought in a big battle in these times that months often elapse before the bodies of the fallen soldiers can be removed from the battle-field. The report 'missing after a big battle' means that a man can not be accounted for, and may be either a prisoner or killed or, in very rare cases may again turn up. In due course it is hoped that Private (name)'s grave may again be known and a cross will be erected...While it is hard, I know, to assuage a Mother's grief, will you allow me to say this, Private (name) laid down his life in the noblest manner, dying himself that others might live in Freedom and Lawfulness...

A burial party later discovered partially buried remains which they believed to be that of her son, but at the time it was much too dangerous for them to attempt burial as the battle was still raging. It was decided to wait until the next day to give the youthful soldier a decent burial. A different burial party returned the following day, but *the ground had been greatly cut up and the body had completely disappeared*. To add to the poor mother's grief and frustration, the burial party that first found what they believed was her son's remains sent home the personal effects of another soldier. This made the distraught mother continue to believe her son might be still alive. She wrote Major Timewell advising that the belt and pay book she had received were not those of her son and she further stated:

Now I want you to tell me if you got poor (soldier's name) field book or could you tell me anything about it... This belt does not belong to the Newfoundland Regiment (the pay-book had a different service number than her son's) I do not believe that Private (name) body was picked up at all, so I am going by returned soldiers words who had been in company with him up until October when he was missing.

On June 18, 1918, her son's kit-bag was found and sent home. If losing her "Boy Soldier," who had been initially arrested and sentenced to death, who had been sent back to the firing-line while suffering from "shell-shock," and whose body was never recovered wasn't enough, this poor woman now had to take on the system in an effort to retrieve her son's military wages. She again wrote the Regiment paymaster's office in London:

The Head authorities here are looking out for their own trouble and not for my grief, nor troubles. My poor dear son would have been a good help now if he had been left home to me. A poor boy enlisted and he was only 16 and 6 months old, so you see it was a terrible thing to take away a poor child, away from his home. Dear friend, please do your best for me, as I am very sick...No money to pay the Dr.'s bills...My poor child's blood money.

Under today's military standards and procedures, I firmly believe that the Newfoundland "Boy Soldier" initially sentenced to death by Hadow would have been treated for operational fatigue or for post traumatic stress disorder. For one thing, today's servicemen/women would never be permitted to stay in the front-line for the long periods of time that were the norm in WW1. It would be wrong, though, to try and judge what happened in the 1914-1918 war by today's societal values, beliefs, and advances in mental health strategies. There was little research done at that time into battle fatigue and mental sickness related to operational stress.

The question of why the young Newfoundlander was sent back into the trenches while still suffering from shell-shock begs to be answered. During my research, I came across British Army General Order No. 2384, dated June 7, 1917, and issued in France, which caused me to contemplate on the motives of the military and the British Government as it related to shell-shock:

In no circumstances whatsoever will the expression 'shell-shock' be used verbally or be recorded in any

regimental or other casualty report, or in any hospital or other medical document. (Rob Ruggenberg. The Heritage of The Great War)

Did the military and the British government try to hide and suppress a terrible wartime mental condition they then had no answers or treatment for because it would spell catastrophe for an Army which desperately needed soldiers for combat? Was it this fear that kept the Allies using the firing-squad as the only means they believed they could control so called cowardice and desertion? Did the authorities go to extreme lengths to hide the problem from families and the general public on the home front because they feared possible challenges for recruiting?

Sending physically and mentally unhealthy soldiers back to the trenches was not an anomaly in WW1. Magistrate Frederick Somerton and his wife Caroline of Trinity, Trinity Bay had four sons who joined the Regiment and who fought in WW1. In the fall of 1918 Magistrate Somerton wrote Newfoundland's Minister of Militia in disbelief about his unhealthy son being sent back to the front:

My son Private Edward Somerton, no. 3526, was wounded in March. He is deaf... and will be sent to the front again. By the tone of his letters to us he seems afraid that he may make some serious mistake through not being able to hear orders. Would you kindly use your Office as Minister of Militia so that he may not be sent to the firing line again? A deaf man most certainly will be placed at a disadvantage at the front and may be a source of danger to the lives of others.

Despite the anguished father's request, Private E. Somerton was sent back to the front lines, but luckily he managed to safely get through the last month of fighting in October of 1918.

The war took a significant toll on the Somerton family: Private

Fred Somerton, former teacher, lost his life at Gallipoli in 1915 after a gunshot wound to the head; Edward's deafness, from wounds suffered, cost him his career as a bank clerk; and young Austin permanently lost movement in his hand as a result of a bayonet wound to his arm.



God only knows how many more injured soldiers were sent back to the front when they should have been classified as medically unfit for battle. Are these examples of injured soldiers returning to the trenches a symptom of a war-machine so desperate that it had to sacrifice the health and safety of its sick men in an effort to stop the enemy?

There is yet another disturbing story related to a "Boy Soldier" who joined the Regiment in February of 1915, and who eventually committed suicide after being discharged for being medically unfit for military service.

This blond, blue-eyed teenager fought in Gallipoli with our Regiment from September 20, 1915, until November, 1915, when he was evacuated to the 3rd Canadian Hospital at Mudros suffering from severe jaundice and dysentery. From Mudros he was transferred to Wandsworth Hospital in London where he stayed for 43 days. The young soldier was then transferred to Middlesex War Hospital suffering from shell-shock. He was subsequently admitted to the "Napsbury War Hospital (Mental)."

On July 5, 1916, a Royal Army Medical Corps' major at Napsbury hospital noted "*(he) is at present well behaved; formerly he had been excited and troublesome.*" The doctor expressed doubt the young man would ever recover sufficiently to resume military duties and he was eventually repatriated to St. John's. In the spring of 1917 he was discharged from the Regiment as medically unfit for military duty.

Shortly after his medical discharge, a story in the *Evening Telegram* told of a young private suffering from shell-shock who had

strayed from his home and said police were searching the area of St. John's Harbour where eyewitnesses had seen the young man earlier in the day. The following article appeared in a local newspaper several days after the war veteran went missing:

A sad drowning, under tragic and mysterious circumstances, occurred on Saturday last at the South Side, the victim being... a veteran soldier of "Ours," who returned home not long since suffering from shell-shock. On Friday morning last he left home, not returning up to the following morning, his absence naturally caused anxiety. He was last seen proceeding in the direction of the South Side. The police, aided by civilians concluded a diligent search for the soldier, and after dragging the waters of the Harbour near Baine Johnston & Company's premises, Mr. Ford raised to the surface the body of the unfortunate young man.... The Private had joined the first contingent of the Newfoundland Regiment. To the bereaved mother and other relatives the sympathy of the whole community will be expressed.

On October 5, 1923, the Regiment was given permission to exhume the young man's remains and have his body reburied in the military section of the cemetery. It was certainly fitting to bury this youthful war veteran amongst his other comrades because it was the dreadful effects of war that caused him to take his life – he fought like a hero and he should be buried like a hero. We will never truly know just how many of our returned veterans of WW1 secretly suffered through the remainder of their lives with "shell-shock"; I personally feel the number was significant!

While searching through the files at The Rooms Archives I came across a newspaper clipping for 1917 entitled "Twice Buried" and telling of a wife who had received a letter from her husband – a Regiment member being treated in a French hospital for complications related to shell-shock. The news article went on to explain:

During his twelve months at the battle-front he had some narrow escapes. Twice, recently, while on his way to the front-line of the trenches he was buried under clay caused by heavy shells dropping a few yards from him. He has lost the use of his lower limbs but under treatment at the British hospital he is improving and expects to be shifted shortly. Large numbers of wounded were going in daily as the result of the severe fighting.

This is yet another example of the severe traumatizing effects of war. One can only imagine how much this brave soldier, who was twice buried, would suffer for the rest of his life from what we well know today as “post-traumatic stress disorder or operational fatigue.” Unfortunately, the answer to questions like this lies buried with the soldiers and their immediate families.

The following is a true World War One story about the executions of young British soldiers who suffered from shell-shock:

Executioner

Victor Silvester was born in 1900. On the outbreak of war he ran away from Ardingly College (U.K.) and was fighting on the Western Front at fifteen. Victor's parents suspected he had joined the army and informed the authorities in 1914 but it was not until he was wounded in 1917 that he was discovered and brought home to England.

In an interview he gave just before his death in 1978, Victor Silvester described how he was ordered to execute a man for desertion: 'The tears were rolling down my cheeks as the victim tried to free himself from the ropes attaching him to the chair. I aimed blindly and when the gunsmoke had cleared away we were further horrified to see that, although wounded, the man was still alive. Still blindfolded, he was attempting to make a run for it still strapped to the chair. An

officer in charge stepped forward to put the finishing touch with a revolver held to the poor man's temple. He had only once cried out and that was when he shouted the one word 'mother.' He could not have been much older than me (16). We were told later that he had in fact been suffering from shell-shock, a condition not recognized by the army at the time. Later I took part in four more such executions.'

After the war Silvester became a world famous dance orchestra leader. (Rob Ruggenberg. The Heritage of the Great War)

During WW1, there were a total of 306 servicemen from the British and Commonwealth Forces who were shot by firing squad for breaches of military regulations. My research tends to show the greatest number of soldiers were shot for desertion or cowardice. I cannot help but wonder if most of the desertions or supposed acts of cowardice resulted from fear caused by post traumatic war-related stress and operational fatigue related problems. But even to this day there are components of society who believe the military had to carry out this cruel method of lethal punishment in order to prevent mass desertion.

The British and Canadian governments have, in recent years, granted dignity to the men who were legally executed during WW1, so giving peace and closure to their families. In 2001, the Canadian government officially granted dignity to twenty-three lawfully executed WW1 servicemen:

...Those who went to war at the request of their nation could not know the fate that lay in store for them. This was a war of such overwhelming sound, fury, and unrelenting horror that few combatants could remain unaffected.... We can revisit the past but we can not recreate it. We cannot relive those awful years of a nation at peril in total war, and the culture of that time is subsequently too distant for us to comprehend fully. We can, however, do something in the present, in a solemn way, aware now, better than before, that people may break for reasons over which they

have little control. For some, it may have been what we today call Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. (Ron J. Duhamel, Minister of Veterans Affairs. House of Commons. December 11, 2001)

The names of the twenty-three executed Canadian soldiers were entered into the First World War Book of Remembrance in Ottawa, alongside those of their WWI comrades, removing the dishonour by execution stigma, and finally giving them dignity in death, and giving their families peace of mind.

There were 12,425 men who volunteered to serve with the Newfoundland Regiment during WWI. Of that number, 6,246 were rejected for a multitude of reasons, mostly medical in nature. Newfoundland sent some of her sons who were unfit for military service to Canada to assist in the war effort, something that was reported in the May 19, 1917, edition of the *Twillingate Sun*:

A goodly number of men – 50 or more, left St. John's on Thursday's express for Montreal, where they will be employed in the munitions factories. The majority of these men had offered for enlistment but failed to pass the necessary tests.

NEWFOUNDLAND		M.S.A. 20
MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1918		
No. <u>1642</u> CERTIFICATE OF UNFITNESS		
This is to Certify that _____		
whose Post Office address is _____		
and whose occupation is _____		
has been rejected as medically unfit for General Service in THE ROYAL NEW-		
FOUNDLAND REGIMENT		
and classified as _____	Date <u>Oct-7th 1918</u>	
Countersigned: _____	J. R. BENNETT,	
Assistant Director of Recruiting	Minister of Militia,	
	Registrar Military Service Act, 1918	
	[over]	

Certificate of Unfitness

Chapter Seventeen

1918: The Final Battles and Armistice

— *We feel proud of our soldier lad.....Jennie Bugden*

After nearly a month and a half break from the firing line, the Regiment once again returned to the trenches on January 26, 1918, at a place called Vindictive Cross, north of Passchendaele. The Newfoundlanders were soon to be involved in the major German offensive of 1918. There would be approximately 79 “Boy Soldiers” who would lay down their lives in the final year of fighting.

The early morning of March 22, 1918, began with the most concentrated bombardment in the history of warfare, which initiated a massive German offensive by 71 enemy divisions along a 55-mile sector.

On April 11, 1918, Field-Marshal Sir Douglas Haig’s *Daily Order* clearly showed the significance of the critical Battle of Bailleul, which the Newfoundlanders would be in the thick of:

There is no other course open to us but to fight it out! Every position must be held to the last man: there must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall, and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end. The safety of our homes and the freedom of mankind alike depend on the conduct of each one of us at this critical moment. (Nicholson – The Fighting Newfoundlander)

Even in the midst of war there is humour, and so it was at the Battle of Bailleul. It is well known that Newfoundlanders are brave people who often times have risked their own personal safety to help

those in emergency situations. It is known too that Newfoundlanders have a sense of humour which can appear at any time, regardless of the event. Newfoundlanders are also known for their appreciation of “a drop of stuff” to take the edge off one’s challenge. Colonel Nicholson writes:

*It was at Steenvoorde that the Transport Section carried out an errand of mercy characteristic of the Regiment’s friendly relationship with the local populace... . Major Bernard, who as second-in-command was held back with the ten percent and the transport, received orders to rescue a French family whose home was in danger of being overrun by the enemy; and in consultation with the Transport Officer it was decided to risk the loss of two wagons and four horses in the attempt. Some uneasiness was experienced when evening drew near with no signs of the drivers. Then, just as sundown, the two wagons were sighted approaching the lines at full gallop, loaded with beds, furniture and miscellaneous household possessions. In place of his steel helmet, each driver wore on his head a woman’s hat. ‘It was to be seen,’ recalls Captain Hicks, ‘that they had no pain.’ Their condition was the result of the hospitality of the Frenchwoman who, overjoyed at her rescue with all her belongings, had given her deliverers the freedom of her wine cellar. (Nicholson – *The Fighting Newfoundlander*)*

Private Fred Bugden, 17-year-old son of Fletcher and Olivia Bugden of Epworth, Burin, was one of the first “Boy Soldiers” to be killed in action in 1918. He died during the Battle of Bailleul on April 13, and his body was never recovered.

The former fisherman had joined the Regiment on June 25, 1917, and was killed after serving 293 days. Private Bugden’s sister, Jennie, wrote the Regiment on March 5, 1920, saying how important it was for families to have something tangible – like the Memorial Scroll

and the King's Message – to remember their brave soldiers by, “*I may say that we as a family appreciate all these things which go to prove that the noble dead are not forgotten. We feel proud of our soldier lad...*”

There were 176 Newfoundlanders killed or wounded in the Battle of Bailleul. After two days of intensive fighting and successful counter-attacks by the Newfoundlanders, the overall situation was getting gloomy, and the Regiment was ordered to make a fighting retreat from the Bailleul sector.

On April 29, 1918, Private Leo M. Shortall, 19, died from wounds received earlier at the Battle of Monchy-le-Preux. There was a tribute paid to the young combatant in the St. Bonaventure's College Memorial Book:

In the Cemetery of Brookwood, Surrey, one of the loveliest parts of England, is a little grave in which rests the remains that enshrined the soul, noble and pure, of Private Leo M. Shortall...one of the brightest and most satisfactory pupils of the place. After spending nine very happy years at St. Bon's his parents decided to give him a course at Loyola College Montreal, where he spent two very successful years. On his return home he lost no time in donning the Khaki. ...at Monchy he received a fatal wound.

During the many months of weary waiting [in hospital] our brave soldier exhibited a spirit of cheerfulness and hope that challenges admiration; but Leo's thoughts took another course. He knew that distance had only intensified a parent's love, and consequently he would ask to see his mother, that he may hear again her gentle voice and feel her loving and tender touch. Life was verging towards its setting and she would brighten the evening that was closing in. A cablegram intimating his desire had been

scarcely read when the mother with undaunted courage set out on a journey that might mean the sacrifice of her life. ... from his death bed he exclaimed "Mother, my Mother coming, it's too good to be true." A few days later... our young hero resigned his spirit into the hands of its Maker passing away on the 29th of April.... The mother had got as far as New York and was about to sail for England, when she heard of Leo's death.

Epitaph

*The blow would not have been so hard
To him she loved so well,
Could she have raised his dying head
Or heard his last farewell.*

On April 29, 1918, the very proud but tired and battle-weary Royal Newfoundland Regiment was temporarily withdrawn from operations. This withdrawal was necessary because the Regiment was far below its strength, having suffered more than 200 casualties in the recent fighting. Newfoundland's Governor was pushing hard for leave for the members of the Regiment (Blue Puttees). These brave men had not been permitted extended furlough since the beginning of the war. These mentally and physically drained soldiers had been unable to visit with family and friends in Newfoundland since they left St. John's with the first contingent in 1914.

Even though the rest was surely welcomed, the Newfoundlanders were very upset with the withdrawal from operations because it meant leaving the "Incomparable 29th Division," whose members they had fought shoulder-to-shoulder with through some of the toughest battles of the entire war. Many Newfoundlanders were wounded and died under the distinct "red triangle patch" of the 29th Division. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment received glowing accolades from the senior officers and fighting men of the 29th

Division, and this was to be forever emblazoned in the Division's illustrious history.

From April 29 to September 20, 1918, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment stayed behind the lines, providing guards at Field-Marshal Douglas Haig's Headquarters at Montreuil, six miles from Etaples, France. As it rested and rebuilt, the Regiment assimilated its new recruits into its ranks in preparation for future battles. During the summer of 1918 members of the Regiment, those who had joined in 1914, were finally given six weeks furlough to return to Newfoundland. On Friday, September 13, 1918, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment became part of the 28th Infantry Brigade of the 9th (Scottish) Division under the command of General H. H. Tudor, a somewhat controversial post-war figure and close friend of Sir Winston Churchill.

Private Samuel Hoddinott of Indian Island, Fogo, son of Samuel and Mary Ann Hoddinott, lost his life to sickness on July 2, 1918. The 16-year-old fisherman enlisted in the Regiment at St. John's on June 3, 1918, by falsely declaring his age as 19 years.

