



**Ronald Neville**

**The Royal Newfoundland Regiment**

**Regimental No. 2066**

**World War I**

**Born:** 1899- 1900?

**Place of Birth:** North River, Newfoundland

**Parents:** James and Ellen (?) Neville

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 1916, Ronald enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Newfoundland Regiment (the Regiment had not yet been given the title “Royal”) for a twelve (12) month period at the Recruiting depot in St. John’s.

The enlistment papers describe him physically as being 5’ 7” tall, with brown hair and blue eyes .He was of Roman Catholic faith, a fisherman by trade and just 19 years old.

When one pictures a good soldier in their mind, Ronald was just that. When one

pictures an undisciplined rabble rouser and, on the edge, bad guy, Ronald was that too. His service record bears out both sides of Ronald to be quite accurate.

Following are handwritten excerpts taken directly from Ronald Neville’s service record:

1. 22 – 03 – 16: Embarked St. John’s on board the S. S. Sicilian for the UK



**S.S Sicilian**

2. 09 – 07 – 16: Embarked Southampton for BEF (British Expeditionary Force)
3. 10 – 09 – 16: Disembarked Rouen, France
4. 25 – 07 – 16: To Unit
5. 04 – 10 – 16: Admitted to hospital at Rouen
6. 08 – 10 – 16: To England
7. 09 – 10 – 16: Admitted to the 4<sup>th</sup> London general hospital
8. 06 – 11 – 16: Furloughed then attached to depot
9. 07 – 01 – 1917: Re-engage after his 12 month original enlistment expired
10. 03 – 06 – 17: Embarked for BEF
11. 19 – 06 – 17: Joined Battalion in the field
12. 16 – 08 – 17: Wounded
13. 18 – 08 – 17: Admitted to field hospital, transferred from CCS

- (Causality Clearing Station) with GSW (gunshot wound) to shoulder, thigh and arm.
14. 20 – 08 – 17: Admitted to 6<sup>th</sup> general hospital at Rouen
  15. 09 – 09 – 17: Rejoined unit in the field
  16. 25 – 09 – 17: Promoted to L/Cpl (lance corporal)
  17. Furloughed London short leave to 04 – 02 – 18
  18. 04 – 02 – 18: Did not return as required. Found and relieved of L/Cpl rank
  19. 20 – 03 – 18: Sent back to France under escort
  20. 21 – 03 – 18: Disembarked at Havre and joined BEF
  21. 09 – 04 – 18: Admitted to station hospital at Rouen with GSW to left knee
  22. 18 – 04 – 18: Transferred England
  23. 25 – 05 – 18: Transferred to London general hospital
  24. 11 – 06 – 18: Apprehended in London for wearing decorations to which he was not entitled and taken under escort to Winchester
  25. 15 – 06 – 18: Received 14 days detention
  26. 05 – 03 – 19: Demobilized at Hazeley Down Camps.

Ronald was discharged in the UK but unlike most Newfoundland soldiers he did not ship home immediately. He had married Rachael McKenna of Ayr, Scotland on June 28, 1918, while on leave

Following his discharge in the UK, Ronald gets himself in trouble with the law and found himself on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1918, sentenced to three (3) months hard labour in Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, Scotland.

Ronald ran into more difficulty when in the spring of 1919, his wife Rachel left him. In his own words, Ronald wrote that “she had gone off with an Australian soldier.”

Following this, Ronald asked for and was granted passage to return home to Newfoundland. According to records, he had passage on the S.S. Sachem to Newfoundland on January 15, 1920 but does not appear in the 1921 Newfoundland census.

The 1935 general census of Newfoundland shows Ronald (36) living in North River, Newfoundland. He is now married to a lady named Bridget (from Labrador). His father, James (79) is living with them

By 1945 census entry shows Ronald and Bridget still living in North River.

Ronald Passed away on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 1973, at the age of seventy-four (74). He is buried in the Roman Catholic Cemetery at North River.