



**Seaman Hugh Daniel Campbell, Number 1463x, is buried in Haslar Royal Naval Cemetery, Gosport, in the English County of Hampshire: Grave reference: B.15.8..**

**(continued)**

Having relinquished his occupation of the time as a fisherman and having travelled from the west coast community of Campbell's Creek, District of St. George, to St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on December 8 of 1914 Hugh Daniel Campbell reported...*to duty...*at the Naval Reserve training ship, HMS *Calypso*, moored in the harbour (see below).



On that same early-December day he enlisted for the first time into the Reserve (see further below), was signed on to serve for a single year of war-time service and underwent the required medical assessment on the morrow. Hugh Daniel Campbell most likely was then also to attest, pledging his allegiance to the King-Emperor, George V.

(Right above: *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: as a boy and young man he had served in the Royal Navy from 1877 until 1891 and always retained a fondness for the Senior Service. – The photograph of the King attired in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet is from the Royal Collection Trust web-site and taken in or about 1935.)*

*\*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.*



(Right above: *The White Ensign has been flown by the Royal Navy in its present form since about the year 1800 although other naval ensigns had existed for at least two centuries. It consists of a red St. George's Cross – the national flag of England - on a white field with the Union Flag\* in the upper canton.)*

*\*The Union Flag is commonly referred to as the 'Union Jack'; this is, in fact, a misnomer since a flag is referred to as a 'Jack' only when flown from the bow of a ship.*

*Note: During the years preceding the Great War the only military force on the Island of Newfoundland – apart from a handful of ill-fated local attempts – was to be the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland). Even so, it was to be some thirty years after the withdrawal of British troops from the Dominion in 1870 before the Reserve came into being in 1902.*

*Just fewer than four-hundred men were sought to enroll as seamen – apparently automatically at the rank of Able Seaman - and to present themselves annually in St. John's for five years in order to train for a period of twenty-eight days per annum. Allowed to report at a time of their own choosing, it is perhaps not surprising that these volunteers – mostly fishermen – were to opt to train in the winter months when fishing was minimal.*

**Expenses were apparently defrayed for the most part by the British (Imperial) Government and an attempt was made to ensure the number of recruits would be kept constantly at a maximum. This practice and policy was then to be continued up until the onset of hostilities some twelve years later.**

**Of course, the purpose of having a reserve force at any time is to provide a trained force ready at any time to serve at a time of need or crisis. Thus in August of 1914, upon the Declaration of War by the government in London, hundreds of those men of the Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland) were to make their way to St. John's, from there to take passage overseas to bolster the ranks of the Royal Navy.**

**(Right: Naval reservists from Newfoundland at some time during the early days of the Great War, before their departure for the United Kingdom - from *The War Illustrated*)**

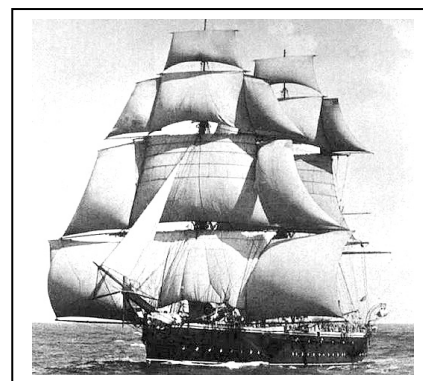


**An elderly vessel, HMS 'Calypso', having become surplus to the Admiralty's needs, had been provided to the Dominion of Newfoundland by the Royal Navy in 1902 for training purposes. After some debate it was eventually decided that she would be permanently moored in the harbour of the capital, her superstructure reduced, and a wooden shelter built on her upper deck to provide training facilities and living quarters for the prospective naval recruits.**

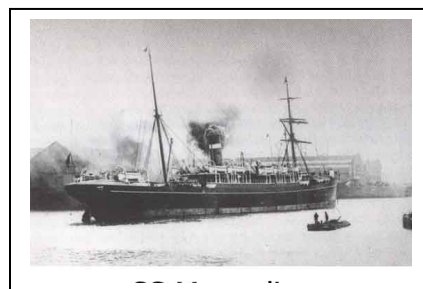
**(Right below: HMS 'Calypso' is seen here in full sail. The vessel was to be re-commissioned 'HMS Briton' in 1916 when a new 'Calypso', a modern cruiser, was launched by the Royal Navy. – The Royal Navy photograph dated 1898 is by courtesy of the Admiralty House Museum)**

