

**Private Malcolm Bradbury (Regimental Number 1188) lies in Bay Roberts (Old) United Church Cemetery.**

**His occupation previous to his military service recorded as that of a *telegraph operator* working for a monthly sixty dollars – the job of *train brakeman* is also cited - Malcolm Bradbury presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland on March 6 of 1915. It was a procedure which would pronounce him as...*fit for Foreign Service*.**

**Two days later, on March 8, he returned to the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road to enlist – engaged at the private soldier's rate of a single dollar per diem, plus a daily ten-cent *Field Allowance*.**

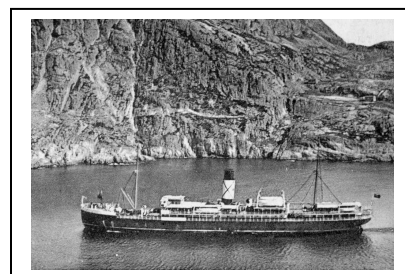
**(continued)**

Eight days again after his enlistment, on March 16 he would undertake his attestation, to swear his *Oath of Allegiance*, the concluding official formality. At that moment Malcolm Bradbury thereupon became...*a soldier of the King*.

There now passed a lengthy period of five weeks and two days before, on April 22, 1915, Private – and Signaller - Bradbury, Number 1188, embarked in the harbour of St. John’s for...*overseas service...with the two-hundred forty-nine officers and...other ranks...of ‘E’ Company* onto the Bowring Brothers’ vessel *Stephano* en route for Halifax.

At the time of his enlistment it appears from his papers that Malcolm Bradbury was boarding for an indefinite period of time on George Street in St. John’s. There appear to be no details of this, nor of how or where he may have spent the following intervening period before taking ship for...*overseas* – he may have returned home to Bay Roberts, perhaps even to work – but this is mere speculation.

Two days later, on April 24 at eleven-thirty in the evening, the detachment began its trans-Atlantic passage on board the trans-Atlantic liner *SS Missanabie* from Nova Scotia to Liverpool. The vessel arrived in that English west-coast port-city on May 2 or 3 – the two dates are recorded although the second may well have been the date of disembarkation.



The Newfoundlanders on this occasion had sailed from Halifax in the company of the Canadian Army Service Corps *Railway Supply Depot*.

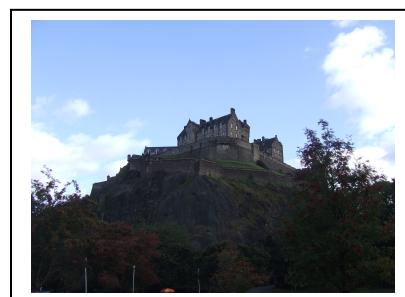
*(Right above: The image of ‘Stephano’ passing through the Narrows of St. John’s Harbour is shown by courtesy of the Provincial Archives.)*

*(Right: The image of ‘Missanabie’ is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries website. The vessel was of the Canadian Pacific Line and, although transporting troops during the Great War, did so as part of her commercial services which continued during the conflict. On September 9, 1918, she was torpedoed and sunk off the south coast of Ireland with the loss of forty-five lives.)*



From Liverpool the contingent travelled northwards by train to the Scottish capital, Edinburgh where, on May 4, ‘E’ Company joined ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ Companies which had already taken up station as the garrison at the historic Castle, the first troops from outside the British Isles ever to do so.

*(Right: The venerable bastion of Edinburgh Castle dominates the Scottish capital from its hill in the centre of the city. – photograph from 2011)*

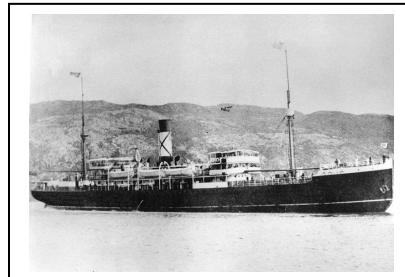


Private Bradbury’s ‘E’ Company, however, was to have but a few days to savour the charms of the Scottish capital.

\* \* \* \* \*

Some seven months before that May 4, in the late summer and early autumn of 1914 there had been a period of training of 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.