Lieutenant Colonel W. F. Rendell sent a telegram to Mrs. Hoddinott advising her that her son had died of complications of measles. Adding to the family's grief he noted that "*Owing to the nature of disease, body will have to be buried in St. John's.*" The young soldier was subsequently buried in the St. John's General Protestant Cemetery.

Measles were a major concern for senior Newfoundland government health officials, and Regimental doctors, throughout the entire war. On April 19, 1916, Newfoundland's Medical Health Officer wrote the Colonial Secretary about an outbreak of measles amongst members of the Regiment in St. John's:

This morning – with the Regiment Medical Officer, Captain Patterson – I examined all the men now on strength.... As a considerable portion of the men have not

had measles, and are therefore very susceptible to attack, it is probable that that further cases will occur during the next two weeks. Every effort will be made to deter any such cases at the earliest stage, so they may not be a source of danger to others. This outbreak appears to be quite a serious matter for the Regiment, as reinforcements cannot be sent forward until the disease has been thoroughly stamped out. An extensive outbreak of measles among the men would, also, in all probability, interfere considerably with recruiting....

It is not practicable to strictly quarantine the boarding houses concerned, there is a considerable danger that some of the sick may be visited by their comrades in the Regiment. Also the presence of so many centres of infection may give rise to an extensive outbreak in the City. ... already four men of the Regiment have died of this disease in Scotland....

There were a significant number of our “Boy Soldiers” who died from complications of measles, during WW1, both in Newfoundland and overseas. Serious problems from measles confronted our Regiment well into 1918, as shown in the death of Private Fredrick Wicks from Greenspond, Bonavista Bay.

Private Wicks, 18-year-old fisherman turned soldier son of William Wicks, joined the Royal Newfoundland Regiment at St. John's on May 29, 1918, after falsely declaring he was 23. On June 14, 1918, less than three weeks after he enlisted, Lieutenant Colonel W.F. Rendell, Regiment Staff Officer, sent a wire to the young man's father in Greenspond: *Private Fred Wicks is at Military Hospital – St. John's, seriously ill with measles.*

Days later, on June 18, Mr. Wicks received another telegram from Lt. Colonel Rendell, this time with tragic news: *We regret to inform you that No 5502 Private Fredrick Wicks died at Military Hospital*

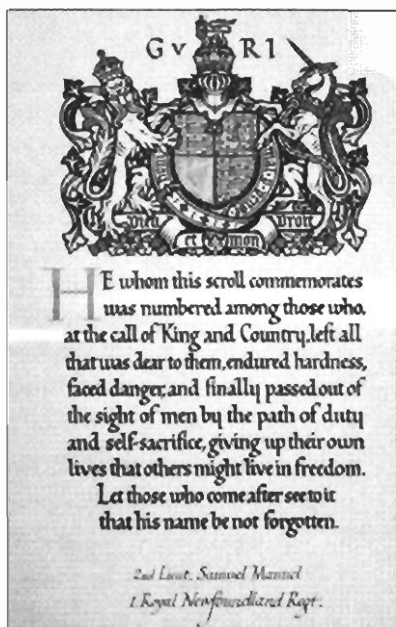
of pneumonia following measles. Death occurred this afternoon. Please advise wishes as to disposal of remains – body embalmed and coffined.

Mr. Wicks sent Lt. Colonel Rendell a telegram on June 19 advising that he wanted his son's body sent home to Greenspond. He said his wife and another son had already left for St. John's on the schooner *Reginald* and they were not aware of Fred's death. On June 19, Lt. Colonel Rendell sent a telegram advising Mr. Wicks that his son's body was leaving St. John's on the vessel *Earl of Devon* on route to Greenspond. One can only imagine the stress and anguish Private Wicks' mother experienced after arriving in St. John's and being told of her son's death.

On November 20, 1925, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment informed Mr. Wicks that a military headstone was on its way to Greenspond for the gravesite of his son.



Memorial Certificate



King's Memorial Scroll

(Pictures courtesy of Frank Gogos and Morgan MacDonald)



*RNR Sentries on duty at
Field Marshal Earl Haig's Headquarters, France 1918
(Capt. Whitty Album)*

Chapter Eighteen

The Battle of Ypres

– *Tell my mother I died for a good cause.....*
Private Alexander Barter's dying words.

The Battle of Ypres would be the first action the newly rested and restructured Regiment would fight in 1918. This battle was part of the Final Advance into Flanders, September 28 to November 11, 1918.

On September 29, seventeen-year-old Private Alexander Barter of St. John's became the first of the "Boy Soldiers" to be killed in action at the Battle of Ypres.

Private Barter, son of James and Leah Barter, enlisted in the Regiment on October 19, 1917, by falsely declaring he was 18 years of age. Private L.P. Byrne, a close friend of Private Barter, was an eyewitness to his tragic death and wrote the following from his own military hospital bed:

I know that Barter was killed in action. He got a bullet wound in the throat. He only lived for about three minutes. He is buried in Belgium (cannot remember the spot). Quarter-master Sellars buried him and took a note from him to give to his mother. He wrote 'Tell my mother I died for a good cause.' Quarter-master Sellars is since dead, killed by a shell. We were the best of pals since we left home together. His last words were of his mother. I made a will in his favour on my pay book, and he had done the same for me. I don't know where his pay book is and should be glad to know.

On May 28, 1919, Leah Barter wrote an emotional letter to Newfoundland's Minister of Militia concerning the death of her only child:

Dear Sir,

I called at the Militia Headquarters today and I was told you were not there. I wished to speak to you about my boy Alex Barter. I suppose now I know my poor boy is gone for sure, and his father, as you know, is not well or strong, and Alex was his only child and the only help we had in our old age. He was the only help we had to look to and now he has gone and left us alone. The way things are now we cannot get enough to live and payout. The boy always said he went to protect his Mother and now he is gone from me. I would like to know what allowance is for me and what money am I his poor Mother to get. Ain't my poor boy's life just as precious as any other boys, as others got it that had other children, but I got no one. Please pardon for taking the liberty of writing you but I thought you were the only one that would take any interest in me as my heart is very weak and I am not strong enough to speak to anyone else on such a subject. Will you kindly answer and let me know what I am to do and you will oblige.

Private Charles Bennett, a young fisherman from Main River, St. Georges, son of James and Maggie Bennett, was 17 when he was killed in action on October 3, 1918. Private Bennett joined the Regiment at St. John's on November 19, 1917, after falsely declaring that he was 20 years of age.

In a letter sent from Scotland dated January 18, 1918, the homesick Bennett said: "*I would like to hear from home. Now when you write send me a couple of pairs of socks and a cake and some*

tobacco." In November of 1919, Maggie Bennett wrote several letters to the Regiment concerning her boy's personal effects:

...Please write me again.... I would like very much to get his clothes – what is left and he had a good watch. He is the only son that we had and we would like to get his clothes for remembrance of my son. I heard the mothers of their sons had the clothes sent – so please try for me.

Private Michael White of Southeast Bight, Placentia Bay, 17-year-old son of Joseph and Evangeline White, lost his life on October 3, 1918. There are two headstones commemorating the death of Private White, one at Little Bona, Placentia Bay, and the official military one on his grave in Belgium. There is a discrepancy relating to his actual age at death, with the headstone in Belgium showing 18 years, while the family headstone in Bona states 17 years of age. The following article about White appeared in the November 5, 1918, edition of the *Evening Telegram*:

Private Michael White

Friday last, the sad intelligence was conveyed to Joseph White, Little Bona, Placentia Bay that his son, Private Michael was killed in action on October 3rd somewhere in France. The deceased was but a boy, being 16 years of age, when he enlisted in November of 1917. Joseph White, brother of Michael was discharged from the Regiment having received several wounds both in France and Gallipoli. 16% of the population of Bona volunteered to fight for King and Country, of that number, Private White was the first to pay the supreme sacrifice. The father, brothers and sisters of the deceased, have the sincere sympathy of the community.

Little Paradise, November 2, 1918



*Private Michael White
(Family picture. Courtesy of Chris Butt)*

Lance-Corporal Gordon H. Thomas, a 19-year-old Bravery Award recipient from St. John's, died on October 16, 1918, at Boulogne, France, from a gunshot wound to the head. He was the son of Henry and Jemma Thomas of 8 Barnes Road, St. John's. The clerk-turned-soldier joined the Regiment on March 17, 1917, at St. John's. He died just weeks before war's end, having served one year and 220 days.

This brave young soldier was also wounded in action on April 13, 1918, when he received a gunshot wound to the head in Belgium. In July of 1919, his father wrote the Regiment asking for a picture of his son's grave in the Terlincthun British Cemetery in France. In August of 1920, photographs of the gravesite were forwarded by Padre Thomas Nangle. The parents also requested a picture of their son from Army films that had been taken in Europe. After much searching, a picture was obtained from a film taken when the Minister of Militia visited the troops in 1918.

On June 5, 1918, the news of Lance-Corporal Gordon H. Thomas' bravery award appeared in the *London Gazette*:

For conspicuous gallantry. He volunteered to reconnoiter forward positions after a heavy bombardment which were supposed to be occupied by the enemy. He showed great devotion to duty during the whole of operations from 12th to the 20th of April (1918 at Armentieres). (The Rooms Archives)

On November 19, 1919, Thomas' parents were invited to Government House in St. John's to receive their son's Military Medal from the governor at a medals presentation ceremony.

Private John Russell of Bay Roberts, son of John and Annie Russell, was 16-years-old when he was killed in action in Belgium on October 20, 1918. He joined the Regiment on February 28, 1918, after falsely declaring he was 18. He died less than three weeks before the end of the war.

Family information (letters of Private Russell's sister), tell of young John (Jack) Russell joining up after his sister had run off to get married. Jack dearly loved his sister and he was very upset at her sudden departure, declaring "*he could not stay home without his sister.*"

His sister wrote that she learned the circumstances of her brother's death from another Bay Robert's soldier who was near him in the trenches when he was killed:

... a fellow was in the war and within talking distance of dear brother Jack in the trenches when he (Jack) put his head up above the trench and called to him saying 'It won't be long now, Bill when the Armistice will be signed and we will be going home.' Bill shouted to him to get his head down, but before he could do so, the enemy shot him. Bill knew how dearly I loved Jack and he used to play that up to me, that he was near poor dear Jack when the end came.

Private John Russell, whose body was never found, had two other brothers, Walter and Herbert, who fought with the Regiment during WW1 and survived.

On October 21, 1918, just weeks before the war ended, Private Edward O'Brien, a 19-year-old Bravery Award recipient from St. John's, died from a shell wound to the throat which he had received in action at Ledeghem, Belgium.

Private O'Brien, a clerk-turned-soldier, was the son of Frederick and Mary O'Brien of 52 Lime Street, St. John's. At the time of his death, he had served with the Regiment for one year and 189 days. In 1918, the O'Briens had the tragedy of losing their son as well as their daughter, Olive, who died in August.

When Private O'Brien's personal effects were sent home to his parents in June of 1919, they included two pairs of Rosary beads and a cased religious medallion, attesting to the strong religious beliefs held by members of our Regiment.

On April 15, 1919 Newfoundland's Minister of Militia wrote to Fred O'Brien advising him of his son's Military Medal:

Dear Sir:

3603 Private E. O'Brien and # 3156 Private H. Trask

I beg to quote hereunder the details of the deed for which the Military Medal was awarded to your late son # 3603 Private E. O'Brien, Royal Newfoundland Regiment, taken from supplement to the London Gazette:

'For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. On the morning of the 14th of October 1918 during the advance from Ledghem towards the Lys, almost before the barrage lifted, these two men dashed forward at a pill-box. A few of the enemy were leaving the pill-box, and as soon as they saw Privates O'Brien and Trask threw bombs at them, but these two men rushed in and bayoneted three of the enemy. Then they went to the pill-box and threw a bomb into it,

then entered it, and captured an officer and 35 men and 2 machine guns. It was entirely due to the prompt action of these two men that the enemy was prevented from bringing their machine-guns into action and causing heavy casualties.'

Private Heber Trask, son of Thomas and Alice Trask of Elliston, Trinity Bay, was also the recipient of a Military Medal on October 14, 1918. Private Trask, 20, was killed in action on October 25, 1918, at Ingoyhem, Belgium. His body was never recovered.

Private Thomas Ricketts of White Bay, age 17, became the youngest serviceman in WW1 to win the Victoria Cross, the British Military's highest decoration for gallantry in the face of the enemy, on October 14, 1918. His Victoria Cross citation reads:



During the advance from Ledgehem, the attack was temporarily held up by hostile fire and the Platoon to which he belonged suffered severe casualties from the fire of a battery at point blank range. Private Ricketts at once volunteered to go forward with his section commander and a Lewis gun team to attempt to outflank the battery. Advancing by short rushes under heavy fire from enemy machine-guns with hostile battery, their ammunition was exhausted when still 300 yards from the battery. The enemy seeing an opportunity to get their field guns away, began to bring up their gun teams. Private Ricketts, at once realizing the situation, doubled back 100 yards under the heaviest machine-gun fire, procured further ammunition, and dashed back again to the Lewis gun, and by very accurate fire drove the enemy and the gun teams into a farm. His platoon then advanced without casualties, and captured four machine-guns and eight

prisoners. A fifth field gun was subsequently intercepted by fire and captured. By his presence of mind in anticipating the enemy intention and his utter disregard of personal safety, Private Ricketts secured the further supply of ammunition which directly resulted in these important captures and undoubtedly saved many lives.

Johnny Burke, a well known St. John's bard of the time, wrote a poem about Private Ricketts winning the Victoria Cross. The first verse reads:

*Long life to Private Ricketts, His praises shout with joy,
A credit to his Country,
And a plucky White Bay Boy.
A member of our Regiment
Who answered duty's call,
Who won the fam'd Victoria Cross,
He was only a Private that's all...*

Newfoundland-born Private John Bernard Croak, formerly of Little Bay, Notre Dame Bay, but raised in Nova Scotia, also received the coveted Victoria Cross, which was awarded posthumously for gallantry while serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in WW1. Croak lost his life in August of 1918.

A newspaper clipping entitled "Four of Family Decorated" in the papers of Captain Leo C. Murphy tells of a family of four "Lewis" brothers from Newfoundland who were highly decorated war heroes.

William (Will) Lewis, a Boer War veteran who won two medals in that campaign, was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (D.C.M.) in WW1. Ralph Lewis, who fought with the Canadians in WW1, won the D.C.M. Jack Lewis, who served with the Newfoundland Regiment in WW1, won the D.C.M. and the Military Medal. *"The Lewis boys, all brilliant fighters, have a mania for*

medals,” reads the newspaper article. If the information is correct, the Lewis family would probably be the most highly decorated in Newfoundland history.

In 1918, the British Government set up Boy Soldier Battalions in the United Kingdom in order to keep under-aged soldiers from going to the front-lines, but there was no such structure for Newfoundlanders.

This was obvious when Private George Mosher, 17, of Fortune, Fortune Bay was killed in action on October 25, 1918, at Ingoyghem, Belgium.

The young seaman-turned- soldier, son of Thomas and Susanna Mosher, joined the Regiment on November 23, 1917, and had served for 337 days before his death. His body was never found.

Private Mosher was killed just a few weeks before hostilities ended on November 11, 1918. His parents, through the intercession of The Reverend A.S. Adams of Fortune, had tried to have their son taken out of the fighting in Belgium. Reverend Adams wrote the Minister of Militia on March 13, 1918:

Dear Sir:

I write at the request of Saul Mosher, father of George Henry Mosher, Private with the Newfoundland Regiment. Private Mosher will not be seventeen years of age until June, as you will see by the certificate of Baptism which I am enclosing. I understand he mis-represented his age when enlisting. Private Mosher is now in France, at least his father informs me that he is. Mr. Mosher is willing for his son to do duty in the Regiment, but he wishes me to appeal to you to see that his son is withdrawn to England until he has attained the age of eighteen years.

Legally speaking, Private George Mosher should have been immediately taken out of the fighting and sent to safety in England. I wonder how bitter the Moshers felt when their appeal was not properly dealt with and their young son was killed in action and had no known grave.

One of the last “Boy Soldiers” to be killed in action in WW1 was Private Michael O’Brien, 18, of Witless Bay. The young son of Richard and Matilda O’Brien was killed on October 25, 1918. St. Bonaventure’s College paid tribute to their former student/hero in their Memorial Book:

Towards the end of October 1918, just before the signing of the Armistice the sad news reached us that Michael O’Brien, of Witless Bay, was killed in action 25th, Oct., in what most likely proved to be the last great offensive in the war. Mike was one of those ardent spirited young fellows who feared no danger and whose deep-rooted patriotism would often overshadow his better judgment. Though much under the military age and while still a boarding student of the College, he made several unsuccessful attempts to enlist in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment, but finally succeeded in having his ambition realized in 1916....

For two years the gallant young volunteer was in the thick of the fighting, coming through on many occasions with hair-breadth escapes; and there is an added touch of sadness when we think that he met his death just as victory for the Allied armies was being flashed all over the world. His death is all the more sad when it is remembered that his brother, Patrick O’Brien, Engineer in the Royal Naval Reserve was officially gazetted as lost in HMS “Clan McNaughton” in February, 1915.

Corporal William Coaker Christian, clerk-turned-soldier, joined the Regiment before his 16th birthday. He died at age 18 from wounds received in battle on October 26, 1918, less than three weeks before the Armistice.

Due to Private Christian’s pre-war military training with the C.L.B. he had been promoted quickly to the rank of corporal in the Regiment. The son of William and Sarah Christian of St. John’s was

the nephew of Sir William F. Coaker, former president of the Newfoundland Fishermen's Protective Union, and Minister of Marine and Fisheries of the Government of Newfoundland.

Christian was shot in the leg on October 14, 1918, and evacuated to hospital suffering from a fractured femur. His father received a letter from the Minister of Militia dated October 29, 1918, advising that his son was dangerously ill from a gunshot wound. News traveled slowly during war. By the time the parents received notification of his death, Corporal Christian had been dead for at least four days.

