



Trinity Historical Society

Newsletter, Issue 5

July 1, 2021

R. Coope, J. Morris, Eds.

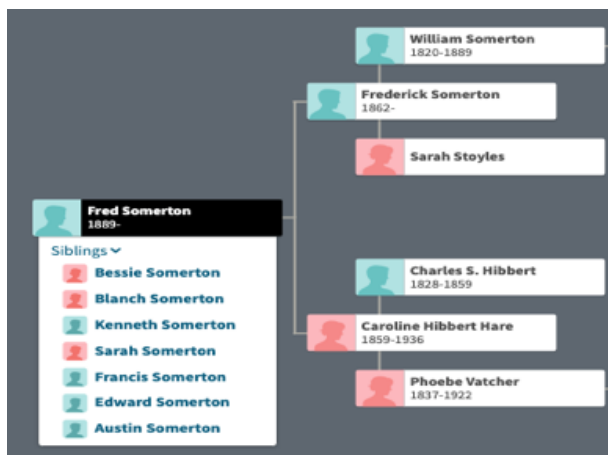
On July 1st, 1916 eight hundred and one Newfoundlanders rose from their trenches at Beaumont Hamel and headed into no man's land. In less than 30 minutes the regiment had suffered the highest casualties of any regiment in WW I. Only 68 soldiers answered roll call the following morning. July 1st became Memorial Day in Newfoundland in 1917 and official remembrance ceremonies are held every year. Many Newfoundlanders still fly the Newfoundland flag at half-mast until 12 noon to commemorate this tragic event in our history.

None of the 15 young men who lost their lives in WW I and are memorialized on the Trinity War Monument died at Beaumont Hamel. However, a young man from Trinity lost his life at Gallipoli where the Newfoundland Regiment saw its first action and suffered its first casualties. His name was Frederick Charles Somerton.

If you have more information, or wish to do more research, please contact the Trinity Historical Society at tci@nf.sympatico.ca or call 709-464-3599 or mail us at PO Box 8, Trinity, NL AOC 2S0. You can also visit our website at www.trinityhistoricalsociety.com



Frederick Somerton





Frederick Somerton was one of four sons of Frederick J. Somerton, magistrate at Trinity, and Caroline Hibbert to enlist in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment during WW I. Fred was born at Burgeo on March 31, 1888 and moved to Trinity with his family. He was a teacher when he enlisted on March 29, 1915. He arrived in England on board the S.S. Stephano on April 22 and on August 31 Fred arrived in Cairo, Egypt before embarking for Gallipoli on September 13. On the night of September 19-20, 1915 Fred disembarked with the Regiment at Suvla Bay.

Fred received a bullet wound to the head on November 20, 1915 which fractured his skull. He was evacuated to the hospital ship Guildford Castle. After succumbing to his injury on November 25 he was buried at sea.

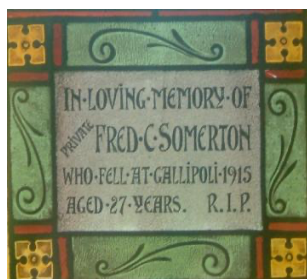
Upon enlisting Fred had listed his mother Caroline as next of kin and on December 4, 1915 she received the following telegram from the Colonial Secretary.

Dated December 4, 1915.
To Mrs. Caroline Somerton,
 Trinity.

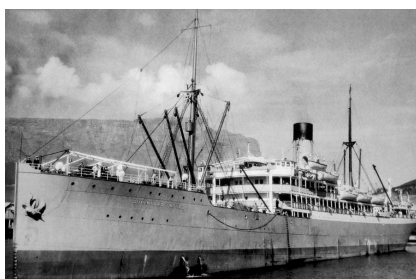
Regret to inform you that Record Office of First
Newfoundland Regiment, London, today reports that No.
1342, Private Frederick Charles Somerton, died on board
GUILDFORD CASTLE November twentyfifth from gunshot wound in
head, causing fracture of skull and was buried at sea.

J.R. BENNETT,
Colonial Secretary.

Fred is remembered on the Beaumont Hamel Memorial, among the 820 soldiers, sailors, and merchant seamen from Newfoundland who lost their lives in WW I and have no known graves. A memorial headstone was erected to him in the new St. Paul's Cemetery by his parents and a memorial window in the Mortuary Chapel commemorates his service.



Memorial window



Guildford Castle



Headstone