

Glorious Tragedy: Newfoundland's Cultural Memory of the Attack at Beaumont Hamel, 1916-1925

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Volume 21, Number 1, Spring 2006

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/nflds21_1art01

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Publisher(s)

Faculty of Arts, Memorial University

ISSN

0823-1737 (print)

1715-1430 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this article

Harding, R. J. (2006). Glorious Tragedy: Newfoundland's Cultural Memory of the Attack at Beaumont Hamel, 1916-1925. *Newfoundland Studies*, 21(1), 3–40.

Glorious Tragedy: Newfoundland's Cultural Memory of the Attack at Beaumont Hamel, 1916-1925

ROBERT J. HARDING

THE FIRST OF JULY is a day of dual significance for Newfoundlanders. As Canada Day, it is a celebration of the dominion's birth and development since 1867. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the day is also commemorated as the anniversary of the Newfoundland Regiment's costliest engagement during World War I. For those who observe it, Memorial Day is a sombre occasion which recalls this war as a tragedy for Newfoundland, symbolized by the Regiment's slaughter at Beaumont Hamel, France, on 1 July 1916.

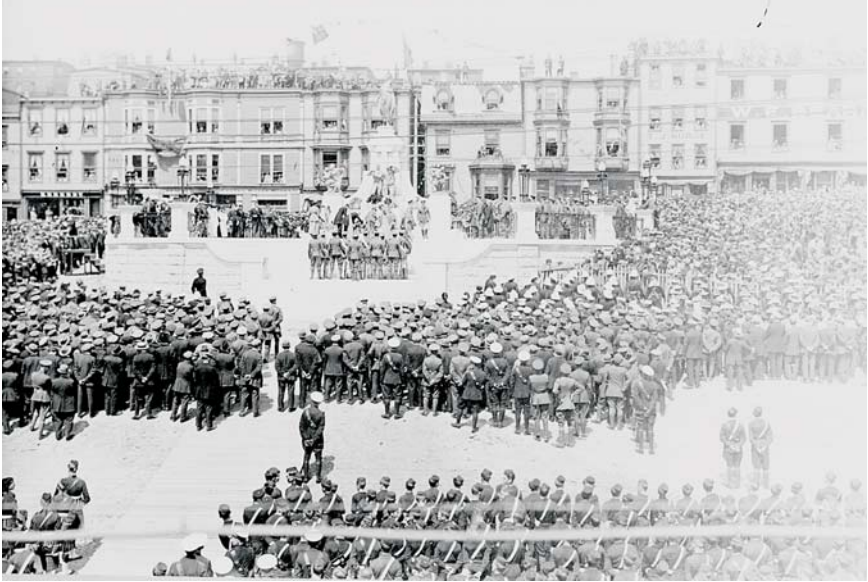
The attack at Beaumont Hamel was depicted differently in the years immediately following the war. Newfoundland was then a dominion, Canada was an imperial sister, and politicians, clergymen, and newspaper editors offered Newfoundlanders a cultural memory of the conflict that was built upon a triumphant image of Beaumont Hamel. Newfoundland's war myth exhibited selectively romantic tendencies similar to those first noted by Paul Fussell in *The Great War and Modern Memory*.¹ Jonathan Vance has since observed that Canadians also developed a cultural memory which "gave short shrift to the failures and disappointments of the war."² Numerous scholars have identified cultural memory as a dynamic social mechanism used by a society to remember an experience common to all its members, and to aid that society in defining and justifying itself.³ Beaumont Hamel served as such a mechanism between 1916 and 1925. By constructing a triumphant memory based upon selectivity, optimism, and conjured romanticism, local mythmakers hoped to offer grieving and bereaved Newfoundlanders an inspiring and noble message which rationalized their losses.

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This 'Beaumont Hamel-centric' Great War myth was disseminated by the state, the church, and the press through remembrance ceremonies, war literature, and commemorative bronze and granite. A highly selective, inspirational cultural memory of the attack rapidly emerged, emphasizing bravery, determination, imperial loyalty, Christian devotion, and immortal achievement. However, each medium added its own distinguishing marks to the myth. Immediate reactions mythologized Beaumont Hamel in order to combat widespread grief. Rather than lamenting an advance that had gone horribly wrong, military and state officials, and the press transformed the failed assault into a heroic and inspiring event. Memorial Day ceremonies suggested that World War I had been a formative national undertaking, most appropriately symbolized by Beaumont Hamel. Through annual ritualizing, consolatory rhetoric was quickly transformed into the language of civic inspiration. A volume of historical literature also appeared in this period which, rather than acting as an alternative, served to reinforce the myth. The construction of the Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park was permanent confirmation that the advance was the symbolic pillar upon which Newfoundland's cultural memory of the conflict was built. Through consideration of the major mythic themes promoted by these mediums, this paper will show that remembering World War I in Newfoundland between 1916 and 1925 had everything to do with pride and achievement, while notions of tragedy and loss merited little, if any, attention. Newfoundland was not the only country which sought to rationalize this war through avenues of remembrance, and comparisons are made with Great Britain, Canada, and Australia. Newfoundland's cultural memory of this war was largely rooted in contemporary international trends.

Newfoundland's part in World War I and its impact on the country's history has been considered by a number of scholars. Recent work by historians David R. Facey-Crowther and P. Whitney Lackenbauer has focused on how the conflict entered Newfoundland's cultural memory during the postwar years.⁴ Although the experience of the Newfoundland Regiment at Beaumont Hamel has been thoroughly documented, the attack's passage into the realm of cultural memory has not been properly assessed.⁵

When war was declared on 4 August 1914, the Newfoundland government immediately assured Britain that it would provide 500 soldiers, and journalists and clergymen used patriotic rhetoric to encourage young men to volunteer. There were those, most notably William Coaker, who felt that Newfoundland should focus on training recruits for the Royal Naval Reserve. However, the predominant opinion was that the conflict would be settled on land, and Sir Edward Morris's government created the Newfoundland Patriotic Association [NPA] to raise and train a land-based battalion.⁶ There was an immediate and enthusiastic response, especially in St. John's. On 4 October 1914, the SS *Florizel* left St. John's with a force of



Unveiling the National War Memorial, St. John's, 1 July 1924. PANL E-1-47, Courtesy of The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Archives.

537 hastily trained and ill-equipped soldiers, “The First Five Hundred,” or “The Blue Puttees.”⁷

This First Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment trained in England and Egypt for several months and was reinforced by additional recruits before joining the British 29th Division on the Gallipoli Peninsula in September 1915.⁸ By the time the battalion withdrew in January 1916, it had suffered 760 casualties; only 170 soldiers remained to answer the roll call.⁹ The battered unit spent the winter months of 1916 being rebuilt and trained under its new commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur L. Hadow.¹⁰ In March, the 29th Division moved to the Western Front in France where the Newfoundlanders underwent further training near Louvencourt, while periodically entering the line to repair trenches in preparation for the Allies’ next offensive.¹¹

Allied commanders had spent the winter planning that offensive, scheduled to commence on 29 June 1916. By that time 500,000 men of the British 4th Army (including the 29th Division) were assembled along an eighteen-mile front between the Ancre and Somme rivers, the southern end linking with the eight-mile front of the French 6th Army.¹² British and French commanders were confident that the offensive, preceded by a week-long artillery bombardment from 1,400 guns, would provide the necessary breakthrough. On 26 June, 29th Division commander General Henry Beauvoir de Lisle gave a speech to the men of the Newfoundland Regi-

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ment in which he all but promised victory in the upcoming offensive.¹³ These same hopes permeated the battalion's ranks, and are evident in the writings of Private Frank 'Mayo' Lind and Lieutenant Owen Steele.¹⁴ Optimism ran high that the Somme offensive would be an Allied victory and a glorious battlefield debut for the Newfoundland Regiment.

The highly anticipated moment came on 1 July 1916. At 7:28 a.m. several mines were blown along the Somme front, and at 7:30 a.m. the infantry advance began.¹⁵ Substantial gains were made by several divisions in the south, but most units were met by a crippling hail of German artillery and machine-gun fire. During the first hour, almost half of the 66,000 Allied troops in the attack were killed or wounded, usually before getting past their own barbed wire.¹⁶ The 29th Division was particularly affected. The 86th and 87th Brigades suffered overwhelming casualties without coming close to their objectives, the first and second lines of the German trenches. The Newfoundland Regiment, a part of the 88th Brigade, received revised orders from General de Lisle at 8:45 a.m., requiring an immediate advance on the German front lines, and hastily prepared for an assault for which it had not trained.¹⁷



Enemy shell bursting, Beaumont Hamel, c. 1916. Imperial War Museum photograph collection. PANL B-2-42, Courtesy of The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Archives.

The 800 Newfoundlanders advanced at 9:15 a.m. without support from the First Essex Regiment. They had to pass through several lines of British barbed wire and trenches before entering the downhill slope of 'no man's land' which would offer a clear view of the German barbed wire and front lines.¹⁸ Most of the 800 were wounded or dead before reaching their own front line, and the few that made it to the German wire were shot down. Not a single Newfoundlanders fired a shot, let alone inflicted a casualty. Within a half-hour the battalion's advance had been shattered.¹⁹

The attack was called off by early afternoon. Of the more than 100,000 soldiers who had advanced against the German trenches, 57,000 were casualties, including 19,000 dead. The Germans suffered about 8,000 casualties.²⁰ The Newfoundlanders had been dealt one of the most severe blows during the assault. In his report that evening Lt.-Col. Hadow noted the brutality of the defeat: 233 dead, 477 wounded or missing, and only 68 answered the roll call.²¹

British commanders probably realized the futility of the attack as they watched their soldiers being mown down. However, unlike historians, battalion commanders and generals were not primarily concerned with assessing the merits and faults of their strategies and tactics.²² For them, finding purpose was more important than laying blame. They were fighting a war they intended to win, and, if they had been defeated, it was vital to at least suggest that their soldiers had died for good reason.²³ There had to be something for the British command to build on, there had to be something inspiring about Beaumont Hamel which could be used in Newfoundland to mitigate the shock.

The Newfoundland press played a significant role in conveying news of the war to the public, usually in the form of censored military reports, in a sanguine and upbeat tone. Indeed, politicians and military authorities expected local papers to present war news in the most favourable light possible.²⁴ This was not unique to Newfoundland. Jeffrey Keshen and Jonathan Vance have shown that the Canadian military effort was always portrayed by Canadian newspapers in a positive and reassuring light.²⁵ Stephen Garton and Ken Inglis note that in the immediate aftermath of appalling losses in the Gallipoli landing of 25 April 1915, the Australian press quickly translated that failed assault into Australia's defining wartime moment, and the 10,000 Anzacs who died there were venerated as national heroes.²⁶ Editorial rhetoric in Newfoundland similarly tried to lessen the negative impact of Beaumont Hamel by describing it as a heroic national sacrifice. In so doing, the press laid out the basic thematic elements that would shape the country's Great War myth.

Initial reports from the Somme were vague and highly optimistic. Major newspapers such as *The Evening Telegram*, *The Daily News*, and *The Weekly Advocate* declared that a major British victory was imminent.²⁷ However, casualty lists began flooding the newspapers a week after the offensive started. On 8 July the *Telegram*

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reported 230 casualties from the Newfoundland Regiment's attack at Beaumont Hamel. By 22 July the figure had risen to 524, including 44 killed.²⁸ One week later the *Telegram* published Lt.-Col. Hadow's official report, which revealed that 110 soldiers were dead, 495 wounded, and 115 missing. Hadow confirmed what newspapers had reluctantly been hinting at — the Regiment had suffered a frighteningly high casualty rate at Beaumont Hamel.²⁹ The fact that Newfoundland was a small country comprised of many tiny, close-knit communities made it difficult to downplay the losses.³⁰ *The Western Star* observed that it was vital for casualty lists to be released quickly because "Newfoundland is different from other countries. Here we seem to know each other. This makes the grief more widely felt."³¹

The official and press reaction was to mitigate the burden of grief by suggesting that the Newfoundland Regiment had accomplished something noble at Beaumont Hamel. *The Daily News* translated military defeat into a virtuous sacrifice offered in the name of imperial loyalty and Christian devotion:

The price of Freedom is paid in tears, and the maintenance of liberty in the blood of its defenders. Today all Newfoundland is in sorrow, but with sorrow is mingled gratitude and pride.... It was Patriotism in its purity, and manhood in its perfection which brought the answer to the call of the Motherland. Newfoundland's response is Newfoundland's glory, and though today we bow in sorrow, and though hearts are breaking, and on some homes a pall of almost impenetrable darkness has settled, yet the silver gleam is there, for who shall say that the young Knights have not achieved in their quest for the Holy Grail. They have done their duty to God and man. They have withheld not themselves in the service of humanity. For some of them the fight is over. They rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.³²

The battalion's slaughter was quickly transformed — this had been a loyal defence of the British Empire by Christian knights engaged in a modern crusade.