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

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



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

Once having disembarked 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 of 1915, 'C' Company – the first re-enforcements for the original contingent\* - would arrive directly – through Liverpool of course - from Newfoundland. On the final day of the month of March it had been the turn of 'D' Company to arrive – they via Halifax as well as Liverpool – to report...*to duty...*at Edinburgh.

*\*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.*

\* \* \* \* \*

Seven days after the arrival of Private Bradbury's 'E' Company in the Scottish capital, on May 11 the entire Newfoundland contingent was ordered elsewhere.

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

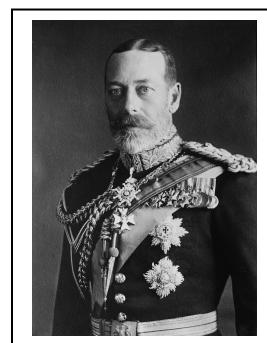
It was to be at *Stobs Camp* that the Newfoundland contingent would eventually receive the re-enforcements from home – ‘F’ Company which arrived on July 10, 1915 - that would bring its numbers up to that of British Army establishment battalion strength\*. On that date the newly-formed 1<sup>st</sup>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

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



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

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



(Right: *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.*)

Meanwhile the two junior Companies, ‘E’ – as seen, the 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 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion.

Private Bradbury, however, although having left Newfoundland as a soldier of ‘E’ Company, was not to be posted to the Regimental Depot but to southern England.

When he had been apprised of this change in plans seems not to be recorded – nor why he was selected - but Private Bradbury was one of the few from ‘E’ Company who were to swell the ranks of the units posted to *Aldershot* - thus he became a soldier of ‘A’ Company. And it was during the period while he was at *Camp Aldershot*, and as was the case with the great majority of the Newfoundland troops there, that Private Bradbury was prevailed upon to re-enlist...*for the duration of the war*. This he did on August 15\*.

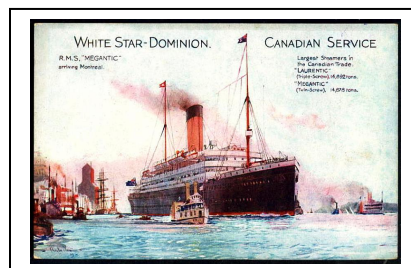
*\*At the outset of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist. Later recruits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



(continued)

(Preceding page: *Some of the personnel of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 Bradbury and his 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport onto the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks. 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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to land at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



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



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



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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

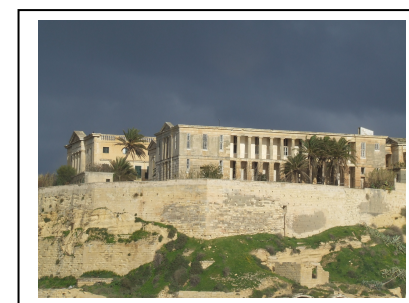


**November 26 of 1915 had seen perhaps the nadir of the Newfoundland Battalion's fortunes at Gallipoli; there was to be a freak rain-, snow- and ice-storm strike the *Suvla Bay* area and the subsequent floods had wreaked havoc amongst the forces of both sides. For several days, survival rather than the 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.**

**\* \* \* \* \***

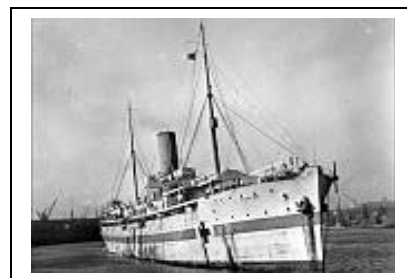
**On December 9 Private Bradbury was admitted into the 54<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station established at *Suvla Bay* suffering from a severe case of the aforementioned trench-foot and frost-bite. From there on the following day he was evacuated on board His Majesty's Hospital Ship *Panama* to the British-held island of Malta where he was admitted on December 14 for further treatment into St. Paul's Hospital.**



**(continued)**

(Preceding page: *Numerous former British military medical establishments today stand disused and abandoned on the island of Malta, independent since 1964. – photograph from 2011*)

Apparently there was more to worry about than just frostbite: On February 20 of the following year, 1916, it was reportedly once again *HMHS Panama* onto which Private Bradbury embarked for the nine-day passage back to the United Kingdom. There, on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the month, he was immediately transferred to and admitted into the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital in the Borough of Wandsworth, by now having been now diagnosed as having contracted dysentery.