**A mere week and a day after having been...taken on strength...at 'Calypso', his sparse Service Records suggest that it was on December 17, having perhaps on the same day been promoted from the rank of *Seaman Recruit*, that the now-Seaman Campbell left en route to the United Kingdom.**

**He was to be one of a draft of one-hundred fifty-three Naval volunteers to board the steamship *Mongolian* in St. John's Harbour for passage across the Atlantic to the United Kingdom. The ship sailed for the Scottish port-city of Glasgow at four o'clock in the afternoon of the same day.**



**(Right: Built in 1891 for use by the Allan Line for the transport of emigrants from Europe to North America, 'Mongolian' was a slow vessel with a speed of just twelve knots and was, by 1914, becoming obsolescent. She was nevertheless to be bought in 1914 for use by the Admiralty and remained in service until July 21 of 1918 when she was torpedoed and sunk by U-boat 70 with a loss of thirty-five. – from the *British Home Child Group International* web-site)**



*\*It appears that in many cases, even if the recruit in question had not already previously been with the Royal Naval Reserve, the required twenty-eight day training period, all or partially, was waived by 'Royal Proclamation'.*

As seen above, Glasgow was to be the destination of Seaman Campbell's draft. Upon disembarkation the Naval Reserve personnel would thereupon have been either posted directly to a ship or ordered to undergo further training – or simply to await a posting to one of His Majesty's ships - at one of various Royal Navy establishments – these for the most part situated around the coast in southern England.

In the case of Seaman Campbell, the destination was to be HMS *Victory I*, Royal Navy shore-based facilities at almost the other end of the country, although exactly what his occupations, apart from waiting, were to be during this period of wearing a cap-band emblazoned HMS *Victory* is not clear.

*HMS 'Victory', like most of the so-called stone-frigates (naval establishments on shore), was three entities: it was a training establishment originally, and also a holding-barracks for seamen not only in training but awaiting a posting, its facilities initially set in the naval city and port of Portsmouth\*; thirdly, it was also the ship to which the majority of the land-based personnel would have been, at least officially and bureaucratically – if not physically - attached\*\*.*

*At Portsmouth this vessel was HMS 'Victory', the warship from which Admiral Nelson had directed the Battle of Trafalgar – although her illustrious history is not limited to that one single incident.*

*\*The large influx of personnel due to the War necessitated further Divisions and functions being transferred to other areas of the United Kingdom.*

*(Right: HMS 'Victory' in dry dock in the southern English port-city of Portsmouth where she has been for a century – photograph from Wikipedia)*



*\*\*Naval discipline differed in some ways from civil and even Army law, and those in naval uniform, even though based on land and perhaps never to go to sea, had to be on the books of a real ship for that discipline to be applied. Thus a normally small, obsolescent and obscure vessel – HMS 'Victory' was the exception - was used for this purely bureaucratic purpose.*

Seaman Campbell was to serve at *Victory I* from the time of his arrival in the United Kingdom until the sixth day of May of the following year, 1915, some twenty weeks less a day in all – this including the days spent in traversing the Atlantic Ocean.

It was then on May 7 that he was transferred to the books of *Victory II*, apparently mainly a training facility for stokers – much of the Royal Navy still used coal – and other engine-room class. But Seaman Campbell was to join the RNR *Trawler Section* as a Deck Hand.

(continued)

He had to wait only eleven days before he was to answer a summons...*to duty*. On May 18 Seaman Campbell was on his way – at least on paper – to the Principality of Wales and to the harbour at Milford Haven.

Waiting for him there was HMS *Sabrina* - soon to be re-named *Sabrina II* – a hired yacht, converted, armed and put into war-time service in February of 1915. Equipped with wireless, not found on every ship in those days, she was to be used until March of 1919 as an Auxiliary Patrol Group Leader, or in a special yacht squadron, in waters around the British Isles and perhaps also in the Mediterranean.