In so depicting Beaumont Hamel, however, the press was also trying to encourage greater support for the war effort. By 1916, a general improvement in the Newfoundland economy was hurting recruitment, and increasing numbers of men chose to work at home rather than enlist for service.³³ Yet officials wanted to reconstruct the Regiment, fearing that the British War Office would remove it from the line.³⁴ One way to stimulate recruitment and popular support was to portray the engagement as a challenge to the collective Newfoundland will. The *Telegram* hailed Beaumont Hamel for providing a new standard of discipline and courage to which future Newfoundland soldiers should aspire:

For we had not yet known the bitter experiences of war which more than anything else has steeled the hearts and fixed the resolve of the rest of the empire. We have had it now. The glorious 1st of July united all Newfoundland in pride and sorrow; the memory of it will unite us in the steadfast resolutions which we have today recorded.³⁵

Mourning was not the most appropriate way to honour the dead — continuing the fight in their place was. Beaumont Hamel therefore became a rallying point around which Newfoundlanders could re-muster and push forward with the war effort.

Words of praise from British military commanders gave the romantic presentation of Beaumont Hamel a heightened degree of legitimacy. Such statements appeared in the *Telegram*, *The Daily News*, *The Weekly Advocate*, and *The St. John's Daily Mail* during July and August.³⁶ The famous comments of General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, commander of the British 4th Army's VIII Corps, appeared in *The Weekly Advocate*:

That battalion (the Newfoundland Regiment) covered itself with glory on the 1st of July by the magnificent way in which it carried out the attack entrusted to it.... There were no waverers, no stragglers, and not a man looked back. It was a magnificent display of trained and disciplined valour, and its assault only failed of success because dead men can advance no further.³⁷

The highest praise came from Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force, who informed Governor Davidson that “Newfoundland may well feel proud of her sons. The heroism and devotion to duty they displayed on 1st July has never been surpassed.... Their efforts contributed to our success, and their example will live.”³⁸ Such statements acknowledged the terrible losses suffered by the battalion, but, more importantly, they encouraged Newfoundlanders to recall Beaumont Hamel as a heroic moment that merited proud remembrance.

Several soldiers' accounts which appeared during July suggested that even in the trenches the advance was perceived as a gallant attack deserving national acclaim and thus provided further reinforcement for the mythic memory quickly taking shape.³⁹ A letter from Private Bert Ellis portrayed Beaumont Hamel as a deadly killing field. However, he wrote, the battalion had conducted itself in a honourable and disciplined manner: “Our boys acted throughout like heroes. They went up on top singing just as if they were going on a march instead of facing death.... But our boys showed no fear.”⁴⁰ Another letter suggested that the Newfoundlanders' advance had been

an impossible job, so much so that we never had one chance in a million of doing anything.... I do not think there were any orders carried out at such a great sacrifice or so gloriously before in the annals of the British Army.... You may tell the people at home that Newfoundland may be proud of the Regiment. It was something to live and die for to be in that charge.⁴¹

Such accounts filled in the gaps left by official reports, while retaining the same assurances of a brave and memorable effort. By describing rather than simply noting

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the tremendous odds which faced the battalion on 1 July 1916, soldiers elevated the accomplishments of their battalion beyond the level of official, politically motivated rhetoric into the realm of authentic experience, making their advance appear even more dignified. Here was first-hand evidence that honour and pride were to be found in the blood-stained mud of Beaumont Hamel.

By August 1916 the press had established that Beaumont Hamel had been a great achievement by the Newfoundland Regiment, and this became the foundation for Newfoundland's 'Beaumont Hamel-centric' Great War myth. Editorials, military appraisals, and soldiers' letters reinforced and contributed to the rapid construction of a consensus which sought to inspire Newfoundlanders to harden their hearts against grief and despair. What makes these commentaries interesting is the manner in which selective realities were used to enhance mythic assertions. Editors, officers, and soldiers did not hesitate to confirm the high price paid by their countrymen at Beaumont Hamel, and they proclaimed the accomplishment of mythic feats there. Newfoundland had enthusiastically answered the Mother Country's call to arms in 1914, and officials did not want that initial enthusiasm to wane. Beaumont Hamel represented the cornerstone of a new Newfoundland heritage which, the press argued, was enhanced and made more inspiring by the severe price paid there. The engagement was transformed into a mythic event that could enrich Newfoundland's cultural fibre; and it was the responsibility of civilians to see that their country's new heritage was fittingly preserved and cultivated.

The spirit of the patriotic press editorials of July and August 1916 manifested itself in the rituals and rhetoric of Memorial Day. This annual ceremony reaffirmed the mythic themes first attached to Beaumont Hamel in 1916, and confirmed that engagement as the embodiment of Newfoundland's Great War myth.⁴² Memorial Day involved civilians in the mythmaking process by suggesting how they could best honour the dead soldiers outside the commemorative sphere. The event reinforced a sense of public duty, which official addresses and newspaper editorials suggested would be most adequately expressed through material aid to veterans and bereaved families. Beaumont Hamel would inspire Newfoundlanders to preserve and transmit a hard-earned heritage to future generations. Memorial Day rituals instructed Newfoundlanders how to commemorate World War I, and ceremonial language, which glorified Beaumont Hamel specifically, reminded them how best to honour the heroic soldiers who had fought and died.⁴³

Remembrance ceremonies became customary in the countries which had participated in World War I. Ritualized commemoration is a social mechanism which ensures public endorsement of a given cultural memory, and provides an opportunity for the public to express its acceptance.⁴⁴ Remembrance ceremonies also allowed the bereaved to formally cope with loss.⁴⁵ This was certainly the case in Britain, while Australian soldiers were honoured on Anzac Day as the nation's fin-

est youth who had performed heroic feats of national relevance.⁴⁶ Each country had distinct commemorative ceremonies, but all were concerned to relay the supposed magnitude and impressiveness of soldiers' wartime service to the civilians who attended. Newfoundland was no exception.

The first Memorial Day ceremony was organized in St. John's by the NPA on 1 July 1917.⁴⁷ *The Daily News* urged Newfoundlanders to commemorate the anniversary because it honoured a day when "there was written into the annals of this country by its noble and gallant sons, deeds of heroism and unflinching devotion to duty that will ever be cherished as a glorious memory and handed down to generations yet to come as a priceless heritage."⁴⁸ A year later, legislation officially established 1 July as Memorial Day, Newfoundland's official day of remembrance.⁴⁹ By 1919 a standard Memorial Day programme, organized by the Great War Veterans' Association of Newfoundland [GWVA],⁵⁰ had been established. That year, veterans and civic brigades paraded to their various churches for commemorative services, before assembling with civilian spectators for a state ceremony in Bannerman Park, next to the Colonial Building. Commemorative wreaths were laid around a temporary memorial cross. Governor Sir Alexander Harris gave a patriotic and optimistic address, and the ceremony concluded with the playing of "The Last Post" and a three-gun salute.⁵¹ With a few slight exceptions and alterations, this became the standard order of proceedings for Memorial Day services in St. John's, and by the early 1920s this programme was widely followed in communities across the island.⁵²

Memorial Day organizers and speakers developed a dynamic 'Beaumont Hamel-centric' symbolism which they hoped would preserve the attack's — and the war's — cultural resonance. Newfoundland paid a relatively high price for serving the British Empire, and its mythmakers reminded civilians what four years of war had meant for their country — 12,000 out of a population of 250,000 had served, and nearly 1,600 had been killed.⁵³ Memorial Day provided the mythmakers with the ideal channel through which to transmit their commemorative answer.

Speakers asserted that through their willing sacrifice at Beaumont Hamel, Newfoundland's soldiers had shown their kinsmen that the cost of freedom was both high and rewarding. During his 1920 Memorial Day sermon at the Anglican Cathedral in St. John's, the Reverend Canon Jeeves referred to the battalion's sacrifice as "the message from Beaumont Hamel. 'Son, Remember.' This is what comes from Paradise. What you enjoy is only yours today, because they laid down their lives on the National Altar."⁵⁴ Dying for their country on 1 July 1916 thus enabled Newfoundland soldiers to achieve immortality. Vance notes that Canada's dead soldiers, like Newfoundland's, were also reinvented as saviours who had achieved eternal life by sacrificing themselves during the conflict.⁵⁵ During the 1923 St. John's Memorial Day ceremony Governor Sir William Allardyce suggested that the fallen of Beaumont Hamel "may not be with us in the flesh, but they are never-

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theless with us. Their influence cannot die, it is indestructible; their heroism and their valour cannot perish, for they were heaven sent and imperishable.”⁵⁶ Through Memorial Day services, Newfoundland’s dead soldiers had new life breathed into them.

Commemorative rhetoric also emphasized that the heroic soldiers could live on in a tangible and practical way, as was the case in Britain.⁵⁷ On Memorial Day, politicians, clergy, and veterans suggested that the noble traits of Newfoundland’s fallen at Beaumont Hamel could be adopted by any civilian, young or old, and could bond Newfoundlanders together as a nation. Civilians were urged:

Hold fast to those principles of truth, honesty, purity and manhood and you will be a perfect citizen, you will be doing more good for your country than ... a hero who dies for his country and her cause and be worthy of praise and renown; he on the other hand deserves an imperishable crown who by the observance of her laws by his industry and integrity lives and gives her the service of life.⁵⁸

The soldiers of the Newfoundland Regiment had established a legacy at Beaumont Hamel that many believed was vital to their nation’s culture, and it fell to civilians to see that that spirit of selflessness, patriotism, and devotion would endure beyond the battlefields of Europe.

Civilians were also urged to imitate the selflessness of Newfoundland’s war heroes through material assistance to veterans and bereaved families.⁵⁹ A *Telegram* editorial suggested that “Our repayment to them is not to be measured by the outward and visible deed. Let it be then ours to keep faith, and to do all that we can for the ones who are left.”⁶⁰ Bereaved families had been left with a “heritage which we will do not to neglect. That heritage is the care of those whom they left behind: those who were dependent upon them, and are now the first lien on the Dominion finances.”⁶¹ A public appeal in the *Telegram* asked, “How sacred these two words have become to us, haven’t they? What lies underneath these words? — blood, unselfishness, anguish.”⁶² Memorial Day reminded the public of their civic duty to those most damaged by World War I, while Beaumont Hamel was the event which should motivate them to fulfil it.

Memorial Day also suggested that civilians were responsible for transmitting the mythic legacy of Beaumont Hamel to future generations. Efforts were made to ensure that children attended Memorial Day observances. The organizers of the 1918 St. John’s ceremony hoped to have all relatives of city soldiers and veterans under the age of fourteen in attendance, and the Women’s Patriotic Association [WPA] provided children’s entertainment.⁶³ The GWVA urged people to bring their children to the Memorial Day services as “[i]t is to the younger generation that we look to see that the memory of the Boys who gave their lives in the War is not forgotten.”⁶⁴ Five years later, a 1923 *Telegram* Memorial Day editorial identified the noble traits which Beaumont Hamel’s fallen had transmitted to Newfoundlanders,

while reminding readers that “[w]e must likewise hand down to our children and our children’s children, as their most precious treasure and their most powerful inspiration, that same spirit of self-sacrifice which was possessed by all those whose memory we commemorate today, who, when duty called, fearlessly and unhesitatingly obeyed the summons.”⁶⁵ Two years later *The Daily News* commented that “July 1st, 1916, was a day that Newfoundlanders of the present generation can never wholly forget, and one which, so long as Newfoundland endures, will be held in honour by the generations that shall be.”⁶⁶ As the Memorial Day message had to survive beyond the generation which had experienced World War I, commemoration became a civic obligation for the island’s youth.

