



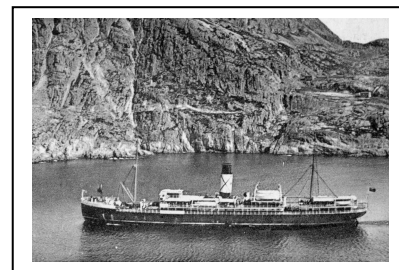
Private Patrick Joseph Brown (Regimental Number 1053) is interred in Earlsfield (Wandsworth) Cemetery – Grave reference: Nfld. 764.

His occupation previous to military service recorded as being that of a *clerk* and earning a monthly thirty-five dollars, Patrick Joseph Brown enlisted – engaged at the private soldier's rate of a single dollar per diem plus a ten-cent *Field Allowance* - at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland on January 8 of 1915.

According to his enlistment papers he did not undergo his medical examination until January 12, four days later. This also was undertaken at the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road in the city. It was a procedure which would pronounce Patrick Brown as...*Fit for Foreign Service*.

Whereas many of the new recruits were to be attested soon after their enlistment or even at the same time, in the case of Patrick Brown it was to be more than one month later again, on the 15th day of February, before he took his oath.

For Private Brown, Number 1053, there was now to be yet another, and last, waiting period of five weeks less two days before he would be summoned to...overseas service. How he occupied himself during that time is not recorded among his papers; he may, of course, have temporarily returned to work, but this is only speculation.



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

Unlike the two previous contingents to have departed Newfoundland (see below) for...overseas service, Private Brown's 'D' Company was not to sail directly to the United Kingdom. On March 20 it, he a soldier of the Number 7 Platoon, embarked onto the Bowring-Brothers' vessel *Stephano* for the short voyage to Halifax, capital city of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, where it was thereupon to board a second vessel, the newly-launched *Orduña* for the trans-Atlantic crossing*.



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

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

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



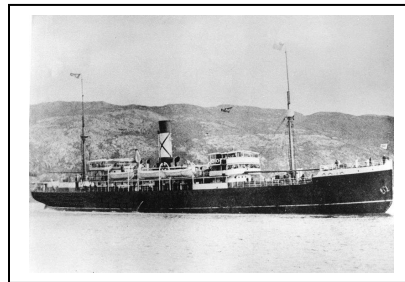
(Right above: *From its vantage point on Castle Hill, the venerable fortress overlooks the city of Edinburgh where in 1915 the Newfoundlanders were to provide the first garrison to be drawn from outside the British Isles. – photograph from 2011)*

* * * * *

Five to six months before that time, in the late summer and early autumn of 1914 there had been a period of training of some five weeks on the shores of *Quidi Vidi Lake* in the east end of St. John's for the newly-formed Newfoundland Regiment's first recruits – these to

become 'A' and 'B' Companies - during which time the authorities had also been preparing for the Regiment's transfer overseas.

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



The ship had sailed for the United Kingdom on the morrow, October 4, 1914, to its rendezvous with the convoy carrying the 1st Canadian Division overseas, off the south coast of the Island.

(Right above: *The image of Florizel at anchor in the harbour at St. John's is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.*)

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



In the United Kingdom this first Newfoundland contingent was to train in three venues during the late autumn of 1914 and then the winter of 1914-1915: firstly in southern England on the Salisbury Plain; then in Scotland at *Fort George* – on the Moray Firth close to Inverness; and lastly at *Edinburgh Castle* – where, as recorded beforehand, it was to provide the first garrison from outside the British Isles.

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

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

* * * * *

As seen in a previous paragraph, for the month of April and the first days of May of 1915, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies, now united, were to furnish the garrison – the first troops from outside the British Isles to do so - of the guardian of Scotland's capital city. Then, during the first week of May, 'E' Company was to report there...*to duty*...from home. Four days later again, on May 11, the Newfoundland contingent was ordered elsewhere.

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

It was to be at *Stobs Camp* that the Newfoundland contingent would eventually receive the re-enforcements from home – 'F' Company which arrived on July 10, 1915 - that would bring its numbers up to that of British Army establishment battalion strength*.

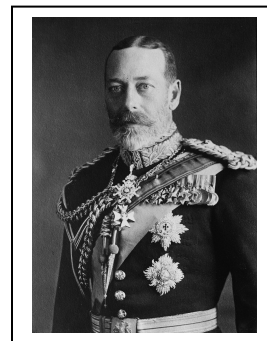
The now-formed 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was thus rendered available to be sent on 'active service'.

(Right: *The Newfoundland Regiment marches past on the training ground at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915. – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



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

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', were then sent south from *Stobs Camp* to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot. This force, now the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, was thereupon attached to the 88th Brigade of the 29th Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.



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

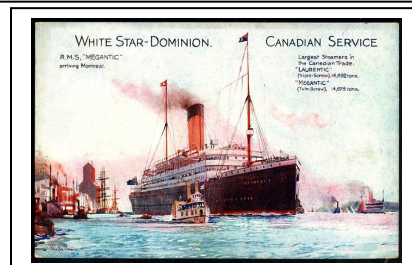
(Right above: *George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India – the photograph is from Bain News Services via the Wikipedia web-site.*)

It was while the Newfoundland Battalion was in training during those weeks at Aldershot, on August 15 that Private Brown would be prevailed upon to enlist for the duration of the conflict.

