



Private Victor Willie Hull (Regimental Number 5471) lies in Little Bay Islands Methodist Cemetery, Newfoundland.

His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a fisherman, Victor Willie Hull presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on May 27, 1918. It was a procedure which found him...*Fit for Foreign Service.***

****The building was to serve as the Regimental Headquarters in Newfoundland for the duration of the conflict.***

It was to be on the day of that medical assessment, May 27, at the same venue, that Victor Willie Hull was now to be enlisted. He was engaged...*for the duration of the war...at the daily private soldier's rate of a single dollar to which was to be appended a ten-cent per diem Field Allowance.**

****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. Later recruits – as of or about May of 1916 - signed on for the 'Duration' at the time of their original enlistment.***

Only a further few hours were then to go by before there came to pass, while still at the *CLB Armoury* on Harvey Road, the final formality of his enlistment: attestation. On that same twenty-seventh day of May* he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Victor Willie Hull became...*a soldier of the King*.

**This was the month during which the Newfoundland Military Service Act (conscription) came into effect. From May 11 through to the end of the War, the Department of Militia called a total of 1,470 men into active service. However, nothing amongst his papers appears to suggest under which circumstances – as a volunteer or a conscripted man – Victor Willie Hull was to be taken into service.*

Whereas many of the recruits during this period were to be granted several days of home leave, Private Hull, Number 5471, has left no evidence among his papers that he had been one of them. But given the rapidity of the events that followed, it is perhaps highly unlikely that a furlough ever came to pass. It may thus be that he was to remain in St. John's.

If he was, then it is likely that Private Hull reported...*to duty*...to be quartered in the temporary barracks apparently established since 1915 in the St. John's curling rink and the Prince's Skating Rink in the eastern end of the city.

(Right: *This photograph of the Prince's Rink in St. John's with military personnel, apparently attired in uniforms of Great War vintage, on parade is from the Ice Hockey Wiki web-site. There appears to be no further information a propos.*)



On June 5, just nine days after his enlistment, Private Hull, Number 5471, was admitted into the *Military Hospital for Infectious Diseases* in St. John's and there was diagnosed as suffering from meningitis.

The son of John Robert Hull, fisherman, and of Leah Ann Hull (née *Oxford*) of Sulian's Cove (variously spelled), Little Bay Islands, he was also brother to Frederick, John-Stanley, Andrew-Arthur, Mary-Elizabeth, Julia, Samuel, Madonna (also found as *Madora*), Virginia(?), to Jean and to James-Clayton*.

Private Hull was reported as having...*died of sickness...of meningitis*...- in hospital on the night of June 8-9, 1918.

His remains, embalmed and placed in a coffin by Mr. J. C. Oke, undertaker, were escorted in a funeral cortege to the railway station in St. John's on Sunday, June 16. The express train then carried him to Lewisport(e) for the final stage of his journey on the *SS Home*.



(continued)

(Preceding page: A vessel of the Newfoundland Alphabet Fleet, the SS 'Home' served northern Newfoundland and Labrador for much of her career as a coastal steamer until 1952 when she was driven ashore in Jersey Harbour, Fortune Bay. She is seen in the background to the right in the photograph. - From the ModelShipBuilder web-site.)

Victor Willie Hull had enlisted at the declared age of eighteen years. The exact date of his birth has thus far proved to be elusive.

The Commonwealth War Graves headstone was shipped en route to Little Bay Islands on September 6 of 1923: the cost of shipment was three dollars and eighty-three cents.

(Right: The sacrifice of Private Hull is honoured on the Screen Wall in the Military Plot, Mount Pleasant Cemetery, St. John's. – photograph from 2011)



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 31, 2023.