

Second Lieutenant Clement Augustus (Gus) Wilfrid Alcock (Regimental Number 1372*), having no known last resting-place, is commemorated on the bronze beneath the Caribou in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel.

****Officers who were eventually promoted from the ranks may be identified from their Regimental Number. Other officers who were not from the ranks received the King's Commission, or in the case of those in the Newfoundland Regiment, an Imperial Commission, and were not considered as enlisted. These officers thus had no Regimental Number allotted to them.***

And since officers did not enlist, they were not then required to re-enlist 'for the duration', even though, at the beginning, as a private, they had volunteered their services for only a limited time – twelve months.

His occupation previous to military service recorded as that of a *teacher*, Gus Alcock presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* on Harvey Road in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland on April 6, 1915. It was a procedure which was to pronounce him as being...*Fit for Foreign Service.*

He subsequently enlisted – engaged at the private soldier's daily rate of a single dollar plus a ten-cent per diem *Field Allowance* – and apparently attested as well on the following day, April 7.

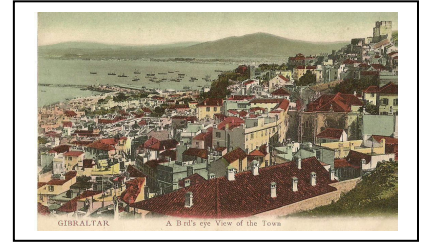
Some two months later, having been promoted to the rank of lance corporal on June 12, and then to that of corporal on June 19, he then embarked for *overseas service* with the officers and two-hundred forty-two *other ranks* of 'F' Company and eighty-five naval recruits in St. John's Harbour onto His Majesty's Transport *Calgarian* on June 20. It was to be a rather prolonged voyage from St. John's to the United Kingdom.



(Right above: The image of 'Calgarian' is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. A modern vessel recently built for service with the Allan Line, she had been requisitioned in September of 1914 to serve with the Royal Navy as an armed merchant cruiser. Having survived most of the conflict, including the Halifax explosion of December, 1917, she was torpedoed and sunk off the Irish coast on March 1, 1918.)

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Apparently the ship took nineteen days to make what was the usual Atlantic crossing of about a week. Not only was *Calgarian* escorting three submarines, but she sailed by way of the Portuguese Azores and then the British possession of Gibraltar – some of the Newfoundlanders even having had the time to cross the straits of the same name to spend a few hours in North Africa.



The vessel was eventually to reach the English west-coast port-city of Liverpool on July 9, the troops to disembark on that same day.

(Right above: *Gibraltar in pre-Great War days: The Spanish mainland is in the background.* – from a vintage postcard)

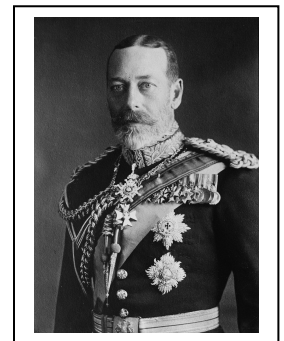
‘F’ Company, once having disembarked in Liverpool, then boarded a train to report to duty with the Newfoundland contingent on July 10. At the time the parent unit was established at *Stobs Camp* in the vicinity of the Scottish town of Hawick and to the south-east of Edinburgh which it had left two months before, on May 11.



(Right above: *The Newfoundland Regiment on parade at Stobs Camp and about to be presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915, and one month before ‘F’ Company’s arrival* – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo)

‘F’ Company’s arrival gave the Regiment the numbers needed to assume the role of a fighting battalion, and also provided the necessary fifty per cent reserve. According to Army regulations, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was now capable to leave on *active service*.

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ – these to form the 1st Battalion - were then sent south from *Stobs Camp* to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot.



Meanwhile, the two junior Companies, the later-arrived ‘E’ and ‘F’, to be accompanied by Corporal Alcock, were ordered posted to Scotland’s west coast, to Ayr, where they were to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion*.

(Right above: *George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India* – photograph from *Bain News Services* via *Wikipedia*)

Following this summer of 1915, the once-Royal Borough of Ayr on Scotland’s west coast was to begin to serve as the overseas base for the 2nd (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment from where – as of November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 - re-enforcement drafts from home were to be despatched to bolster the 1st Battalion’s numbers, at first to the Middle East and then later to the *Western Front*.