Corporal Christian was a very caring person, as was demonstrated in June of 1918, when he requested that the Pay Office take money from his soldier's account and forward it to the Prisoners of War Fund.

Early in 1918, Sir William Coaker, never dreaming that his nephew's life would end that very year, contacted the Minister of Militia who, in turn, contacted the Officer-Commanding the 2nd Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, in an effort to get young Christian into officer training.

In 1919, accompanied by Padre Thomas Nangle, Sir William Coaker visited the Battlefields of France and Belgium where the Newfoundlanders had fought and died.

Coaker was shaken by what he saw, particularly after visiting the grave of his well liked and only nephew. He later wrote in his diary: *"While I live I will ever oppose the dispatch of another son of Newfoundland to fight and die on foreign soil. I have seen enough of this curse of war during my visit to Europe to cause my blood to run cold..."*



*Sir William F. Coaker during his visit to France in 1919
(Whitty Album)*

Major R.H. Tait, M.C. wrote an emotional farewell verse to all of his fallen comrades in his book *The Trail of the Caribou*:

L'Adieu (Farewell)

*Ye brothers of our blood who fell,
Your living comrades bid farewell.
Though body lose its mortal breath,
Your spirit does not pass with death.
With us who walked with you the road
And shared with you the common load,
Who laughed with you and with you wrought,
Who chaffed with you and with you fought,
Your memory will for aye abide.
Unseen, ye still march by our side
To help us keep the faith sublime
Along the battlefield of Time.*

Following the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, the Royal Newfoundland Regiment formed part of the Allied Army of Occupation which entered Germany. The Regiment was billeted at Cologne and Hilden from December 7, 1918, up until December 18, 1918. The demobilization of the Regiment started on November 25, 1918, at the depot in St. John's and continued until November 20, 1919, when our famed and beloved Regiment officially disbanded.

During my research, I came across a very poignant quote from a WW1 British Officer (name unknown) who returned to the battlefield in 1919:

Yesterday I visited the battlefield of last year. The place was scarcely recognizable. Instead of a wilderness of ground torn up by shell, the ground was a garden of wild

flowers and tall grasses. Most remarkable of all was the appearance of many thousands of white butterflies which fluttered around. It was as if the souls of the dead soldiers had come to haunt the spot where so many fell. It was eerie to see them. And the silence! It was so still that I could almost hear the beat of the butterflies' wings. (Rob Ruggenberg, The Heritage of The Great War)

A fitting poem for every mother's son who did not come home appeared in *The Veteran Magazine* in October of 1928:

**A Mother's Armistice Day at The Grave
of the Unknown Soldier at Westminster Abbey**

*O Lad o' Mine, it seems so long
Since I saw your sunny smile,
Or heard your voice with its old-time ring
That made my life worth while.
You were all your mother had to give
When the Empire called for aid,
And you took your place in the foremost rank-
Gladly and unafraid.*

*And then from afar this message came:-
"Your son is missing today."
But there were no tears to bring relief-
No prayer that my heart could pray!
The dog you loved still waits by the gate,
But he cannot call you back:
You found a grave with the unknown Dead
After the great attack.*

*They found a British warrior's grave
Over there on another shore,*

*Far from those he loved so well,
And the country he'd see no more.
Then they brought him back to the land of his birth,
And tenderly laid him down
In the heart of England, with the Kings,
And with such as had won renown.*

*But I knew it must be you, Dear Lad,
As I knelt there by your side,
For I looked at the flag that covered you,
And it told me why you died:
That its honour might ever sacred be,
That the land it waved o'er might live!
I fancy you smiled as you gave your life-
All that you had to give.*

*So I left you there, at rest, Beloved!
In the twilight sacred and dim:
And it makes me happy just to know
You are safe in keeping of Him.
No sound of battle shall mar your peace
There in the Nation's heart.
Sleep on! Sleep well! The day will dawn
When never shall we part.
(By Gladys M. Russell of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland)*

Chapter Nineteen

“The Heart and Soul of the Regiment” – Padre Thomas Nangle

*– When the War is o’er and wrongs are righted,
God is forgot, and the soldier slighted – The Veteran Magazine*

There was absolutely no way I could write a book about those brave and heroic “Fallen Boy Soldiers” of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment – WWI and not include a section dedicated to a very remarkable man referred to as “The Heart and Soul of the Regiment” – Padre Thomas Nangle.

Captain Padre Nangle, later to become Lieutenant Colonel Nangle, went to his grave emotionally scarred by the human tragedy the First World War heaped on soldiers and their families, and especially on mothers.



It was information gathered during my research on the Regiment that drove me to find out as much as I could about this “Soldier-Priest,” and then to co-author with Darrin McGrath the book *Soldier Priest in the Killing Fields of Europe: Padre Thomas Nangle*. (DRC Publishing 2006)

Nangle was born in St. John’s and spent nearly two years desperately trying to become the Roman Catholic Padre for our Regiment. He finally succeeded in joining his fellow Newfoundlanders in Europe during October of 1916. As chaplain of the Newfoundland Regiment during the Great War, he played a major role in administering to the spiritual needs of soldiers in the trenches, burying the dead, consoling the wounded, comforting anguished

families, and motivating the often war-ravished troops.

This Newfoundland “Man-of-the-cloth, Messenger of the Prince of Peace, and God’s Disciple in the Trenches” often risked his own life to be with the men from all denominations who needed him in the front-lines. His heroic dedication to “Ours” in the trenches caused him a shoulder wound in April, 1918, and he was subsequently sent to London to recuperate.

An unknown author writing in *The Newfoundland Magazine* in March of 1919 succinctly described Captain Thomas Nangle, and his role as chaplain to the Newfoundland Regiment – WW1:

...When the nurses and doctors had given up of saving the life of the victim of war, the chaplain persisted to the last in the fight to save the soul. It was his privilege to take the place of the father and mother, sister and wife, son and daughter at the death bed of their loved ones. Amid the roar of the guns and the bursting shells and surrounded by the hideous din of war, the messengers of the Prince of Peace calmly performed their duty....Among those who so ardently pressed their claims was the subject of this article, the Reverend Captain Thomas Nangle. He has been to the very gates of hell on earth which we call war. He has been in the thick of it, often, as Governor Davidson put it, ‘repeatedly working under fire, regardless of the instructions that he should keep out of it.’ Of such stuff, Nangle was made. The broad minded spirit of the man raised him above petty sectarianism and he bestowed praise alike on men of all denominations.... Thank God, there were such men as he, to light into the Dark Valley of the Shadow of Death so many of our brave boys who will never return to their homeland...

Captain Leo C. Murphy of the Newfoundland Regiment described the sudden unexpected appearance of Padre Nangle into a front-line trench dugout somewhere in France in 1916:

It’s dark in the dugout – the candle burns low! Comes a

heavy step and a cheerful voice. A stalwart form darkens the entrance and makes itself known... It is 'Padre Nangle'; beloved of the Regiment and always welcome for his genial personality and pleasant company. (The Veteran Magazine – 1921)

A 1917 St. John's newspaper article entitled "Official Report" commented on a letter Brigadier-General Caley of the 88th British Infantry Brigade wrote to Newfoundland Governor Davidson highly praising Padre Nangle's courage during the Battle of Monchy: *The Chaplain, the Reverend Thomas Nangle showed himself absolutely fearless on this day, being constantly under the heaviest fire.*

Corporal Gus Galgay of St. John's, who was severely wounded in the arm at Monchy-le-Preux, spoke of Padre Nangle in a letter he wrote to his mother from his bed in Wandsworth Hospital in England. He said "*Dear Father Nangle was quite near the Regiment when we advanced. He did some wonderful work for our poor wounded chaps. He is well liked by all and his good work is appreciated by all.*" (Newspaper article entitled "Young Hero Writes." May 2, 1917)

At war's end, the Prime Minister of Newfoundland asked Lt. Col. Nangle to return to Gallipoli and Europe as director of War Graves Registration, Enquiries and Memorials for the Dominion of Newfoundland. The government also appointed him as our country's representative on the Imperial War Graves Commission. In his newly appointed positions, he was responsible for personally supervising the exhumation of known graves, the construction of Newfoundland's fifteen war graveyards in Europe and Gallipoli, the building of five very impressive Newfoundland Regiment Caribou Memorials (four in France and one in Belgium), and the construction and unveiling of Newfoundland's National War Memorial in St. John's.

I may say that Captain Nangle of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment has been detailed by this Department to undertake in France and Belgium, the work of marking and having registered the isolated graves and

bodies of the Newfoundland soldiers, and having them placed in Military Cemeteries. This work is expected to prove very successful, and with this in view it is hoped that your son's grave will be eventually located, where it will be removed to a British Military Cemetery. (excerpt from August 1, 1919, letter that Lt. Col. Rendell, Chief Staff Officer for the Regiment, wrote William Hancock, father of missing Private Albert Hancock of St. John's.)

Following the war, Nangle served a term as president of the Great War Veterans Association of Newfoundland. In early 1926, the war weary Nangle would walk away from the priesthood and the R.C. Church and immigrate to the far-off British Colony of Southern Rhodesia, where he would eventually meet, court and marry Thelma Watkinson, and raise four children: Timothy, Hugh, Rory, and Mavourneen.

Hugh Nangle, a retired federal government civil servant and former journalist who resides in Ottawa, said his father often spoke about his work in creating the battlefield memorials to the fallen of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in Europe, and the National Memorial in St. John's. Hugh tells also of the relentless devotion and respect his father had for the families of the fallen, especially the mothers:

He said it was part of his commitment to the mothers and sisters of Newfoundland. This was a point he made again and again. Dad had an enormous admiration for the women of Newfoundland. He said they were the backbone of the country... Dad felt there was a heavy duty on his conscience to remember the fallen because many had died as a result of his recruiting work. A lot of the men had responded to his recruitment efforts...

During the war, Padre Nangle was asked by the Newfoundland government to come home and conduct periodic recruitment drives. As a well loved and respected individual with tremendous communication abilities, he was very successful in his recruiting

endeavors. This became a double edged sword and one that would bother him for the rest of his life. Hugh Nangle said his dad felt something of a personal responsibility for so many of his fallen comrades, especially the “youngsters,” because many of them enlisted after taking part in his recruitment sessions:

Father was mortified by the loss of life.... Harder still was exhuming and trying to identify individuals and re-burying them. Realizing that so many weren't identified or were missing devastated father. It was almost as though each body identified was a victory, and those who were not were an enormous loss for him, a defeat.

World War One left an indelible mark on the Nangle family, particularly on Thomas and Thelma Nangle. Hugh recalls in 1952, shortly after his seventeenth birthday, he raised the question of making the military a career with his father while home in Rhodesia from boarding school. Hugh was very excited because he was one of only four pupils in the entire school invited to attend a special session with military recruiting officers. *My mother's reaction was a flaring refusal. She declared that 'no son of mine was going to be colonial cannon fodder,' and she was absolutely opposed to a career in the military.*

Hugh said his father's response was more measured:

His firm opposition was based on his experience as the Padre with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment during and immediately after World War One. He explained that the most difficult aspect of his work was dealing with the 'youngsters, no older than you are today,' who were in the Regiment. In many cases it fell to him to write the families of those killed or wounded in battle because their Officers were either wounded or killed themselves. He knew many of the parents directly, either having been at school with their sons, or as parishioners in the various areas where he was posted by the Roman Catholic Church.

He said in reality, it was the parents who bore the brunt of war, most especially the Mothers and sisters of the 'boys' who were lost bore an awful burden. It ripped his gut out writing

the letters and knowing how final his words would be.

He explained to me that the loss of young people was one of the primary reasons he visited nearly every community in Newfoundland from where those members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment came. Most of the visits were by hitching rides on the line of rail, where the conductors would let him off at the point nearest to an outport, village or town. He would spend time visiting the families before moving on. It was to try and bring closure to the loss of a son/brother and to make the family understand that it was not a futile loss.

Former premier Joseph Smallwood told Hugh Nangle that his father's visits to Newfoundland communities made him the best-known and most beloved man in Newfoundland in the immediate post war period.



King George V visiting graves during war-time. (Whitty Album)



Lt. Col. Nangle and Graves Team exhuming bodies in post-war France (Whitty Album)

Chapter Twenty

War's Forgotten Casualties – Mothers

*– The Battle's o'er, Victory won, great the loss
of my darling son. Grave epitaph of C.L.B. soldier in France*

Padre Thomas Nangle had great affection, respect and caring for the “Mothers of Newfoundland.” While writing this book, the feelings he had for the soldiers’ mothers resonated with me.

In 1919, Lt. Colonel Nangle wrote of his great disappointment at being unable to identify all the graves of those killed in WWI:

*The Battle Exploit Memorials are being erected by other Dominions to show Europe and the World what the Dominions have done. They are monuments to our Glorious Dead and to our just as glorious survivors. They are monuments to the mothers that bore such brave sons and the land that bred them. (Padre Nangle in the early post-war years as quoted by military historian Norm Christie in his book *For King and Country*)*

Of the 272 fallen “Boy Soldiers” whom I have been able to identify, a daunting 114 have no known graves. Not knowing where their boys were buried was surely, as Nangle realized, a lifelong heartache for families, and especially for the mother who had given birth to such brave sons.

Julia Horwood wrote about the wartime role of mothers and wives in the 1916 edition of *The Distaff* – a Newfoundland paper written by and for the Colony’s women:

The sacrifices which war entails are not restricted to the men who go forth to join the colours, but extend to their women and children at home. These sacrifices are for the most part borne uncomplainingly; in the case of France, most heroically, for these mothers and wives vie with their husbands and sons in patriotism and bravery. It is then but fair that these women who are sharing in the sacrifices being made for home and duty, should know that what they are enduring is not without appreciation. (The Distaff – 1916, M.U.N. – CNS)

Horwood went on to tell of the extremely important role played by women of the Newfoundland Women's Patriotic Association's Visiting Committee, under the leadership of Lady Davidson:

Naturally the most important part of the visitor's work consists in calling upon the relatives of those whose names occur in the casualty list. When soldiers or naval reserves are in hospital, they too are visited by members of the committee.... It is gratifying to learn that the visits are well received by all classes, and are understood in the spirit in which they are intended, as carrying the sympathy of the W.P.A. to the anxious and the bereaved.

The Women's Patriotic Association (W.P.A) of Newfoundland consisted mainly of women who wanted to do their part to assist soldiers fighting in the war, and to offer assistance to families and loved ones of military personnel in Newfoundland.

War Work of the W.P.A.: Beyond the "Comforts"

The W.P.A. was not a narrowly organized group with a simple agenda. While the group's primary focus had been the production of 'comforts,' the continuation of the war into 1915 and beyond saw Newfoundland women assume increased tasks in health care, the Red Cross and in the general welfare of Newfoundlanders, both at home and

overseas. The W.P.A.'s Visiting Committee, for example, kept in contact with the parents and relatives of the Newfoundland volunteers and naval reservists who had gone overseas. By February 1919, the W.P.A. Visiting Committee had made 11, 270 visits in the St. John's district....From the beginning of the war until 1916, the Red Cross branch of the W.P.A. In St. John's, along with 215 outport branches had successfully produced a quarter of a million hospital and surgical supplies.

...The Canadian Red Cross Society, on January 1917, set out to ascertain the feasibility of making sphagnum moss surgical dressings and determined, through trial and error, that it could acquire some of the best materials in coastal provinces. While it has been suggested that only four centres; Montreal, Toronto, Halifax and Saint John, were involved in the collection of sphagnum moss and its preparation for surgical dressings, reports show that there was a W.P.A. Branch at Flat Islands, Bonavista Bay, where boatloads of women went to surrounding islands to collect moss. The women then washed, dried, sorted, and packaged the moss for shipment to England.(Gale D. Warren. 2005 MUN History Research Paper (Master's Degree)

The W.P.A. helped address the social and recreational needs of First World War servicemen in Newfoundland by managing and running places like the Soldier and Sailor's Club on Water Street and the Caribou Hut in the regimental barracks in St. John's. The organization also supported the "Cot Fund" for a Newfoundland ward of 30 beds in the St. John Ambulance Brigade hospital at Etaples, France, and another 246 beds in war hospitals in the United Kingdom and France. The Newfoundland section of The Daughters of The Empire also contributed much to the war effort. Eliza Petten, four year president of the Flat Islands W.P.A., was recognized by Newfoundland Governor Aldardyce with the coveted honour "Member of the British Empire" (M.B.E.) for her untiring efforts during the First World War.

Lady Isobel Morris of the Newfoundland War Contingent Association, London, England wrote a very compelling letter to the mothers of Newfoundland servicemen that was featured in *The Distaff* in 1916:

To The Mothers

Dear Mothers of Our Heroes;-

I have been asked to write a few words for this little magazine. It was my privilege for a year to visit the hospital at Wandsworth at least once a week, and very often twice a week, and to know that our dear boys were glad to see 'someone from home.' It was charming to watch their faces light up, and to find in most cases that if they did not know me personally, I was familiar with their names, and knew their parents or near relations, and the different parts of the Island which had the honour to give them birth.

I was the first to hear the news of the 'Great Push' of July 1st, 'the Battle of the Somme,' where so many of our 'bravest and best' laid down their lives so gloriously on the field of honour for King and Country.

To walk through the wards of 'Our' hospital, as we may well name the 3rd London General at Wandsworth, through rows of dear 'broken' wounded on that day was indeed an experience never to be forgotten. Some 200 had arrived only the night before, and more were still coming in. While I was speaking to those in one ward, a sister came in from another ward, and said 'Oh, do come to ward C – they have heard you are here, and are asking for you.' It thrilled me with mingled pride and sorrow to see those dear, brave lads bearing their pain with such grit! But the tale of how well they fought and suffered has it not been ably told by many pens infinitely more competent than my humble one. The charge of the gallant Newfoundlanders of the Incomparable 29th Division on that memorable July 1st will be told by many a fireside, and thrill the hearts of sons and

daughters long years after we have passed away. In every hospital and convalescent home I visited, the matrons, sisters and nurses had nothing but praise for our dear soldiers, 'So well behaved, so good looking, so grateful for all that was done for them, and such patience and fortitude in bearing the pain of wounds, or the dreadful dysentery contracted during the Gallipoli campaign, and in Egypt. I am proud to be one of the 'mothers.' In the words of the General who commanded them: 'Newfoundlanders, I salute you.'

