



Private Edward Hiscock (Number 478518) of the Royal Canadian Regiment, Canadian Expeditionary Force, is buried in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery: Grave reference, O. 330.

(Right: The image of the cap badge of the Royal Canadian Regiment is from the Wikipedia Web-site.)

(continued)



His occupation prior to war-time military service recorded as that of... *peace-time* military service*, Edward Hiscock, by the time of his enlistment, had already been a soldier for a year with the 94th Victoria Regiment (*Argyll Highlanders*), Canadian Militia, a unit raised in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

**A soldier in the Canadian Militia was not permitted to serve overseas, thus Private Hiscock had to enlist into a battalion that was. Apparently the 94th Regiment of Militia would spend the period of Great War patrolling the coast-line of Cape Breton.*

It may be that Edward Hiscock was the young man recorded as Ed Hiscock, who took passage from the Dominion of Newfoundland on board the SS *Bruce* in Port aux Basques, to disembark on April 14, 1910, at North Sydney, Cape Breton, in the foreign country of Canada. Perhaps, like many young Newfoundlanders at the time, he was looking for work as a labourer – that being the young man’s declared occupation on the ship’s passenger list – in the industrial town of Sydney*.

**This venue, however, is not confirmed.*

Edward Hiscock enlisted on August 31 of 1915 – that is the day on which his pay-records document him first being remunerated for his services. He then presented himself in Sydney for medical examination* and attestation on September 17. Very temporarily attached to the Sydney Depot Company – also on August 31, according to the same pay-record - he was transferred at the latest three weeks later – one paper even notes September 17 – to the Royal Canadian Regiment. He was on the RCR pay-roll as of September 21.

**Where the examining physician noted that he bore a tattoo of a young lady in tights carrying a British flag and was also... ‘fit for the Canadian Over Seas Expeditionary Force’.*

From Sydney, Private Hiscock was forwarded to the Royal Canadian Regiment Depot in Halifax where he underwent a second medical examination for an unspecified reason, possibly for vaccination, on September 24, 1915. He was not to remain there for very long.

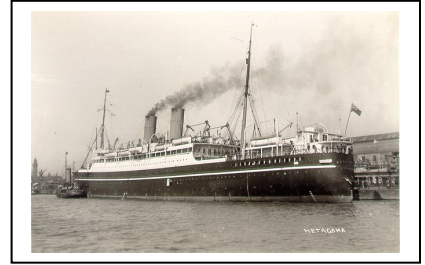
The Royal Canadian Regiment, the senior infantry unit in the Canadian Army, had been sent to garrison the British possession of Bermuda on September 10, 1914, only one month after the British – and thus the Canadians* – had declared war on Germany. On August 13 of 1915 it left Bermuda to return to its base in Halifax.

The unit’s time spent there was short, barely enough for the personnel to re-attest before boarding ship in the harbour on August 26. It took passage to the United Kingdom on board HMT *Caledonia* which sailed that same day and which docked in the British naval port of Plymouth-Devonport on September 9.

**It was the British Government in Westminster which declared war on behalf of the Empire.*

But by the end of that September Private Hiscock was apparently still in Canada – and no further RCR contingents are recorded as having crossed the Atlantic until April of 1916. Given the recorded dates of him in Halifax and then at *Shorncliffe* – and his pay-records which have him transferred on or about October 15-16 of 1915 – it seems most likely that he sailed on His Majesty’s Transport *Metagama* on October 16.

If this were so, then Private Hiscock sailed in the company of the 35th Battalion of Canadian Infantry and of the 1st Draft of the Royal Canadian Garrison Artillery. The vessel docked some nine days later, in the British naval port of Plymouth-Devonport from where Private Hiscock in all likelihood was taken by train to the vicinity of *Shorncliffe*, the newly-established Canadian military complex close to the English-



Channel town of Folkestone in the county of Kent.

(Right above: *The photograph of the SS Metagama is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries Web-site.*)

(Right: *Little remains of Shorncliffe Military Camp today apart from a barracks occupied by Gurkha troops. The Military Cemetery almost alone serves as a reminder of the events of a century ago. – photograph from 2016*)



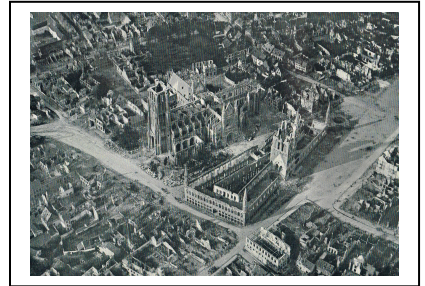
(Right: *A view of the coastal town of Folkestone almost a century later as seen from the white cliffs of nearby Dover – photograph from 2009*)



There appears to be little further information a propos Private Hiscock until either November 25 or 29 – both dates from credible sources - when he was transferred to the 11th Canadian Reserve Battalion, almost certainly a sign that he was soon to be on his way across the Channel for service on the Continent*.

****This would have been in Belgium where all the Canadian units were to be stationed until, at the earliest, August of 1916.***

(Right: *An aerial photograph, taken in July of 1915 – just after the battle of 2nd Ypres - which shows the shell of the medieval city, an image entitled Ypres-la-Morte (Ypres the Dead) – By the end of the conflict there was little left standing. – from Illustration*)



However, this was not to come about as, on December 18, Private Hiscock was admitted into the Westcliffe (also written as *West Cliffe* and *West Cliff*) Canadian Eye and Ear Hospital in Folkestone. He was apparently... *complaining of a chaffing sensation in throat, no pain. He was to remain there for ten days. A first examination also noted...*swelling... and...pus in larynx.***

****Other sources record other dates, notably his admission to hospital on only the later date of December 27. The dates of December his presence there from 18 to 28 (inclusive) are taken from the documents of the hospital itself.***

(continued)

On December 28 of 1915, two medical bulletins were issued, the first referring to the previous day: *Very dangerously ill Canadian Westcliffe Hospital. Dec. 27th Suffering from Laryngitis*

And then: *Died of Pneumonia Dec 28th Westcliffe Eye, Ear Hosp., Folkestone. Private Hiscock died at a quarter past five in the afternoon.*

The son of William Hiscock, fisherman, and of Eliza (also *Elizabeth*) H. Hiscock (née *Curtis* and deceased in 1909) of Manuel's (also *Chamberlain's*), Newfoundland, he was also brother to Ellen-Elizabeth, to Jessie, to John (born 1888 - died 1898), and to William-Francis.

Edward Hiscock had enlisted at the apparent age of twenty-four years and one month: date of birth (on attestation papers), February 23, 1891. However, a copy of Topsail Parish Records documents his birth as being a year later, on February 23, 1892.

Private Edward Hiscock was entitled to the British War Medal for his overseas service. (He was eligible for it once he left Canada*.)



(Right: *The sacrifice of Edward Hiscock is commemorated on a family memorial in the Anglican graveyard in Topsail... Far right: ...and honoured on the War Memorial in the community of Conception Bay South. – from 2016*)



**Had Private Hiscock been a soldier of the Newfoundland Regiment he would have been eligible for the British War Medal when he left Newfoundland, since Canada was a foreign country. However, he had enlisted into a Canadian battalion which meant that he would have had to leave Canada to be eligible for the medal. (Had he been transferred back to serve in Newfoundland as a Canadian soldier, he would also been awarded the decoration.)*

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. Last updated – January 24, 2023.