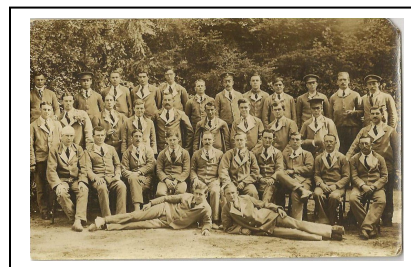
(Right above: *The image of HMHS ‘Panama’ clad in her war-time hospital-ship garb is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. The vessel was to serve in that capacity from July of 1915 until November of 1919 and could accommodate just fewer than five-hundred patients. Having survived one war, she was also to serve throughout the next, employed in much the same way – as a floating hospital. ‘Panama’ was scrapped in 1948.*)

(Right below: *The main building of what was to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital during the Great War had originally been opened, on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 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 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital at Wandsworth – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*



Upon discharge from hospital and after a subsequent period spent in the Weybridge Convalescent Hospital, Private Bradbury was granted the customary ten-day furlough granted to military personnel upon release from medical care in the United Kingdom – on this instance from April 19 until April 28 - and then was immediately posted to ‘E’ Company at the Regimental Depot, Ayr, where he apparently did not arrive until May 2. Where he had spent those ten days of leave appears not to be recorded: perhaps in or close to London as his forwarding address at the time was cited as the *Newfoundland Pay & Records Office* at 58 Victoria Street.



At the end of the summer of 1915, the once-Royal Borough of Ayr on Scotland’s west coast had begun to serve as the overseas base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (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 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion’s numbers, at first to the Middle East and then later to the *Western Front*.

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(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)



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



It was to be at Ayr that Private Bradbury would remain posted for the following two months until such time as the authorities decided what his future with the Newfoundland Regiment would be. The decision was that there was to be *no* future.

Private Bradbury was very ill.

By this time it must have been becoming obvious that Private Bradbury was unfit for...overseas service...as he had been diagnosed as stricken with tuberculosis. It would be decided to discharge him back to Newfoundland: one document has him travelling on the SS *Corsican*; a second source has the *Scandinavian*. The journey home – via Québec – apparently lasted from July 20 until August 5 and was likely on another vessel.



In fact, if he was to leave the United Kingdom on July 20 and to take passage to Québec, the only ship to match those criteria was *neither* of the above: having embarked in London, he would have taken passage on board *Corinthian*.

(Right above: '*Corinthian*', like the also mentioned '*Corsican*' and '*Sicilian*', was a vessel of the Allan Line. Having been a ship of the flotilla which transported the first Canadian units overseas in October of 1914, she reverted again to commercial service for the remainder of the War, being transferred to Canadian Pacific colours in 1917 when that company purchased the Allan Line. In her very first post-War journey she ran aground in the Bay of Fundy – although without loss of life – and eventually broke up in the winter storms.)

Still attached to the Newfoundland Regiment after his arrival back home, it was not until September 12 that Private Bradbury was definitively released from duty. His official discharge reads partly thus: *He is discharged in consequence of being no longer physically fit for war service after serving 1 year 189 days with the colours.*

The son of Joshua Bradbury, fisherman, and of Rachel Bradbury (née *Parsons*)\* – to whom he had allotted a daily allowance of sixty cents from his pay - of Mercer's Cove, Bay Roberts, he was also brother to Pearl, teacher in Bay Roberts; Ruby; William-Stanley, carpenter; Emma-Juanita; Robert-Parsons; and to James.

*\*The couple had married on December 19, 1880.*



Malcolm Bradbury passed away, a victim of spinal tuberculosis, on February 17-18, 1918.

Malcolm Bradbury had enlisted at a *declared* twenty-two years of age: date of birth in Bay Roberts, Newfoundland, December 9, 1893.

*In 1923, the Department of Militia decided to consider Private Bradbury's grave as a War Grave if his family members so desired. With their collective consent, and with the help of the Reverend Samuel Baggs, a Commonwealth tombstone today commemorates his sacrifice.*

Private Malcolm Bradbury was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to [criceadam@yahoo.ca](mailto:criceadam@yahoo.ca). Last updated – January 30, 2023.