(Right: An aerial view of Ayr, likely from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr, where were quartered the 'other ranks', is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough, where were housed the officers, is to the right. – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)



Corporal (later to be Sergeant and then Second Lieutenant) Alcock, was now to remain posted in Scotland for the following nineteen months. The reason for his retention there for so long appears not to have been recorded.

The date of his third promotion, to the rank of sergeant, does not appear among the papers of his personal file. What *is* to be found, however, is a record of his treatment for measles in hospital – the name and date almost illegible but perhaps in January of 1916 - on which paper his rank is shown as that of sergeant.



(Right above: *The High Street in Ayr as shown on a postcard of the time, the imposing Wallace Tower – it stands to this day (2017) - dominating the scene – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs Lillian Tibbo.*

There is also a second paper bearing the name of Sergeant Alcock: The report is dated July 2 of that 1917 and it records him as having been...*absent from Church Parade at 10 a.m...*for which misdemeanour he was *severely reprimanded* by his Commanding Officer.

That last-mentioned episode appears nevertheless not to have impeded his promotion: It was while still stationed at Ayr, on August 8 of 1916, that Sergeant Alcock was granted an Imperial Commission and the accompanying appointment to the rank of second lieutenant, a promotion that was to be retroactive to July 12, some four weeks prior.

An extract of some months later from the records of the *Pay & Record Office* in London, and dated February 22 of 1917, shows that it was on February 4, eighteen days prior, that Second Lieutenant Alcock...*proceeded to B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force)*; but it provides no further information.

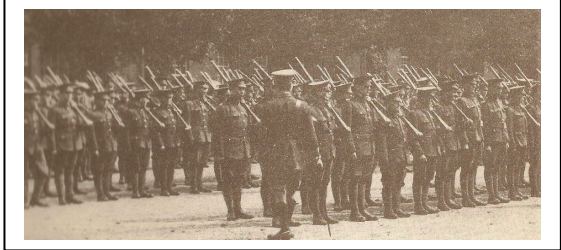
It was then the 1st Battalion War Diarist who thereafter documented that on March 6, while the Newfoundlanders were out of the line for two weeks at Meaulté, that...*Draft arrived. 2/Lt ALCOCK & 31 O.R...*and also...*Band arrived from 2nd Battalion...*

* * * * *

As previously seen, not long after Corporal Alcock's 'F' Company had arrived in Scotland at *Stob's Camp* where the entire Newfoundland contingent had been in training, there was to be a parting of ways: the two junior companies and Corporal Alcock to the Regimental Depot at Ayr while the four senior companies had been ordered to Aldershot.

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Those four senior companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', of the Newfoundland Regiment, having now become the 1st Battalion, had thereupon been attached to the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force and had been despatched to *active service*.



(Right above: *Some of the personnel of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915, prior to leaving for active service – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)*

On August 20, 1915, the Newfoundland unit had embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport on England's south coast, onto the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks. There, a month later – having spent some two weeks billeted in British barracks in the vicinity of the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, the 1st Battalion had landed at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right above: *The image of Megantic, here in her peace-time colours of a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.)*



(Right: *Kangaroo Beach, where the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is to be seen in the distance at the far end of Suvla Bay. The remains of a landing-craft are still clearly visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph taken in 2011)*



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

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



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

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

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

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

**Many of the commanders chosen were second-rate, had been brought out of retirement, and had little idea of how to fight – let alone of how to win. One of the generals at Suvla, apparently, had handed in his resignation during the Campaign and had just gone home.*

November 26 would see the nadir of the Newfoundland Battalion's fortunes at *Gallipoli*; there was to be a freak rain-, snow- and ice-storm strike the *Suvla Bay* area and the subsequent floods had wreaked havoc amongst the forces of both sides. For several days, survival rather than the enemy was to be the priority.



There were to be many casualties on both sides, some of them, surprised by the sudden inundation of their positions, fatalities who had drowned in their trenches – although no Newfoundlanders were to be among that number. Numerous, however, had been those afflicted by trench-foot and by frost-bite.

