



Private Charles Burton (Regimental Number 5966) lies in Durrell United Church Cemetery in the District of Twillingate.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Charles Burton presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on August 10, 1918. It was a procedure which would find him...*Fit for Foreign Service.***

(continued)

****The building was to serve as the Regimental Headquarters in Newfoundland for the duration of the conflict.***

It was to be on the day of that medical assessment, August 10, and at the same venue, that Charles Burton was now to be enlisted. He was engaged...***for the duration of the war****...at the daily private soldier's rate of a single dollar to which was to be appended a ten-cent per diem Field Allowance.

****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 – as of or about May of 1916 - signed on for the 'Duration' at the time of their original enlistment.***

Only a further few hours were then to go by before there came to pass, while still at the CLB Armoury on Harvey Road, the final formality of his enlistment: attestation. On that same tenth day of that August* he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Charles Burton became...***a soldier of the King.***

****It had been two months prior to this that the Newfoundland Military Service Act (conscription had come into effect. From May 11 through to the end of the Great War, the Department of Militia was to call a total of 1,470 men into active service. No evidence found among his documents suggests that Charles Burton was or was not one of those to be conscripted.***

Many of the recruits during this period are recorded as having been granted several days of a final furlough before departure for ***overseas service.*** Private Burton, Number 5966, was to be one of those to receive these several days of leave, his records showing that following some initial training he was granted home leave to the Notre Dame Bay community of Durrell's Arm from September 8 to 17 before then returning to St. John's and accordingly reporting...***to duty...***with the 3rd Battalion, but not, however, until the 19th day of the month – no reason appears for this delay among his papers and he was apparently to suffer no consequences because of it.

Following his enlistment and again upon his return from the aforementioned leave, it is likely that Private Burton, Number 5966, was ordered to report...***to duty...***and thereupon to be quartered in the temporary barracks apparently established since 1915 in the St. John's curling rink and the Prince's Skating Rink, both in the eastern end of the city.

(Right: This photograph of the Prince's Rink in St. John's with military personnel, apparently attired in uniforms of Great War vintage, on parade is from the Ice Hockey Wiki web-site. There appears to be no further information a propos.)



During this period while awaiting transport for *overseas service*, several of these latest recruits were to be assigned to tasks – usually guard duty – at various sites around the Island. Thus on October 2, Private Burton was in his turn sent to the St. John's Dockyard on...*special duty*. Presumably having been over-exposed to the elements, only days later, on October 5, he was admitted into the Military Hospital for Infectious Diseases in St. John's.

There diagnosed as suffering from bronchial pneumonia, on October 11 he was reported as being...*very dangerously ill*.

The son of Levi Burton, fisherman, and of Harriet Burton (née *Mitchell**) – to whom he had allotted a daily sixty cents from his pay – of Durrell's Arm (today *Durrell*), Twillingate, he was also brother to Flossie (named with his father as his next-of-kin), to Maud, Caroline, Lydia, Elizabeth(?), Cloie (*Chloe*?), Harriet, Beatrice, Theresa and to Pierce.

**The couple was married on November 13 of 1888.*

Private Burton was reported as having...*died of sickness...of pneumonia...*– in the above-named hospital on October 12, 1918.

His remains embalmed and placed in a coffin by Mr. J. C. Oke, undertaker, the funeral cortege of Private Burton was escorted on the morning of the following day to the railway station in St. John's before being taken onto the daily express. The train thereupon departed on the first stage of his journey home.

Charles Burton had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty-three years: date of birth in Durrell's Arm, Newfoundland, July 11, 1893 (from the Newfoundland Birth Register).

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