Newfoundland’s mythmakers may have promoted Memorial Day as an event that could motivate higher levels of social cohesion and civic pride, but it did not guarantee domestic political or economic stability. After the National Government collapsed in May 1919, politics became confused and chaotic. While civilians gathered annually to listen to patriotic rhetoric about national unity and imperial pride, their country went through six different ministries between 1919 and 1925, and a high level of government corruption was exposed by the 1924 Hollis Walker enquiry. At the same time, a harsh postwar economic climate saw Newfoundland’s economy plummet dramatically from its prosperous wartime levels, while the public debt rose inexorably.⁶⁷ Within this context, Memorial Day speeches and editorials offered the example of Beaumont Hamel’s fallen to civilians in the hope that they would apply the same bravery and determination to their own obstacles.

Through the efforts of state, church, the GWVA, and the press, Memorial Day offered a highly ritualized and mythologized ‘Beaumont Hamel-centric’ memory of World War I to the Newfoundland public to ensure that their war dead lived on. Because Beaumont Hamel became mythologized so quickly, mythmakers could consolidate the noble elements they had extracted from the battle into a commemorative package which Newfoundlanders could use to repay the debt which they owed their dead soldiers and veterans. Maurice Halbwachs, James Fentress, and Chris Wickham have noted that memory can only be sustained through direct efforts to adapt it to changing social contexts.⁶⁸ From this perspective, Memorial Day was the point of intersection where mythic assertions about the noble traits of dead soldiers became tangible elements that Newfoundland civilians were responsible for using to better their society. Remembrance ceremonies offered further validity to the mythic interpretation of Beaumont Hamel, while informing commemorative audiences that a cultural memory born under dire circumstances could aid a country entering dire straits.

Memorial Day was not the only way idealistic notions about the Newfoundland Regiment’s advance at Beaumont Hamel were disseminated. Accounts of the engagement suggested that commemorative myths were rooted in actual fact.

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Through emphasis on the overwhelming odds the battalion faced, and the identification of positive results, such works suggested that the battalion had actually achieved a plausible victory at Beaumont Hamel. To this end, writers produced highly selective accounts which avoided anything that could have threatened the mythic image. Fussell and Vance note that British and Canadian war-based literature recalled the conflict through narrative structures which, like Newfoundland war literature, offered mythic depictions of the conflict.⁶⁹ In this period, writing about World War I was not about critical assessment; it was about persuading Newfoundlanders that the conflict had been a constructive national endeavour and that Beaumont Hamel was the country's defining wartime moment.

The terrain at Beaumont Hamel was presented as the first obstacle to confront the Newfoundland Regiment. The December 1917 edition of *The Times History and Encyclopedia of the War* included a chapter⁷⁰ informing readers that the Newfoundlanders had to cross an open valley, which made them a clear and easy target, before they could even begin their attack. The battalion had to advance approximately 600 to 800 metres before reaching the German trenches, and

the way over this long distance was by no means clear. Lines had been cut through our own wires through which the troops might move, but those gaps were not nearly sufficient in number. The enemy knew all of these lanes and had their machine guns playing directly over them. There was a slight dip in the ground shortly after leaving our trenches, about three or four feet deep. The German machine guns had thus an admirable line of sight towards which they could sweep their fire, making the passage impossible.⁷¹

Then once it began, the advance was hindered by war-torn terrain. Published in 1921, Richard Cramm's *The First Five Hundred* was the first detailed treatment of Newfoundland's war effort. A politician and lawyer,⁷² he described a battlefield that presented many obstacles:

The ground over which they [the Newfoundland Regiment] had to advance could scarcely be more difficult. It formed a gradual descent, which rendered our troops completely exposed. It contained enormous quarries and excavations in which large numbers of the enemy could remain concealed, almost immune from shell-fire, and ready to rush out and attack our men in the rear. Although the bombardment from the British guns was terrific it had comparatively little effect in lessening this danger.⁷³

Physical obstacles guaranteed that the Newfoundlanders' advance would be hard pressed to succeed, and writers suggested that the battlefield served as an ally to the Germans, thus leaving the battalion seriously disadvantaged once it began its assault.

If the battlefield slowed the Newfoundlanders, it was the overwhelming volume and ferocity of the German resistance that broke their advance. In "Newfound-

land's Heroic Part in the War" (which appeared in October 1916 editions of both *The Cadet*⁷⁴ and *Great War*), F.A. McKenzie suggested that the Newfoundlanders bore the full brunt of the German fire during their advance at Beaumont Hamel.⁷⁵ When they began their assault, the Germans

met our men with a withering fire before which none could live.... Success was impossible ... The whole thing was over so quickly that it seemed impossible that in a few minutes a gallant regiment should thus have been wiped out.⁷⁶

Henry F. Shortis also emphasized the Germans' unrelenting fire in "Newfoundlanders in Picardy" in the October 1916 *Newfoundland Quarterly*.⁷⁷ According to *The Times* account, once the British artillery bombardment ceased, "the German machine gunners poured out from their dugouts" and, when the Newfoundland Regiment advanced, "they were mown down in heaps."⁷⁸ Thus the battalion's attack at Beaumont Hamel had not failed as a result of tactical errors — it had been stopped by the overpowering and skilful resistance of the German defenders.⁷⁹

Survivors of the attack offered particularly harrowing accounts. Veteran John J. Ryan, in a 1918 edition of *Colonial Commerce*,⁸⁰ described how "One by one the boys were killed or wounded, and then the rear sections came piling in, just in time to receive a great shell that burst in the center of the bunch. A few of the chaps were blown in little pieces."⁸¹ The September 1921 edition of *The Veteran Magazine*,⁸² the "Beaumont Hamel Commemorative Edition," included a "fittingly and graphically told" account of the advance by Major Arthur Raley from St. John's. In one of the most famous lines written about the engagement, Raley observed that

The only visible sign that the men knew they were under this terrific fire was that they all instinctively tucked their chins into an advanced shoulder as they had so often done when fighting their way home against a blizzard in some little outpost in far off Newfoundland.⁸³

Such eye-witness accounts provided convincing evidence that the Newfoundland Regiment's ability to endure the German's resistance was a victory unto itself.

While authors did not hesitate to spell out the number of casualties, they did not describe the horrifying carnage and destruction that the Newfoundlanders had endured.⁸⁴ Ryan depicted Beaumont Hamel as a deadly affair but was careful not to describe the suffering of the wounded and the dying.⁸⁵ Casualty figures and battlefield descriptions emphasized the battalion's heroism; the portrayal of danger and lethal opposition gave the attack a greater mythic aura.

It was further argued that the Newfoundland Regiment's advance had positive results. First, it was often depicted as a tactical sacrifice which enabled British and French forces to succeed along the southern sector of the Somme front. Second,

writers argued that the Regiment's victory at Gueudecourt on 12 October 1916 was made possible by the experience gained at Beaumont Hamel, and the determination to avenge that defeat. Thus the battalion's noble efforts allowed others to succeed on that and future battlegrounds.

The southern sector of the Somme front was the only portion of the entire line where the Allies achieved any substantial gains on 1 July 1916,⁸⁶ and several commentators suggested that the Newfoundland Regiment was instrumental in that success. Engaging a vast number of German machine guns and artillery pieces allowed British and French units in the south to achieve their tactical objectives. McKenzie reproduced a portion of General Hunter-Weston's letter to Prime Minister Morris which made this claim, adding that "[a]n attacking army is like a football team; there is but one who kicks the goal, yet the credit of success belongs not alone to that individual but to the whole team, whose concerted action led to the desired result."⁸⁷ McKenzie suggested that the Regiment had been the midfielder with the ball who gets seriously injured by a dangerous tackle, but whose effort ultimately allows his striker to score the winning goal. Cramm used the same letter five years later to reinforce his assertion that the southern success owed much to the Newfoundlanders' assault.⁸⁸ Similarly, Raley argued that the battalion had drawn the fire of numerous German machine-gun and artillery positions away from the southern front, because it advanced without support from neighbouring units. Instead of questioning why the battalion had advanced independently rather than as a part of a wider assault, Raley transformed its action into a successful tactical sacrifice.⁸⁹ French artillery tactics were probably the deciding factor in the south, but Newfoundland writers were not looking to steal credit.⁹⁰ Rather, through evidence taken from official military observations and eyewitness reports, such literature sought to convince Newfoundlanders that their battalion had made a vital contribution to the Allies' only concrete success on 1 July 1916.

Many commentators attributed the Newfoundland Regiment's victory at Gueudecourt in October 1916 to the fierce combat it had endured three months earlier. After being held in reserve after Beaumont Hamel, the battalion returned to the front line on 12 October 1916.⁹¹ Following an all-night artillery barrage the battalion successfully captured the German trenches facing it, secured its left flank after another brigade had been unable to capture the position, and then repelled a major German counter-attack. The Newfoundlanders' victory at Gueudecourt was the only significant gain made by any British unit that day. The battalion inflicted more than 250 casualties upon the Germans and took 150 prisoners; the price was 239 of its own casualties, including 120 dead.⁹²

At Gueudecourt the Regiment proved that it had developed into a more effective fighting unit because of Beaumont Hamel, while also avenging its previous defeat. *The Times* asserted that "[e]very man had fresh in his memory what had happened at Beaumont Hamel."⁹³ Cramm explicitly identified Gueudecourt as the battalion's "first chance for revenge since the reverse and losses at Beaumont

Hamel, and the Regiment did not fail to take advantage of it.”⁹⁴ Within the wider context of World War I, Beaumont Hamel was translated into a valuable learning experience which taught the battalion how to fight, endure, and ultimately succeed. In this sense, Beaumont Hamel served as a necessary prerequisite for an inexperienced battalion. In order to succeed, it had to endure defeat first.

Such a depiction of Beaumont Hamel was partially determined by contemporary circumstances and intended audiences. Historians of the war were pressured by veterans and civilians to produce positive accounts that could serve as literary memorials,⁹⁵ and the authors of Newfoundland war literature were not excepted. The accounts of Beaumont Hamel which appeared in *The Newfoundland Quarterly*, *Great War*, and *The Times History and Encyclopedia of the War* were wartime publications intended for public consumption and selectively described the action. Like the immediate press reactions, these pieces also appear to have been partially intended to serve as propaganda to promote the war effort. Cramm’s *The First Five Hundred* appeared in the immediate postwar era when Memorial Day ceremonies were constructing a positive cultural memory of the conflict. Because it appeared in *The Veteran*, Raley’s account was intended for fellow comrades who perhaps sought a commendatory depiction of their efforts on 1 July 1916. While these accounts had different audiences, they were consistent in painting Beaumont Hamel in as positive a light as possible.

There was no alternative narrative. Indeed, other than the graphic account provided by John J. Ryan in *Colonial Commerce*, nothing resembling antiwar literature appears to have been produced in Newfoundland during this period. This differs from Britain, Australia, and Canada, where veterans often produced antiwar literature in the form of biographical accounts of the war, novels, or poetry.⁹⁶ The books, essays, or official histories mentioned here did not consider Newfoundland’s role in a critical or objective light. Newfoundland war literature was overwhelmingly supportive of the ‘Beaumont Hamel-centric’ Great War myth, offering readers factual evidence to support the mythic claims expressed in formal commemorations.

In the years immediately following Beaumont Hamel, literature reaffirmed the attack’s revered position within Newfoundland’s Great War myth. Fentress and Wickham note that selectivity, distortion, and inaccuracy are common (though not necessary) features of social memory, and many writers incorporated some of these elements into treatments of the attack.⁹⁷ Although these accounts abstained from taking a critical stance, they did not make false charges about the engagement either. Instead, the battlefield was presented in a highly selective manner which did not compromise the accepted mythic version of the attack. Historical accounts reinforced mythic perceptions with concrete historical evidence that justified and gave greater authority to the high claims of Memorial Day rhetoric. Historical literature provided Newfoundlanders with a more intimate and seemingly realistic depiction

of Beaumont Hamel which added to, rather than stripped away, the mythic layers of cultural memory.

War monuments gave physical shape to the commemorative concepts and mythic perceptions of Beaumont Hamel. The mythic overtones that permeated commemorative services and historical literature were most evident in the Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park, officially opened on 7 June 1925. Through a combination of masonry, sculpting, landscaping, and preservation, the park symbolized Beaumont Hamel as a victorious and inspiring achievement. It also represented how Newfoundland wished to be perceived by an international audience, suggesting that the attack had enabled Newfoundland to earn higher status within the British Empire.