(Right: *This grainy photograph is of the above-mentioned requisitioned yacht 'Sabrina', built in 1899, the vessel which 'Idaho' – see further below - replaced in 1916 at Milford Haven. The two ships were likely comparable: apart from them being ex-luxury yachts, both were unfit to be used in any fighting capacity but quite adequate to be used as floating offices and occasional billets. – from the Maritime Quest web-site via Google*)



Seaman Campbell was unlikely to have served for long on the ship *Sabrina II* or at any of the shore-based facilities which went by the same name – if at all on either of them. His Service Records show that while at Milford Haven he was to serve on two of the smaller craft for which *Sabrina II* was responsible as a depot ship\*.

*\*A part of the role played by 'Sabrina II' before Idaho was to act as a base ship, to be responsible for the personnel, the arming, fuelling, provisioning, maintenance as well as the administration finances of a flotilla of smaller boats, usually trawlers and drifters and the such-like which operated out of 'The Haven'.*

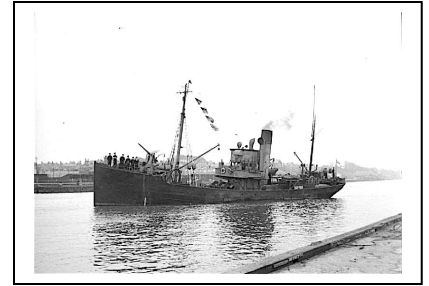
He may well have joined the crew of the requisitioned trawler *Good Luck* immediately upon his arrival in Wales. Built in 1912 and weighing just less than three-hundred tons, she had been armed with a single twelve-pounder gun to act as a mine-sweeper and also escort-vessel, tasks which she was to perform from April of 1915 until an unrecorded date in 1919, the year after the War. Having survived the conflict the ship was to serve in the same manner during the Second World War twenty years later.



(Right above: *A quick-firing naval twelve-pounder (the weight of the shell) and twelve hundred-weight (1200 lbs. the weight of the barrel and breech) gun, here seen adapted for use in 1941, such as found on HMT 'Good Luck'– taken at the Royal Artillery Museum 'Firepower', Woolwich, in 2010*)

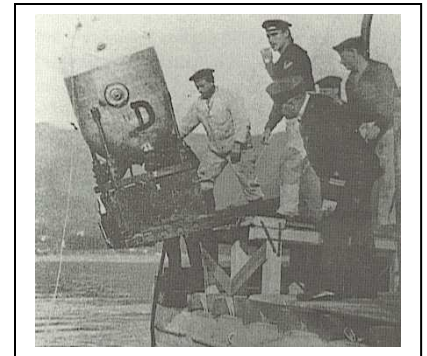
Seaman Campbell is documented as having served on her until August 6 of that 1916, with nothing in particular to report out of the ordinary. On August 7, while remaining based at Milford Haven, he then changed ships, being transferred to another armed trawler, this one HMT *Kudos*.

(Right: A Castle-Class trawler of the Great War, a gun seen mounted on her forward area: During the War, 1456 such vessels were requisitioned from ports around the British Isles and even elsewhere, of which two-hundred sixty-four were to be lost. – a Royal Navy photograph taken at Milford Haven(?) from the Imperial War Museum via Google)



Smaller than *Good Luck* by almost one-hundred tons – and a year older - and with one six-pounder gun as armament, she also was to serve from April of 1915 until 1919 as a minesweeper\*.

(Right: Minelaying from a German surface vessel during the Great War: these were for the most part contact mines. U-boats were also used for this purpose – from the NavWeaps web-site)



\*The area patrolled by these small ships from Milford Haven was known as the 'Western Approaches' where shipping from the south as well as from North America entered the English Channel or the Irish Sea on the last leg of their journey to port. A busy area, it was not only frequently mined but was regularly visited by German U-boats.

Seaman Campbell's work on board *Kudos* is documented as having been divided into two periods: from the aforementioned August 7 until September 30 of 1916 before October 1, a day later, until May 2 of the following year again, 1917. But this was only a bureaucratic interruption and Seaman Campbell may well not have even been aware of it.

