

**Private Silas Eckerman Edgecombe (Regimental Number 1251) is interred in Earlsfield (Wandsworth) Cemetery – Grave reference: Nfld. 765.**

**His occupation previous to military service recorded as that of a *fisherman* working for an annual five-hundred fifty dollars, Silas Edgecombe presented himself for medical examination in the Conception Bay community of Western Bay on February 18, 1915. It was a procedure which would pronounce him as...*Fit for Foreign Service*.**

**Six days later, on February 24, and having in the meantime made the journey to St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, he enlisted at the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road – engaged at the private soldier's rate of a single dollar per diem, plus a daily ten-cent *Field Allowance*.**

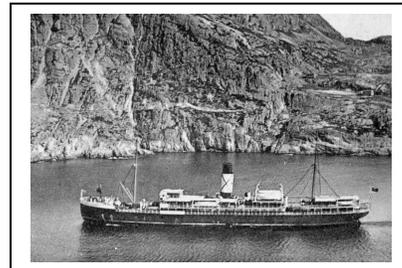
**After a further wait of four weeks and three days after his enlistment, on March 27 he was to undertake his attestation, to swear his *Oath of Allegiance*, the concluding official formality. At that moment Silas Eckerman Edgecombe became...*a soldier of the King*.**

**(continued)**

There now passed another period almost as lengthy, of four weeks less two days on this occasion before, on April 22, 1915, Private Edgecombe, Number 1251, embarked in the harbour of St. John's for...overseas service...with the two-hundred forty-nine officers and...other ranks...of 'E' Company onto the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Stephano* en route for Halifax.

There appear to be no details of how or where he may have spent those two intervals before taking ship for...overseas service; Private Edgecombe may have returned home to Ochre Pit Cove, and perhaps even to work – but this is mere speculation.

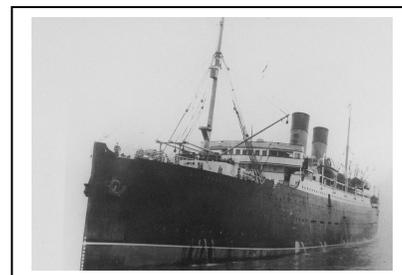
Having arrived in Halifax, on April 24 at eleven-thirty in the evening the detachment began its trans-Atlantic passage on board the trans-Atlantic liner SS *Missanabie* from Nova Scotia to Liverpool. The vessel arrived in that English west-coast port-city on May 2 or 3 – the two dates are recorded although the second may well have been the date of Private Edgecombe's disembarkation.



The Newfoundlanders on this occasion had sailed from Halifax in the company of the Canadian Army Service Corps *Railway Supply Depot*.

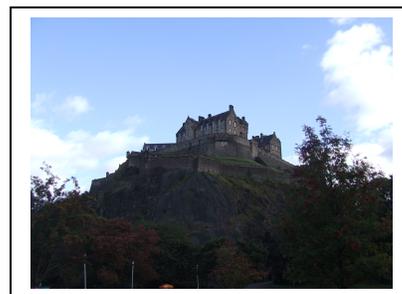
*(Right above: The image of 'Stephano' passing through the Narrows of St. John's Harbour is shown by courtesy of the Provincial Archives.)*

*(Right: The image of 'Missanabie' is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries website. The vessel was of the Canadian Pacific Line and, although transporting troops during the Great War, did so as part of her commercial services which continued during the conflict. On September 9, 1918, she was torpedoed and sunk off the south coast of Ireland with the loss of forty-five lives.)*



From Liverpool the contingent travelled northwards by train to the Scottish capital, Edinburgh where, on May 4, 'E' Company joined 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies which had already taken up station as the garrison at the historic Castle, the first troops from outside the British Isles ever to do so.

*(Right: The venerable bastion of Edinburgh Castle dominates the Scottish capital from its hill in the centre of the city. – photograph from 2011)*



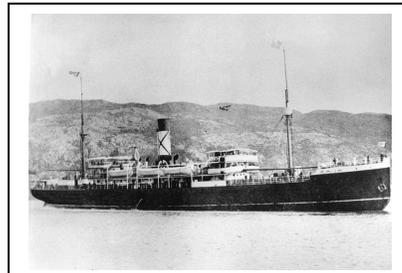
Private Edgecombe's 'E' Company, however, was to have but a few days to savour the charms of the Scottish capital.