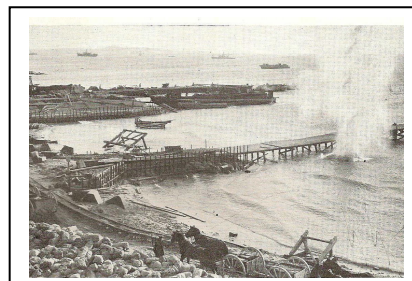
On the night of December 19-20, the British had abandoned the area of *Suvla Bay* – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, to form a part of the rear-guard. Some of the Battalion personnel had been evacuated to the nearby island of *Imbros*, some to *Lemnos*, further away, but in neither case was the respite to be of a long duration; the 1st Battalion would be transferred only two days later to the area of *Cape Helles*, on the western tip of the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right above: *Cape Helles as seen from the Turkish positions on the misnamed Achi Baba, positions which were never breached: The Newfoundland positions were to the right-hand side of the picture. – photograph from 2011*)

The British and the *Anzac* forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was also to serve at *Gallipoli* – were now to be only marking time until a complete withdrawal of the *Peninsula* could be undertaken.

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



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

**Lieutenant Owen Steele of St. John's, Newfoundland, is cited as having been the last soldier of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to step into the final small boat – with General Maude - to sail from the Gallipoli Peninsula.*



(Right above: 'W' Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces in that January of 1916 and by the Newfoundlanders who were to be the last soldiers off the beach: Vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen. – photograph from 2011)

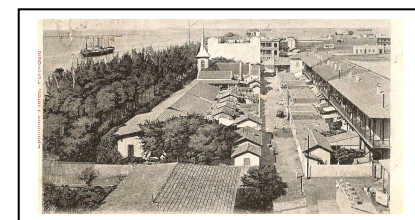
Immediately after the British had evacuated the entire *Gallipoli Peninsula* in January of 1916, the Newfoundland Battalion was to be ordered to the Egyptian port-city of Alexandria, arriving there on the 15th of that month. The Newfoundlanders were then to be immediately transferred southward to the vicinity of Suez, a port at the southern end of the Canal which bears the same name, there to await further orders since, at the time, the subsequent destination of the British 29th Division had yet to be decided*.



**Bulgaria had entered the conflict on the side of the Central Powers, and Salonika was soon to become a theatre of war.*

(Right above: *The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The men of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment were among the last to leave on two occasions, at both Suvla Bay and Cape Helles. – photograph taken from the battleship Cornwallis from Illustration*)

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



(Right above: *Port Tewfiq at the south end of the Suez Canal Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

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

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



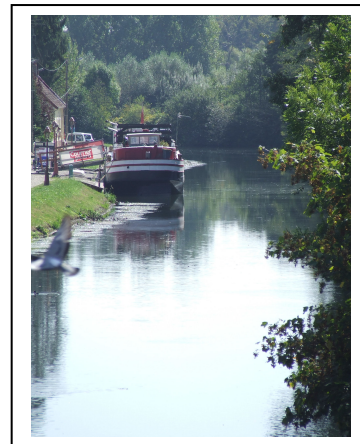
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Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train was to find its way to the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy, a thousand kilometres to the north of Marseilles. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having inexcusably travelled unused in a separate wagon.

Having de-trained at the local station at two o'clock in the morning, the Newfoundlanders were now still to endure the long, dark march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

It is doubtful if many of those tired soldiers were to pay much attention to the slow-moving stream flowing under the bridge over which they had then marched on their way from the station. But some three months later *the Somme* would become a part of their history.

(Right: *A languid River Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy – photograph from 2010*)



On April 13, the 1st Battalion had subsequently marched into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy - where it would be billeted, would receive re-enforcements from Scotland via Rouen and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.

Just days following the Newfoundland Battalion's arrival on the *Western Front*, two of the four Companies – 'A', and 'B' – were to take over several support positions from a British unit* before the entire Newfoundland unit was to then be ordered to move further up for the first time into forward positions on April 22.

**It should be said that the Newfoundland Battalion and two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles who were serving at the time in the 2nd Lincolnshire Regiment Battalion, were then the only units at the Somme from outside the British Isles - true also on the day of the attack on July 1.*

Having then withdrawn, at the end of April after their first tour in the trenches, to the areas of Mailly-Maillet and Louvencourt where they would be based for the next two months, the Newfoundlanders were soon to be preparing – this to include the construction of a light railway in the Louvencourt area - for the now-impending British campaign of that summer. It was to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river, *the Somme*, flowing sedately – as it still does today – through the region on its journey to the sea.



(Right above: *Two views of the re-constructed trench system to be found in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)

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If there is one name and date in Newfoundland history which is etched in the collective once-national memory, it is that of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1 of 1916; and if any numbers are remembered, they are those of the eight-hundred who went *over the top* in the third wave of the attack on that morning, and of the sixty-eight unwounded present at muster some twenty-four hours later*.



