



Wilfred Nathan French

Royal Artillery Regiment Newfoundland

Regimental No. 970187 M.I.D.

World War II

Born: 26 Apr 1919

Died: 20 Nov 2000

Place of Birth: Ayrshire, Scotland

Parents: Nathan and Agnes (nee Taylor)
French

The 1921 Newfoundland general census shows Nathan French age 25 was born 1896 and currently employed as a bookkeeper at C & A Dawe Office. Agnes his wife was also born in 1896 but in Scotland. Son Wilfred is listed as 2 years old and born in Ayrshire, Scotland. They are residents of Frenches Cove, Bay Roberts.

The next census in 1935 finds the family now living in St. John's on Pleasant Street. Nathan 39 has taken a job as Postmaster at the General Post Office there. Agnes is 38 and their family has grown to include five children. Wilfred is 16, Edward 14, Leslie 12, Harold 8, and Yvonne 4.

Prior to enlisting in the Newfoundland Artillery Regiment, Wilfred worked in a grocery store. This is supported by several trips to England/Scotland in 1938 and 1939 listing his occupation as grocer.

The 1939 trip departed England on April 20th, 1939, bound for St. John's. On the passenger list, Wilfred gives his residence while in the UK as 40 London Street, Ayrshire, Scotland. He is 19.

The 1945 census has Wilfred back in St. John's but living on Brazil Street with his wife, Mary Ellen Roche of St. John's.

Sometime over the course of their marriage, they moved to the Gander area, where Wilfred became an active member of the Royal Canadian Legion there. It is here that Wilfred passed away in late 2000 and is buried in the Gander Civilian Cemetery (old).

During his time in service, Wilfred was MID. This means that he was Mentioned In Dispatches – commended by Commanding officers for outstanding or meritorious service.

Below is Wilfred's obituary from "The Telegram", November 2000:

French, Wilfred Nathan
Veteran of WW11 - 166th Newfoundland Regiment

*Passed peacefully away **Monday, November 20th, 2000, "Wilf" French**, long time resident of Gander, aged 81 years.*

Predeceased by his brother Donald and his son Allan. Leaving to mourn his loving wife, Mary Ellen (nee Roche); sons; Nat (LeeAnn), St. John's and Marc (Christine), Gander; daughters; Linda, London, Ontario and Donna Lee, St. John's; brothers; Leslie Taylor (Eileen), St. John's and Harold (Elsie), Manchester, New Hampshire; and sister Yvonne (Ern), St. John's; 10 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren, many nieces and nephews, and countless friends within Newfoundland and Labrador and across Canada. Wilf was a veteran of the 166th Newfoundland Regiment- Mentioned in Dispatches, a Provincial Past President to the Royal Canadian Legion, member of the Executive of Dominion Command, and five times President of the Legion Branch #8, Gander. He was also involved in many local public service organizations, serving on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Corps of Commissioners and the Legion Manor in Gander. He was a founder of the Gander Rod and Gun Club and 537th Air Cadet Squadron. Resting at Stacey's Funeral Home, Gander. Visitation Tuesday and Wednesday from 2-9 P.M.. Funeral Service on Thursday, November 23rd, 2000 at 10 A.M. at St. Martin's Anglican Cathedral, with interment at the Commonwealth Wars Graves Cemetery, Gander. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to War Amputees of Canada or the charity of one's choice.

Nov. 22, 2000