Wandsworth Hospital in London, England, where so many Newfoundlanders recuperated from illness or wounds suffered in battle and where some died – eighteen members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment are buried in Wandsworth Cemetery – was the subject of a poem by Newfoundland poet Dan Carroll, writing under the pen-name “Nell.” The poem was featured in the January 27, 1916, edition of the St. John’s *Evening Telegram*:

Wandsworth

*Oh! Gentle Sister of the ward,
Tell me that news again:
“His wounds are healed and he is well,
Looks bright and free from pain.”*

*Oh, daughter of sweet Charity,
Christ’s blessings on thee pour,
And God of Mercy, send me back,
My soldier boy once more....*

*Accept this sacrifice, withhold
Thy anger from the earth!
Thy outraged Justice stay, oh Lord,
Let Peace again have birth!
A million mothers-hearts, grief-torn,
Prostrate before Thee bend;
Mother of Him who died for all
Thy intercession lend!.*

Mothers and widows of Canadian soldiers and sailors who were killed or died on active service, or who subsequently died as a result of active service, were recognized by the Canadian government with the initiation of a commemorative “Memorial Cross” – more commonly known as “The Silver Cross.” If the mother and widow of the serviceman were still alive, a Silver Cross was given to each of them.

The first Silver Cross was presented in honour of Private Philip Lariviere, a Métis soldier from Manitoba who was killed on August 11, 1918, while serving with the Canadian Mounted Rifles. All told, the Canadian government awarded some 51,500 Silver Crosses to mothers and widows of slain servicemen during WW1.

The Silver Cross was a Canadian commemorative honour and even though Newfoundland did not become a part of Canada until March 31, 1949, I did find one WW1 Newfoundland Silver Cross mother. Her name is Ida Blackall of St. John’s, wife of Dr. W. Blackall, and the medal was given in honour of their son, Private Herbert William Blackall. He was killed on October 30, 1917, at 23 years of age, while serving with the Canadian Infantry – Alberta Regiment.

Private Blackall left Canada as a Company Sergeant-Major with the 9th Reserve Battalion, but reverted back to the rank of Private in order to go to the Front where he later died. His body was never recovered, and as such, his name appears on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial. His medal is part of the Dr. W. Blackall collection at The Rooms Archives.

In January of 2009, Ottawa made changes to the eligibility criteria to ensure that the Silver Cross is appropriate to present day campaigns and conflicts, and allowing for widowers to receive the commemoration.

While researching Silver Cross mothers I came across a magnificent story of sacrifice by a Canadian mother. Charlotte Susan Wood, a British subject, moved to Canada in 1905 with her husband and children. Mrs. Wood had eleven sons who fought in the King’s Fighting Services during World War One, and five paid the supreme sacrifice. In July of 1936, Mrs. Wood laid a wreath at the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier in London’s Westminster Abbey on behalf of all Canadian Silver Cross mothers and widows. While at the Abbey, Mrs. Wood was introduced to King Edward VIII and asked him: “*Why did so many die?*” He replied, “*Please God, Mrs. Wood, it*

shall never happen again!

The first official mention of Newfoundland mothers being involved with Memorial Services, which I could find, was that of an unidentified Newfoundland mother whose three sons died in WW1 and who laid a wreath at the Sergeants' Memorial on July 2, 1922. Ever since 1950 the Royal Canadian Legion has chosen a Memorial Cross mother or widow to place a wreath on the National Memorial each year on Remembrance Day – November 11.

In Newfoundland terms, mothers were “between a rock and a hard place” when it came to agreeing to let their sons and husbands go off to war – a truly emotional conundrum. In her book *Mothers of Heroes, Mothers of Martyrs: World War One and the politics of grief* (2007), author Suzanne Evans discusses recruitment pressure directed at mothers to encourage their husbands and sons to join the war effort, including the highly developed British and Canadian government's wartime propaganda campaign of using radio and newspapers and eye-catching public posters, all aimed at mothers. For the mothers who encouraged their men folk to go off to war, one can only imagine how they felt after being notified that their loved one had been killed or gone missing.

In the past, I have often referred to mothers as “unsung heroines” but now, after much research for my books, I have expanded my referral terms to “Unsung Heroines and War's Forgotten Casualties.” Make no wonder Padre Thomas Nangle had such an affection and respect for the mothers of World War One servicemen!

I sincerely hope someone will soon step forward and create a lasting public memorial to the mothers of servicemen, and to women who have lost their lives in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping missions. I can think of no better place than Newfoundland and Labrador to initiate such a project(s) – “Lest We Forget.” I can envisage a sculpture of a larger than life mother, waving her hand in a gesture of *Good bye and God Speed*, located in the area of the King's Beach Park on Water Street, near the wharf. This is not far from the actual site where so many thousands of WW1 soldiers and

sailors departed on their final trip.

The first official Newfoundland memorial to the fallen members of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in St. John's was the Sergeants' Memorial, situated at the bottom of Garrison Hill/Gower Street. This remembrance monument, which was unveiled on July 3, 1921, was in honour of the Sergeants of the Regiment who died during WW1. The sincere appreciation of the mothers of those fallen heroes was summed up in a letter written to the Great War Veterans Association in 1921:

As the mother of two soldiers 'who went to the Great War and died' I cannot refrain from writing to express my great appreciation of the splendid act of the Sergeants of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in erecting a Monument to their fallen comrades, not only I (one of my sons had been a Sergeant) but I am convinced all mothers of Newfoundland soldiers, perhaps more especially mothers of Sergeants will feel a deep sense of affectionate gratitude, towards those who 'remembered,' who have shown how much they appreciated the high courage and self sacrifice of their brothers in arms. (The Veteran Magazine – September 1921)



Governor and Mrs. Allardyce, G.W.V.A. members, Padre Nangle at ground-breaking ceremony for National War Memorial, St. John's - 1923
(Whitty Album)

Chapter Twenty- One

“Mother of the Regiment”

– *May Furlong...the boys she loved so well*
The Evening Telegram

“She Sleeps Silently and Well, Her Work Done.” This was the title of an article paying tribute to Miss May Furlong, lovingly and respectfully referred to as the *“Mother of the Regiment,”* which appeared in the July 1938 edition of *The Veteran Magazine*.

Accompanying the magazine article was a picture of eleven executive members of the Great War Veterans Association (G.W.V.A.) at the graveside of Miss Furlong on July 1, 1938. The following caption appeared beneath the picture:

Miss May Furlong, Honourary President of the GWVA, and familiarly known as the ‘Mother of the Regiment,’ died January 1st, last. Miss Furlong was actively associated with the Regiment during the war years and after with the GWVA, up to the time of her death. During the war she helped to provide comforts for our Sailors and Soldiers and since each year helped organize ‘Forget-Me-Not’ and ‘Poppy’ Days. On the Anniversary of the Battle of Beaumont-Hamel, on July 1st, last, Executive Members of the Dominion Command (GWVA) and St. John’s Branches paid tribute to her memory by visiting her grave in Belvedere Cemetery, and decorating the grave with Forget-Me-Nots.

May Furlong (1870-1938) was born in St. John’s, the daughter

of Patrick and Caroline (Williams) Furlong. Up until 1920, she carried on an extremely successful business on Water Street which specialized in women's apparel. In a 1915 article in the *Colonial Commerce Magazine*, her business was described as "*the leading Dress-making and Millinery establishment in the city.*"

Miss Furlong was a very bright and progressive woman who didn't mind publicly expressing her views on modern women and their influence on society, as was evident in her dedicated "*Women's Section*" of *The Veteran Magazine*. "To me, the fact of the magazine having a dedicated women's section also demonstrated the progressive attitude of the Great War Veterans Association. These were men who fought for, and whose many comrades died for, human rights and freedom of speech.

May Furlong visited the Newfoundland Regiment at Stobbs Camp in Scotland during the war, and she raised many thousands of dollars for veterans through her efforts and leadership in fundraising activities. Miss Furlong may not have been a biological mother, but she was a loving and caring surrogate mother to her adopted servicemen – sons who fought in WW1. Her outstanding legacy should not be lost to history, and she should be remembered, commemorated, and celebrated for her deeds. The work done by May Furlong and other members of the G.W.V.A. Ladies Auxiliary was not lost on Field Marshall Douglas Haig who publicly recognized them by presenting them with an autographed picture when he was in St. John's for the unveiling of the Newfoundland National War Memorial on July 1, 1924.

The following is an excerpt from May Furlong's January 3, 1938, obituary in *The Evening Telegram*:

...During the War years 1914-1918 she was an ardent worker in the cause of the Women's Patriotic Association and was greatly interested in the welfare of the 'boys' of the Newfoundland Regiment, many of



whom will recall her kindness to them when she visited London (Wandsworth Hospital) during the war.

At the close of the war she was untiring in her efforts to alleviate distress amongst ex-servicemen. She was, for a great number of years (17) President of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Great War Veterans Association and performed yeoman service in the G.W.V.A. in the organization of the Annual (Forget-Me-Not) Poppy Day Collection...

She was known to the G.W.V.A. as the 'Mother of the Regiment' and her home on Waterford Bridge Road was named 'Caribou Hill' in memory of the boys she loved so well. She received The Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) in the Coronation Honours in recognition of her services to the cause of the ex-servicemen....



Executive G.W.V.A. Ladies' Auxiliary - 1922

Front row (l-r): Mrs. A Browning, Miss May Furlong (President) and Mrs. MacKeen.

Back row (l-r): Mrs. B. Dicks, Mrs. J.B. Mitchell, Mrs. Janet Ayre and Mrs. Kearley.

(The Veteran Magazine)



*Harold Mitchell, RNR WW1 Veteran, Founder and first President
of the Great War Veterans Association
(The Veteran Magazine)*

Chapter Twenty-Two

The Great War Veterans Association (G.W.V.A.)

– *Those who died have welded us together...Lt. Col A.E. Bernard*

The above words are those of Lt. Col. A.E. Bernard, former president of the G.W.V.A. and WW1 veteran/ hero who was awarded the Military Cross and the French Croix de Guerre for bravery in the face of the enemy. On the eve of his departure from Newfoundland in 1922 he commented on the ties that bound the members of the G.W.V.A. together:

Life is made up of meetings and partings, and we, who served side by side in the Great War, shall ever bear the memories of bitter partings from good and better friends. Those who have died have welded us together with unbreakable bonds, and it is up to those of us who are left to stand firm together, whatever disappointments or hardships come our way, 'to honour all men; love the brotherhood; fear God; Honour the King.'

The G.W.V.A. of Newfoundland was the forerunner to what we know today as the Royal Canadian Legion Newfoundland Command:

The Great War Veterans Association was conceived in the minds of the men who went overseas with the First Contingent. On the sodden Plains of Salisbury and in Flanders fields, they formed a very definite opinion that an organization of Veterans would be necessary to spare Newfoundland from the shame of failure to deal fairly with the Women who Gave and the men Who Braved....Those men

of the Regiment who were broken early in flight lost no time banding themselves together on their return to Newfoundland. By the spring of 1918 this organization had been formed. Today the organization comprises eighteen branches and over four thousand members and covers Newfoundland as no other existing organization does. Since its formation the G.W.V.A. has been responsible for greatly improving the condition of pensioners and ex-servicemen generally.... They have supported constitutional methods of procedure and have assisted to maintain law and order where such has been seriously threatened. In little more than three years of its existence, the G.W.V.A. has accomplished more than its founders ever hoped for. The organization has obtained and retained the confidence of the citizens of Newfoundland to a remarkable degree. Although it has hitherto refrained from participating in political campaigns, its tremendous political potentiality is recognized by all.... (The Veteran Magazine. December, 1921)

Harold Mitchell, returned wounded soldier, was founder and first president of the Great War Veterans Association. One of the greatest legacy instruments left by the G.W.V.A. was *The Veteran Magazine*, an important historical treasure trove which takes us back in time, and allows us to listen to the words and opinions of our brave servicemen who gave us their all.



*Private Joseph Julian Gorman
of Harbour Breton, died in the
City Fever Hospital in Edinburgh*



*Private Joachim Murphy
Mundy Pond Road, St. John's.
Died of shrapnel wound on
Hospital ship Morea*

Chapter Twenty-Three

The Church Lads Brigade

*– They fought the good fight
Colonel Adrian Heffernan C.L.B.*

The young men and officers of the cadet organizations - Church Lads Brigade; Catholic Cadet Corps; Newfoundland Highlanders; and Methodist Guards – played an extremely important role in supplying recruits for the war effort, especially for the Blue Puttees. Many of these cadets and their leaders went on to distinguish themselves in the Great War, and many would eventually give the supreme sacrifice.

It is not often advisable to single out any one group of people for their contribution but I believe it would be remiss of me if I did not give special recognition to the C.L.B. This non-denominational Newfoundland and Labrador youth movement, which gave so much in human sacrifice during WW1, is still molding and supporting our most valuable resource – our children.

The C.L.B. was the first cadet corps to be formed in Newfoundland on November 11, 1892, and its illustrious longevity is linked to the ability, determination and commitment of its senior people.

The C.L.B. Armoury in St. John's was voluntarily passed over to the Newfoundland Regiment in August of 1914, and it remained as the headquarters of the Regiment for the duration of the war (1914-1918). The original blue puttees (lower leg coverings) issued to the First 500 volunteers came from the C.L.B. Quartermaster's Stores.

The commitment given to the war effort by the international C.L.B. was astonishing. By May of 1915, some 50,000 of its

members had joined His Majesty's Fighting Forces. There were a very impressive number of gallantry awards won by C.L.B. Members in WW1:

22 Victoria Crosses (One being Private Thomas Ricketts, R.N.R.)
175 Distinguished Conduct Medals
131 Military Crosses
498 Military Medals
19 Croix de Guerre (France)

There were 108 C.L.B. Members amongst the 538 1st Contingent Blue Puttees who left Newfoundland for overseas in October of 1914. In total, there were 132 C.L.B.(Newfoundland) members who lost their lives in WW1. All thirteen of the lads who joined from the small Trinity Bay community of Heart's Content died in the Great War.

Fight the Good Fight

*When darkness assails us it leads to the light,
Strengthening weakness, guiding the strong,
Helping each lad to shun what is wrong
A stay to the lads who, in The Great War,
Left home, friends and loved ones, to see them no more.*

*They set an example for me and for you,
Still guided on by their motto so true.
Their souls have gone on to that Heaven of Light,
Still the echo comes back to us –
'Fight the Good Fight.'*

(Compliments of J.V. Rabbitts C.L.B.)



*Church Lads Brigade Rifle Team 1912
(Courtesy of C.L.B. Archives)*



**1914-1918
Victory medal**



**1914-1918
War medal**



**1914-1915
Star**

**World War I medals
Regt # Pvt William Viguers
Bay Bulls Road- St. John's West**



William Bennett



Hector Bennett

*Memorial Plaque WWI – commonly referred to as
“Deadman’s Penny.” (Courtesy of Frank Gogos and Morgan MacDonald)*

Chapter Twenty-Four

Memorial Package and Medals

– He Died For Freedom..... King's Memorial Plaque

During WW1, it was ultimately agreed by King George V that a commemorative process and an accompanying memorial package would be adopted in the U.K. and the British Empire in relation to the death of persons, as a consequence of the war. The chronological commemorative process in Newfoundland consisted of: a government telegram to a respective clergyman, or intimate family friend for personal face to face death notification. After confirmation of the face to face notification, a government telegram officially notifying of the soldier's death was sent to next-of-kin; also a personal letter of sympathy from the Newfoundland Government (usually from the Colonial Secretary); an official Government Commemorative Scroll; and a message from the King, which accompanied the British Memorial Scroll and Memorial Plaque. The respective war medals would follow the Memorial Package in due course. An official typewritten receipt would have to be signed by the next-of-kin upon receipt of the Memorial Plaque and receipt of war medals; this was done to ensure the memorial items had been received.

The respective war memorials/monuments/plaques/military graveyards and headstones for the fallen were the final components of the memorial process for servicemen who gave up their lives in WW1. From the very first military cemetery I visited during the Regiment's 2006 Pilgrimage to France and Flanders I immediately gained a profound respect for the Commonwealth War Graves

Commission (CWGC) and the tremendous work they do/have done in paying honour to the fallen of wars passed. The CWGC got its beginnings in 1914 when Sir Fabian Ware, at the age of 45 years, was too old to join the British Army, so he became the commander of a mobile unit of the Red Cross. As the war's death toll began to rise, Ware became deeply saddened by the staggering loss of human life, and his caring and wisdom led him to establish a graves registration system to ensure that the grave sites of these brave servicemen and women would be forever known.

In 1915, Fabian Ware's Red Cross Unit was absorbed into the British Army as the Graves Registration Commission. In 1917, the name was changed to the Imperial War Graves Commission in 1960, it became the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Since its early meager beginnings under Sir Fabian Ware, the CWGC has constructed some 2,500 war cemeteries and plots, erected headstones over graves and, in instances where the remains are missing, inscribed the names of the dead on permanent memorials. Over one million casualties are now commemorated at military and civil sites in some 150 countries, including Newfoundland and Labrador. The CWGC's corporate mandate is clearly articulated in their statement of principles which states:

Each of the dead should be commemorated by name on the headstone or memorial. Headstones and memorials should be permanent. Headstones should be uniform. There should be no distinction made of account of military or civil rank, race or creed. (CWGC Website www.cwgc.org)

Lt. Colonel Padre Thomas Nangle C.F., RNR, as Newfoundland's director of War Graves Registration and Enquiries, was our country's liaison person on the CWGC during and after WW1.