The park also signified an attempt to construct a Newfoundland national heritage rooted in a mythically enhanced historic event, much like Newfoundland's Cabot quadcentenary festivities in 1897 and Quebec's tercentenary celebrations in 1908.⁹⁸ Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park provided the concrete stamp of approval to Newfoundland's Great War myth, while also speaking in optimistic tones to the dominion's present and future.

According to Jacques Le Goff, World War I brought funerary commemoration to new heights, and the resulting war memorials often symbolized "the cohesiveness of a nation united in common memory."⁹⁹ Like Newfoundland, Canada and Australia also commemorated their World War I dead through overseas memorials often in the form of battlefield monuments that honoured a single climactic engagement. For Canada, that event was the Canadian Corps' victory at the Battle of Vimy Ridge on 9 April 1917.¹⁰⁰ According to Denise Thomson and Jonathan Vance the Vimy Ridge Memorial, unveiled in 1936, was an expression of sacred commemoration and a statement of Canadian national identity.¹⁰¹ However, the Canadian and Newfoundland experiences are different in the sense that the Canadian Corps had undoubtedly succeeded at Vimy; the same could not be said of the Newfoundland Regiment at Beaumont Hamel. Garton and Inglis note that Australia was most inclined to memorialize its role in the 1915 Gallipoli campaign during the postwar years.¹⁰² Australia's experience at Gallipoli was similar to that of the Newfoundlanders' experience at Beaumont Hamel, as both dominions memorialized their bloodiest wartime engagements as events which made them into stronger nations.

Beaumont Hamel was identified as such an event soon after it occurred. On 19 July 1916 the *Telegram* reported that the battlefield had been renamed St. John's Wood, and on the following day the newspaper's editor suggested the title gave a "hint of the nature of the feat performed by the Battalion. It helps to confirm the impression that it was a high one. It is a rare compliment, this naming of a field of battle after our capital, implying a rare gallantry that deserved it."¹⁰³ On the attack's first anniversary Prime Minister Morris proclaimed that



War Memorial, Grand Falls, 1914-1918. PANL A-37-56, Courtesy of The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Archives.

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July 1st, will, in future, be the day we celebrate because it is the anniversary of the day our heroes fell facing the foe. The glory of the Newfoundland troops has become a permanent page in the history of the world's greatest achievements and July 1st will always be a beacon light of liberty for Newfoundland....¹⁰⁴

The bloody engagement was quickly being translated into a heroic defence of Newfoundland's freedom, leading many to believe that Beaumont Hamel was sacred national soil which the dominion rightfully owned and needed to reclaim.

Efforts to acquire the battlefield began once the war ended. After consulting with the GWVA's Memorial Committee, Prime Minister Richard Squires announced his government's intention to help fund the construction of a memorial park at Beaumont Hamel. In January 1920, Squires appointed the Newfoundland Regiment's former chaplain and GWVA member Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Nangle to negotiate the purchase of the battlefield and to supervise the construction of a memorial park. The government granted Nangle \$15,000 to start the project.¹⁰⁵ These efforts generated excitement within Newfoundland, and an editorial in the April 1921 *Veteran* commented that "we shall be the proud possessors of the sacred battlefield — the only land owned by Newfoundland in France."¹⁰⁶

Events in Newfoundland and France moved along smoothly throughout 1921 and 1922. The Ladies' Auxiliary Committee of the GWVA formed a sub-committee to raise money for the purchase of the site, and the Beaumont Hamel Collection Committee was established in the spring of 1920 by a group of prominent St. John's residents.¹⁰⁷ Both fundraising campaigns were successful — the Beaumont Hamel Committee raised almost \$8,000 by August 1922.¹⁰⁸ Nangle completed the purchase of the land during the summer of 1922.¹⁰⁹ In October he commissioned the Flemish landscape architect Rudolph Cochius¹¹⁰ to design the layout for the park. The government granted an additional \$25,000 to ensure that the work would be completed.¹¹¹

Providing funding for the park's construction was something of a sacrifice in itself, given the country's economic and financial condition,¹¹² but the project remained a priority because it was intended to be more than a war memorial. This fits well with Benedict Anderson's argument that official state nationalism often serves as a conscious, self-protective policy.¹¹³ From this perspective, memorializing Beaumont Hamel was too great an opportunity for national promotion for the government to let pass. In November 1922 Nangle informed Squires that he and Cochius planned to build "a proper 'Memorial Park' which would be an honour to the Men who fell there and an advertisement of the Colony."¹¹⁴ They intended the park to honour the precise moment when Newfoundland stepped onto the road of nationhood. If Peter Pope is correct in his assertion that the 1897 Cabot quadcentenary celebrations had more to do with "nationalism than navigation,"¹¹⁵ then it is quite likely that commemoration was not intended to be the sole symbolic purpose of the Beaumont Hamel memorial.

Construction began in the spring of 1923.¹¹⁶ Because they also conceived of Beaumont Hamel as “a resting place for Newfoundland’s nearest and dearest,”¹¹⁷ Nangle and Cochius made a concerted effort to convert the battlefield into a transplanted piece of Newfoundland soil.¹¹⁸ A visitor’s lodge was built from Newfoundland lumber; more than 5,000 native Newfoundland trees were planted around the battlefield’s outer edges; and the 50-foot-high granite pedestal where the park’s central monument would stand was covered with Newfoundland shrubs and flowers.¹¹⁹ The beautification efforts also symbolized nature’s ability to overpower the scourge of war. Concerning the layout of the park, Cochius wrote

The sternness and the tragedy of War are passed from the scene. Where, then, was conflict, now is peace; harmony is enthroned where discord was; and beneath the sacred sod of the transformed wilderness, their duty done, their valour proved, their sacrifice complete, lie the mortal remains of hundreds, whose memory still shines in the hearts and homes of this land.¹²⁰

A significant portion of Newfoundland’s manhood and future had spent its blood on that battlefield, and beautifying it with Newfoundland flora was an explicit statement that those grounds were the dominion’s rightful property. Beyond that, the replacement of wartime devastation with natural beauty was also meant to symbolize Newfoundland’s collective determination to persevere through the hardship caused by the advance to regain postwar stability. If the battlefield could recover from the damage it had sustained, then so too could Newfoundland society.

The park’s main sculpture suggested that the Newfoundland Regiment had made its sacrifice willingly and courageously. British sculptor Basil Gotto designed a bronze caribou replica reminiscent of the caribou which appeared on the battalion’s emblem.¹²¹ Placed on top of the granite mound overlooking the battlefield, an oversized caribou arched its head, crowned with an imposing set of many-pointed antlers, as if in mid-bellow. *The Veteran* called the sculpture a “majestic animal ... bugling his battle challenge.”¹²² It suggested how the battalion had performed at Beaumont Hamel, and how Newfoundland wished for the effort to be commemorated. The sculpture also represented Newfoundland’s covenant with its fallen to ensure that their memory would forever be venerated and preserved.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the park was what had not been altered. The battlefield was unchanged since the war, so Cochius and Nangle agreed that the park’s design should “preserve and accentuate these features,” while also allowing limited access to trenches near the monument site. As *The Veteran* reported, the preserved battlefield would allow visitors to grasp some sense of what it had been like to be at Beaumont Hamel.¹²³ Preserving the cratered and trench-ridden battlefield within a closed, sacred space was meant to remind visitors of the high price which the Newfoundland Regiment had paid, and to amplify the park’s reassuring mes-



Opening of Beaumont Hamel Park, 1925. PANL NA-3106, Courtesy of The Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Archives.

sage. The battlefield was sacred ground which no amount of commemorative development could enhance any further.

Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park was lauded as a commemorative and national success at its unveiling on 7 June 1925. The dignitaries present included Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary John R. Bennett, representatives of the GWVA, and Marshall Fayolle of the French General Staff. In contrast to Eric Hobsbawm's argument that many colonies and dominions developed a brand of anti-imperial nationalism after World War I,¹²⁴ the unveiling of Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park suggested that Newfoundland had attained a more prominent rank within the British Empire. Any sense of Newfoundland nationalism that had been generated by Beaumont Hamel had been achieved within a broader imperial framework, which corresponds with Pope's belief that Newfoundland's national myth surrounding the Cabot 1497 landfall claims was largely influenced by British cultural traditions.¹²⁵ The caribou monument was draped with a giant Union Jack for the occasion, and was unveiled by Field Marshal Haig.¹²⁶ In a speech reminiscent of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Bennett stated that "we are met on one of the great battlefields of the war, and we are here to dedicate a portion of that battlefield as the resting place

of... our fellow countrymen who gave their lives to the cause of civilization on the First of July, 1916.”¹²⁷ Beaumont Hamel was Newfoundland’s Gettysburg, ‘Hallowed Ground’ apparently earned by the dominion through the sacrifice and loyalty to the Mother Country which its soldiers had displayed there. Essentially, Newfoundland could not celebrate the birth of a national heritage at Beaumont Hamel without first acknowledging its position within, and debt to, the British Empire.

The park was physical evidence that, with determination and perseverance, victory could be achieved in the face of seemingly inevitable defeat. Instead of choosing a field of victory for the memorial, Haig noted that Newfoundland had

chosen instead a locality where courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice were poured out, as it seemed at the moment, to no purpose. You have chosen a scene which in July 1916, seemed to many, remarkable for the failure of British arms. I think that you have chosen well.... Here your comrades died in the hope of that victory which they would never see. Today that victory is achieved.¹²⁸

This was a bold statement from Haig, who seemed to be suggesting that the Somme Offensive and the assault at Beaumont Hamel could have been conducted with better outcomes. He suggested that victory could be found in resounding defeat, and he identified the park as a fulfilment of the victory which Newfoundland’s soldiers had been unable to achieve nine years earlier.

In successfully reclaiming a sacred part of Newfoundland’s past, the government and the designers had also constructed a reassuring message about the country’s future. The *Telegram* commented that “it will always be regarded as hallowed ground, and it is for us and those who come after to see that it is tended with zealous care.”¹²⁹ The park was not a cemetery for mourning, but a shrine honouring national accomplishment and progress which proclaimed that the attack was the sacrificial pillar upon which a great nation could be founded. The caribou sculpture, transplanted vegetation, preserved battlefield, and ceremonial oratories served as the final confirmation of Newfoundland’s ‘Beaumont Hamel-centric’ Great War myth, the point where myth and reality harmoniously met. By capturing the mythic memory of Beaumont Hamel in stone and space, the park represented the best chance for that triumphant cultural memory to survive on to future generations.

The triumphant cultural memory of Beaumont Hamel did not endure. Not long after the Memorial Park was opened, the country which it represented ceased to exist as an independent political unit. The Great Depression struck Newfoundland hard, and the results were disastrous. Newfoundland surrendered its sovereignty in February 1934 to an appointed Commission of Government.¹³⁰ In two hotly contested referendums in 1948, Newfoundlanders chose Confederation with Canada, and their country became a province on 31 March 1949.¹³¹ Until that time, the mythic

image of Beaumont Hamel remained a cultural symbol of national resistance, unity, and accomplishment. If “social memory exists because it has meaning for the group that remembers it,”¹³² then the memory of Beaumont Hamel had to change to ensure its sustained relevance. From 1949 forward, the proud memory of Beaumont Hamel as a triumphant national anniversary ceased to exist, becoming instead a painful reminder of an incurable wound suffered by a dead country.

Beaumont Hamel is still promoted as Newfoundland’s most significant moment in World War I, but it is recalled in solemn and critical terms. In 2003, Memorial Day was observed in St. John’s on Sunday, 29 June, and the programme was remarkably similar to the one first introduced in 1917.¹³³ The *Telegram* reminded readers to pause on the anniversary “of the battle to remember those who paid the ultimate price in the war meant to end all wars.”¹³⁴ While the practice remains the same, the tone and symbolism of those ceremonies have been revised drastically. Today, Memorial Day is a sombre occasion when Newfoundlanders mourn Beaumont Hamel as an event which earned them nothing and stole their nation away.