(Right above: *Beaumont-Hamel: Looking from the British lines down the hill to Y Ravine Cemetery which today stands atop part of the German front-line defences: The Danger Tree is to the right in the photograph. – photograph taken in 2009)*

(Right: *A view of Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery Number 2 in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)



**Perhaps ironically, the majority of the Battalion's casualties was to be incurred during the advance from the third line of British trenches to the first line from where the attack proper was to be made, and while struggling through British wire laid to protect the British positions from any German attack.*

There are other numbers of course: the fifty-seven thousand British casualties incurred in four hours on that same morning of which nineteen-thousand recorded as having been *killed in action or died of wounds*.

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



(Right above: *Beaumont-Hamel is a commune, not a village. – photographs from 2010 and 2015)*

In fact, Beaumont-Hamel was a commune – it still exists today – at the time comprising two communities: Beaumont, a village on the German side of the lines, and Hamel which was behind those of the British. No-Man's-Land, on which the Newfoundland Memorial Park lies partially today, was on land that separated Beaumont from Hamel.



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

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After the events of the morning of July 1, 1916, such had then been the dire condition of the attacking British forces that it had been feared that a German counter-assault might well annihilate what had managed to survive of the British Expeditionary Force on *the Somme*.

The few remnants of the Newfoundland Battalion – and of the other depleted British units - had thus remained in the trenches perhaps fearing the worst, and at night searching for the wounded and burying the dead. It was to be July 6 before the Newfoundlanders were to be relieved from the forward area and to be ordered withdrawn to Englebelmer.



It had then been a further two days before the unit had marched further again to the rear area and to billets in the village of Mailly-Maillet.

(Right above: *The re-constructed village of Mailly-Maillet – the French Monument aux Morts in the foreground - is twinned with the community of Torbay, St. John's East. – photograph from 2009*)

There on July 11, a draft of one-hundred twenty-seven re-enforcements – a second source cites one-hundred thirty – had reported *to duty*. They had been the first to arrive following the events at Beaumont-Hamel but even with this additional man-power having arrived, the Regimental War Diary records that on the 14th of July, 1916, the 1st Battalion still numbered only...*11 officers and 260 rifles*...after the holocaust of Beaumont-Hamel, just one-quarter of establishment battalion strength.

On July 27-28 of 1916, the 1st Battalion - still under battalion strength at only five-hundred fifty-four strong, even after further re-enforcement – had moved north and entered into the *Kingdom of Belgium* for the first time.

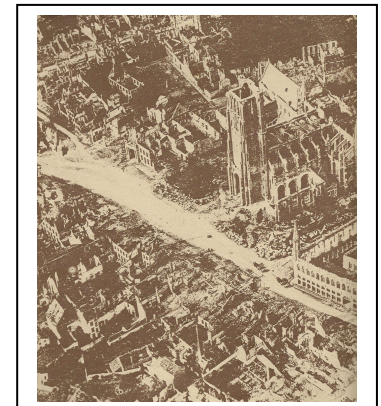
It had been ordered to the *Ypres Salient*, one of the most dangerous pieces of real estate on the entire *Western Front*, there to continue to re-enforce and to re-organize after the ordeal of Beaumont-Hamel.

(Right: *The entrance to 'A' Company's quarters – obviously renovated since that time - in the ramparts of the city of Ypres when it was posted there in 1916 – photograph from 2010*)



The Salient – close to the front lines for almost the entire fifty-two month conflict - was to be relatively quiet during the time of the Newfoundlanders' posting there; yet they nonetheless incurred casualties, a number – fifteen? - of them fatal.

Then on October 8, after having served in Belgium for some ten weeks, the 1st Battalion had been ordered to return south, back into France and back into the area of – and the battle of – *the Somme*.



(Preceding page: *An aerial view of Ypres, taken towards the end of 1916: it is described as the 'Ville morte'. – from Illustration*)



Four days after that return to France, on October 12, 1916, the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment had again been ordered to the offensive; it was at a place called Gueudecourt, the vestiges of a village some dozen or so kilometres to the south-east of Beaumont-Hamel.

The encounter had proved to be another ill-conceived and costly affair – two hundred and thirty-nine casualties all told - for little gain.