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) has done yeoman service in relation to preserving and honouring the memory of our servicemen, the resting places of fallen soldiers, and the battles grounds of Europe (Belgium and France) where our brave military personnel fought and died in WW1.

In relation to Newfoundland, VAC has done an outstanding job in the upkeep and preservation of the Beaumont-Hamel Park in France, thus ensuring that the exceptional early efforts of Lt. Colonel Nangle; Captain Basil Gotto, British sculptor; Rudolph Cochius, landscape architect; and Mr. Addison, bronze work, would survive.

Veteran Affairs Canada is also custodian of thirteen First World War Memorials in France and Belgium. The Memorials were erected to honour and remember the achievements and sacrifices of Canadians and Newfoundlanders during the Great War. Eight of these Memorials stand on notable Canadian battlefields. The other five memorials mark places of historical wartime significance to the then separate Dominion of Newfoundland: Beaumont-Hamel, Gueudecourt, Monchy-le-Preux, Masnieres, and Courtrai (Kortrijk), and these memorials all display the emblematic and revered Newfoundland Caribou. In 1925, General Sir Horace Smith Dorrien, veteran of the Somme Offensive, stated the following about Newfoundland's Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Park: *".... There, to my mind, exists the most impressive of any War Memorial I have ever seen. I regard it as a memorial of great value to the Empire."*

The **Memorial Plaque**, mostly common known as **"The Dead Man's Penny,"** was of bronze construction and measured 125 mm (five inches) in diameter and featured Britannia holding a wreath in her outstretched hand, and standing behind a lion. At the very bottom of the coin, a lion is depicted tearing apart the symbolic German eagle. Also featured, amongst other items, is a rectangular tablet with the name of the deceased serviceman/civilian spelled out in raised letters. Interestingly, no rank appears before the name, and this is to signify that they were all equal in death. The words **"HE DIED FOR FREEDOM"** are written around the edge of the Plaque. If the deceased was female the words **"SHE DIED FOR FREEDOM"** would be written around the edge of plaque.

The **Memorial Scroll**, made of heavy grade paper, was eleven inches in length and seven inches wide. The following message appeared on the Scroll:

He whom this scroll commemorates was numbered among those who, at the call of King and Country, left all that was dear to them, endured hardness, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their own lives that others might live in freedom. Let those who come after see to it that his name is not forgotten.

The Memorial Plaque was enclosed in an envelope measuring five inches square, and the flap of the envelope was embossed with the Royal Coat of Arms.

The parents/immediate next-of-kin or designated individual would also be sent the entitled war medals of the fallen soldier. Soldiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment were entitled to three general service related medals which would be issued depending on dates and places of their service:

1914-1915 Star: The Star was awarded to all who saw service in any theatre of war against the central powers between August 5, 1914, and December 31, 1915, except those eligible for the 1914 Star. The medal was issued in December of 1918. There were some 2,366,000 Stars issued, and the medal was always issued with the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

British War Medal: The medal was granted to all ranks of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment and the Newfoundland Forestry Corps who proceeded overseas on duty between August 5, 1914, and November 11, 1918. The recipient's name, number and rank are engraved on the rim of the first issue. The medal was authorized on July 26, 1919, and some 6,500,000 British War Medals were issued by the British military.

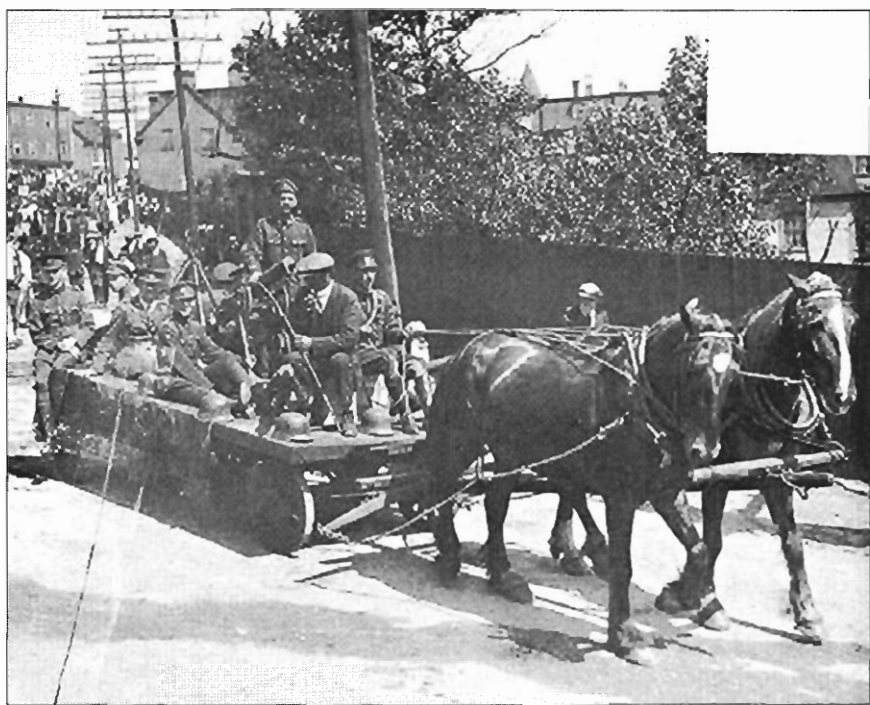
Victory Medal: This medal was also known as the Inter-Allied Medal and it was awarded to all ranks of the fighting forces, to civilians under contract, and others employed with military hospitals who actually served on the establishment of a unit in a theatre of war

between August 5, 1914, and November 11, 1918, (inclusive). The medal was never issued alone and was always distributed with the British War Medal. There were some 5,725,000 Victory Medals issued after it was authorized on September 1, 1919.

Members of the Regiment who had served in Gallipoli in 1915 were entitled to the three mentioned medals. There were, of course, individual bravery medals and other awards of the British Honours and Awards System for which individual soldiers could have been granted during WWI. The actual descriptions of the medals and their ribbons are quite interesting, and I would definitely suggest that military history buffs or medal holders take time to explore these historic items.



*Newfoundland's National War Memorial, St. John's, circa 1925.
(Whitty Album)*



*Regiment float in St. John's post-war Victory Parade
(The Rooms-Provincial Archives)*

Chapter Twenty-Five

2009 – Major WW1 Historical Discovery

– It will change the way we look at World War One

Peter Barton

In March of 2009, news agencies around the world reported on a historical find of tremendous significance relating to Red Cross WW1 records not seen since 1918. British historian and author Peter Barton discovered the archival treasure while doing research for the Australian government into a mass WW1 battlefield burial site located at Fromelles in France. Barton advised reporters:

To a military historian, this was like finding Tutankhamen's tomb and the terracotta warriors on the same day. The emergence of this archive is hugely important. It will change the way we look at World War One. This archive has been hidden away - not deliberately – for 90 years. We historians just did not know that this existed. I still can't understand why no-one has ever realized the significance of this archive – but the Red Cross tell me I'm the first researcher who has asked to see it.

This archival cache of some 20 million pieces of information is stored in dusty cardboard boxes in the basement of the International Red Cross Headquarters at Geneva. The long forgotten information deals with the death, capture, or burial of millions of soldiers who fought and died in The Great War. The card indexes and hand written ledger notes have the potential of identifying the exact burial sites of many thousands of soldiers who, up until now, are designated as

“having no known graves.” The Red Cross has set up a team of international experts and volunteers to catalogue and archive these extremely valuable pieces of information. They hope to have the information digitized and available on the World Wide Web in time for the 100th Anniversary of The Great War in 2014.

One can only imagine the importance of this archival find to the immediate families of those brave men who lost their lives in WW1. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment, as part of the British Expeditionary Force, has hundreds of soldiers who fought and died on The Western Front during WW1, and who have no known graves. Nearly one third of the fallen “Boy Soldiers” of our Regiment also have no known graves. I sincerely hope that the majority, if not all, of our Regiment’s soldiers who have no known graves will be included in the files of the Red Cross and then, just maybe, peace will finally come to the families of these brave heroes. The timing of the public release of this valuable information would be ideal for family members who may be considering a pilgrimage to France and Belgium in 2014. After generations, they would finally be able to lay wreaths on the burial sites of those brave Newfoundlanders who gave the supreme sacrifice - “Lest we Forget!” – “Lest We Forget!”

Conclusion

The intent of this book was to tell the untold heroic but tragic story of the fallen “Boy Soldiers” of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment – WW1, those brave young Sons of Terra Nova who volunteered to join the King’s Army Fighting Service from 1914 to 1918. The sad fact that many of these brave young combatants, from Britain’s oldest Colony, had no known graves gave me an added incentive to tell their story.

I sincerely felt this story cried out to be told, and with the 100th Anniversary of The Great War drawing near, it was long overdue. I wanted to relate the tremendous pain and suffering experienced by families, especially mothers, of fallen “Boy Soldiers.”

I hope this book has added to the illustrious history of our famed and beloved Royal Newfoundland Regiment, and that it has filled an historic void.

As the 100th Anniversary of The Great War draws near, I am so pleased our Newfoundland and Labrador community is still honouring our WW1 veterans. This is evident in recent works such as: the great enhancement of the Caribou Memorial Parkett in Bowering Park, which was a combined effort of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, the City of St. John’s, Morgan MacDonald and Frank Gogos, and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment; the recent book “Known unto God” by Frank Gogos and Morgan MacDonald; the recent book release of “Best Small-Boat Seamen in the Navy” by David and Ean Parsons; and a soon to be released book on the WW1 Battle of Monchy by Anthony MacAllister.

Professor Fred Hawksley of Memorial University is presently doing groundbreaking research into the lives of Royal Newfoundland Regiment’s “returned men” of The Great War, and

on the tension between the mythologies of the “War to End all Wars” and that which cannot be spoken. I have had the pleasure of working with Professor Hawksley over the past two years on his research project, and I eagerly await the publication of his research findings and his upcoming play.

The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (Department of Education) have recently constructed a new interactive web-site – *The Newfoundland Regiment and The Great War*. The site was developed to meet the respective curriculum needs of teachers and students in Newfoundland and Labrador. The site can also serve as an excellent historical resource for researchers and the general public alike. Congratulations to all involved in the construction of this site which can be accessed on The Rooms home-page at <the rooms.ca>.

Dr. Rob Shea of Memorial University is also working on personal projects to enhance the ways the University and our general community can remember and celebrate our famed Regiment.

I felt so strongly about the importance of The Great War to Newfoundland and Labrador history that I wrote Memorial University Chancellor General (Retired) Rick Hillier on September 9, 2009 asking him *to consider the possibility of initiating a review into creating a **Chair of Great War Studies** for Memorial University*. What an appropriate place – Memorial University, so named in honour of those who fought and those who died in WW1, to have a Chair of Great War Studies!

It would also be appropriate if each junior and senior high school and post-secondary institution in our province would consider fundraising in an effort to send as many youth delegates as possible to Europe in 2014-2018 to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the First World War. What a tremendous way to remember and to thank all those brave Newfoundlanders who served in The Great War!

I believe Newfoundland poet Ena Constance Barrett summed up the feelings of all Newfoundlanders in her poem which appeared in *The Veteran Magazine* in 1934:

It Must Not Happen Again

*If we would remember - we who saw them go,
Heard those eager tramping feet through the mist and rain;
If we would be worthy the love they died to show,
There is one way only – It must not be again!
We may tell of valor in the Flanders mud,
Sing a deathless anthem for the splendid slain;
But, if we would honour their sacrificial blood,
There is only one way – It must not happen again!*

*Still, though years are fleeting, pass before our sight
Mothers, widows, orphans, bowed with want and pain,
Veterans armless, legless, blinded in the fight –
God of compassion, it must not be again!*

*If we would remember by the poppy red,
If the cross they bore for us, be not borne in vain;
If our hearts would homage pay to those spirits fled –
There is one way only – It must not be again!*

I will conclude my story of the “Fallen Boy Soldiers” of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment – WW1 with an appropriate quote from Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Nangle:

“Ours Was a Regiment of Heroes!”

The End



Appendix 1

Fallen Boy Soldiers WW1

Note: These soldiers showing "Beaumont-Hamel (Newfoundland) Memorial, France" (114) have no known graves