Beaumont Hamel is still a popular topic for historians and writers. According to John FitzGerald, the attack was “an event that cut so deep into all aspects of Newfoundland society that it changed the course of the country forever.”¹³⁵ The novelist Kevin Major has called Beaumont Hamel “the single greatest tragedy in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador,” an event which “left a wretched pall over the country.”¹³⁶ In his best-selling 1995 novel *No Man’s Land*, Major depicted Beaumont Hamel as a senseless bloodbath that robbed Newfoundland of young men who could have led their nation to postwar prosperity.¹³⁷ In *The Danger Tree: Memory, War, and the Search for a Family’s Past*, David Macfarlane suggested that the absence of a generation of young Newfoundlanders was Beaumont Hamel’s most noticeable legacy. He wrote that after the engagement “the best were gone ... or doomed, and what the world would have been like had they not died is anybody’s guess.... Their plans were left in rough draft, their sentences unfinished.... No one expected it to be like this.”¹³⁸ The journalist and news broadcaster Jim Furlong has lamented the Newfoundland Regiment’s defeat at Beaumont Hamel in *The Newfoundland Herald*, arguing that “[t]hey were not ordinary men. They were the type of men you could build a nice small nation around. They were the men who might have made a difference in Newfoundland’s future.”¹³⁹ Contemporary literature and editorial columns often suggest that Beaumont Hamel was the event which fatally crippled Newfoundland’s nationhood.¹⁴⁰

On 10 April 1997, Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park was declared a National Historic Site by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, because “Newfoundland’s accomplishment, contribution, and sacrifice in the First World War are themselves of major national importance. The loss of Newfoundlanders in the First World War had a profound impact on the colony.”¹⁴¹ World War I might have been Canada’s road to national maturity, but it ended Newfoundland’s national potential. From this Canadian perspective, Beaumont Hamel is a reminder

to Newfoundlanders of their country's mortal wounding and subsequent rescue by its neighbouring dominion. The website "Newfoundland and the Great War," constructed by students and faculty from Memorial University of Newfoundland, states that Beaumont Hamel "has typified the spirit of Newfoundland," and that since 1925 the memorial park has stood as "its lasting testimonial."¹⁴² If the website is correct in its assertion, then that spirit is one characterized by regret and a nostalgic yearning for what could have been. At Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park the Newfoundland Regiment's advance has been symbolically preserved, but the event and its memory can never be erased.

Today, Beaumont Hamel is remembered by a Newfoundland society which, according to Jerry Bannister, recalls its past with a sense of tragic nostalgia. In turn, the attack is perceived in a manner which enables it to fit this tragic context.¹⁴³ Rather than commemorating Beaumont Hamel and acknowledging what transpired in its aftermath, modern-day observers lament the bloody encounter and conjure visions of a Newfoundland where it had never happened. Applying the hypothetical "what if?" to history can be a stimulating and imaginative exercise, but such manipulated alternatives have no chance of transpiring. We know of the terrible casualties suffered by Newfoundland servicemen during World War I; the severe postwar economic and political turmoil which crippled Newfoundland; that the dominion surrendered its democracy to a British-appointed commission which governed it until after World War II; and that it became a Canadian province in 1949. Hindsight allows present-day observers to identify Beaumont Hamel as the start of a tragic avalanche.

However, this contemporary view ignores the circumstances in which the attack occurred and was subsequently commemorated. Beaumont Hamel had a very different symbolic significance for Newfoundland, the dominion, than it does for Newfoundland and Labrador, the Canadian province. Before 1949, Beaumont Hamel was not identified as being Newfoundland's fatal national wound, and it was not recalled with regret or resentment. Between 1916 and 1925 Beaumont Hamel was depicted as a national triumph which should inspire Newfoundlanders to look confidently to their future. During a period when Newfoundland was weathering a storm of economic and political duress, an assortment of mythmakers constructed a mythic memory which suggested that World War I had reinforced the country's place within the British Empire, and Beaumont Hamel was identified as the bloody anvil upon which Newfoundland the colony had been forged into Newfoundland the nation. When Newfoundland was against the ropes in the early 1920s, Beaumont Hamel was triumphantly recalled as the event which should inspire the country to fight its way out of the corner. Today, it is recalled as the knockout blow which forced Newfoundland into national retirement. If cultural memory of the past can only remain relevant through its manipulated applicability to the present, then Newfoundland's cultural memory of Beaumont Hamel is an example which firmly supports that perspective.

It was probably in the best interest of Newfoundland's mythmakers to recall the attack in admirable and triumphant fashion. The state, press, and heads of Newfoundland's various religious denominations had all proactively encouraged Newfoundland's participation in World War I,¹⁴⁴ so for them to recall the conflict in a critical or negative manner would have been to expose themselves to justifiable charges of hypocrisy and deceit. Thus, it is not surprising that newspaper editors spoke of Beaumont Hamel in heroic terms; that clergymen gave sermons which recalled the advance as a glorious Christian sacrifice; and that the state provided more than two-thirds of the funding for the \$58,000 Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park which they envisioned as a nation-building tool.¹⁴⁵ The rituals, rhetoric, and sculptures which informed Newfoundland's 'Beaumont Hamel-centric' Great War myth were probably nothing more than a series of shrewd moves by Newfoundland's ex-war-promoters turned postwar mythmakers to curb some of the overwhelming grief and tremendous shock that undoubtedly affected the bereaved families of those who had died on 1 July 1916.

Why was Beaumont Hamel bestowed with such mythic significance by mythmakers in postwar Newfoundland? After July 1916 the Newfoundland Regiment fought successfully in a number of battles during the final two years of World War I. The battalion achieved a stunning victory at Gueudecourt in October 1916; experienced further, but costly, successes at Sailly-Saillisel, Monchy-le-Preux, and Cambrai in 1917; before the year's end it became the only unit to receive a Royal prefix to its title during the conflict; and the Newfoundlanders were also involved in the final Allied charge that forced the Germans to concede defeat in November 1918.¹⁴⁶ So why was the bloody failure of Beaumont Hamel transformed into a triumphant symbolic microcosm for Newfoundland's war effort? Because at no other time during the conflict did the dominion field a larger battalion; at no other time was it involved in a more anticipated offensive; at no other time did it suffer more casualties; and according to Newfoundland's mythmakers, at no other time did the dominion's soldiers perform more nobly in the service of their dominion, their empire, or their God. Beaumont Hamel was quickly identified as Newfoundland's wartime benchmark and turning point in much the same way that the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863 was identified as "the high water mark of the Confederacy" during the American Civil War.¹⁴⁷ If victory had been a requisite for the establishment of a military or national heritage, then a successful assault such as Gueudecourt or Cambrai would have assumed a more prominent position within Newfoundland's Great War myth. Though a military failure, Beaumont Hamel was the standard against which all subsequent Newfoundland military endeavours would be measured. Once the full scope of the defeat was realized, the mythmaking process functioned to turn Beaumont Hamel into as successful a standard as selective memory construction would allow. The outcome on 1 July 1916 did not matter under these circumstances — how that result could be applied within a broader social context did.

Remembering Beaumont Hamel in the period considered by this study had more to do with honouring conjured mythic images of the attack than mourning the losses it had caused. Myth was promoted as being a stronger influence on postwar Newfoundland society than reality. The lack of emphasis on what actually happened to the Newfoundland Regiment on 1 July 1916 prevented Beaumont Hamel from being recognized as a bloody military failure sooner than it did. Editorial, ceremonial, literary, and monumental emphasis on what the battalion had supposedly achieved that day enabled it to become Newfoundland's mythic pillar of remembrance. These commemorative mediums not only reinforced one another, but they also added their own distinctive remark to the mythic answer which they offered to Newfoundlanders. Essentially, remembering Beaumont Hamel in the decade after it occurred was not about accurately recalling events and their impact — it was about rationalizing a terrible event and finding concrete positives where none can ever be found.

Notes

¹Paul Fussell contends that elements of romantic literature, including high diction, dramatic satire, humorous irony, male homoeroticism, and pastoral imagery, were used by British soldier-writers to selectively describe their war experiences. Fussell believes this created a tendency to recall the war in ironic terms which hinted at the awful reality of conflict without actually stating it. Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

²Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995), 7-11.

³Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. Lewis A. Cosser (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1992).

⁴See David R. Facey-Crowther, "For King and Country: The Royal Newfoundland Regiment and the Battle of Beaumont Hamel, 1 July 1916" (paper presented at the Great War/Western Front Association Conference, Washington, DC, September 1993); "War and Remembrance: Soldiers' Diaries, Letters and Memoirs of the Great War" (talk to the Newfoundland Museum, 14 November 1999); "'Don't Let the Old Flag Fall': War, Remembrance and the Forging of National Identity: Newfoundland 1916-1934" (paper presented at the Calgary British World Conference, July 2003); P. Whitney Lackenbauer, "War, Memory, and the Newfoundland Regiment at Gallipoli," *Newfoundland Studies* 15.2 (1999), 176-214.

⁵Military historian G.W.L. Nicholson's *The Fighting Newfoundlander: A History of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment* (St. John's: Government of Newfoundland, 1964) remains the authoritative account of Newfoundland's military role in World War I; see esp. 232-283. The battle has also received comprehensive treatment in Richard Cramm, *The First*

Five Hundred, being a historical sketch of the military operations of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in Gallipoli and on the western front during the Great War (1914-1918) together with the individual military records and photographs, where obtainable, of the men of the first contingent, known as the "The first five hundred," or "The blue puttees" (Albany, NY: C.F. Williams & Son, 1921); Martin Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1972); and Joy B. Cave, *What Became of Corporal Pittman?* (Portugal Cove: Breakwater Books, 1976).

⁶Newfoundland did have a standing naval reserve force of 600 men, but most were away at the fishery when war broke out. According to Christopher Sharpe, the Newfoundland naval reservists became dispersed on ships throughout the British navy, leaving them no opportunity to identify themselves as a distinct naval unit. Thus, the almost 2,000 men who served with the naval reserve during the conflict remained Newfoundland's "silent force." Christopher A. Sharpe, "The 'Race of Honour': An Analysis of Enlistments and Casualties in the Armed Forces of Newfoundland: 1914-1918," *Newfoundland Studies* 4.1 (Spring 1988), 42-44.

The NPA was formed by Governor Davidson shortly after the war broke out as an organization designed to administer Newfoundland's war effort without the influence of partisan politics. The NPA lost administrative control to a Department of the Militia in July 1917 after the formation of the National Government. S.J.R. Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 120-121; Patricia O'Brien, "The Newfoundland Patriotic Association: The Administration of the War Effort, 1914-1918" (MA thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982), 137-138; *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* [ENL], s.v. "Newfoundland Patriotic Association"; Nicholson, *The Fighting Newfoundlander*, 102, 105-111.

⁷The battalion received this nickname when its members were given blue puttees as part of their uniforms because of a shortage of the normally issued green puttees. Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 110, 117; ENL, s.v. "Royal Newfoundland Regiment."

⁸Andrew Parsons notes that the Newfoundland Regiment benefited from its association with the 29th Division which was well known for its fighting during the Gallipoli campaign ("Morale and Cohesion in the Newfoundland Regiment" [MA thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1995], 53). This enabled the battalion to temporarily adopt the division's military reputation before establishing its own. Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 121-154, 161-163, 169; ENL, s.v. "World War One"; Lackenbauer, "War, Memory, and the Newfoundland Regiment," 176-178.

⁹Lackenbauer notes that Newfoundlanders remembered the Gallipoli campaign as an experience which provided an element of growing suspense in a war narrative that would reach its climax during a subsequent campaign ("War, Memory and the Newfoundland Regiment," 181-182). See also Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 189, 508.

¹⁰Arthur Lovell Hadow was a soldier his entire life. He entered the British Army in 1898 and served in South Africa, India, Tibet, and Egypt before World War I. He commanded the Newfoundland Regiment from December 1915 until December 1917 before assuming command of the second battalion of the Norfolk Regiment until he retired in 1926. ENL, s.v. "Hadow, Lt.-Col. Arthur Lovell."

¹¹ENL, s.v. "Beaumont Hamel"; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 232-236.

¹²The devastating German offensive at Verdun, which began in February 1916, forced them to alter that plan. As the French Army's hold on the fortress weakened, calls for

an immediate British offensive to relieve German pressure increased. The objectives for the offensive, scheduled to commence on 29 June 1916, were to relieve the French of German pressure at Verdun, to inflict major casualties against the German army, and to put Allied forces into a position to win the war during 1917. Bad weather delayed the start of the offensive until 1 July. B.H. Liddell Hart, *History of the First World War, 1914-1918*, 3rd ed. (London: Cassell, 1970), 285-287, 304-305, 309-310; John Keegan, *The First World War* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1998), 279-284, 290-291; Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 48, 51, 57, 83.

¹³In his diary entry for 26 June, Owen Steele noted de Lisle's encouraging words to the battalion, paying specific attention to the overwhelming force the British would bring to bear against the Germans. According to de Lisle, the German's 32 battalions were outnumbered by 263 British battalions, while the artillery being fired on their trenches would fill trains stretching for 46 miles.