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(continued)

Some seven months before that May 4, in the late summer and early autumn of 1914 there had been a period of training of five weeks on the shores of *Quidi Vidi Lake* in the east end of St. John's for the newly-formed Newfoundland Regiment's first recruits – these to become 'A' and 'B' Companies - during which time the authorities had also been preparing for the Regiment's transfer overseas.

This first Newfoundland contingent was to embark on October 3, in some cases only days after a recruit's enlistment and/ or attestation. To become known to history as the *First Five Hundred* and also as the *Blue Puttees*, on that day they had boarded the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* awaiting in St. John's Harbour.



(Right above: *The image of Florizel at anchor in the harbour at St. John's is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.*)

The ship had sailed for the United Kingdom on the morrow, October 4, 1914, to its rendezvous with the convoy carrying the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division overseas, off the south coast of the Island.



(Right: *Fort George, constructed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, still serves the British Army to this day. – photograph from 2011*)

Once having disembarked in the United Kingdom this first Newfoundland contingent was to train in three venues during the late autumn of 1914 and then the winter of 1914-1915: firstly in southern England on the *Salisbury Plain*; then in Scotland at *Fort George* – on the *Moray Firth* close to Inverness; and lastly at *Edinburgh Castle* – where, as recorded beforehand, it was to provide the first garrison from outside the British Isles.

Only days after 'A' and 'B' Companies had taken up their posting there, on February 16 of 1915, 'C' Company – the first re-enforcements for the original contingent\* - would arrive directly – through Liverpool of course - from Newfoundland. On the final day of the month of March it had been the turn of 'D' Company to arrive – they via Halifax as well as Liverpool – to report...*to duty...at Edinburgh.*

*\*This contingent, while a part of the Newfoundland Regiment, was not yet a battalion and would not be so for a further five months – as will be seen below.*

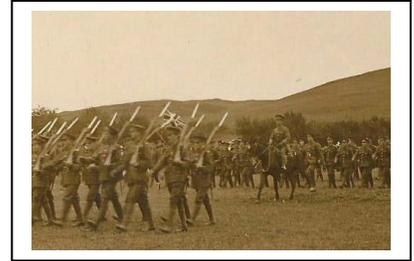
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Seven days after the arrival of Private Edgecombe's 'E' Company in the Scottish capital, on May 11 the entire Newfoundland contingent was ordered elsewhere.

On that day, seven weeks into spring – although in Scotland there was apparently still snow - the unit was dispatched to *Stobs Camp*, all under canvas and south-eastwards of Edinburgh, in the vicinity of the town of Hawick.

It was to be at *Stobs Camp* that the Newfoundland contingent would eventually receive the re-enforcements from home – ‘F’ Company which arrived on July 10, 1915 - that would bring its numbers up to that of British Army establishment battalion strength\*. On that date the newly-formed 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was thus now available to be ordered on...*active service*.

(Right: *The Newfoundland Regiment marches past on the training ground at Stobs Camp and is presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915. – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



*\*This was approximately fifteen hundred, sufficient to furnish four ‘fighting’ companies, two re-enforcement companies and a headquarters staff.*

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘C’ and ‘D’, were then sent south from *Stobs Camp* to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at *Camp Aldershot*. This force, now the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment, was thereupon attached to the 88<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 29<sup>th</sup> Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.



(Right: *George V, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India – the photograph is from Bain News Services via the Wikipedia web-site.*)

Meanwhile the two junior Companies, ‘E’ – as seen, the last arrived at Edinburgh - and the aforementioned ‘F’, were ordered transferred to Scotland’s west coast, to Ayr, there to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion.

Private Edgecombe, however, although having left Newfoundland as a soldier of ‘E’ Company, was not to be posted to the Regimental Depot but to southern England.

When he had been apprised of this change in plans seems not to be recorded – nor why he was selected - but Private Edgecombe was one of the few from ‘E’ Company who were to swell the ranks of the units posted to *Aldershot* - thus he became a soldier of ‘C’ Company. And it was during the period while he was at *Camp Aldershot*, and as was the case with the great majority of the Newfoundland troops there, that Private Edgecombe was prevailed upon to re-enlist...*for the duration of the war*. This he did on August 14\*.