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
ABBOTT, ELI	Private	2119	Killed in action on the Somme	28-Jan-17	19
Son of Charles and Annie Abbott, of Grand Falls. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ADAMS, OTTO HERBERT	Private	1770	Killed in action near Langemarck	09-Oct-17	18
Son of Thomas Daniel and Theresa Frances Adams, of 31, Le Marchant Rd., St. John's BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ADAMS, WILLIAM	Private	2306	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	17
Son of James and Alister Ann Adams. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ANDREWS, JOSEPH	Private	1119	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Mrs. Catherine Andrews, St. John's, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ANDREWS, WALTER	Private	2058	Killed in action near Marcoing	20-Nov-17	19
Son of John S. and Emma Andrews, of 75 New Gower St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
AYRE, EDWARD ALPHONSUS	Lance Corporal	1009	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Edward and Selina Ayre, of Isle Aux Morte, Newfoundland. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
BADCOCK, ARTHUR	Private	2314	Killed in action at Sailly-Saillisel	03-Mar-17	19
Son of Richard and Susie Badcock, of Bay Roberts. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BALDWIN, HENRY HERBERT	Private	1523	Killed in action	12-Oct-16	18
Son of Edward James and Clara Baldwin, of Pouch Cove, Newfoundland. BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
BALLAM, ARTHUR GEORGE	Private	3031	Killed in action near Marcoing	03-Dec-17	19
Son of Manoa and Alice Ballam, of Curling, Bay of Islands. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BARNES, JOHN	Private	3614	Died of wounds	15-Oct-18	19
Son of Ebenezer and Selina Barnes, of Leslie St., St. John's, Newfoundland. Native of Tilt Cove, Notre Dame Bay. YPRES RESERVOIR CEMETERY, Belgium					
BARTER, ALEXANDER	Private	4001	Killed in action	29-Sep-18	17
Son of James and Leah Barter, of 265 South Side, St. John's, Newfoundland. TYNE COT CEMETERY, Belgium					
BELLOWS, STEWART	Private	1430	Died of wounds	14-Aug-17	19
Son of Robert and Honora Bellows. CANADA FARM CEMETERY, Belgium					
BENGER, RANCE	Private	4132	Died of wounds	20-May-21	19
Son of John and Elizabeth Benger, Amherst Cove, Newfoundland. CHURCH OF ENGLAND CEMETERY					
BENNETT, CHARLES	Private	4143	Killed in action	03-Oct-18	17
Son of James and Maggie Bennett, of Main River, St. George's, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
BENNETT, CHESLEY	Private	3519	Killed in action near Marcoing	20-Nov-17	17
Son of James and Alice Bennett, of Lewisporte, Twillingate. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BENSON, WILLIAM	Private	4132	Died of sickness	29-Oct-18	19
Son of Samuel and Emma-Jane Benson, Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
BENSON, WILSON	Private	3357	Killed in action near Marcoing	03-Dec-17	17
Son of Newman and Sarah Benson, of 41 South Side, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BEWHEY, EDWARD	Private	1144	Killed in action	30-Nov-15	19
Son of Henry and Ellen Bewhey, of 23 Princes St., St. John's, Newfoundland. AZMAK CEMETERY, SUVLA, Turkey					
BISHOP, CALEB GOLDING	Private	2524	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Jacob and Eliza Mary Bishop, of Mundy Pond Rd., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BLYDE, MICHAEL JOHN	Private	280	Died of wounds	26-Sep-15	19
Son of Michael John and Mary Blyde, of 49 Fleming St., St. John's, Newfoundland. HILL 10 CEMETERY, Turkey					
BOBBETT, MATTHEW	Private	3541	Killed in action at Ypres	13-Mar-18	18
Son of John Bobbett, of McCallum, Hermitage Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BOYD, ALPHONSO	Private	2745	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Edward Boyd, Tizzard's Harbour, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BRINSTON, AUGUSTUS PERRY	Private	2851	Killed in action near Langemarck	16-Aug-17	19
Son of Nelson and Hannah Brinston, of Bay Bull's Arm, Trinity Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BRINSTON, GEORGE	Private	1772	Killed in action near Langemarck	09-Oct-17	17
Son of Robert William and Amelia Jane Brinston, of North Harbour, Placentia Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BRINTON, THOMAS	Private	3907	Killed in action	14-Oct-18	16
Son of Henry and Ellen Brinton, of Burin, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
BROWN, GEORGE	Private	5931	Died of pneumonia	02-Nov-18	19
Son of William Henry and Hannah Maria Brown, of Tacks Beach, Placentia Bay, Newfoundland. BODELWYDDAN (ST. MARGARET) CHURCHYARD, United Kingdom					
BROWN, HENRY	Private	2101	Killed in action	12-Aug-16	19
Son of William Henry and Emma Brown, of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland. MENIN ROAD SOUTH MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium					
BROWN, LOUIS	Private	2044	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	11-Oct-16	16
Son of Henry and Hannah Brown, of Bishop's Harbour, Bonaviaista Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BROWN, ORLANDO	Private	2670	Killed in action at Sailly-Saillisel	25-Feb-17	19
Son of William George and Sarah Brown, of Trinity East. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BRYANT, CHARLES	Private	3623	Killed in action near Nieppe	12-Apr-18	18
Son of Herbert and Drucilla Bryant, of Hickman's Harbour. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
BUGDEN, FRED	Private	3873	Killed in action near Neuve-Eglise	13-Apr-18	17
Son of Fletcher and Olivia Bugden, of Epworth, Burin. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
BURKE, LEO MICHAEL	Private	1170	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	18
Son of Martin and Annie Burke, of St. John's West, Newfoundland.					
ANCRE BRITISH CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
BUTLER, HARVEY RONALD	Lance Corporal	1883	Died of wounds	12-Oct-16	19
Son of William Parsons Butler and Annie Butler, of 92 Pleasant St., St. John's, Newfoundland.					
HEILLY STATION CEMETERY, MERICOURT-L'ABBE France					
BUTLER, IGNATIUS	Private	1442	Killed at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Mrs. Mary Butler, St. Georges, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CAKE, ALFRED E.	Private	2463	Killed in action	14-Apr-17	16
Son of Manuel and Patience Cake, of 76 Cabot St., St. John's, Newfoundland. Born at Tilt Cove, Newfoundland.					
IS-EN-ARTOIS BRITISH CEMETERY, HAUCOURT, France					
CANNING, PARMANUS	Private	5455		23-Jun-18	19
<i>Son of William and Emma Canning, of Moreton's Harbor.</i>					
MORETON'S HARBOUR UNITED CHURCH WILD COVE CEMETERY, Canada					
CAREW, DAVID MICHAEL	Private	776	Killed in action	07-Oct-15	19
Son of David and Carrie Carew, of St. John's, Newfoundland. HILL 10 CEMETERY, Turkey					
CHAFFEY, ARTHUR JAMES	Private	3014	Killed in action near Marcoing	03-Dec-17	19
Son of Edward and Catherine Ann Chaffey, of Jeffreys, Bay St. George.					
BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CHAPLIN, JOHN FIELDING	Private	584	Died of sickness	01-Jan-15	18
Son of Mark and Amelia Chaplin, of Water St., St. John's, Newfoundland.					
ARDERSIER PARISH CHURCHYARD, United Kingdom					
CHRISTIAN, WILLIAM C.	Corporal	3371	Died of wounds	26-Oct-18	18
Son of William L. and Sarah Christian, of St. John's, Newfoundland. TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
CHRISTOPHER, LEO JOSEPH	Corporal	1783	Killed in action near Langemarck	09-Oct-17	17
Son of Michael and Catherine Christopher, of St. Joseph's, Salinonier, St. Mary's Bay.					
BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CLARKE, GEORGE	Private	271	Died of dysentery	24-Nov-15	19
Son of John and Lydia Clarke, of Brigus, Newfoundland. EAST MUDROS MILITARY CEMETERY, Greece					
CLARKE, THOMAS	Private	3311	Killed in action near Wijndendrift	28-Sep-17	18
Son of John and Bridget Clarke, of The Goulds, (Bay Bulls Rd.), St. John's West.					
BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CLEARY, BERNARD	Private	1359	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Edward and Ellen Cleary, of Harbour Main. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
COISH, WILLIAM CLYDE	Private	3200	Killed in action	28-Sep-17	19
Son of William and Maud Coish, of Ladle Cove, Fogo District, Newfoundland. ARTILLERY WOOD CEMETERY, Belgium					
COLE, EDWARD LOUIS	Private	195	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	28-Jun-16	18
Son of Edward James and Fanny Jane Cole, of 46 Gilbert St., St. John's.					
BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
COLLINS, GEORGE W.	Private	2448	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of James Joseph and Bridget Collins, of St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Nmae	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
COLLINS, LEO	Private	2952	Killed in action at Steenbeek	16-Aug-17	19
Son of James Collins, St. John's, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
COULTAS, NORMAN	Private	1058	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	17
Son of Myles and Maria Coultas, of 80 Patrick St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CRANE, JOHN	Private	4074	Killed in action at Kieberg Ridge	29-Sep-18	19
Son of John and Susannah Crane, Tilton, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. TYNE COT CEMETERY, Belgium					
CROCKER, JOB	Private	2418	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of John and Honora Crocker, of Heart's Delight, Trinity Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CRON, JAMES MATTHEW	Private	1585	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of James and Emma Cron, of Harbour Grace. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CROSBIE, GEORGE CROSBIE	Private	1447	Died of wounds	03-Jul-16	17
Son of Walter and Mary Crosbie, of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland. ST. SEVER CEMETERY, ROUEN, France					
CROUCHER, JAMES E.	Private	2711	Killed in action at Cambrai	20-Nov-17	18
Son of Thomas and Mary Olivia Croucher, of Pointe Verde, Placentia, Newfoundland. MARCOING BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
CROUCHER, NATHANIEL	Private	1495	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Elias and Hagar Croucher, of Cutwell Arm, Notre Dame Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
CURNEW, GEORGE ROBERT	Private	1587	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	24-Apr-16	19
Son of John and Elizabeth Curnew, of Flower's Cove, St. Barbe, Newfoundland. MESNIL RIDGE CEMETERY, MESNIL-MARTINSART, France					
DALY, JAMES JOSEPH	Corporal	3141	Killed in action	25-Oct-18	18
Son of Lawrence and Catherine Daly, of 182 Gower St., St. John's, Newfoundland. INGOYGHEM MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium					
DAWE, CHRISTOPHER	Private	4864	Died of pneumonia	31-May-18	19
Son of George and Elizabeth Dawe, of Cupids, Port-de-Grave. CUPIDS UNITED CHURCH CEMETERY, Canada					
DAY, JAMES LEWIS	Private	1484	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	23-Apr-17	19
Son of Ernest and Sarah Day, of 48 Mullock St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
DE LOUCHREY, HAROLD	Private	1966	Killed in action at Flers	18-Oct-16	19
Son of Joseph and Frances De Louchrey, of Little Bay, Notre Dame Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
DELANEY, THOMAS J.	Private	2225	Killed in action at Lesbœufs	20-Nov-16	19
Son of Michael and Bridget Delaney, of Placentia. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
DICKS, BENJAMIN	Private	2828	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of William and Susie Dicks, of Burgeo. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
DOMINY, HARRY	Private	3769	Killed in action near Wieltje	14-Mar-18	19
Son of Edgar and Annie Dominy, of Greenspond, Bonavista Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
DONNELLY, WILLIAM	Private	2162	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of William and Mary Donnelly, of 45 Wickford St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
DONOHUE, WILLIAM	Private	2992	Died of disease	18-May-18	19
Son of John and Mary Donohue, of Point Verde, Placentia, Newfoundland. ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
DORAN, JOHN	Private	2660	Died of wounds	23-Sep-17	18
Son of John and Elizabeth Doran, of 41 Duckworth St., St. John's, Newfoundland. CANADA FARM CEMETERY, Belgium					
DRUKEN, THOMAS	Private	1363	Died of wounds	01-Nov-16	19
Son of John and Alice Druken, of Horse Cove Line, Topsail, Newfoundland. ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
DUNPHY, EDMOND L.	Private	2967	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	17
Son of Patrick and Ellen Dunphy, of 31 Central St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
DURNFORD, FRED R.	Private	2631	Killed in action at Cambrai	20-Nov-17	19
Son of John R. S. and Mary Durnford, of Rencontre, Hermitage Bay, Newfoundland. MARCOING BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
DWYER, MARTIN	Private	2499	Died of wounds	30-Dec-17	19
Son of Thomas and Bridget Dwyer, Bell Island, Newfoundland. COLOGNE SOUTHERN CEMETERY, Germany					
EBBS, JOHN	Private	2351	Killed in action at Lesbœufs	20-Nov-16	19
Son of John and Agnes Ebbs, St. John's, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
EBSARY, FREDERICK ERNEST	Private	1138	Died of meningitis	23-Sep-15	19
Son of Newman and Sarah Ebsary, of 89 Southside, St. John's, Newfoundland. CAIRO WAR MEMORIAL CEMETERY, Egypt					
EDGAR, EDWIN	Private	737	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Edwin and Helen Edgar, of Greenspond, Bonavista Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
EDNEY, SAMUEL R.	Private	1714	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	12-Oct-16	19
Son of Mr. and Mrs. John T. Edney, of 15 William St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ELLIOTT, WILLIAM	Lance Corporal	1786	Killed in action	03-Mar-17	19
Son of Samuel and Honor Elliott, of Burnt Arm, Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland. SAILLY-SAILLISEL BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
ELLSWORTH, JOHN T.	Private	2469	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of Moses and Lenora Ellsworth, of Carmanville, Fogo. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
FALLON, STEPHEN	Private	1191	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	17
Son of John and Susie Fallon, of Harbour Grace. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
FARRELL, MARTIN PATRICK	Private	1798	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of John and Mary Farrell, of Marystown, Burin, Newfoundland. SERRE ROAD CEMETERY No.2, France					
FARRELL, PATRICK	Private	3044	Died of sickness	01-Oct-17	19
Son of Patrick Farrell, Ferryland, Newfoundland. BROOKWOOD MILITARY CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
FIFIELD, FREDERICK	Private	3473	Killed in action	27-Mar-18	19
Son of Charles and Johanna Fifield, of Bonavista, Newfoundland. OXFORD ROAD CEMETERY, Belgium					
FILLIER, FRANK	Private	1377	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Thomas Fillier, of Petty Harbour. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
FISHER, ERNEST	Private	3516	Died of wounds	29-Nov-17	18
Son of Robert and Hannah Fisher, of 23 Hayward Avenue, St. John's, Newfoundland. ROCQUIGNY-EQUANCOURT ROAD BRITISH CEMETERY, MANANCOURT, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
FITZGERALD, THOMAS JOSEPH	Private	1645	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Thomas Joseph and Elizabeth Fitzgerald, of Ropewalk Range, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
FITZPATRICK, ALPHONSUS	Private	1904	Died of sickness	29-Jan-16	18
Born at Conche, French Shore, Newfoundland. AYR CEMETERY, Ayrshire, United Kingdom					
FOLKS, ALBERT	Private	3490	Died of wounds	13-Mar-18	18
Son of William and Janet Folks, of Little Bay, Newfoundland. NINE ELMS BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
FORTUNE, STEPHEN	Private	3146	Died of wounds	22-Nov-17	19
Foster-son of James and Mary Ann Fortune, of Jeffery's Bay, St. George, Newfoundland. ROCQUIGNY-EQUANCOURT ROAD BRITISH CEMETERY, MANANCOURT, France					
FRAMPTON, JOHN	Private	4102	Died of pyrexia following dysentery	23-Nov-18	19
Son of Thomas and Jane Frampton, of Burin Bay, Newfoundland. KORTRIJK (ST. JAN) COMMUNAL CEMETERY, Belgium					
FREW, MACKINTOSH	Corporal	2246	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of William and Katie Frew, of Grand Falls. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
FRIZELL, HENRY	Private	3310	Killed in action at Cambrai	20-Nov-17	19
Son of Charles and Mary Frizell, of Goulds, Bay Bulls Rd., St. John's West, Newfoundland. MARCOING BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
FUDGE, CHARLES	Private	5367	Died of pneumonia	12-Jun-18	19
Son of George and Elizabeth Fudge, of Burnt Islands, Burgeo and La Poile. BURNT ISLANDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND CEMETERY, Canada					
FUREY, IGNATIUS	Private	1312	Died of tetanus	07-Dec-15	19
Son of George and Margaret Furey, of Harbour Main, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. PORTIANOS MILITARY CEMETERY, Greece					
GALGAY, FRANCIS	Private	892	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Francis and Mary Galgay, St. John's, NL. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
GILLAM, CHARLES	Private	3148	Died of tuberculosis	19-Jul-17	19
Son of Charles and Mary Jane Gillam, of Jeffreys, Newfoundland. Native of Crabbe's, Newfoundland. BROOKWOOD MILITARY CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
GILLEY, JOB	Private	2476	Died of wounds	22-May-17	18
Son of John and Eliza Gilley, of Gull Marsh, Bonne Bay, Newfoundland. NIEDERZWEHREN CEMETERY, Germany					
GOODLAND, AUGUSTUS	Private	4186	Died of wounds	14-Oct-18	18
Son of William Henry and Clara B. Goodland, of Winter Avenue, St. John's, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
GOODYEAR, OSWALD	Lance Corporal	2156	Killed in action	12-Oct-16	18
Son of Josiah and Louisa Goodyear, of Grand Falls, Newfoundland. Native of Ladle Cove, Fogo. BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
GORMAN, JULIAN JOSEPH	Private	794	Died of pneumonia	30-Mar-15	19
Son of James and Marguerite Gorman, of Harbour Breton, Fortune Bay, Newfoundland. Born at St. Pierre, Miquelon. EDINBURGH (MOUNT VERNON) ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
GOUDIE, GEORGE	Corporal	2242	Died of sickness	06-Nov-18	19
Son of Elias and Mary Jane Goudie, of Grand Falls, Newfoundland. Born at Northern Arm, Botwood, Newfoundland. VEVEY (ST. MARTIN'S) CEMETERY, Switzerland					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
HALFYARD, WALLACE	Private	3793	Killed in action near Ledeghem	03-Oct-18	19
Son of William and Eliza Ann Halfyard of Bonne Bay, St. Barbe. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HALIBURTON, GORDON ARCHIBALD	Lance Corporal	3893	Died of wounds	19-Apr-18	18
Son of Horatio Henry and Ada Haliburton, of Port Au Port, Newfoundland. MENDINGHEM MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium					
HANCOCK, JOHN	Private	946	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	18
Son of Joseph and Amelia Hancock, of Goose Cove, Treaty Shore, Newfoundland. Born at Jamestown, Bonavista Bay. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
HANN, BRIGAM	Private	3799	Died of wounds	30-Sep-18	19
Son of Jacob Hann, Bonne Bay, Newfoundland. HARINGHE MILITARY CEMETERY Belgium					
HARBIN, WILFRED T.	Lance Corporal	953	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	18
Son of Henry and Elizabeth Harbin of Twillingate. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HARDY, EDWARD	Private	677	Killed in action	12-Oct-16	18
Son of George and Elizabeth B. Hardy, of 24 Monroe St., St. John's, Newfoundland. BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
HARE, HARVEY	Private	988	Died of diphtheria	25-May-16	17
Son of William and Susan Hare, of Burgeo, Newfoundland. AYR CEMETERY, Ayrshire, United Kingdom					
HARRIS, WILLIAM GEORGE	Private	2817	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	11-Apr-17	17
Son of Job and Sarah Harris, of Brooklyn, Bonavista. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HAYES, PATRICK JOSEPH	Private	1239	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of John and Mary Hayes, of 6 Brennan St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HEALEY, JOHN	Private	2748	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Michael Healey, St. John's, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HEALEY, WILLIAM JAMES	Private	2984	Killed in action	03-Oct-18	19
Son of John and Jane Healey, of 39, Merrymeeting Rd., St. John's Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
HEARN, AUGUSTINE	Private	1024	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of William and Sarah Hearn, of St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HERDER, WALLACE	Private	2274	Killed in action on the Somme	28-Jan-17	18
Son of H. George and Susannah Herder, of 12 Pleasant St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HICKS, PHILIP	Private	5426	Died of pneumonia	18-Jun-18	18
Son of William and Elizabeth Hicks, of Merritt's Harbor, Herring Neck. Alternative Commemoration - buried in Merritt's Harbor (Old) Methodist Cemetery, Twillingate. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					
HILLIARD, SILAS	Private	1970	Died of wounds	24-Aug-17	18
Son of Alexander and Martha Hilliard, of New Harbour, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. DOZINGHEM MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium					
HILLIER, LLEWELYN	Private	3034	Died of wounds	25-Jan-18	18
Son of Edward and Martha Hillier, of Point Aux Gauls, Lamaline, Newfoundland. LE CATEAU MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
HOBBS, ELIOL	Private	5413	Died of pneumonia	22-Jun-18	19
Son of Thomas and Caroline Hobbs, of Redcliffe, Bonavista Bay. RED CLIFF CHURCH OF ENGLAND CEMETERY, Canada					