(Right above: *This is the ground over which the 1st Battalion advanced and then mostly conceded at Gueudecourt on October 12. Some few managed to reach the area where today stand the copse of trees and the Gueudecourt Caribou, on the far right horizon. – photograph from 2007*)



(Right: *The Caribou at Gueudecourt stands at the furthest point of the Newfoundland Battalion's advance of October 12, 1916. – photograph from 2012*)

The Newfoundland Battalion was not to be directly involved in any further concerted infantry action in the immediate area of Gueudecourt although, on October 18, it would supply two-hundred fifty men to act as stretcher-bearers in an attack undertaken by troops of two British regiments, the Hampshires and the Worcestershires, of the 88th Brigade.

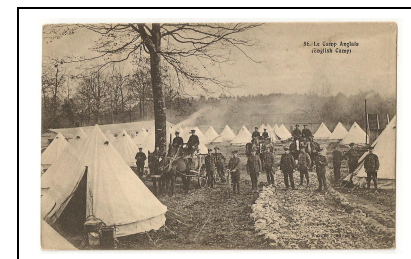
(Right below: *Stretcher-bearers not only shared the dangers of the battle-field with their arms-bearing comrades, but they often spent a longer period of time exposed to those same perils. This photograph was likely taken during First Somme. – from Illustration*)

As has been recorded above, Captain Rendell had returned to report to *duty* with the Newfoundland Battalion four days prior to its employment as bearers of the wounded to the rear.



On October 30, the Newfoundland unit had eventually been retired to rear positions from the Gueudecourt area. It had been serving in front-line and support positions for three weeks less a day.

The Newfoundlanders were now to spend two weeks withdrawn to the area of Ville-sous-Corbie, re-enforcing and reorganizing. It was not to be until November 15 that the 1st Battalion began to wend its way back up to the front lines.

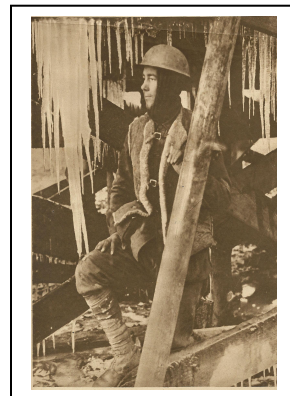


(Right: *A typical British Army Camp during rather inclement winter conditions somewhere on the Continent – from a vintage post-card*)

There it continued its watch in and out of the trenches of *the Somme* – not without casualties – during the late fall and early winter, a period broken only by another several weeks spent in *Corps Reserve* during the Christmas period, encamped well behind the lines and in close proximity to the city of Amiens.

After that welcome six-week Christmas respite spent in *Corps Reserve* far to the rear, the Newfoundlanders were to *officially* return to *active service* on January 23, although they had apparently already returned to the trenches by that date and had incurred their first casualties – and fatality – of 1917.

Those casualties, however, were only some of those everyday thousands whom Douglas Haig casually referred to as *wastage*. The sole infantry activity *directly* involving the Newfoundland unit during that entire period – from Gueudecourt in mid-October, 1916, until Monchy-le-Preux in mid-April of 1917 – was to be the sharp engagement at Sailly-Saillisel at the end of February and the beginning of March, an action which would bring this episode in the Newfoundlanders' War – in the area of *the Somme* - to a close.

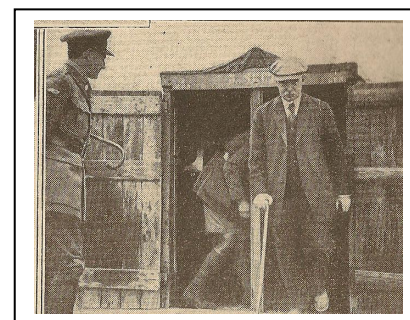


(Right: A soldier of the Lancashire Fusiliers, their unit to be relieved by the Newfoundlanders on March 1, enjoys his cigarette in the cold and ice of the trenches at Sailly-Saillisel during the winter of 1916-1917. – from *Illustration*)

(Right: The fighting during the period of the Battalion's posting to Sailly-Saillisel took place on the far side of the village which was no more than a heap of rubble at the time. - photograph from 2009(?))



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



(Right: The Prime Minister of Newfoundland visiting the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, encamped at Meaulté – from *The War Illustrated*)

On March 29, the Newfoundlanders began to make their way – on foot – from Camps-en-Amienois to the north-east, towards the venerable medieval city of Arras and eventually beyond, the march to finish amid the rubble of the village of Monchy-le-Preux.