British commanders believed the preliminary artillery bombardment would alleviate any concerns of German resistance. However, the shelling was not as effective as they had hoped. The Germans took shelter in deep dugouts, while efforts to sever the German barbed wire with shrapnel-fire only made it more difficult to penetrate. The shelling also indicated to the Germans where the assault would occur. Thus, when the shelling intensified on the morning of 1 July, the Germans were prepared for an imminent attack. David R. Facey-Crowther, ed., *Lieutenant Owen William Steele of the Newfoundland Regiment: Diary and Letters* (Montreal and Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 187; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 253-254; Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 69, 95, 258-263; Keegan, *The First World War*, 292.

¹⁴Mayo Lind had been a clerk in Fogo before enlisting as a private in the Newfoundland Regiment in 1914. Lind became a regular correspondent for *The Daily News*, and his letters quickly became one of the newspaper's most popular features. After Lind complained about the lack of quality tobacco in the frontlines, *The Daily News* struck an agreement with the Imperial Tobacco Company in St. John's to have Mayo cigarettes donated to the battalion. The nickname stuck.

In his final letter written on 29 June 1916, Lind said that the battalion was "the talk of the whole line," and had received words of praise from highly ranked commanders for their night raids on 26 and 27 June. He concluded the letter with the promise that his next letter would be a very exciting one. He was killed two days later at Beaumont Hamel.

Owen Steele had been a Water Street shop clerk and respected athlete in St. John's. He kept a detailed account of the battalion's activities in Europe in his personal diary and letters home. In a letter dated 30 June 1916, Steele wrote, rather prophetically, that "I believe the climax of our troubles will be reached within the next few days (after which the day of peace will quickly draw near), though they will undoubtedly bring trouble to many." Steele remained with the reserves at Beaumont Hamel, but was mortally wounded by a shell on 7 July. Frank Lind, *The Letters of Mayo Lind: Newfoundland's Unofficial War Correspondent, 1914-1916* (St. John's: Creative Publishers, 2001), 138, 144; *ENL*, s.v. "Lind, Francis Thomas," s.v. "Steele, Owen William"; Facey-Crowther, ed., *Lieutenant Owen William Steele*, 188-189.

¹⁵Most British soldiers expected the assault to begin at 5:30 a.m. Zero Hour was moved to 7:30 a.m. to allow the artillery a clearer view of the German lines as shelling inten-

sified. However, the extra daylight also made advancing British infantry a clearer target for the German gunners.

The mine at Hawthorn Ridge near the Beaumont Hamel sector was blown at 7:20 a.m. However, when the 2nd Royal Fusiliers were sent ahead to secure the ridge at Zero Hour, 7:30 a.m., the Germans had already secured the far side of the resulting crater with several machine-gun posts. Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 264-265; Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 94, 99-100.

¹⁶Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 127-129; Keegan, *The First World War*, 294-295.

¹⁷The 88th Brigade was supposed to advance at 8:40 a.m. and capture the third line of German trenches once the 86th and 87th brigades had cleared the first two lines. Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 169; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 268-269; Cave, *What Became of Corporal Pittman?*, 41-43.

¹⁸The Newfoundland Regiment consisted of approximately 1,000 men, but nearly 200 were held in reserve at Louvencourt. In early 1916, British high commanders ordered all battalions to keep at least ten percent of their troops in reserve, largely due to the heavy losses which the army had sustained during the previous year's combat. This ten percent would provide a battalion with a nucleus around which it could be rebuilt. *ENL*, s.v. "Beaumont Hamel"; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 241-245, 262.

¹⁹Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 232-283; Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 170-171.

²⁰Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 174, 244.

²¹Only the 10th West Yorkshire Regiment suffered more casualties. The 29th Division suffered 5,240 casualties, the second highest divisional casualty rate of the day. Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 247-249; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 272-274.

²²Liddell Hart, Middlebrook, and Keegan argue that the British sealed their own fate with incompetent artillery and infantry tactics. Nicholson believes the Newfoundland Regiment was victimized by last minute order changes. Liddell Hart, *History of the First World War*, 312-314; Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 261-263; Keegan, *The First World War*, 279-284, 292-294, 297-298; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 268.

²³The first reactions to the Newfoundland Regiment's defeat came from British commanding officers who had witnessed the battle. Since these reports were created as private military documents and were not intended for public circulation, I have not discussed them in the body of this paper. Nevertheless, it is still interesting to note that the reports from Lt.-Col. Hadow, Brig.-Gen. Cayley, and General Beauvoir de Lisle were not critical of the Newfoundlanders' advance, opting to emphasize their determination in the face of near impossible battlefield conditions. Their reports alluded to a theme of collective determination which would soon assume mythic proportions within Newfoundland. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador [PANL], War Diary of the Newfoundland Regiment, 1914-1918, Report of Lieutenant-Colonel A.E. Hadow, 1 July 1916; Archives and Manuscripts Division, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland [A&MD], Papers of Thomas Nangle, Newfoundland Regiment, MF 308, File 7, Routine Orders for Gallipoli and Beaumont Hamel, Report of Brigadier-General D.E. Cayley, 88th Brigade, 29th Division, 8 July 1916, 2-3; A&MD, Nangle Papers, File 7, Report of General Henry Beauvoir de Lisle, 11 July 1916, 4-6.

²⁴*ENL*, s.v. "Journalism."

²⁵Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Propaganda and Censorship During Canada's Great War* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1996), 11-12, 66, 78; Vance, *Death So Noble*, 11.

²⁶Ken Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, 2nd ed. (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1999), 108; Stephen Garton, *The Costs of War: Australians Return* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1996), 39-40, 49.

²⁷See, for example: "British Launch Great Offensive," *Evening Telegram*, 1 July 1916; "The British Launch Big Offensive Over 20 Mile Front North of Somme," *Weekly Advocate*, 1 July 1916; "Berlin Despondent over Allies' Advance," *Daily News*, 4 July 1916; "Allied Advance Continues Successfully," *Daily News*, 6 July 1916.

²⁸"First Newfoundland Regiment — Casualty List," *Evening Telegram*, 6 July 1916; "Official Casualty List, First Newfoundland Regiment," *Weekly Advocate*, 6 July 1916; "Message from the Premier," *Evening Telegram*, 8 July 1916; *Daily News*, 9-11 July 1916; "Official Casualty List, First Newfoundland Regiment," *Weekly Advocate*, 10 July 1916; "Meeting of the Patriotic Women," *Evening Telegram*, 22 July 1916.

²⁹The total number of deaths cited in this report is much lower than it actually was. The total number of wounded is fairly close to the total accepted today (477), so there is a good chance that the 115 missing were probably deaths which the state was hesitant to report before bereaved families had been notified. "Official Report to His Excellency," *Evening Telegram*, 29 July 1916.

³⁰Patricia O'Brien notes that Newfoundlanders were unprepared for the destruction of their battalion and only "the very multitude of names went a long way toward blunting the impact of individual losses" ("The Newfoundland Patriotic Association," 137-138); Andrew Parsons believes that the public's collective reaction to Beaumont Hamel was accentuated by the fact that the battalion was "Newfoundland's national contingent" ("Morale and Cohesion," 52).

³¹*The Western Star* was the major news publication on Newfoundland's west coast. "Greater Love Hath No Man," *Western Star*, 12 July 1916.

³²"Our Noble Dead," *Daily News*, 7 July 1916.

³³By the summer of 1916 it was obvious that the year's recruitment goal of 1,800 was beyond reach. In the wake of Beaumont Hamel, recruitment dropped to 76 for the month of July. *ENL*, s.v. "World War One"; David Alexander, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," in James Hiller and Peter Neary, eds., *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 17-39.

³⁴The Newfoundland Regiment was reinforced with 127 new recruits on 11 July 1916 and reassumed a position in the British reserve line three days later with a strength of 260 men. The battalion did not achieve its pre-Beaumont Hamel strength again until December 1916. Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 123; O'Brien, "The Newfoundland Patriotic Association," 140-141; Parsons, "Morale and Cohesion," 59-60.

³⁵"The Third Year," *Evening Telegram*, 4 August 1916.

³⁶Lt.-Col. Hadow's report to Governor Davidson also included some glowing remarks about his battalion's conduct under extreme circumstances. In describing the advance, Brig.-Gen. Cayley stated that "[n]othing could have been finer. In the face of a devastating shell and machine gun fire, they advanced over our parapets, not a man faltering or hanging back. They literally went on till scarcely an officer or man was left unhit." In a let-

ter to Prime Minister Morris, General Beauvoir de Lisle stated that “[t]his example of discipline and valour was equalled by others but cannot be surpassed.” “Official Report to His Excellency,” *Evening Telegram*, 29 July 1916; “The Brigadier-General’s Tribute,” *Evening Telegram*, 10 August 1916; Cave, *What Became of Corporal Pittman?*, 47.

³⁷Edward Morris, *Report of the Prime Minister on his Visit to the Newfoundland Soldiers in France, July 1916* (St. John’s: Herald Print, 1916), 8; “Official Report of General Hunter-Weston,” *Weekly Advocate*, 24 July 1916.

³⁸*ENL*, s.v. “Beaumont Hamel.”

³⁹Jeffrey Keshen believes Canadian soldiers wrote as a means of gaining temporary shelter from the war through the maintenance of contact with their loved ones (*Propaganda and Censorship*, 153). David R. Facey-Crowther argues that writing home allowed Newfoundland soldiers to remind themselves of their motivation for fighting in the first place (“The Soldiers’ Tale: Newfoundland Soldiers’ Accounts of the Great War,” talk to the Newfoundland Genealogical Society, 23 November 1999), while Lackenbauer notes that letters from Newfoundland soldiers at Gallipoli commonly depicted the campaign as a heroic adventure, rather than a bloody and filthy mess (“War, Memory, and the Newfoundland Regiment,” 187-188).

⁴⁰Ellis wrote that “The Newfoundland Regiment is about done. They stood to their guns almost to the last man and fought like those who know no fear.... When I was crawling back I was all alone and never met a soul all the way back, which was 400 yards, only Dead! Dead! Everywhere. The awful sight, it made me so sick that I used to lie down and wonder if would go on or stay there.” “Soldiers’ Letter from France,” *Evening Telegram*, 22 July 1916.

⁴¹“That Never-To-Be-Forgotten Day,” *Daily News*, 28 July 1916.

⁴²Numerous examples of those idealistic themes are reaffirmed every Memorial Day. Numerous speakers during the 1917 and 1918 ceremonies cited Beaumont Hamel as an inspiring example in their attempt to bolster slipping recruitment rates. Memorial Day also reaffirmed the notion that Newfoundland had earned a more revered imperial status through its wartime service. During the 1922 services in St. John’s the platform of the Sergeant’s Memorial was draped with a variety of imperial flags while the Union Jack was flown at half-mast nearby. “July 1st,” *Daily News*, 30 June 1917; “Commemoration Day Observance,” *Daily News*, 2 July 1918; “Commemoration Day Ceremonies, 1922,” *Veteran* 2.3 (September 1922), 17; Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 123-127.

⁴³Newfoundlanders also commemorated World War I on 11 November, which was declared as Remembrance Day within the British Empire the year after the armistice. Remembrance Day does not seem to have been as important to Newfoundlanders as Memorial Day. In November 1925 an anonymous war veteran wrote to *The Evening Telegram* complaining about the general apathy which most St. John’s residents seemed to show the ceremony, noting that it was always poorly attended in comparison to Memorial Day ceremonies. *Evening Telegram*: “Shameful Apathy — Non-Observance by Many,” 11 November 1921; “Wreath of Poppies Laid on the Sergeant’s Memorial,” 13 November 1923; “Remembrance Day Address,” 5 November 1924; “How Shall We Spend Armistice Day,” 10 November 1925.

⁴⁴Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 88-93; Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, x-xi, 56; Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, 3-4, 57-58.

⁴⁵Adrian Gregory, *The Silence of Memory: Armistice Day, 1919-1946* (Oxford: Berg, 1994) 23, 41, 51.

⁴⁶Anzac Day is observed annually in Australia on 25 April, the anniversary of the Anzac's disastrous landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915. Garton, *The Costs of War*, 20-23.

