



**Private Archibald (apparently known as *Arch*) Whitehorn (Regimental Number 5616) is buried in the Cottrell's Cove United Church Cemetery in the District of Twillingate. He also shares the white family monument (above) with his brother Kenneth (see further below).**

**His occupation prior to military service recorded as that of a *fisherman*, Archibald Whitehorn presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury\**, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on June 7, 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, June 7, at the same venue, that Archibald Whitehorn 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 seventh day of June\* he pledged his allegiance to the reigning monarch, George V, whereupon, at that moment, Archibald Whitehorn became...*a soldier of the King.*

***\*It had been during the month prior to this that the Newfoundland Military Service Act (conscription had come into effect. From May 11 through to the end of the Great War, the Department of Militia was to call 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 – Archibald Whitehorn was to be taken into service.***

Following his enlistment it is likely that Private Whitehorn 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.)*



Many of the recruits during this period are recorded as having been granted several days of a final furlough before departure for *overseas service*. Private Whitehorn was to be one of that number, receiving time to travel home from June 16 until June 26 on which last date he was expected to return to report...*to duty*...in St. John's.

It was not to be.

Both he and his brother Abner (also to be seen further below) had enlisted on that June 7<sup>th</sup> and were to later be granted the afore-mentioned leave on the also afore-mentioned dates.

(continued)



Days after the outset of that period, on June 21, a Reverend Eugene Vaters was to write to Headquarters in St. John's that:

*I have been told to advise you that Pte. 5614 Abner Whitehorn and 5616 Archibald Whitehorn Whitehorn are now sick with the measles and are not likely to be able to report for a week or so...*

For Private Abner Whitehorn the aforesaid *week or so* was to develop into three months: for Private Archibald Whitehorn it was to be only a matter of days.

The son of Samuel Whitehorn, fisherman (deceased on February, 1899, from erysipalis – a skin infection - and of Emily-Phœbe Whitehorn (née *Rowsell*\*) of New Bay, Notre-Dame Bay, in the District of Twillingate, he was also brother to twin Ida-Maud, to Bessie-Constance, Lewis, Edith-Jane, Abner and to Kenneth.

*\*The couple had been married in the community of New Bay on November 22 of 1880.*

Private Whitehorn was reported as having...*died of sickness – bronchial pneumonia following measles* – on July 27, 1918, although the news, once again dispatched by the Reverend Vaters, was not to be received by the Regimental authorities in St. John's until on or about August 3.

Archibald Whitehorn had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty-four years: date of birth in the community of New Bay, October 1, 1893 (from the Newfoundland Birth Records).

*Private Whitehorn's Commonwealth War Grave headstone was not to be sent by rail from St. John's until July 19, 1923 – to be followed almost immediately by cement and lumber for the construction of the surrounds.*



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

*\*His brother, Private Abner Whitehorn, Regimental Number 5614, became sick at the same time as Brother Arch, as seen above. Having recovered after three months care he reported to St John's to the Prince's Barracks, the city's only skating rink – both ice- and roller skating – at the time, in the east end of the city, on October 11 later that year.*

*Three days afterwards he was admitted into the Barracks Hospital with a recurrence of his medical problems.*

*On November 16 a Medical Board made the recommendation that he be discharged from service as being...permanently unfit. Two days later the decision to do so was taken.*

*In the meantime his widowed mother had taken it upon herself to write by hand the same letter to several influential people in the community:*

(continued)

Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>/18

Dear Mr. ----- :-

I am dropping you this note. To ask you if you would write to "Head-quarters", St-"John's" To try & get - "Abner" out of the Army.

You understand my circumstance's now, you could explain to them. That I am a widow: And Abner my youngest son. And also of my two sons' deaths\* The pass three months sence Abner enlisted.

I think it no harm to try & get him back As we

Are now left with no body but Lewis. And he has always had it so hard.

Try you do, this will greatly oblige

Yours very Truly

Emily Whitehorn

In case you would need Abne's address in Writing. I will let you know what it is.

#5414 Pte. Abner Whitehorn

F Company

Princess Rink

St. John's

Please write soon as possible

*\*Son Kenneth had by then died of influenza on October 28.*

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 – January 30, 2023.