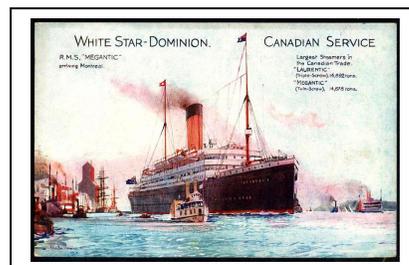
*\*At the outset of the War, perhaps because it was felt by the authorities that it would be a conflict of short duration, the recruits enlisted for only a single year. As the War progressed, however, this was likely to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist. Later recruits signed on for the ‘Duration’ at the time of their enlistment.*

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(Right: Some of the personnel of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915, prior to its departure to 'active service' on the Gallipoli Peninsula – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)



(Right: The image of *Megantic*, here in her peace-time colours of a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the *Old Ship Picture Galleries* web-site.)



On August 20, 1915, Private Edgecombe and his 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport onto the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks. There, a month later – having spent some two weeks billeted in British barracks in the vicinity of the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to land at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right: *Kangaroo Beach*, where the officers and men of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is to be seen in the distance at the far end of *Suvla Bay*. The remains of a landing-craft are still clearly visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph taken in 2011)



(Right: Newfoundland troops on board a troop-ship anchored at *Mudros*: either *Megantic* on August 29, *Ausonia* on September 18, or *Prince Abbas* on September 19 – Whichever the case, they were yet to land on *Gallipoli*. – from Provincial Archives)



(Right: A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at *Suvla Bay*, and where the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment was to serve during the autumn of 1915 – photograph from 2011)

When the Newfoundlanders had landed from their transport ship at *Suvla Bay* on that September night of 1915 they were to disembark into a campaign that was already on the threshold of collapse.

Not only in the area where the Newfoundland Battalion was to serve but, even ever since the very first days of the operation in April of 1915, the entire *Gallipoli Campaign*, including the operation at *Suvla Bay*, had been proving to be little more than a debacle:

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Flies, dust, disease, the frost-bite and the floods – and of course the casualties inflicted by an enemy who was to fight a great deal better than the British High Command\* had ever anticipated – were eventually to overwhelm the British-led forces and those of their allies, the French, and it would finally be decided to abandon not only *Suvla Bay* but the entire *Gallipoli* venture.



(Right above: *No-Man's-Land at Suvla Bay as seen from the Newfoundland positions – from Provincial Archives*)

*\*Many of the commanders chosen were second-rate, had been brought out of retirement, and had little idea of how to fight – let alone of how to win. One of the generals at Suvla, apparently, had handed in his resignation during the Campaign and had just gone home.*



(Right: *An un-identified Newfoundland soldier in the trenches at Suvla Bay – from Provincial Archives*)

(Right: *This is Anzac Bay in the fore-ground with the Salt Lake in the centre further away. The bottom of Suvla Bay is just to be seen on the left and adjacent to the Salt Lake, and further away again. The hills in the distance and the ones from which this photograph was taken were held by the Turks and formed a horse-shoe around the plain surrounding the Salt Lake - which was where the British and Newfoundlanders were stationed. – photograph from 2011*)

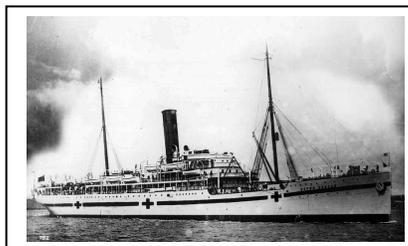


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On November 5, almost seven weeks after having set foot on the sand and stone – mostly the latter – of *Kangaroo Beach*, Private Edgecombe was evacuated from the Newfoundland positions and admitted into the 88<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance at *Suvla Bay*. There he was diagnosed as suffering from rheumatic fever.

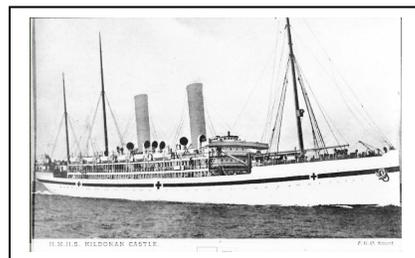
From *Suvla Bay* he was embarked on November 12 onto His Majesty's Hospital Ship *Dover Castle* – perhaps only as far as the Greek island of Lemnos – before then being transferred immediately afterwards – in fact on the same November 12 - onto HMHS *Kildonan Castle* for passage back to the United Kingdom.

