



Private Levi Bragg Williams (Regimental Number 3328) lies in Maplewood Cemetery, Windsor, Nova Scotia: Grave reference, S 3.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman earning an annual four-hundred dollars, Levi Bragg Williams was a volunteer of the Twelfth Recruitment Draft. He presented himself for medical examination on December 12 of 1916 at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland. It was a procedure which was to pronounce him as...*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, December 12, and at the same venue, that Levi Bragg Williams would enlist. He was thus 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 some few hours were now to follow before there then came to pass, while still at the CLB Armoury on Harvey Road, the final formality of his enlistment: attestation. On that same twelfth day of the month of December of 1916 he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Levi Bragg Williams became...a soldier of the King.

Private Williams, Number 3328, would not now sail to the United Kingdom until a lengthy span of seven weeks plus a day had then elapsed. How he was to spend this prolonged interval after his attestation appears not to have been documented. It may be that he was to return temporarily to work and was perhaps to spend time at his family home in the community of Pouch Cove in the District of St. John's East but, of course, this conclusion is a little bit speculative and he may well have chosen – or *been* chosen - to remain in barracks in St. John's, even though there was apparently little in the way of military training to be undertaken*.

****A number of the recruits, those whose home was not in St. John's or close to the capital city, or those who had no friends or family to offer them board and lodging, were to be quartered in the curling rink in the area of Fort William in St. John's, a building which was at the time to serve as barracks.***

Those several aforementioned weeks having passed, Private Williams was one of the approximately three-hundred twenty...all ranks...to leave St. John's on January 31 of 1917 for overseas service on the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel*. The vessel was on its commercial schedule and bound for Halifax from where the detachment had been ordered to take ship to the United Kingdom on board *Saxonia*.

However, preparations for this crossing had gone awry and thus, immediately upon arrival in Nova Scotia, Private Williams and his contingent were forwarded to accommodation – apparently cramped - in the town of Windsor where the Newfoundlanders were soon to be catching measles, influenza and then the mumps. The detachment was ordered to remain in Windsor and to be quarantined.

A week after the draft had made its way to Windsor, on February 12 Private Williams reported sick, complaining of pains and a cough. On the following day, Private Williams having by then been hospitalized, the same symptoms were still persistent.

On February 14 he was taken with seizures and lapsed into unconsciousness. It was at that point that he was to be diagnosed as suffering from meningitis – later amended to meningoencephalitis – whereupon it was deemed that there existed no hope of his recovery. To these problems were later added: splenitis; edema of the right lung; acute bronchitis; and influenza.

The son of John Williams, fisherman, and of Hannah Williams (née *Bragg**) – to whom he had allocated a daily sixty cents from his pay - of Pouch Cove, he was also brother to Ester-Virtue, Charles, Martha, William, Grace-Marion, Joshua, Agnes, Frederick, John-Thomas and Nathaniel.

**The couple had married in the community of Pouch Cove on December 10 of 1880.*

Private Williams was reported as having...*died of sickness*...in the Military Hospital at Windsor on February 15, 1917, at one o'clock in the afternoon.

He was buried in Halifax on February 19 with full military honours by Archdeacon Martell.



Levi Bragg Williams had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty years and six months: date of birth in Pouch Cove, Newfoundland, May 10, 1896 (from the Newfoundland Birth Register)

(Right above: *The sacrifice of Private Williams is honoured on the central stele of the Pouch Cove War Memorial.* – photograph from 2010)

Private Levi Bragg Williams was entitled to the British War Medal in recognition of 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 1, 2023.