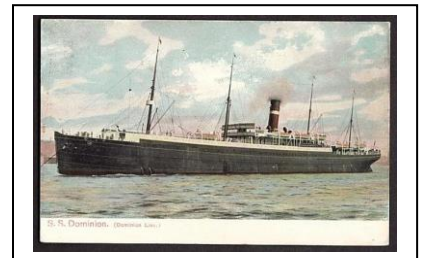




Private Buchanan William Freebairn (Regimental Number 724) lies in Santa Marija Cimiterju (Addolorata) on the island of Malta – Grave reference E. EA. E. 673.

His occupation prior to military service being recorded as that of a clerk earning \$75.00 a month, Buchanan William Freebairn enlisted at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury in St. John's – engaged at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 per diem – and also attested on December 16, 1914. He was a recruit of the Second Draft.



During January and February of 1915, he apparently lodged on several occasions with a Mrs. Ryan of 227, Theatre Hill in St. John's before embarking via the sealing tender *Neptune* onto the *SS Dominion* (right above) – the vessel having anchored off Bay Bulls because of ice conditions. Private Freebairn departed Newfoundland for overseas service on February 5, 1915.

'C' Company, the first re-enforcements for the initial contingent of the Regiment that had sailed in October of 1914, arrived in Liverpool on February 16, 1915. The detachment immediately took a train to Edinburgh where the Newfoundland Regiment was to garrison the Castle, the first troops from outside the British Isles to perform this duty. The newcomers arrived in the Scottish capital later on that same day.



(Right above: *The venerable bastion of Edinburgh Castle dominates the skyline of the Scottish capital city from the summit of Castle Hill. – photograph from 2011*)

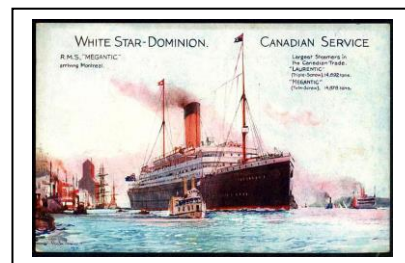
On May 11 the Newfoundlanders were transferred to Stobs Camp, near Hawick, to the south-east of Edinburgh. There they remained until the beginning of August when the senior Companies 'A', 'B', 'C', and 'D', were sent south to Aldershot to prepare for a posting to the Middle East and Gallipoli - and to become 1st Battalion.



The later arrivals, 'E' and 'F' Companies were to be sent to the new Regimental Depot recently established at Ayr, on the west coast of Scotland, as the nucleus of the newly-formed 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.

(Right above: *the Regiment on parade at Stobs Camp on June 10, the day it received its Colours – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)

It was during this period at Aldershot, on August 15, that Private Freebairn was prevailed upon to re-enlist, on this occasion for the *duration of the war**.



**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 obviously going to cause problems and the men were encouraged to re-enlist.*

On August 20, 1915, Private Freebairn took ship on board the requisitioned passenger liner *Megantic* (right above) for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting in Gallipoli where, a month later – of which two weeks had been spent billeted at the British barracks at Abbassia, near the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, 1st Battalion landed on the beach at Suvla Bay on the Gallipoli Peninsula.



(Right above: *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*)

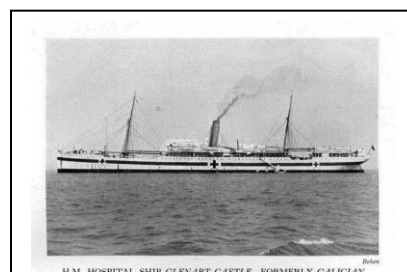
(Right: 'Kangaroo Beach', where the men of 1st Battalion landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is in the distance at the far end of Suvla Bay. The remains of a landing-craft are still clearly visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph from 2011)



(Right below: almost a century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where Private Freebairn served during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)



On or about October 13, Private Freebairn was evacuated from Suvla – likely ferried from there to the Greek island of Lemnos - and taken on board His Majesty's Hospital Ship *Glenart Castle* (right below) to be hospitalized on the British-held Mediterranean island of Malta. Diagnosed as suffering from dysentery, he arrived there for further treatment some seven days after leaving Suvla, on October 20.



Born in Placentia, the son of Dr. Robert Jardine Freebairn and Sarah (née *Boyle*) Freebairn – to whom he had allotted a daily fifty cents from his pay - of Ferryland, he was also brother to Charlie and Jessie.

Private Freebairn was reported as having *died of sickness*, of dysentery, in hospital on Malta on October 23, 1915.

Buchanan William Freebairn - apparently his nickname was *Chan* – had enlisted at twenty-one years of age: date of birth August 29, 1893.

He shares his tombstone with Private V. Merrick of the South Lancashire Regiment and Private P. Heally, of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

(Right: one of the several British medical facilities on Malta, disused since the island's independence in 1964 – photograph from 2011)



Private Buchanan William Freebairn 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) (right).

