



Sergeant Francis Joseph Vaughan (Regimental Number 481) is buried alongside his brother in Belvedere Roman Catholic Cemetery in the city of St. John’s, Newfoundland.

His occupations prior to military service cited as those of *tanner* and *furrier* (unemployed at the time of his enlistment) – with the *Sudbury Manufacturing Company*? – and earning the weekly sum of ten dollars, Francis (*Frank*) Joseph Vaughan presented himself at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* on Harvey Road in St. John’s, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on September 8 of 1914 – five weeks after the *Declaration of War on August 4* – for a medical examination. It was an exercise which was to pronounce him as...*Fit for Foreign Service*.

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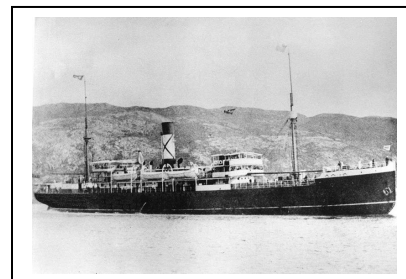
Come the morrow on September 9, Frank Vaughan returned to the *C.L.B. Armoury*, on this second occasion for enlistment, whereupon he was engaged at the private soldier's daily rate of a single dollar plus a ten-cent per diem *Field Allowance*. A recruit of the First Draft, he was likely now ordered to the tented area by that time established on the shores of *Quidi Vidi Lake* in the East End of St. John's where a four-five week course of training was already under way.

The regimental authorities were *also* busy by now, preparing for the transport of this, the first body of volunteers, to *overseas* - and later to *active* - service.

At the beginning of the month of October a large number of the new recruits underwent attestation; Private Vaughan was one of that number, taking his oath of allegiance on the first day of October.

Two days later, after the Newfoundland contingent – it was not as yet a battalion – of 'A' and 'B' Companies had paraded through the city, it embarked onto the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* which was awaiting in St. John's Harbour.

Private Vaughan and his comrades-in-arms of the *First Five Hundred* – also to be known to history as the *Blue Puttees* – were now to sit on board ship for the best part of a day as it was not to be until the morrow that *Florizel* would sail to the south coast of the Island and to its rendezvous with the convoy carrying the Canadian Division to the United Kingdom.



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

(Right below: *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 the unit was to provide the first garrison from outside the British Isles.



(Right below: *The venerable Edinburgh Castle dominates the city from its position on the summit of Castle Hill. – photograph from 2011*)

Some three months later, on May 11, and some seven weeks into spring – although in Scotland there was apparently still snow - the entire Newfoundland unit – by now 'A' and 'B' Companies re-enforced by 'C', 'D', and 'E' - was ordered moved from the Scottish capital 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 received 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 ready to be ordered on ‘active service’.

**The number was about fifteen hundred, sufficient to provide four ‘fighting’ companies, two re-enforcement companies and a headquarters staff.*

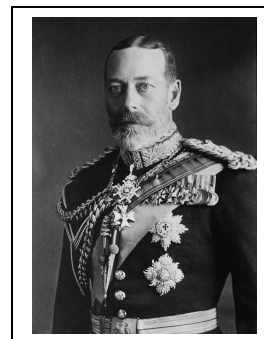
(Right: *The Newfoundland Regiment marches past on the training ground at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915. – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’ – Private Vaughan among their ranks - 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 designated as 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, the later-arrived ‘E’ and the aforementioned last-arrived ‘F’, were ordered transferred to Scotland’s west coast, to Ayr, there to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.



(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.*)

While most of the personnel of the four senior companies moved south to Aldershot and from there to the Middle East, Private Vaughan was one of those transferred instead from *Stobs Camp* to the newly created Regimental Depot, there to serve with ‘F’ Company. He was to be stationed at Ayr for the best part of the next two years.

At the end of 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*.



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(Preceding page: *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: *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.

(Right below: *the new race-course at Ayr - opened in 1907 – where the men of the Regiment were sometimes billeted and where they replaced some of the turf with a vegetable garden* – photo from 2012)

Private Vaughan was promoted on three occasions during his posting to Ayr: to the rank of lance-corporal on September 18, 1915, and to that of corporal on October 12 of the following year, 1916, before then to receive his third stripe on the 29th of the following November. His duties at Ayr revolved around the kitchen, and when he left that posting for a six-month furlough, his orders were to later return to Ayr to duties as Master Cook.



On June 15 of 1917, Sergeant Vaughan departed from the United Kingdom at Liverpool, embarking onto His Majesty's Transport *Missanabie* en route to Newfoundland* – ostensibly on a six-month furlough**. He travelled via Québec and did not set foot on home shores until July 2, seventeen days after having left the United Kingdom. On the day after his arrival in St. John's it was recommended that he be discharged as being *medically unfit*.



**'Missanabie' sailed from Liverpool directly to Quebec City where the vessel docked on June 26. From there Sergeant Vaughan returned to St. John's by train and by ferry.*

***A late diagnosis, concluded only three days prior to his departure from Ayr, had revealed that Sergeant Vaughan was suffering from bronchitis, asthma and a fatty heart – he had also gained ninety pounds in weight since the time of his enlistment. It was thus that he had been recommended to be posted to Headquarters in St. John's and that a previous order to return to Scotland had subsequently been countermanded.*

However, some nine months after that discharge, on May 8, 1918, Sergeant Vaughan was recalled to service and was attached to Headquarters in St. John's to be posted temporarily as cook at the *Military Infectious Disease Hospital*, there to train new staff.

A bare two weeks later he passed away.

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The son of Henry Herbert Vaughan, an employee of the *Nfld. Boot & Shoe Manufacturing Co.*, and of Ellen Vaughan (née *Dwyer*) of Leslie Street (of 40, Brine Street as of 1920) in St. John's, he was also husband to Mary Lewis Vaughan (née *Lewis*), to whom he had allotted a daily ninety cents from his pay and whom he had married on April 14, 1912. They were the parents of Charles-Henry and Mary, two-and-a-half years and eleven months old respectively at the time of their father's enlistment. The family resided on Waterford Bridge Road – she by 1919 had moved to 275 ½ Water Street before then Brine Street - and signed her name *Mary Costello*.



Sergeant Vaughan had been admitted to the General Hospital – date uncertain - where he *died of sickness* - of heart failure - on May 22, 1918.

Frank Vaughan had enlisted at the *declared* age of thirty-one years – date of birth in St. John's, Newfoundland, March 25, 1883.

He was apparently from a family of mostly brothers, two of whom also died in service: Oscar Augustus (#337), lies near Sergeant Vaughan in Belvedere Cemetery, having died of tuberculosis at Jensen Camp; Joseph Patrick (#800) was reported as missing in action at Monchy-le-Preux and later presumed dead, having no known grave (for the war-time biographies of both, see elsewhere in these files); Herbert (#2742) survived the conflict; Albert-Edward, Charles, George, Henry, Michael-Leo and a single sister, Pauline, were his other siblings.



(Right above: *The memorial to Sergeant Vaughan in Belvedere Cemetery was erected by his wife, Mary. – photograph from 2010*)

(*The photograph of Sergeant(?) Vaughan is from the Provincial Archives.*)

Sergeant Francis Joseph Vaughan was entitled to the British War Medal for his overseas service.



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 8, 2023.