Full Nmae	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
HODDINOTT, SAMUEL	Private	5595	Died of sickness	02-Jul-18	16
Son of Samuel and Mary Ann Hoddinott, of Indian Islands, Fogo. ST. JOHN'S GENERAL PROTESTANT CEMETERY, ST. JOHN'S CITY WEST, Canada					
HOLDEN, PATRICK	Private	555	Died of wounds	29-Jan-16	19
Son of Joseph and Mary Alice Holden, of South Side, St. John's, Newfoundland. ADDOLORATA CEMETERY, Malta					
HOLLAND, MICHAEL JOHN	Private	1634	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Richard and Jane Holland, of 37 Freshwater Rd., St. John's, Newfoundland. Born at King's Cove, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
HUDSON, GEORGE	Private	3327	Died of wounds	12-Mar-18	19
Son of Henry and Susannah Hudson, of Pouch Cove, St. John's East, Newfoundland. NINE ELMS BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
HUDSON, PETER	Private	1689	Died of wounds	04-Jul-16	18
Son of James and Bride Hudson, of 20 Mullock St., St. John's, Newfoundland. GEZAINCOURT COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION, France					
HULAN, GERALD	Private	3764	Died of meningitis	07-Jun-17	19
Son of Joseph and Catherine Phoebe Hulan, of Crabbes, Bay St. George. ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CEMETERY, ST. JOHN'S CITY EAST, Canada					
HULAN, HOWARD	Private	1568	Died of phthisis	02-May-16	18
Son of Richard and Jane Hulan, of Robinson's, Newfoundland. AYR CEMETERY, Ayrshire, United Kingdom					
HULL, VICTOR WILLIE	Private	5471	Died of meningitis	09-Jun-18	18
Son of John Robert and Leah Hull, of Sullivan's Cove, Little Bay Islands. Notre Dame Bay. Alternative Commemoration - buried in Little Bay Islands Methodist Cemetery, Green Bay. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					
HUSSEY, FRANCIS JOSEPH	Private	1533	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	18
Son of John and Sarah Hussey, of Kenmount Rd., Freshwater, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
HUTCHINGS, RICHARD	Private	3366	Killed in action	30-Mar-18	17
Son of George Henry and Providence Hutchings, of Whitbourne, Trinity, Newfoundland. POELCAPELLE BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
HUTCHINS, HAROLD	Private	602	Killed in action at Beaumont Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Philip Henry and Louise Hutchins, of Greenspond, Bonavista, Newfoundland. Born at St. John's. ANCRE BRITISH CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
HYNES, JAMES JOSEPH	Private	1095	Killed in action	18-Nov-15	19
Son of John and Margaret Hynes, of 239 South Side, St. John's, Newfoundland. AZMAK CEMETERY, SUVLA, Turkey					
JACKMAN, MICHAEL JOSEPH	Private	733	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of David J. and Catherine Jackman, of Bell Island. Educated at St. Bonaventure's College, St. John's. Member of Catholic Cadet Corps, Bell Island. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
JACOBS, HAROLD	Private	2253	Died of wounds	19-Apr-17	17
Son of David and Evelyn Julia Jacobs, of Northern Bay South, Bay de Verde, Newfoundland. DOUAI COMMUNAL CEMETERY, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
JANES, CHARLES	Private	3983	Killed in action near Ingoyghem	25-Oct-18	19
Son of Charles and Emma Janes, of Greenspond, Bonavista. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
JARVIS, RICHARD	Private	4135	Killed in action	29-Sep-18	18
Son of Eli and Mary Ann Jarvis, of Pinch Cove, Placentia Bay, Newfoundland. TYNE COT CEMETERY, Belgium					
JOYCE, WILLIAM	Private	1952	Killed in Action at Wietje, Belgium	08-Sep-16	19
Son of Christopher Joyce, Burin Bay Arm, Newfoundland. VALMERFTINGHE MILITARY CEMETRY, Belgium					
KEAN, WALLACE	Private	2599	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Charles and Amelia Kean, of Traytown, Alexander Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
KEEPING, STANLEY	Private	2697	Killed in action at Lesbœufs	19-Nov-16	17
Son of James and Agnes Keeping, of Regent St., North Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
KENDELL, EDWARD WILLIAM	Private	3110	Killed in action at Langemarck	09-Oct-17	19
Son of William Robert Kendell, of Ramea Island, Burgeo and La Poile. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
KNOTT, CECIL JAMES	Private	2882	Died of wounds	02-May-17	19
Son of Robert and Mary Knott, of Burgeo, Newfoundland. COLOGNE SOUTHERN CEMETERY, Germany					
LACEY, GEORGE B.	Private	2344	Killed in action at Cambrai	20-Nov-17	18
Son of Martin and Catherine Lacey, of 10 Sebastian St., St. John's, Newfoundland. MARCOING BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
LAMBERT, JOHN	Private	3026	Killed in action at Steenbeek Canal, Ypres	16-Aug-17	18
Son of Richard and Elizabeth Lambert, of St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
LANGER, JOHN	Private	2186	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	12-Oct-16	18
Next-of-kin Miss Caroline Langer, Thoroughfare, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
LE MESSURIER, WALLACE JAMES	Private	2034	Killed in action	12-Oct-16	19
Son of Alexander and Fannie Le Messurier, of St. John's, Newfoundland. BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
LE RICHE, JAMES H.	Private	2462	Killed in action on the Somme	28-Jan-17	18
Son of John Le Riche, of Channel, Burgeo and La Poile. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
LEPAGE, MANUEL	Private	3179	Killed at Marcoing	03-Dec-17	19
Son of Claude LePage, St. Georges, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
LEWIS, GORDON C.	Private	2309	Died of wounds	28-Jan-17	17
Son of Charles N. and Annie L. Lewis, of 53 Pennywell Rd., St. John's, Newfoundland. GUARDS' CEMETERY, COMBLES, France					
LEWIS, JOHN T.	Private	2746	Killed in action near Nieppe	12-Apr-18	19
Son of Thomas and Margaret Lewis, of Chapel's Cove, Harbour Main. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
LITTLE, REDVERS	Private	4887	Died of phthisis	15-Nov-18	18
Son of James and Elizabeth Little, of Musgravetown, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland. WINCHESTER (MAGDALEN HILL) CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
MACKAY, ANDREW JOSEPH	Private	572	Died of wounds	13-Jul-16	18
Son of John and Mary Mackay, of St. John's, Newfoundland. WIMEREUX COMMUNAL CEMETERY, France					
MACKAY, WALTER H.	Private	4105	Killed in action at Ledeghem	02-Oct-18	18
Son of Herbert H. and Mary E. Mackay, of Channel, Burgeo and La Poile. His brother Edgar also fell. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
MADDIGAN, RICHARD JOSEPH	Private	826	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Richard and Ellen Maddigan, of 259 Water St. West St. John's, Newfoundland. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
MAIDMENT, ROBERT	Private	2587	Died of wounds	29-Apr-17	19
Next-of-Kin Mr. W. Maidment, St. John's, Newfoundland. ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
MAJOR, JOHN THOMAS	Private	3493	Died of tuberculosis	07-Jun-18	19
Son of George Major, of Norris' Point, Bonne Bay, Newfoundland. BROOKWOOD MILITARY CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
MARSH, WILLIAM L.	Private	2083	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	12-Oct-16	19
Son of Ezra and Caroline Marsh, of Deer Harbour, Trinity Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MARTIN, HENLEY ARTHUR	Private	1417	Died of wounds	14-Oct-16	19
Son of James Henry and Phoebe Martin, of Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. HEILY STATION CEMETERY, MERICOURT-L'ABBE, France					
MARTIN, JAMES J.	Private	2352	Killed in action near Neuve-Eglise	13-Apr-18	18
Son of James and Mary Martin, of 8 Sebastian St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MARTIN, RICHARD B.	Private	2936	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Frank and Bessie Martin, of Bunn. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MARTIN, STEPHEN A.	Private	1942	Died of wounds	08-Jul-17	19
Son of William and Josephine Martin, of Torbay, Newfoundland. CANADA FARM CEMETERY, Belgium					
MARTIN, WILLIAM JOHN	Private	3221	Killed in action	08-Jul-17	17
Son of Moses and Susannah Martin, of Killigrews, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. BARD COTTAGE CEMETERY, Belgium					
MAY, JOHN	Private	4047	Died of wounds	18-Oct-18	18
Son of Frederick and Hannah May, of Head's Harbour, Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland. TERLINCHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
McGRATH, WILLIAM	Private	4994	Died of influenza	11-Jun-18	18
Son of John and Mary McGrath, of Delby's Cove, Trinity Bay. Alternative Commemoration - buried in Delby's Cove Church of England Cemetery, Trinity Centre. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					
MEANEY, JOHN A.	Private	2396	Killed in action at Langemarck	09-Oct-17	19
Son of John T. and Mary A. Meaney, of St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MELEE, THOMAS	Private	1877	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Thomas and Sarah Melee, of Southside Rd., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MERCER, CHESLEY	Private	1303	Died of sickness	14-Nov-15	19
Son of John and Emma Mercer, of 48 Spencer St., St. John's, Newfoundland. WANDSWORTH (EARLSFIELD) CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
MERCER, MAXWELL JAMES	Private	1446	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Isaac and Anastatia Mercer, of Bay Roberts, Harbour Grace. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MERCER, PERCY	Private	2374	Killed in action	14-Apr-17	18
Son of John and Lizzie Mercer, of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland. DURY CRUCIFIX CEMETERY, France					
MESSERVEY, WILLIAM	Private	4152	Killed in action	14-Oct-18	19
Son of James and Martha Messervey of Sandy Point, Bay St. George, Newfoundland. CEMENT HOUSE CEMETERY, Belgium					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
MILES, HEBER JOHN	Private	934	Died of meningitis	18-Mar-16	18
Son of Dugald Miles, of Bonavista, Newfoundland. WANDSWORTH (EARLSFIELD) CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
MOORES, JOHN	Private	3250	Killed in action at Ledeghem	05-Oct-18	18
Son of Arthur Moores, Bay de Verde, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MORGAN, WILLIAM	Private	865	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	16
Son of John A. and Sarah Morgan, of Alexander St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MORRIS, HAROLD	Private	4131	Died of sickness	19-Apr-18	19
Son of William and Amelia Morris, of Seal Rocks Bay, St. George, Newfoundland. WINCHESTER (MAGDALEN HILL) CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
MOSHER, GEORGE	Private	4168	Killed in action near Ingoyghem	25-Oct-18	17
Son of Saul and Susanna Mosher, of Fortune, Burin. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MOULTON, JOHN	Private	3936	Killed in action near Neuve-Eglise	13-Apr-18	19
Son of Thomas Isaac and Eliza Moulton, of Loon's Cove, Burin. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MUGFORD, GEORGE	Private	1943	Died of sickness	24-Feb-16	19
Son of Samuel and Celina Mugford, of Codroy, Newfoundland. PAISLEY (HAWKHEAD) CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
MULLINGS, GORDON	Private	1698	Killed in action on the Somme	20-Jan-17	18
Son of Joseph Mullings, St. John's, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MURPHY, JOACHIM	Private	696	Died of wounds	07-Nov-15	19
Son of Joseph and Ellen Murphy of Mundy Pond Rd., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
MURPHY, WALTER LEONARD	Private	407	Died of dysentery	29-Sep-15	19
Son of John Jos. and Alice Murphy, of 20 Buchanan St., St. John's, Newfoundland. Born at Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. EAST MUDROS MILITARY CEMETERY, Greece					
MYRICK, JOHN	Private	99	Died of diphtheria	10-Dec-15	19
Son of Patrick and Mary Myrick, of 15 Monkstown Rd., St. John's, Newfoundland. PORTIANOS MILITARY CEMETERY, Greece					
NEWELL, VICTOR PERRIN	Private	3598	Died of sickness	17-Jul-17	19
Son of Nathan and Priscilla Newell, of Dock Bareneed, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. AYR CEMETERY, Ayrshire, United Kingdom					
NICHOLS, GEORGE DUNCAN	Corporal	2054	Killed in action	12-Oct-16	19
Son of George A. and Katie Maria Nichols, of Nicholsville, Deer Lake, Newfoundland. BANCOURT BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
NOFTELL, PATRICK ALEXANDER	Private	3174	Killed in action	07-Jul-17	19
Son of Michael and Elizabeth Nofte, of Fleur-de-Lys, St. Barbe, Newfoundland. BARD COTTAGE CEMETERY, Belgium					
NORTH, ROBERT	Private	2596	Killed in action at Cambrai	20-Nov-17	19
Son of George and Fannie North, of Bay Roberts, Newfoundland. MARCOING BRITISH CEMETERY, France					
O'BRIEN, EDWARD	Private	3603	Died of wounds	21-Oct-18	19
Son of Frederick and Mary Fahey O'Brien, of 32 Lime St., St. John's, Newfoundland. DUHALLOW A.D.S. CEMETERY, Belgium					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
O'BRIEN, JUSTIN	Lance Corporal	3476	Died of wounds	20-Oct-18	19
Son of Michael and Mary O'Brien, of 4 Mullock St., St. John's, Newfoundland. HARLEBEKE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
O'BRIEN, MICHAEL G.	Private	2968	Killed in action	25-Oct-18	18
Son of Richard J. and Matilda O'Brien, of Witless Bay, Newfoundland. VICHTE MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium					
OLSEN, JOSEPH	Private	313	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Charles and Annie Olsen, of 87 Signal Hill Rd., St. John's, Newfoundland. TANK CEMETERY, GUEMAPPE, France					
OSBOURNE, JAMES	Private	4912	Died of pneumonia	26-May-18	18
Son of James John and Mary Ann Osbourne, of Lewisporte. ST. JOHN'S GENERAL PROTESTANT CEMETERY, ST. JOHN'S CITY WEST, Canada					
PALFREY, PATRICK	Private	2582	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of John and Margaret Palfrey, of 8 Brazil's Square, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
PARMITER, CECIL	Private	1586	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of John and Sarah Parmiter, of Topsail, Harbor Main, Newfoundland. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
PARMITER, NORMAN	Private	3929	Died of wounds	15-Oct-18	18
Son of Samuel and Mary Parmiter, of Topsail, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
PARSONS, AUBREY L.	Private	1664	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of John and Martha Parsons, of Lumsden North, Fogo. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
PERRAN, WILLIAM C.	Private	1690	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Thomas and Elizabeth Perran, of St. John's, Newfoundland. AUCHONVILLERS MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
PHELAN, JAMES	Private	2420	Killed in action near Neuve-Eglise	13-Apr-18	18
Son of James and Mary Phelan, of Merrymeeting Rd., St. John's, Newfoundland. MONT NOIR MILITARY CEMETERY, ST. JANS-CAPPE, France					
PHELAN, WILLIAM A.	Private	2001	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	11-Oct-16	18
Son of James and Mary Phelan, of Merrymeeting Rd., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
PIERCEY, JOHN CHARLES	Private	1535	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Robert and Patience Piercey, of Bay Bulls Arm, Trinity Bay Newfoundland. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
PIKE, JAMES JOSEPH	Private	1220	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Joseph and Winifred Pike, of Avondale, Harbour Main. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
PIKE, MANUEL EDWARD	Private	2666	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of Lewis and Minnie Pike, of 220 Theatre Hill, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
PITTMAN, ABEL	Private	3706	Died of wounds	14-Apr-18	19
Son of Benjamin and Mary Ann Pittman, of Brickyard, Smith Sound, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. NINE ELMS BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
POLLARD, WILLIAM	Private	3823	Killed in action near Neuve-Eglise	13-Apr-18	18
Son of William and Virtue Ann Pollard, of Harbour Deep, White Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
POWELL, GARLAND	Private	2816	Killed in action at Sailly-Saillise	02-Mar-17	19
Son of James and Rosanna Powell, of Happy Adventure, Bonavista Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
POWER, FRANCIS	Private	2652	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of Michael and Catherine Power, of William St., St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
POWER, JAMES MATTHEW	Private	1150	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Martin and Johanna Power, of Boston, U.S.A. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
PRETTY, JOHN	Private	2276	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Edmund and Sarah Pretty, of Chapel Arm, Trinity Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
PYNN, JACK	Private	4036	Died of wounds	31-Oct-18	17
Son of Daniel and Margaret Pynn, of St. John's Newfoundland. TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
QUINTON, ALBERT EDWARD	Private	3525	Died of phthisis	27-Jun-17	18
Son of Alfred and Susannah Quinton, of Southern Bay, Bonavista Bay. PRINCETON CHURCH OF ENGLAND CEMETERY, Canada					
RALPH, CECIL	Private	5201		13-Jun-18	19
Son of George and Susanna Ralph, of Flat Islands, Bonavista Bay. Alternative Commemoration - buried in Flat Island Church of England Cemetery. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					
RANDELL, MARCUS	Private	3772	Died of wounds	17-Oct-18	19
Son of Walter and Angelina Randell, of Port Rexton, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
REES, EDGAR	Private	4163	Died of wounds	21-Oct-18	19
Son of Thomas and Elizabeth Rees, of Bell Island, C.B., Newfoundland. TERLINCTHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
REES, WILLIAM	Private	4088	Died of wounds	27-Oct-18	19
Son of George and Amelia Ann Rees, of Lance Cove, Bell Island, Newfoundland. DUHALLOW A.D.S. CEMETERY, Belgium					
REEVES, MAXWELL	Private	2277	Died of meningitis	19-May-16	17
Son of John and Sarah Reeves, of St. Lawrence, Newfoundland. ST. LAWRENCE (ST. MATTHEWS) CHURCH CEMETERY, Canada					
REID, SAMUEL	Private	2366	Died of pneumonia	05-Jan-17	16
Son of Solomon and Alvina Reid, of Heart's Delight, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. Native of South Dildo, Trinity Bay. ST. SEVER CEMETERY EXTENSION, ROUEN, France					
RENDELL, ERNEST	Private	1906	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	12-Oct-16	19
Son of Fred and Naomi Rendell, New Harbour, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
RING, THOMAS J.	Private	2364	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Martin and Hannah Ring, of St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ROBERTS, CECIL	Private	3908	Killed in action at Kieberg Ridge	14-Oct-18	18
Son of Frederick and Susanna Roberts, of Hermitage. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ROBERTS, JOHN	Private	4042	Killed in action near Waterdamhoek	30-Sep-18	18
Son of William and Jane Roberts, of Burlington, Notre Dame Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
ROBERTS, THOMAS STEPHEN	Private	3875	Killed in action near Ingoyghem	25-Oct-18	17
Son of Thomas and Mary Roberts, of Epworth, Burin. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
RODGERS, EDWARD JOSEPH	Private	355	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Stephen and Katherine Rodgers, of 34 Flower Hill, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
RODGERS, THOMAS	Private	2632	Died of wounds	17-Apr-17	18
Son of Stephen and Annastatia Rodgers, of St. John's, Newfoundland. DOUAI COMMUNAL CEMETERY, France					
ROPER, FREDERICK CHARLES	Private	1189	Killed in action	27-Nov-15	19
Son of John and Annie Roper, of Bonavista, Newfoundland. AZMAK CEMETERY, SUVLA Turkey					
ROSE, GEORGE	Private	2919	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Matthew and Susie Rose, of Burgeo. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL France					
ROSE, JOHN	Private	2175	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	23-Apr-17	19
Son of Ambrose Rose, Cape St. Francis, Newfoundland. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
ROSS, MICHAEL JOSEPH	Private	250	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Native of Colchester, England. Son of James and Margaret Ross, of Portugal Cove, St. John's East, Newfoundland. AUCHONVILLERS MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
RUSSELL, JOHN	Private	4358	Killed in action near Vichte	20-Oct-18	16
Son of John and Annie Russell, of Country Rd., Bay Roberts. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
RUSSELL, MELVILLE R.	Private	2365	Killed in action near Marcoing	20-Nov-17	18
Son of Edward and Mary Russell, of 97 Portland St., Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
RUSSELL, WILLIAM	Private	1137	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Samuel and Edith Russell, of Brooklyn, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland. Native of Plate Cove, Newfoundland. KNIGHTSBRIDGE CEMETERY, MESNIL-MARTINSART, France					
RYAN, CHESLEY	Private	5690	Died of pneumonia	09-Jan-19	18
Son of Thomas and Caroline Ryan, of Round Harbour. ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CEMETERY, ST. JOHN'S CITY EAST, Canada					
RYAN, PATRICK	Private	3188	Killed in action at Cambrai	20-Nov-17	19
Son of Partick Ryan, Marysval, Brigus, Newfoundland. MARCOING BRITISH CEMETERY France					
SAMSON, NEVILLE	Private	3544	Killed in action near Marcoing	03-Dec-17	18
Son of Thomas Edward and Martha Jane Samson, of Flat Islands, Bonavista Bay. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL France					
SARGENT, JOHN	Private	1540	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	12-Oct-16	19
Son of Michael and Cecilia Sargent, of Badger, Twillingate. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SEAWARD, EDWARD	Private	1908	Killed in action	12-Aug-16	18
Son of Thomas and Rosely Seaward, of Red Bay, Labrador. MENIN ROAD SOUTH MILITARY CEMETERY, Belgium					
SHAVE, EDWIN L.	Lance Corporal	1699	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Constable William Henry Shave and Isobel Shave, of Fogo. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SHEPPARD, HENRY	Private	5226	Died of pneumonia	08-Jun-18	19
Son of Henry and Naomi Sheppard, of Bishop's Cove, Harbor Grace. Alternative Commemoration - buried in Bishop's Cove Church of England Cemetery. Porte-de-Grave. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
SHORTALL, LEO	Private	1940	Died of wounds	29-Apr-18	19
Son of Richard and Catherine Shortall, St. John's, Newfoundland. BROOKWOOD MILITARY CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
SIMMS, ERNEST	Private	5580	Died of pneumonia	14-Jun-18	18
Son of John and Maria Simms, of Richard's Harbour, Hermitage Bay. HERMITAGE ST. SAVIOUR'S ANGLICAN CHURCH CEMETERY, Canada					
SIMMS, FRANK F.H.	Private	2959	Killed in action near Marcoing	03-Dec-17	18
Son of Frank H. and Rose C. Simms, of Kimberley Farm, Burin. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SIMMS, ROBERT RONALD	Private	576	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Adam and Mary Ann Simms, of St. Anthony, St. Barbe. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SIMPSON, RONALD GORDON	Private	3373	Killed in action near Nieppe	12-Apr-18	19
Son of Sophie Boone (formerly Simpson), of St. John's, and the late Robert Simpson. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SKINNER, WILLIAM	Private	2933	Died of wounds	22-Nov-17	19
Son of James and Mary Ann Skinner, of Harbor Briton, Fortune Bay, Newfoundland. Native of Grand John, Fortune Bay. ROCQUIGNY-EQUANCOURT ROAD BRITISH CEMETERY, MANANCOURT, France					
SMALL, GEORGE STEWART	Private	1626	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Robert Jabez and Amelia M. Small, of Lewisporte, Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland. Native of Moreton's Harbor, Newfoundland. HAWTHORN RIDGE CEMETERY No.2, AUCHONVILLERS, France					
SMART, FRANK	Private	3578	Died of heart failure	22-May-17	18
Son of Samuel and Fanny Smart, of Saunder's Cove, Alexander Bay, Newfoundland. HALIFAX (FORT MASSEY) CEMETERY, Canada					
SMITH, JOSIAH	Private	1677	Killed in action at Beaumont Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Foster son of Matthew Smith, of Hopeall, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. ANCRE BRITISH CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
SNOW, DOUGLAS K.	Private	1021	Killed in action	01-Jul-16	19
Son of Charles and Patience Snow, of 6 Mullock St., St. John's, Newfoundland. Born at Brigus, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. Y RAVINE CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
SOMERTON, PETER	Private	2779	Died of wounds	04-Dec-17	19
Son of Richard and Elizabeth Ann Somerton, of Bell Island, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. Native of Portugal Cove, St. John's East, Newfoundland. ROCQUIGNY-EQUANCOURT ROAD BRITISH CEMETERY, MANANCOURT, France					
SPARKES, GEORGE JOSEPH	Private	253	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	19
Son of George and Annie Sparkes, of Bell Island. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SPENCER, HERBERT MAXWELL	Private	3640	Killed in action near Nieppe	12-Apr-18	18
Son of George and Mary Jane Spencer, of Springdale, Hall's Bay, Twillingate. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
SQUIBB, JOSIAH	Private	243	Killed in action	19-Oct-15	19
Son of Charles and Jane Squibb, of Carbonear, Newfoundland. HILL 10 CEMETERY Turkey					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
SQUIRES, FRED	Private	3584	Killed in action	05-Oct-18	19
Son of John and Leah Squires, of 68 New Gower St., St. John's, Newfoundland. Native of Britannia, Trinity Bay. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
STEAD, JABEZ	Private	2487	Killed in action at Monchy-Le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Benjamin and Sarah Jane Stead, of Musgravetown, Bonavista, Newfoundland. VIS-EN-ARTOIS BRITISH CEMETERY, HAUCOURT, France					
STONE, HARRY J.	Private	2755	Killed in action	23-Apr-17	19
Son of William and Fanny Stone, of Bell Island, Conception Bay, Newfoundland. Native of Pilley's Island, Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland. WINDMILL BRITISH CEMETERY, MONCHY-LE-PREUX, France					
STRONG, ROSS	Private	3786	Died of wounds	16-Apr-18	19
Son of William and Sarah Ann Strong of Jackson's Cove, Green Bay, Northern Dame Bay, Newfoundland. BOULOGNE EASTERN CEMETERY, France					
TEIXEIRA, JOSEPH	Private	3424	Killed in action near Wieltje	13-Mar-18	19
Brother of Ignez Teixeira, of 5759, Rua da Fátima, Oporto. Enlisted 15th Jan., 1917. Native of Oporto, Portugal. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
THISTLE, FRANCIS	Private	2687	Died of wounds	30-Apr-17	16
Son of Maurice and Mary Ann Thistle, of Gander Bay, Newfoundland. ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
THOMAS, GORDON	Private	3498	Died of wounds	16-Oct-18	19
Son of Henry J. H. and Jerima Thomas, of St. John's, Newfoundland. TERLINCHUN BRITISH CEMETERY, WIMILLE, France					
THORNE, JAMES	Private	1905	Died of sickness	21-Feb-16	18
Son of William and Jessie Thorne of New Harbour, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. PAISLEY (HAWKHEAD) CEMETERY, United Kingdom					
THORNE, JOSEPH	Private	3149	Died of meningitis	19-Dec-17	19
Son of Joseph and Jane Thorne, of Burin. Alternative Commemoration - buried in Grand Bank Salvation Army Cemetery. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					
TIBBET, EDWARD J.	Private	4214	Killed in action	14-Oct-18	19
Son of Abel Arthur and Flora J. Tibbet, of Little Catalina, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
TOBIN, JOHN THOMAS	Private	1800	Died of measles	01-Feb-16	19
Son of Mr. and Mrs. John Tobin, of Burin North, Newfoundland. AYR CEMETERY, Ayrshire, United Kingdom					
TUFF, FRANK PAINE	Private	1694	Killed in action at Gueudecourt	12-Oct-16	18
Son of Edmund and Serena Tuff, of 51 Hayward Avenue, St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
TULK, RALPH	Private	4207	Killed in action at Kieberg Ridge	14-Oct-18	19
Son of Gabriel and Mary Ann Tulk, of Ladle Cove, Fogo. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
VAUGHAN, JOSEPH	Private	800	Killed in action Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	17
Son of Henry and Ellen Vaughan of St. John's. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
VOKEY, HERBERT	Private	2614	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Philip Henry and Emily Ann Vokey, of Little Harbour, Twillingate. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					