⁴⁷O'Brien, "The Newfoundland Patriotic Association"; *ENL*, s.v. "Newfoundland Patriotic Association"; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 102-107; Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 121-122; "To Commemorate July First," *Daily News*, 27 June 1917; "Commemoration Services Yesterday," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1917; "Fallen Heroes of Beaumont Hamel Honored Yesterday," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1917.

⁴⁸"July 1st," *Daily News*, 30 June 1917.

⁴⁹"Commemoration Day, 1918," *Daily News*, 27 June 1918; "Commemoration Day Observance," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1918; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 282-283.

⁵⁰The GWVA was formed in August 1918 in St. John's and incorporated members of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers and Rejected Volunteers Association [RSVA]. The GWVA served as a veterans' lobbying organization, and its chief objectives were to acquire acceptable pension rates, provide vocational training and employment opportunities for veterans, promote sustained comradeship, and to see memorials built to honour their part in the conflict. "War Veterans Meeting," *Daily News*, 20 August 1918; *The Great War Veterans' Association of Newfoundland: Constitution and By-Laws, 1918*, 3, 5-10.

⁵¹"Memorial Day Fittingly Observed," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1919; "City Honours Heroic Dead," *Daily News*, 2 July 1919.

⁵²The 1921 ceremony in Harbour Grace retained an almost identical programme to the one used annually in St. John's. The 1927 Memorial Day service on Bell Island also adhered to the established programme. In Grand Falls that same year the ceremony began with a parade to the community's war memorial; wreaths were laid, hymns were sung, and the ceremony was concluded with "The Last Post." "Harbour Grace Notes," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1921; "Commemoration Day at Bell Island," *Daily News*, 2 July 1927; "Grand Falls Observes Memorial Day," *Daily News*, 5 July 1927.

⁵³6,241 men served in the Newfoundland Regiment, of whom 1,305 were killed. More than 5,000 additional Newfoundlanders served in the Newfoundland Forestry Corps, the Royal Naval Reserve, and other British imperial forces. Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 507-509; Sharpe, "The 'Race of Honour'," 34-35, 46-47.

⁵⁴"Anglican Cathedral Service," *Evening Telegram*, 5 July 1920.

⁵⁵Vance, *Death So Noble*, 40-44.

⁵⁶"Memorial Day Celebration," *Evening Telegram*, 3 July 1923.

⁵⁷Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in Cultural History* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1995), 93-97.

⁵⁸"Memorial Day Celebration," *Evening Telegram*, 3 July 1923.

⁵⁹Pension rates caused great debate between the government and the GWVA, which regarded pensions as "compensation, money paid as a right by the people of Newfoundland ... a debt that the country owes to our returned men and the dependents of those who have fallen." The GWVA lobbied incessantly for amendments to pension legislation before receiving acceptable improvements to the pension system in 1923. PANL, Office of the Prime Minister — Richard Squires Papers 1920-1924, GN 8/2, 8.188, Report submitted by the GWVA Special Committee Regarding Pensions, 22 March 1920.

⁶⁰"Remembrance Day," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1919.

⁶¹“Our Immortals,” *Evening Telegram*, 3 July 1920.

⁶²“Beaumont Hamel — Or a Lesson Learned from the Shrine Erected in Bannerman Park,” *Evening Telegram*, 5 July 1920.

⁶³“Commemoration Day,” *Daily News*, 29 June 1918; “Commemoration Day Observance,” *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1918.

⁶⁴“GWVA Notes,” *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1925.

⁶⁵“Memorial Day Celebration,” *Evening Telegram*, 3 July 1923.

⁶⁶“Forget-Them-Not,” *Daily News*, 2 July 1925.

⁶⁷Wartime interests provoked politicians to put aside their partisan differences for the greater good of their dominion’s war effort, making it difficult to redraw the traditional political lines once the conflict ended. Alexander, “Newfoundland’s Traditional Economy,” 35; R.M. Elliott, “Newfoundland Politics in the 1920s: The Genesis and Significance of the Hollis Walker Enquiry,” in Hiller and Neary, eds., *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 184-194; Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 134-170, 191-196, 201-202, 290-292.

⁶⁸Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, 51; Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 80.

⁶⁹Fussell argues that recalling World War I theatrically became common because numerous parallels could be made between warfare and theatre. He notes that in both cases, individuals are trained for a specific role which they perform detached from society. According to Vance, Canadian war-based theatre was another publicly accessible medium which was “carefully employed to erase any negative connotations” of the war (*The Great War*, 191-199). See also Vance, *Death So Noble*, 82-85.

⁷⁰“Newfoundland and the War,” *The Times History and Encyclopedia of the War*, Vol. 14, Part 175 (24 December 1917), 181-216.

⁷¹“Newfoundland and the War,” *Times History and Encyclopedia of the War*, 195.

⁷²Cramm, *The First Five Hundred*, 70.

⁷³Cramm, *The First Five Hundred*, 44.

⁷⁴*The Cadet* was the official publication of Newfoundland’s Catholic Cadet Corps from 1914 until 1920, and it was utilized as a propaganda tool during World War I. *ENL*, s.v. “The Cadet.”

⁷⁵McKenzie was commissioned in the early 1920s to write an official history of Newfoundland’s role in World War I. It was a highly anticipated work that failed to appear. The September 1921 *Veteran* asked, “What about our Regimental History? Is anything being done by F.A. McKenzie, whom we understand has been paid a considerable sum, but so far nothing has been produced?” A year later McKenzie informed Thomas Nangle, through Newfoundland High Commissioner Victor Gordon, that he was upset at the news that Nangle himself had seemingly begun work on a regimental history of his own (Nangle had been reading Newfoundland war records in London in 1922). McKenzie suggested that they should collaborate, as he believed a literary rivalry would be detrimental to a final official history. No subsequent evidence was uncovered which suggested what happened to McKenzie’s official history, but it is certain that it was never completed, and Newfoundlanders had to wait for such a treatment until G.W.L. Nicholson’s *The Fighting Newfoundlander* appeared in 1964. F.A. McKenzie, “Newfoundland’s Heroic Part in the War,” *Great War* 7 (7 October 1916), 309-318; “Things We Want to Know,” *Veteran* 1.3 (September 1921), 68; A&MD, Nangle Papers, File 16.

⁷⁶McKenzie, “Newfoundland’s Heroic Part,” 314-315.

⁷⁷Shortis was the chief historiographer of the Newfoundland Museum and wrote a large volume of historical essays on various aspects of Newfoundland's history, while collecting and transcribing many assorted historical documents which he pieced together into an eight-volume collection which he referred to as his "Fugitive History."

Concerning the advance at Beaumont Hamel, Shortis wrote that "[n]otwithstanding, however, this rain of shot from the machine guns, the shrapnel, and the high explosives, our troops moved on as if at manoeuvres, never faltering for a moment, although men and officers were falling all around. This went on until those who were left reached the first line of the enemy's trenches. It was then seen that the German position could not be taken until further preparations were made by the artillery. The men were then withdrawn."

The Newfoundland Quarterly, founded in 1901, is one of Newfoundland's most well-known and widely read publications. *ENL*, s.v. "Shortis, Henry Francis"; *Dictionary of Newfoundland and Labrador Biography*, s.v. "Shortis, Henry Francis"; *ENL*, s.v. "Newfoundland Quarterly"; Henry F. Shortis, "Newfoundlanders in Picardy," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 16.2 (October 1916), 3.

⁷⁸"Newfoundland and the War," *Times History and Encyclopedia of the War*, 195.

⁷⁹It is interesting to note that the Germans were credited with having exhibited great skill in defeating the Newfoundlanders. Lackenbauer notes that soldiers' and press accounts of the Gallipoli campaign described the Turks in a similar fashion ("War, Memory, and the Newfoundland Regiment," 184). Conversely, Vance notes that Canadian commemorations frequently recalled World War I as a victory against German tyranny and barbarism (*Death So Noble*, 12, 15). Newfoundland commentators seemed to believe that giving the Germans their due would enhance mythic perceptions of the conflict.

⁸⁰*Colonial Commerce* was a monthly publication of the Trade Review Publishing Company of St. John's. *ENL*, s.v. "Colonial Commerce."

⁸¹John J. Ryan, "The Royal Newfoundland Regiment: Reminiscences of the Great War, in which it took such a prominent part," *Colonial Commerce* 27.5 (30 April 1918), 13.

⁸²*The Veteran Magazine* was the official publication of the GWVA. Some early numbers were special editions which commemorated battles of great significance to Newfoundland. The April 1921 edition stated that "[t]he Trail was a long one, both in length and time. There is much to be told, and many numbers will be needed to complete the task. Gallipoli, Beaumont Hamel, Gueudecourt, Combles, Sailly-Saillisel, Monchy, Steenbek, Broembek, Cambrai, Neuve Eglise, Armentieres! All are names that are immortalized in the history of our Country, and have shed a halo of glory around our island home." Editorial, *Veteran* 1.2 (April 1921), 5.

⁸³"The Beaumont Hamel Commemorative Edition," *Veteran* 1.3 (September 1921), 5; Arthur Raley, "Beaumont Hamel," *Veteran* 1.3 (September 1921), 40.

⁸⁴The accounts given by Shortis, McKenzie, and Cramm consistently cited approximately 100 dead, 230 missing, and 374 wounded. Shortis, "Newfoundlanders in Picardy," 3; McKenzie, "Newfoundland's Heroic Part," 315; Cramm, *The First Five Hundred*, 44.

⁸⁵Ryan, "The Royal Newfoundland Regiment," 12-13.

⁸⁶Middlebrook believes these southern advances were made possible because the French had concentrated their artillery to a much higher degree than did the British, enabling the French to pound the opposing German trenches with much greater effectiveness. Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 192, 207, 258.

⁸⁷McKenzie, "Newfoundland's Heroic Part," 316.

⁸⁸Cramm cited a portion of Hunter-Weston's letter to Morris where he stated that "it was the action of the Newfoundland Battalion and the other units of the British left (that) contributed largely to the victory achieved by British and French troops.... The gallantry and devotion of this battalion, therefore, was not in vain, and the credit of victory belongs not alone to that individual but to the whole team whose concerted action led to the desired result" (*The First Five Hundred*, 45).

⁸⁹Raley, "Beaumont Hamel," 42.

⁹⁰The Newfoundland Regiment's advance at Beaumont Hamel probably had little bearing on actions to the south. Seven divisions and approximately ten miles separated the Newfoundlanders from the British and French forces which achieved success along the southern sector. See the map of the Somme region in Middlebrook, *The First Day on the Somme*, 49.

⁹¹The battalion's complement had reached 601 when it fought at Gueudecourt on 12 October. Raley, "Beaumont Hamel," 4; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 284, 301-315; *ENL*, s.v. "Regiment, Royal Newfoundland."

⁹²The British assault featured a new tactic called the 'creeping barrage,' whereby the British continued their artillery bombardment as the infantry advanced. The Germans were unable to use machine guns against the advancing troops, and Newfoundlanders stormed their trenches with their bayonets fixed. Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 310-315; *ENL*, s.v. "Regiment, Royal Newfoundland."

⁹³"NF and the War," *Times History*, 197.

⁹⁴Cramm, *The First Five Hundred*, 47.

⁹⁵According to Tim Cook, the numerous Canadian regimental histories that appeared after the war were largely a response to veterans' demands for written accounts of their participation in the war. Cook argues that Canadian military officials wanted these histories to function as literary homage to the dead which portrayed the war in a favourable manner. Tim Cook, "'Literary Memorials': The Great War Regimental Histories, 1919-1939," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, New Series, 13 (2002), 167-190. Garton suggests that the appearance of Australian official histories, including C.E.W. Bean's enormous and influential account of the Anzacs, gave the myth a greater sense of legitimacy (*Costs of War*, 19-20).

⁹⁶Antiwar literature appeared almost immediately after the war ended, but was largely marginalized. Critics argued that it falsified the accepted history of World War I and questioned the established mythic themes of comradeship, sacrifice, and heroism. Some of the most notable antiwar works to appear in the late 1920s and early 1930s included Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War*, Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Robert Graves's *Goodbye to All That*, and Siegfried Sassoon's *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer*. The most notable Canadian pieces were Peregrine Acland's *All Else is Folly*, Will Bird's *And We Go On*, and Charles Yale Harrison's *Generals Die in Bed*. Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory*, 109, 203-207, 259; Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined: The First World War in English Culture* (New York: Atheneum, 1991), 253, 356-358; 42; Vance, *Death So Noble*, 186-197.

⁹⁷Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, xi.