(Right: *The image of HMHS Dover Castle in her war-time hospital ship garb is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. Requisitioned early during the Great War, she served until May 26 of 1917 when she was torpedoed and sunk with the loss of seven members of her engine-room crew.*)

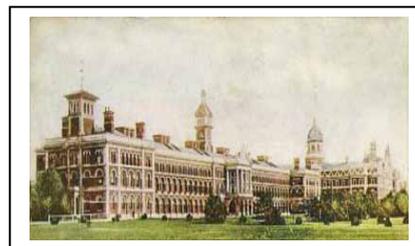


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(Right: The image of HMHS 'Kildonan Castle' clad in her war-time hospital garb is from the [www.bandstaffregister.com](http://www.bandstaffregister.com) web-site. Launched in 1899, her first employment was as a transport ship during the Boer War. After the conflict, she returned to commercial service with her owners, the newly Union-Castle Line. In October of 1915, some fourteen months after the onset of the Great War, the vessel was converted for use as a hospital ship and, less than a year later, transformed once more, on this second occasion into an Armed Merchant Cruiser – which was how she finished the War.)



Upon arrival in England on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of the same month, Private Edgecombe was admitted into Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley – in close proximity to Southampton - for further treatment.



(Right: The image of the Royal Victoria Hospital is from a vintage post-card.)

Granted the customary ten-day post-convalescent furlough allowed military personnel upon release from hospital in the United Kingdom – a period of leave which he spent at the *Union Jack Club* in London - from January 18 of the New Year, 1916, until the 27<sup>th</sup> of that same month when, upon that latter date, Private Edgecombe immediately began a posting to the Regimental Depot, an assignment which lasted two months.

At the end of this summer of 1915, the once-Royal Borough of Ayr on Scotland's west coast was to begin to serve as the overseas base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment from where – as of November of 1915 and up until January of 1918 - re-enforcement drafts from home were to be despatched to bolster the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's numbers, at first to the Middle East and then later to the *Western Front*.



(Right above: An aerial view of Ayr, likely from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr, where were quartered the 'other ranks', is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough, where were housed the officers, is to the right. – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)



(Right: The High Street in Ayr as shown on a postcard of the time, the imposing Wallace Tower – it stands to this day (2017) - dominating the scene – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs Lillian Tibbo.

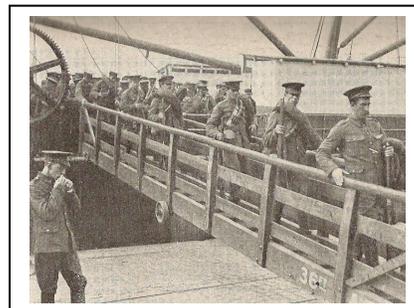
Private Edgecombe was a soldier of the 3rd Re-enforcement Draft from Ayr which passed through the English south-coast port of Southampton on March 28 to embark onto His Majesty's Transport *Archangel* en route to the *Western Front*.

(Right: *The image of a troop-laden 'Archangel' leaving port-likely Southampton – is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries – web-site.*)



The draft disembarked in Rouen, capital city of Normandy and site of the large British Expeditionary Force Base Depot on the 30<sup>th</sup>, two days later, proceeding to the Depot for several days of final training and organization\* before leaving to seek out the parent unit.

(Right: *British troops at an earlier period of the War disembark at Rouen en route to the Western Front. – from Illustration*)



*\*Apparently the standard length of time for this final training at the outset of the war had been ten days – although this was to become more and more flexible as the War progressed - in areas near Rouen, Étapes, LeHavre and Harfleur that became known notoriously to the troops as the Bull Rings.*

On April 15, a re-enforcement detachment from Rouen of two-hundred eleven *other ranks* accompanied by two officers reported...*to duty...*with the Newfoundland Battalion already billeted in the village of Englebelmer, some three kilometres behind the forward lines of the *Western Front*. Private Edgecombe, although not documented as such, was most likely among that number.