Full Name	Rank	Service No.	Cause of death	Date of death	Age
WAGG, ALBERT F.	Private	3270	Killed in action near Marcoing	03-Dec-17	19
Son of Stephen and Selina Wagg, of Stepaside, Burin. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
WELLS, CLARENCE	Private	2681	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	19
Son of Matthew and Phoebe Wells, of 1190, Ethel St. Verdun Montreal. Canada. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
WELLS, FREDERICK	Private	4031	Killed in action	14-Oct-18	19
Son of Herbert and Emma Wells, of Springdale, Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
WHEELER, FREDERICK	Private	1680	Died of wounds	10-Jul-16	19
Son of Aaron and Mrs. M. Wheeler, of Tizzard's Harbour, Newfoundland. ST. SEVER CEMETERY, ROUEN, France					
WHEELER, REUBEN	Private	2787	Killed in action	14-Oct-18	19
Son of John (of Edward) and Mary M. Wheeler, of Lower Island Cove, Bay de Verde, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
WHITE, ALBERT CLARENCE	Corporal	1374	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	11-Apr-17	19
Son of William John and Virtue White, of Catalina, Trinity. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
WHITE, MICHAEL	Private	4121	Killed in action	03-Oct-18	18
Son of Joseph and Evangeline White, of Southeast Bight, Placentia Bay, Newfoundland. DADIZEELE NEW BRITISH CEMETERY, Belgium					
WHITE, REGINALD BAYLY	Sergeant	3048	Died of disease	09-Jan-18	19
Son of William Charles and Frederica Thorne White, of Fogo, Newfoundland. ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY, France					
WICKS, FREDERICK	Private	5502	Died of pneumonia	18-Jun-18	18
Alternative Commemoration - buried in Greenspond Methodist Cemetery. ST. JOHN'S (MOUNT PLEASANT) CEMETERY, Canada					
WILLIAMS, HUGH	Private	3581	Killed in action near Marcoing	01-Dec-17	19
Son of Martin and Lucy Margaret Williams, of Springdale, Hall's Bay, Twillingate. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
WILLS, HERBERT	Corporal	2185	Killed in action near Lesbœufs	08-Dec-16	18
Son of Frederick William and Mary Wills, of 8 Exploits Lane, Grand Falls. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					
WINSOR, GEORGE	Private	1845	Killed in action at Beaumont-Hamel	01-Jul-16	18
Son of David and Annie Louisa Winsor, of Wesleyville, Bonavista Bay. SERRE ROAD CEMETERY No.2, France					
WINTER, EDWARD ROZIER	Private	675	Killed in action at Beaumont Hamel	01-Jul-16	18
Son of Thomas and Florence Winter, of St. John's, Newfoundland. Served at Gallipoli and in Egypt. ANCRE BRITISH CEMETERY, BEAUMONT-HAMEL, France					
WOOLRIDGE, JAMES ROBERT	Private	1993	Killed in action at Monchy-le-Preux	14-Apr-17	18
Son of John and Phoebe Frances Woolridge, of Trinity. BEAUMONT-HAMEL (NEWFOUNDLAND) MEMORIAL, France					



Appendix 2

The Origins of Newfoundland's Remembrance Flower

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Forget-Me-Not was worn on July 1, Commemoration Day, from 1918 until about 2000. July 1 is the date of the infamous 1916 Battle of Beaumont-Hamel when our Regiment was all but annihilated. The Great War Veterans Association officially made the beautiful little blue “Forget-Me-Not” our “Remembrance Flower” in 1918.

Due to its long and historic commemorative linkage to Newfoundlanders in the Great War, I wanted to learn as much as I possibly could about the Forget-Me-Not and the probable rationale for using it as our “Remembrance Flower.” To help, I turned to local experts, namely Ross Traverse – professional horticultural consultant; and John E. Maunder – Curator Emeritus of Natural History, The Rooms Provincial Museum.

The Forget-Me-Not is a member of the Borage Family. There are about 50 species worldwide, most being native to New Zealand. About a dozen species are native to Europe. However, only four species are found in Newfoundland; three of these are introduced, while only one, the unremarkable Small Forget-Me-Not (*Myosotis laxa*), and is native to our home.

The Forget-Me-Not has long been a symbol of true love and remembrance; the name being known at least as far back as the year 1520, from the French form “ne m’oubliez mye.” So, perhaps it was a generic Forget-Me-Not, rather than any one particular species, that was the basis for the designation of the July 1 symbol. However, there is usually some very personal and relevant reason for one symbol being chosen over another.

It is tempting to suggest that, over and above the long-standing

historical symbolism of the forget-me-not, its selection as the July 1 symbol was inspired by a particular species, or perhaps even a very small group of species, that were fondly remembered “from the gardens of home.” However, it seems more realistic to suggest that the inspiration was drawn from a species vividly remembered from the battlefields of Europe. Such is the example of the poppy, which existed everywhere on the battlefields of France and Belgium, particularly after the ground had been torn up and pulverized.

John Maunder advised me of a scientific paper published in 1917 (Bulletin of Miscellaneous Information: # 9-10: pp. 297-300, Kew Gardens, London) which described the flora of the “Somme Battlefield” as it recovered from the almost total devastation of the previous year. The list of plants springing up from the muddy craters and ridges of the former battleground comprised over 25 species, including the Field Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*), and just one species of forget-me-not – the “Field Forget-Me-Not” (*Myosotis arvensis*).

Was it this Field Forget-Me-Not that was the inspiration for Newfoundland’s July 1 flower? It is probable, but difficult to say with total accuracy. Often mentioned as alternate candidates are the larger and more showy Garden Forget-Me-Not (*Myosotis sylvatica*) and Large Forget-Me-Not (*Myosotis scirpoides*). All three of these species have been introduced to Newfoundland from Europe.

Whatever the specific inspiration, the Forget-Me-Not was certainly an appropriate choice. Its beautiful blue and blue-pink flowers bloom in May and June, making them an ideal July 1 symbol.

The Forget-Me-Not flower (artificial version) was utilized during Remembrance Day Ceremonies on July 1 by the Newfoundland Command of The Royal Canadian Legion up until about 2000.

In 2006, while accompanying the Royal Newfoundland Regiment on its pilgrimage to France and Belgium in my capacity as chair of the Regimental Advisory Council, I recall an issue relating to a Canadian Forces’ military directive which clearly dictated uniform protocol, including the wearing of badges/insignia and related war memorabilia. Prior to the Regiment’s departure, Edward Roberts, our Regiment’s Honourary Colonel and then Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, had sought authorization

from the Canadian Armed Forces in permitting Regiment personnel to wear the “Forget-Me-Not” during official commemorative activities.

Up until our arrival in France, Mr. Roberts had not received a reply. He then approached Newfoundland-born Chief of Defence Staff Rick Hillier and sought his permission for the Regiment to wear the commemorative flower special to Newfoundlanders since 1917. General Rick Parsons, Army Commander supported his efforts. The upshot was that General Hillier gave his permission for the troops to wear the flower in their uniforms during the 2006 pilgrimage.

On his return home, Mr. Roberts wrote to General Hillier, requesting his intervention in allowing the members of the Regiment to wear the “Forget-Me-Not” while commemorating the Regiment – WW1. Thanks to the determined efforts of Mr. Roberts, and the swift intervention of General Hillier, soldiers of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment are now permitted, under written order, to wear the flower on their uniforms during appropriate WW1 commemorations.

I would like to see our province once again make the Forget-Me-Not the July 1 – Remembrance Day Flower, and bring back this great commemorative tradition in honour of the Newfoundlanders who participated in the First World War. As I said at the start of this book, I think the Royal Canadian Legion, of which I am a long time proud member, should seriously consider re-introducing the selling of this small and appropriate floral tribute as a fund raiser for military veterans and their families, as was so faithfully done by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Great War Veterans Association for many years.

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About the Author



Garrett (Gary) Browne, M.O.M.

Is a Past-Chair of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment Advisory Council, and a person who has proudly contributed to raising the history profile of the Regiment over the past number of years: instrumental in having the Caribou Softball Memorial Complex in Pleasantville named in honour of the Regiment; co-authored the compelling book "Soldier Priest In the Killing Fields of Europe WW1 – Lt. Colonel Thomas Nangle"; one of the key people who pulled together a committee to retain historic Pleasantville as the home of Canadian Forces Station St. John's and the Royal Newfoundland Regiment; acquired the comprehensive WW1 Captain Gerald Whitty Photo Album for the Rooms Archives

Division and the Regiment Museum; instrumental in getting long over-due recognition for members of the Newfoundland Regiment who, along with others, put their lives in danger in order to save victims of the horrific Knights of Columbus Fire – St. John's during WW2; has lectured on the Regiment's illustrious history to name just some of his accomplishments for an organization he greatly admires.

Gary has a strong connection with the military, both on a National and Provincial basis: former member of the Canadian Armed Forces (Regular) – Royal Canadian Artillery – 1966-1969; a Past Vice-President of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 47, Labrador City; a Past President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Army Cadet League and a former long serving director with the Signal Hill Tattoo Association.

Gary retired from the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary in 2003 with the rank of Deputy Chief of Police after serving more than 31 years of dedicated service. In 2001 Gary was one of the first 23 Canadian Police Officers to be inducted into the National Order of Merit of Police Forces (Canada), and the first native Newfoundlander and Labradorean to be inducted into this prestigious Order. He graduated from a three year Memorial University Course in Law Enforcement and Community Relations with distinction. In 2006 Gary authored the acclaimed book "To Serve and Protect: The Newfoundland Constabulary on the Home Front WW2."

In 2009 Gary was awarded the Volunteer Service Medal by the Army Cadet League of Canada for his 17 years of "exemplary service and dedication to the National Army Cadet League and to its cadets."

Gary and his wife of 40 years, Paula (Cleary) of Harbour Grace, are avid hikers and they have three children – Chris (Pam), Danielle, and Greg (Pippa).



This book identifies those young men and their heart-wrenching stories. Best enjoyed with time to yourself, this book will not let you go until you have devoured the last page.

Alex Brennan, B.A. , CD
Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Officer First Battalion
The Royal Newfoundland Regiment

"Forget-me-not: Fallen Boy Soldiers" tells the story of some of these young heroes, who earned the title – **"Better Than the Best"** while they were but boys.

Brigadier General Edward P. Ring (Ret.) Canadian Forces

In his new work, Gary takes a bold step into a little known part of the story of The Regiment as he takes us into the lives of children of Newfoundland who were in various ways encouraged to go to war as child soldiers.

Fred Hawksley, Professor, Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland

DRC Publishing **\$19.95**
709-726-0960

ISBN 1-926689-21-6

