



**Frank Gilbert Dawe**  
**World War I**  
**Royal Newfoundland Regiment**  
**Regimental No. 915**

**Born:** 20 November 1892

**Place of Birth:** Coley's Point, Bay Roberts

**Parents:** John and Caroline Dawe

**Married:** Florence Marge Earle, 6 June 1927

Frank enlisted in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment on 8 January 1915, he was 22 at the time. His official enlistment paper describes him as:

- a) 5 feet 6 inches tall
- b) 129 lbs
- c) light complexion
- d) Foxy (red) hair
- e) Grey eyes
- f) Both little fingers crooked
- g) A fisherman
- h) Church of England

His service record is quite detailed and covers his time of service, 4 years, and 106 days. Pte. Dawe was promoted twice during

his service, to lance corporal on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1916, and to Corporal on February 9<sup>th</sup>. 1917.

Cpl Dawe's service record shows a soldier, who fought in some of the infamous battles of WW I. He was wounded twice and held as a POW by the Germans for about 18 months, yet he survived and returned home.

Service Record:

1. Embarked St. John's on board the S.S. Dominion on 3 Feb 1915
2. Embarked for The British Expeditionary Force (BEF) 20 Feb 1915
3. To Cairo by train 21 Aug 1915
4. Embarked for Gallipoli 13 Sept 1915
5. Landed at Suvla Bay the night of 19 -20 Sept.1915
6. Evacuated 15 Jan 1916
7. Suffered leg wound 16 Jan 1916 and admitted to hospital at Tewfik 21 Feb 1916.
8. Returned to duty 10 Mar 1916
9. Transported to Marseilles 22 Mar 1916
10. Wounded again on 16 June 1916. Shrapnel wound to the right shoulder. Operation to remove metal from his shoulder.
11. Admitted to field hospital 17 June 1916
12. Invalided to England 21 June 1916, then hospitalized at Wadsworth 22 June 1916.
13. Following convalescence, he was furloughed and then attached to Depot in England 3 Aug 1916
14. Embarked Southampton 3 Oct 1916
15. To Rouen Camps in France and rejoined unit 19 Oct 1916

16. Fighting with unit for several months, then went missing in action at Monchy Le Preux, France
17. Taken prisoner at Monchy 14 April 1917.
18. Transported as POW to Soltau prisoner of war camp in Hannover Provinz, Germany.
19. Soltau Camp (*Lager Soltau*), the largest German prisoner-of-war camp of the First World War was built in 1914.



20. Released on 30 Dec 1918 after a year and 8 months as POW.
21. Arrived Lyon, France and then moved to Winchester, England on 2 Jan 1919.
22. To Newfoundland on 12 Mar 1919
23. Demobilized 24 April 1919.

Being able to track Cpl Dawe following his discharge from military service in 1919 has proven difficult.

The 1921 Newfoundland census shows his parents still living at Coley's Point. With them is their daughter Carrie who is 20 and a Grand daughter Emily who is 1 but there is no mention of Frank with them, and his name doesn't appear elsewhere in the census entries.

The 1935 census shows Frank Dawe at 42 with wife Florence 32 and they have 3 children living in Coley's Point.

In 1930 Frank and his family immigrated to Boston, Suffolk, Massachusetts, USA.

Florence died in 1966 and Frank 25 years later in October of 1991. He was 98 years old. They are buried at Coley's Point in the St. John the Evangelist Cemetery there.

## The Road To Monchy

Frank Dawe of Bay Roberts volunteered for the Newfoundland Regiment in the early Spring of 1915. No. 915, Corporal Dawe was with 14 Platoon of "D" Company, when they embarked for overseas, and he sailed with the 1st Battalion, when they left Aldershot to join the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

Training with the original machine gun section, under Major H. S. Windeler in the C.L.B. Armoury, he was with the gunners all through Gallipoli and Suvla Bay, becoming an N.C.O. in France, and taking part in the Battle of the Somme, at Gueudecourt and Sailli-sailli Sel.

Corporal Dawe marched along through Arras on the road to Monchy. Here on that beautiful morning of April 14th, 1917, he went "over the top" with the Newfoundlanders, in the first wave of "D" Company, 13 Platoon, and the Essex Regiment on the left flank. Two German Divisions were also attacking, believing the village to be defenceless. Of our boys, who leapt out into "No man's land" at dawn, hundreds were killed, wounded and reported "missing." At least

a third of the Battalion fell into the hands of the field-grey hordes. Corp. Dawe was one of these. First marched to Lille—the historic town in Belgium—he was later conveyed to Germany, where he remained a prisoner of war until the Armistice was signed. Then he was repatriated and returned to Newfoundland.

About five years ago he underwent a major operation in the Grace Hospital. He is now a patient at "Sudbury," under the care of Dr. Roberts, and maintains very vividly the memory of Monchy-le-Preux, and its aftermath.

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