\* \* \* \* \*

November 26 would see the nadir of the Newfoundland Battalion's fortunes at Gallipoli; there was to be a freak rain-, snow- and ice-storm strike the *Suvla Bay* area and the subsequent floods had wreaked havoc amongst the forces of both sides. For several days, survival rather than the enemy was to be the priority.

There were to be many casualties on both sides, some of them, surprised by the sudden inundation of their positions, fatalities who had drowned in their trenches – although no Newfoundlanders were to be among that number. Numerous, however, were those afflicted by trench-foot and by frost-bite.

By this time the situation there was daily becoming more and more untenable, thus on the night of December 19-20, the British had abandoned the entire area of *Suvla Bay* – the Newfoundlanders, the only non-British unit to serve there, to form a part of the rear-guard. Some of the Battalion personnel had been evacuated to the nearby island of Imbros, some to Lemnos, further away, but in neither case was the respite to be of a long duration; the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to be transferred only two days later to the area of *Cape Helles*, on the western tip of the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



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**(Preceding page: Cape Helles as seen from the Turkish positions on the misnamed Achi Baba, positions which were never breached: The Newfoundland positions were to the right-hand side of the picture. – photograph from 2011)**

**The British, Indian and Anzac forces – the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps was also to serve at Gallipoli – had now only been marking time until a complete withdrawal of the Peninsula could be undertaken.**

**This final operation would take place on the night of January 8-9, the Newfoundland Battalion to furnish part of the British rear-guard on this second occasion also.**

**(Right: ‘W’ Beach at Cape Helles as it was only days before the final British evacuation – from Illustration)**



**\*Lieutenant Owen Steele of St. John’s, Newfoundland, is cited as having been the last soldier of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to step into the final small boat to sail from the Gallipoli Peninsula.**

**(Right: ‘W’ Beach almost a century after its abandonment by British forces in that January of 1916 and by the Newfoundlanders who were to be the last soldiers off the beach: Vestiges of the wharves in the black-and-white picture are still to be seen. – photograph from 2011)**



**Immediately after the British evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula, the Newfoundland unit had been ordered to the Egyptian port-city of Alexandria. On January 14, the Australian Expeditionary Force Transport Nestor had arrived there with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion on board. The vessel was to sail just after mid-day on the 16<sup>th</sup>, on its way southwards down the Suez Canal to Port Suez where she arrived on the morrow and where the Newfoundlanders landed and marched to their encampment.**

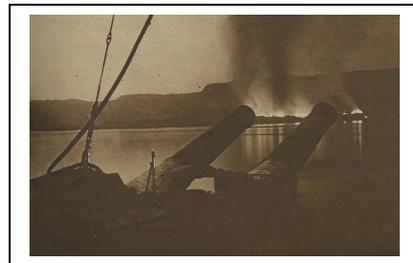


**There they were to await further orders since, at the time, the subsequent destination of the British 29<sup>th</sup> Division had yet to be decided\*.**

**(Right above: The image of the Blue Funnel Line vessel Nestor is from the Shipspotting.com web-site. The vessel was launched and fitted in 1912-1913 and was to serve much of her commercial life until 1950 plying the routes between Britain and Australia. During the Great War she served mainly in the transport of Australian troops and was requisitioned once again in 1940 for government service in the Second World War. In 1950 she was broken up.)**

**\*Bulgaria had entered the conflict on the side of the Central Powers, and Salonika was already becoming a theatre of war.**

(Right: *The British destroy their supplies during the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula. The men of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment were among the last to leave on two occasions, at both Suvla Bay and Cape Helles.* – photograph taken from the battleship *Cornwallis* from *Illustration*)



(Right below: *Port Tewfiq at the south end of the Suez Canal just prior to the Great War* – from a vintage post-card)

After a two-month interim spent in the vicinity of Port Suez, the almost six-hundred officers and *other ranks* of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion were to board His Majesty's Transport *Alaunia* at Port Tewfiq, on March 14 to begin the voyage through the *Suez Canal* en route to France. The Newfoundlanders would disembark eight days afterwards in the Mediterranean port-city of Marseille, on March 22.