⁹⁸H.V. Nelles argues that Anglo-Canadian attempts to have the 300th anniversary of Quebec's establishment incorporated into the broader cultural tradition of Canada actually helped to reinforce French-Canadian identity. Nelles shows that the pageantry in Quebec ac-

tually suggested to French Canadians that they deserved greater cultural equality within a largely Anglo-centric nation (*The Art of Nation-building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999], 11-19, 316). Peter Pope argues that organizers of Newfoundland's 400th anniversary celebrations of John Cabot's supposed 1497 Bonavista landfall were more concerned with "nationalism than navigation," and that the 1897 Cabot ceremonies were a good example of historical appropriation for the purpose of influencing cultural memory (*The Many Landfalls of John Cabot* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997], xi, 8-10, 69-70, 76).

⁹⁹Le Goff, *History and Memory*, 89.

¹⁰⁰After withstanding a German assault, the Canadians fought back and captured the German positions along the entire ridge. Success came at a high cost for the Canadians — the corps suffered 10,000 casualties from a fighting force of 40,000 men. Desmond Morton and J.L. Granatstein, *Marching To Armageddon: Canadians and the Great War, 1914-1919* (Toronto: Lester and Orpen Dennys, 1989), 138-143.

¹⁰¹According to Vance, the Vimy Memorial "was clearly a place of worship. It was the nation's primary altar to the fallen of the war" (*Death So Noble*, 69-70). Thomson, "National Sorrow, National Pride," 14-16, 20-22.

¹⁰²Garton, *Costs of War*, 20-23, 32-35, 38-43, 49; Inglis, *Sacred Places*, 83-90, 251-269.

¹⁰³"In Honour of our Boys!," *Evening Telegram*, 19 July 1916; "St. John's Wood," *Evening Telegram*, 20 July 1916.

¹⁰⁴"Fallen Heroes of Beaumont Hamel Honored Yesterday," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 1917.

¹⁰⁵Smaller monuments were also built to honour the efforts of the Newfoundland Regiment at Gueudecourt, Monchy-le-Preux, Masnières (for the Battle of Cambrai), and Courtrai (in Belgium). "Governor's Address, 20 April 1920," *Proceedings of the Newfoundland House of Assembly, 1920* (St. John's: Evening Telegram Ltd.), 6; A&MD, Nangle Papers, File 3, Minute of the Executive Council, 6 January 1920; A&MD, Nangle Papers, Nangle to Squires, 9 November 1922; PANL, Great War Veterans' Association of Newfoundland, MG 592, Box 1, Minute, 6 January 1920; G.J. Whitty, "Visit to Battlefields and Newfoundland War Memorial," *Veteran* 3.3 (October 1923), 15.

¹⁰⁶"The Ladies' Auxiliary," *Veteran* 1.2 (April 1921), 74.

¹⁰⁷The Ladies' Auxiliary was formed in January 1920 to assist the GWVA with its relief work. Janet Ayre, the chairwoman of the Beaumont Hamel Collection Committee, was the widow of an officer who had been killed at Beaumont Hamel and also a member of the GWVA's Ladies' Auxiliary ("Ladies' Auxiliary," 73-74); "Beaumont Hamel Collection," *Evening Telegram*, 10 November 1920; Margot Duley, *Where Once Our Mothers Stood We Stand: Women's Suffrage in Newfoundland 1890-1925* (Charlottetown: Gynergy Books, 1993), 105.

¹⁰⁸A&MD, Nangle Papers, Ayre to Nangle, 28 August 1922.

¹⁰⁹A&MD, Nangle Papers, Executive Council Minute, 6 January 1920; *ENL*, s.v. "War Memorials."

¹¹⁰Cochius worked as the landscape architect for Bowring Park in St. John's from 1912 to 1917. *Dictionary of Newfoundland and Labrador Biography*, s.v. "Cochius, Rudolf Hugo Karel."

¹¹¹“20 April 1920,” *Proceedings of the House of Assembly, 1920*, 6; “Report of the Department of Militia,” *Appendix to the Newfoundland Journal of the House of Assembly, 1922* (St. John’s: House of Assembly, 1923), 198-200.

¹¹²Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 150-151; Elliott, “Hollis Walker Enquiry,” 184-195.

¹¹³Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Verso, 1991), 159.

¹¹⁴PANL, H.H. Winter Papers, MG 79, Box 3, Nangle to Squires, 9 November 1922.

¹¹⁵Pope, *The Many Landfalls of John Cabot*, xi, 8-10.

¹¹⁶Bringing that patriotic and optimistic image into reality became slightly delayed when Nangle went looking for the money raised by the Beaumont Hamel Collection Committee during the fall of 1922. Nangle, as Newfoundland’s state-appointed war memorial representative, believed the GWVA’s Memorial Committee was entitled to the funds, while the collection committee believed it should determine how the money was spent.

Nangle made several unsuccessful attempts to acquire the funds from the committee between August and October 1922. When these failed, he asked GWVA Dominion President G.J. Whitty to have lawyers secure a court injunction against the committee in October 1922. After this proved unsuccessful, Nangle appealed to Squires for assistance, telling him that “[t]he place is going to be a beauty spot but if we leave (Mrs. Ayre) and co. loose we cannot guarantee what may happen.” The dispute was not resolved until legal action and state intervention forced the Beaumont Hamel committee to relinquish the funds to Nangle in the spring of 1923. A&MD, Nangle Papers, Nangle to Whitty, 30 October 1922; Nangle to Squires, 2 February 1923; “Newfoundland’s Fallen: Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel,” *Veteran* 3.1 (April 1923), 17.

¹¹⁷Rudolph Cochius, “Marking the Trail of the Caribou,” *Veteran* 4.1 (April 1924), 8, 17.

¹¹⁸Canadian monument designers took similar measures to convert memorial grounds into sacred soil by beautifying them with surrounding gardens and trees. Vance, *Death So Noble*, 47-48.

¹¹⁹A&MD, Nangle Papers, Nangle to Squires, 2 February 1923; Cochius, “Marking the Trail,” 23.

¹²⁰“Beaumont Hamel Memorial Park — Tomorrow’s Opening by Field Marshal Earl Haig,” *Evening Telegram*, 6 June 1925.

¹²¹Gotto created the caribou sculptures for Newfoundland’s other overseas memorials, as well as the figures on the National War Memorial located in St. John’s. A&MD, Nangle Papers, File 3, Minute of the Executive Council, 6 January 1920; “National War Memorial,” *Veteran* 3.1 (April 1923), 49.

¹²²“Newfoundland’s Fallen, Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel,” *Veteran* 3.1 (April 1923), 17.

¹²³A&MD, Nangle Papers, Cochius to Nangle, 4 November 1922; G.J. Whitty, “Visit to Battlefields and Newfoundland War Memorial,” *Veteran* 3.3 (October 1923), 15.

¹²⁴Eric J. Hobsbawm also notes that devices and symbols were developed to allow national movements and states to develop their own national foundations (*Nations and Nationalism since 1870: Programme, Myth, and Reality* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990], 136-139).

¹²⁵Pope, *The Many Landfalls of John Cabot*, 102.

¹²⁶Haig had previously unveiled the National War Memorial on 1 July 1924. He played a significant role in veterans' affairs after World War I and was frequently asked to speak at remembrance ceremonies and veterans' reunions, but he was a shy and inarticulate public speaker. Gerard J. De Groot, *Douglas Haig, 1861-1928* (London: Unwin Hyman Limited, 1988), 402-405; H.S. Knight, "Unveiling of Newfoundland's National War Memorial and the Haig Week Celebrations," *Veteran* 4.3 (October 1924), 49-50; "Unveiling Ceremony at Beaumont Hamel: Field Marshal Haig Dedicates the Park and Unveils the Memorial," *Evening Telegram*, 8 June 1925; "Beaumont Hamel Park Officially Opened," *Daily News*, 9 June 1925; "Unveiling Ceremony at Beaumont Hamel," *Veteran* 5.1 (June 1925), 5; "Beaumont Hamel Park Unveiling," *Veteran* 5.2 (October 1925), 32.

¹²⁷"Unveiling Ceremony," 5.

¹²⁸Thomas Nangle, "Newfoundland Memorial Park," *Veteran* 5.3 (May 1926), 9.

¹²⁹"Newfoundland Overseas," *Evening Telegram*, 8 June 1925.

¹³⁰Peter Neary, *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World, 1929 to 1949* (Kingston and Montreal: Queen's-McGill University Press, 1988), 12-43.

¹³¹Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 253-255; Neary, *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World*, 343-345; David MacKenzie, *Inside the Atlantic Triangle: Canada and the Entrance of Newfoundland into Confederation, 1939-1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 194-201, 209-214, 224-227.

¹³²Fentress and Wickham, *Social Memory*, 87.

¹³³The ceremony included a parade through downtown St. John's to the National War Memorial where wreaths were laid, speeches were given, consolatory hymns were sung, a three-gun salute was fired, and a two-minute silence was observed. "86th Memorial Day Service Commemorating the 87th Anniversary of The Battle of Beaumont Hamel, National War Memorial, St. John's, Newfoundland, Sunday, 29th June, 2003" (St. John's: Royal Canadian Legion, 2003).

¹³⁴"Lest We Forget," *Evening Telegram*, 30 June 2003.

¹³⁵Will Hillard, "History Overshadowed," *Evening Telegram*, 2 July 2002.

¹³⁶Kevin Major, *As Near to Heaven By Sea: A History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 2002), 330-331.

¹³⁷Kevin Major, *No Man's Land* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1995).

¹³⁸David Macfarlane, *The Danger Tree: Memory, War and the Search for a Family's Past*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Vintage, 2000), 137.

¹³⁹Jim Furlong, "Casualties of War: What if Beaumont Hamel Never Happened," *Newfoundland Herald* 57.27 (July 2002), 43.

¹⁴⁰Not all contemporary commentators have reassessed Beaumont Hamel in this manner. In his most recent publication, Patrick O'Flaherty offers an interpretation of the attack which fits quite well with the selectively romantic notions that were being circulated in the decade following its occurrence (*Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933* [St. John's: Long Beach Press, 2005]). O'Flaherty contends that "amidst the anguish there appeared as well a note of pride," and that the attack had "affected Newfoundland deeply. It raised the colony's standing among countries of the world, raised it to a place of honour and importance. So at any rate it was believed, and there is no good reason to doubt it" (277-278).

¹⁴¹"The Newfoundland Beaumont-Hamel Memorial Receives National Historic Site Designation," Veterans' Affairs Canada Press Release, 10 April 1997.

¹⁴²*Newfoundland and the Great War*, n.d. (www.heritage.nf.ca/greatwar) (19 May 2004).

¹⁴³Jerry Bannister, "Making History: Cultural Memory in Twentieth Century Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Studies* 18.2 (Fall 2002), 175-194.

¹⁴⁴Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, 124-127, 130, 143-144; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 102, 105-111.

¹⁴⁵"1921 Militia Report," *Appendix to the Newfoundland Journal of the House of Assembly*, 1922, 198-200; A&MD, Nangle Papers, Nangle to Squires, 9 November 1922; Whitty, "Visit to Battlefields," *Veteran* 3.3 (October 1923), 15.

¹⁴⁶After Gueudecourt the Newfoundland Regiment served along the Somme front for several more months before moving north to Sailly-Saillisel where it successfully staved off a German counterattack on 2 March 1917. At Monchy-le-Preux on 14 April 1917 the battalion successfully stormed the German trenches, resisted numerous counterattacks and suffered 460 casualties in its costliest engagement since Beaumont Hamel. After a fierce skirmish several days later at the Scarpe, the Newfoundland Regiment moved into the Ypres salient in June 1917.

The battalion suffered 200 casualties during the Battle of Poelcappelle in October 1917. Before the end of the year the battalion fought again at Cambrai and Masnières, costing the unit an additional 450 casualties. It was after these two battles that the battalion was renamed the Royal Newfoundland Regiment. The battalion fought during the German's failed 1918 spring offensive, served in the Allies August counter-offensive and was in Belgium preparing for a forced crossing of the Scheldt River when the armistice was signed on 11 November 1918. Raley, "Beaumont Hamel," 4; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, 284, 301-315, 331-335, 348-355, 358, 392-400, 410-416, 419-421, 423, 445-446, 449-458, 500-502; *ENL*, s.v. "Regiment, Royal Newfoundland."

¹⁴⁷James M. MacPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 665.