THE ROYAL NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT – 1795 - 1816

The origin of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment can be traced back to the year 1795. In that year Captain Skinner raised an army unit in and around St. John's Newfoundland. Through vigorous recruiting, the regiment was 385 strong by Christmas 1803, and by June 1805 it had reached the very respectable figure of 683 men.

The Royal Newfoundland Regiment was stationed in the Canadas for ten years and regimental detachments served in the majority of land and naval engagements during the War of 1812. Detachments of the Regiment were sent to Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick. A company of the Regiment served as marines with the Lake Erie Royal Navy Squadron. Two other companies were sent to reinforce Michilimackinac on Lake Huron including Fort Willow Depot.

From February to April of 1814, six officers and 130 men of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment accompanied by 11 artillerymen, and a naval party of 21, marched overland with supplies from Kingston to York, through the Nine Mile Portage to Fort Willow Depot. Moving to re-supply the starving garrison at Michilimackinac, in a remarkable operation that demonstrated their capability and determination both ashore, and on the water, they felled trees to build 30 bateaux at Fort Willow Landing and then rowed from the Nottawasaga River across Lake Huron to the fort at Michilimackinac (some 360 miles) losing only one boat crushed in the ice choked waters.

On August 4th of 1814**,** the Royal Newfoundland Regiment repulsed an attack by outnumbering American forces on Fort Michilimackinac with no losses.

From September of 1814**,** Fifty-four Newfoundlanders, 3 of their officers all in 3 small boats, and Lt. Miller Worsley RN., with a party of sailors in a fourth, plus a small number of native allies, succeeded in capturing the American warships *Tigress* and *Scorpion***.** Seven of the Newfoundlanders, including one officer, were wounded (3 sailors and one artilleryman were killed in the action).

In June 1814, the regiment began to return to St. John's by detachments, to be replaced by the Nova Scotia Fencibles. The Royal Newfoundland Regiment garrisoned St. John's until orders were received for the reduction of all fencible corps in North America. The regiment was formally disbanded on 24 June 1816.