(Right: *British troops march through the port area of the French city of Marseille.* – from a vintage post-card)

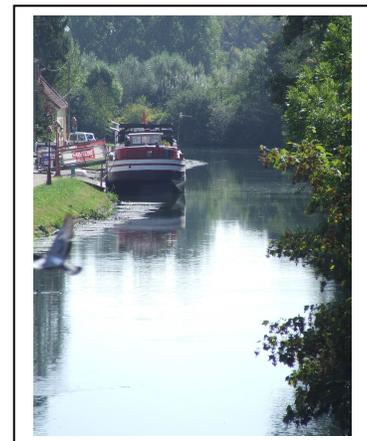
Some three days after the unit's disembarkation on March 22, the Newfoundland Battalion's train was to find its way to the small provincial town of Pont-Rémy, a thousand kilometres to the north of Marseille. It had been a cold, miserable journey, the blankets provided for the troops having inexcusably travelled unused in a separate wagon.



Having de-trained at the local station at two o'clock in the morning, the Newfoundlanders were now still to endure the long, dark march ahead of them before they would reach their billets at Buigny l'Abbé.

It is doubtful if many of those tired soldiers were to pay much attention to the slow-moving stream flowing under the bridge over which they had then marched on their way from the station. But some three months later *the Somme* was to become a part of their history.

(Right: *A languid River Somme as seen from the bridge at Pont-Rémy* – photograph from 2010)



On April 13, the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion had subsequently marched into the village of Englebelmer – perhaps some fifty kilometres in all from Pont-Rémy - where it would be billeted, would receive re-enforcements from Scotland via Rouen and, in two days' time, would be introduced into the communication trenches of the *Western Front*.

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And, of course, as related in a previous paragraph, one of those...re-enforcements from Scotland via Rouen...was Private Edgecombe returning from injury...to duty...with the Newfoundland Battalion.

\* \* \* \* \*

Just days following the Newfoundland Battalion's arrival on the *Western Front*, two of the four Companies – 'A', and 'B' – were to take over several support positions from a British unit\* before the entire Newfoundland unit – thus Private Edgecombe's 'D' Company - was to then be ordered to move further up for the first time into forward positions on April 22.

*\*It should be said that the Newfoundland Battalion and two-hundred men of the Bermuda Rifles who were serving at the time in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lincolnshire Regiment Battalion, were then the only units at the Somme from outside the British Isles - true also on the day of the attack on July 1.*

(Right below: *A part of the re-constructed trench system to be found in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)

Having then been withdrawn at the end of that April to the areas of Mailly-Maillet and Louvencourt where they would be based for the next two months, the Newfoundlanders were soon to be preparing for the upcoming British campaign of that summer, to be fought on the ground named for the languid, meandering river, *the Somme*, that flowed – and still does so today – through the region.



If there is one name and date in Newfoundland history which is etched in the collective once-national memory, it is that of Beaumont-Hamel on July 1 of 1916; and if any numbers are remembered, they are those of the eight-hundred who went *over the top* in the third wave of the attack on that morning, and of the sixty-eight unwounded present at muster some twenty-four hours later\*.



(Right above: *Beaumont-Hamel: Looking from the British lines down the hill to Y Ravine Cemetery which today stands atop part of the German front-line defences: The Danger Tree is to the right in the photograph. – photograph taken in 2009*)

(Right: *A view of Hawthorn Ridge Cemetery Number 2 in the Newfoundland Memorial Park at Beaumont-Hamel – photograph from 2009(?)*)

*\*Perhaps ironically, the majority of the Battalion's casualties was to be incurred during the advance from the third line of British trenches to the first line from where the attack proper was to be made, and while struggling through British wire laid to protect the British positions from any German attack.*



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There are other numbers of course: the fifty-seven thousand British casualties incurred in four hours on that same morning of which nineteen-thousand were recorded as having been *killed in action or died of wounds*.

It was to be the largest disaster ever in the annals of the British Army...and, perhaps just as depressing, the butchery of *the Somme* was to continue for four and a half months.

(Right: *Beaumont-Hamel is a commune, not a village.* – photographs from 2010 and 2015)

*In fact, Beaumont-Hamel was a commune – it still exists today – at the time comprising two communities: Beaumont, a village on the German side of the lines, and Hamel which was behind those of the British. No-Man’s-Land, on which the Newfoundland Memorial Park lies partially today, was on land that separated Beaumont from Hamel.*



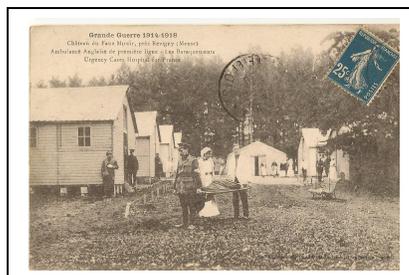
(Right: *A grim, grainy image purporting to be Newfoundland - dead awaiting burial after Beaumont-Hamel* – from...?)