**At the outset of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist.*



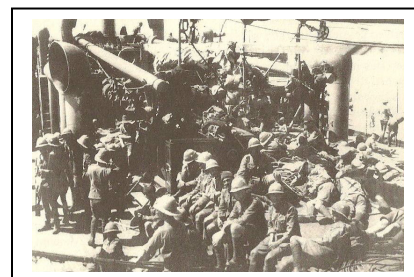
(Right above: *Some of the personnel of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1st Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915, prior to its departure to active service on the Gallipoli Peninsula – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)*



(Right: *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.)*



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



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



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

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

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

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



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

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

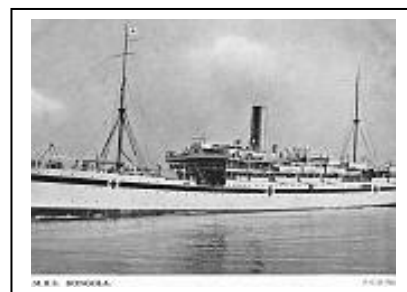
****Many of the commanders chosen were second-rate, had been brought out of retirement, and had little idea of how to fight – let alone of how to win. One of the generals at Suvla, apparently, had handed in his resignation during the Campaign and had just gone home.***

Just three weeks after having set foot on the sand and rock of *Kangaroo Beach*, on October 11 Private Brown was evacuated from *Suvla Bay* on board His Majesty's Hospital Ship *Dongola*. A week later, on the 18th day of the month, he was admitted into the *Nazarieh Schools Hospital* in *Cairo*. He had been diagnosed as suffering from dysentery.



At the same time a fistula was giving him problems and so was operated upon.

(Right above: *The image of HMHS Dongola clad in her war-time hospital garb is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. Launched in 1905 for the P & O Steam Navigation Company she was already carrying troops when war broke out in August of 1915.*



The vessel was converted for use as a hospital ship in 1915, having accommodation for just over five-hundred patients. Dongola was to serve at the Dardanelles (Gallipoli) in 1915 and during the East Africa Campaign in 1917, in-between times acting as a troop-transport. She survived the conflict to be used as a refugee ship in 1919 before being re-fitted for commercial use.)

After some one-hundred nine days of treatment followed by convalescence, on January 28 of the New Year, 1916, Private Brown was once more placed on board a hospital ship. On this occasion it was HMHS *Nevasa* and he was taking passage from *Egypt* back to the *United Kingdom*.



(Right above: *The image of HMHS 'Nevasa' clad in her war-time hospital-ship garb, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. A new ship – her maiden voyage for the British India Steam Navigation Company in 1913 – she was requisitioned in January, 1915, as a hospital ship fitted for six-hundred sixty patients. In 1918 she became a troop transport, a role she was again to play twenty years later throughout the conflict of 1939 to 1945.)*

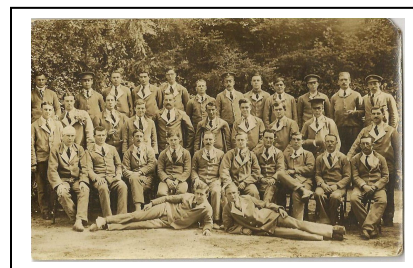
Twelve days after sailing from *Egypt*, on February 9 Private Brown was admitted into the 3rd *London General Hospital* in the *Borough of Wandsworth* where treatment commenced to counter the *pulmonary tuberculosis* that had by then been diagnosed – but not deemed to be serious. A medical board convened on March 1, however, declared Private Brown on March 3, as... *Permanently unfit for War Service, Home Service & Light Duty.*

(continued)

(Right: *The main building of what was to become the 3rd London General Hospital during the Great War had originally been opened, on July 1st of 1859, as a home for the orphaned daughters of British soldiers, sailors and marines. – photograph from 2010*)



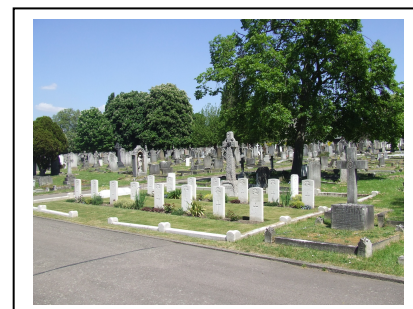
(Right below: *A party of Newfoundland patients, dressed in hospital uniform but otherwise unfortunately unidentified, is seen here convalescing in the grounds of the 3rd London General Hospital at Wandsworth – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



The son of William Brown and Elizabeth Brown* of St. John's, and nephew of Mrs. Mary (May) Brown (husband Patrick) of 239, Hamilton Avenue – to whom he had allotted a daily allowance of fifty cents from his pay, he was also brother to Hannah of Bannerman Street, and to John Joseph.

**Possibly both deceased by the time of enlistment as his sister Hannah was named by Private Brown as his next of kin.*

Private Brown was reported as having passed away in Pinewood Sanatorium, Wokingham, in the County of Berkshire, to where he had been transferred on May 27. He died of sickness on July 18, 1916 and was buried with full military honours on the afternoon of July 22.



Patrick Joseph Brown* had enlisted at the declared age of nineteen years.

**It seems possible, even likely, that Patrick Joseph Brown may have been Patrick Francis Brown, born September 15, 1895, to William Brown (tanner) and Elizabeth Brown of Water Street West (from the Newfoundland Birth Register). Both William and his brother Patrick of 239 Hamilton Avenue worked for the McKeen Tannery.*

(Right above: *the Newfoundland Plot at Magdelene Road Cemetery, Wandsworth*)

Private Patrick Joseph Brown was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



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 7, 2023.