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(Preceding page: *The remnants of the Grande Place in Arras in early 1916 after less than two years of war – from Illustration*)

(Right below: *The Canadian National Memorial which has stood atop Vimy Ridge since 1936 – photograph from 2010*)

On April 9 the British Army was to launch an offensive in the area to the north of *the Somme* battlefields; this was to be the so-called *Battle of Arras*, intended to support a major French effort elsewhere. In terms of the daily count of casualties this attack was to be the most expensive operation of the *Great War* for the British, its only positive episode to be the Canadian assault of *Vimy Ridge* on the opening day of the battle, Easter Monday, 1917.



While the British campaign would prove an overall disappointment, the French *Bataille du Chemin des Dames* was to be yet a further disaster.

(Right: *The village of Monchy-le-Preux as seen today from the western – in 1917, the British – side of the community: The Newfoundlanders advanced, out of the ruins of the place, to the east, away from the camera. – photograph from 2013*)



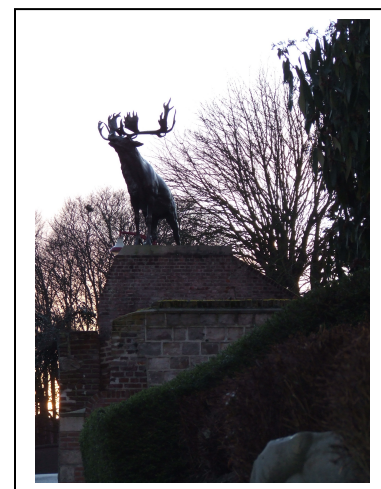
The 1st Battalion was to play its part during the *Battle of Arras*, a role that would begin at the place called Monchy-le-Preux on April 14 and which would finish ten days later, on April 23, perhaps a kilometre distant, at *Les Fosses Farm*. After *Beaumont-Hamel*, the ineptly-planned action at Monchy-le-Preux would prove to be the most costly day of the Newfoundlanders' war, four-hundred eighty-seven casualties all told on April 14 alone*.

**It was also an action in which a DSO, an MC and eight MMs were won by a small group of nine personnel of the Battalion – the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) awarded to the unit's Commanding officer. An MM for the same action was also presented to a private from the Essex Regiment .*

The only child of Mark, fisherman, and Mary Ann Alcock (née *Elms*) of Griquet, and a member of the *Legion of Frontiersmen*, he was at first reported as *missing in action* on April 14, 1917, while commanding Number 14 Platoon of 'D' Company*, in the fighting at Monchy-le-Preux, during the *Battle of Arras*.

Apparently it was to be only weeks later, on May 11, that Second Lieutenant Alcock's file had been amended so as to read *killed in action* – although some of the evidence seems to have been submitted at a later date.

At home, it was the Reverend E. S. Tarrant of St. Anthony who was requested to bear the news to his family.



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(Preceding page: *The Caribou at Monchy-le-Preux stands atop the vestiges of a German strongpoint in the centre of the village. – photograph from 2010*)

The death of Second Lieutenant Alcock was confirmed on a later date by Private Frampton (Number 2880) who had been taken prisoner on that same April 14.

Clement Augustus Wilfrid Alcock had enlisted at the age of twenty-one years: date of birth at Griquet, Newfoundland, September 11, 1896 (from the Newfoundland Birth Register, District of St. Barbe).



****Most of 'D' Company had been surrounded by the enemy, having many been taken prisoner; hope had been held out for a while – in vain - that Second Lieutenant Alcock might have been among them.***

(The photograph of Sergeant Alcock is from the Provincial Archives.)

Second Lieutenant Augustus Alcock was entitled to the British War Medal and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



(continued on the following page)

47 Hawkhill Ave.
Ayr, Scotland
24-1-18

Major Timewell,
Dear Sir,

I received your communication regarding Lt. A. W. Alcock.
Permit me to thank you for your kindness and courtesy in
endeavouring to obtain information for me.

I am,

Yours faithfully
(Mrs.) Susie G. Corbett

Sir – With reference to your enquiry of 14, April, Whilst attacking Lieut. Alcock was in my rear in 16 Platoon, my Platoon was 14, I saw him advancing. Owing (sic) to dust etc. I lost sight of him, after being taken prisoner, I heard that Lt. Alcock had been killed, being shot through the head. Hoping this information will lead to something definite.

**I remain, Sir
Your humble servant,**

A.F. Osmond

Number 1131, Private A. F. Osmond, was in a prisoner-of-war camp at the time of writing.

I saw Lt. Alcock killed on April 14 1917 at Monchy.

2544 Pte. S. Halfyard, was also a prisoner-of-war when he wrote this report.

The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to criceadam@yahoo.ca. Last updated – February 11, 2023.