On July 1, 1916, while serving with ‘C’ Company during the fighting of the first day of...*First Somme*, Private Edgecombe was wounded at Beaumont-Hamel. On the following day he was evacuated through the 87<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance to the 4<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station at Beauval, suffering from injuries to the left knee inflicted by artillery fire.

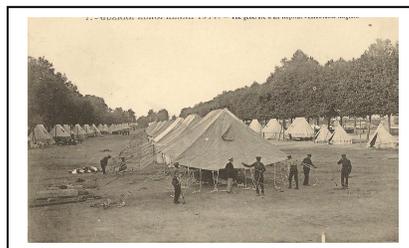


(Right: *A British field ambulance, of a more permanent nature than some* – from a vintage post-card)

(Right below: *A British casualty clearing station – the one pictured here under canvas for mobility if and whenever the necessity were to arise – being established somewhere in France during the early years of the War. Other such medical establishments were often of a much more permanent nature.* - from a vintage post-card)



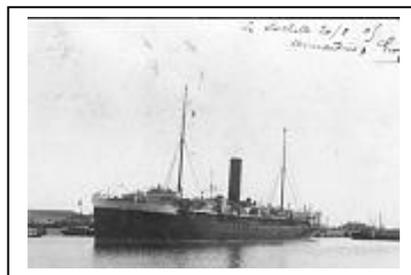
From the 4<sup>th</sup> CCS Private Edgecombe was forwarded to the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Hospital established in the French industrial port-city of Le Havre through which place he was then invalided back across the Channel to England on July 4 on board HMHS *Panama*, Private Edgecombe was admitted into the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital in the Borough of Wandsworth, on the next day. His wound was found to be...*extremely septic*.



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(Right: The image of a peace-time SS 'Panama' is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. Built in 1902, she was a vessel of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company and served the Company's commercial routes until the second year of the Great War. In 1915 she was converted into a hospital ship with a capacity for just fewer than five-hundred wounded and sick and was to serve in this capacity from July 25, 1915, until November 23, on 1919. Having then served between the wars as a hospital ship of the British Mediterranean Fleet, she was to do likewise during the Second World War which she also survived. In 1948 she was de-commissioned and sent to Scotland to be broken up.)

Extract from the final medical report a propos Private Edgecombe released by the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital, Wandsworth: *Wound was enlarged and pockets of pus evacuated and the joint put on continuous irrigation.*



(Right below: The main building of what was to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital during the Great War had originally been opened, on July 1<sup>st</sup> of 1859, as a home for the orphaned daughters of British soldiers, sailors and marines. – photograph from 2010)



The son of Edward Edgecombe (also found as *Edgcom*), former fisherman, deceased October 6, 1911, and of Janet Edgecombe (née *Hiscock* of Labrador) – to whom he had allotted a daily seventy cents from his pay - of Ochre Pit Cove, Conception Bay - he himself apparently born in Carbonear where his parents had married on October 21, 1885 – he was also brother to Caroline, Edward, Leonard, Stanley and to William-Pike.

Private Edgecombe was reported as having...*died of wounds...*at Wandsworth on July 11, 1916. He apparently died suddenly.

Private Edgecombe was buried in Earlfield Cemetery on July 14 at half-past-two in the afternoon with full military honours. A firing-party and a bugler were in attendance as was Prime Minister Morris. A Newfoundland flag was draped over his coffin.

Silas Eckerman Edgecombe had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty-two years: date of birth at Carbonear, Newfoundland, December 21, 1892.

(Right: A monument, erected by his brother Stanley to the memory of Private Edgecombe, stands in Ochre Pit United Church Cemetery, Conception Bay North. – photograph from 2010)



(continued)

Private Silas Ekerman Edgecombe was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).



The above dossier has been researched, compiled and produced by Alistair Rice. Please email any suggested amendments or content revisions if desired to [criceadam@yahoo.ca](mailto:criceadam@yahoo.ca). Last updated – February 6, 2023.