The yacht *Sabrina II* was to be withdrawn from her responsibilities as depot ship at Milford Haven and replaced by a second such vessel, also requisitioned: HMS *Idaho*. When exactly this exchange took place physically is not clear but several sources record that it was in the month of August of 1916 that the naval base at Milford Haven was to be transformed from HMS *Sabrina II* to HMS *Idaho*.

But apparently, as far as Seaman Campbell's personal records were concerned, the change was not documented until the October 1 seen above.

However, as it had been in the seventy-nine days with *Good Luck*, nothing untoward appears to have been experienced during the period of a year and two-hundred sixty-nine days that he was with his second ship, *Kudos*, and thus the highlights of Seaman Campbell's service at *Sabrina II* and *Idaho* were to be nothing more exciting than the daily routines of war-time life on board a requisitioned trawler of the Royal Navy.

On May 2 of 1917, Seaman Campbell was on his way back – on paper if not physically – to his former quarters at *Victory I*, Portsmouth. He was there to spend a month and a day while the naval authorities decided his future.

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When that eventual decision was made, it was that he should be trained in the finer points of Naval artillery practices, and on June 3, a month after having left HMS *Idaho*, Seaman Campbell found himself not far distant from *Victory I* and at the Royal Navy Gunnery School, HMS *Excellent*\*.

*\*HMS 'Excellent' was the name – and also still is the name - of the Royal Navy's Gunnery School which had been established in a ship of the same name in 1829, the vessel being permanently moored just outside Portsmouth dockyard. As the years passed the ships were to be replaced, but each in turn was to be named HMS 'Excellent'.*



(Right above: *Recruits at drill on a Naval gun on 'Whale Island' during the period of the Great War – from Wikipedia*)

*And as the years passed, the use evolved of the nearby 'Whale (originally 'Whaley') Island' as facilities were constructed on it. In 1885 the Gunnery School was moved from the ship of the time to be re-established on the island itself.*



(Right above: *The Royal Navy Memorial stands on the coast at Portsmouth from where may be seen 'Whale Island' – photograph from 1917*)

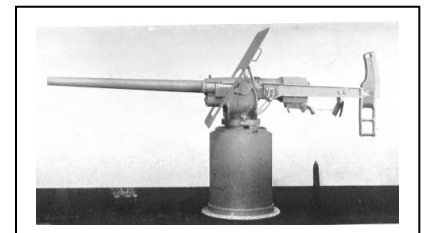
Exactly what was the weaponry that he was to train on is not clear, but in the space of two-hundred sixty-two days he was surely to lay hands on multiple types of naval ordnance, some of it much larger than anything that the Army possessed.



(Right: *Two of the largest-calibre weapons ever possessed by the Royal Navy today stand in the entrance to the Imperial War Museum in London. Fifteen-inch guns, their size and that of their shells may be judged by the stature of the people nearby. – photograph taken in 2009(?)*)

From HMS *Excellent* Seaman Campbell, on February 13, 1918, was back in Portsmouth at *Victory I*, but for only the short period of thirty-two days. On March 18 he was to join the drifter – a fishing-ship smaller than a trawler but often requisitioned for the same types of purpose.

HM Drifter *White Oak* weighed but seventy-five tons and had been built in the year before the outbreak of the *Great War*. Armed with a six-pounder quick-firing gun she had been put into service to patrol and maintain anti-submarine nets, perhaps in the vicinity of Portsmouth Harbour itself where a number of larger Royal Navy war-ships was stationed.



(Preceding page: *A Quick-Firing Hotchkiss 6 pounder gun such as had been mounted on the fore-deck of the drifter 'White Oak' and for which Seaman-Gunner Campbell may well have been at least partially responsible. – from Wikipedia*)

His posting to HM Drifter *White Oak* was to last from that March 18, 1918, without incident, until September 15 of the same year. He was then once again to be attached to *Victory I*, perhaps because his services were no longer required on board the drifter but perhaps because he was ill.

For how long he was to remain at *Victory I* is not clear. There was a world-wide pandemic in the offing at the time – the so-called *Spanish 'Flu* – and servicemen, whatever their nationality, were not immune from the disease\*. He was to be soon admitted into the Royal Hospital, Haslar, in nearby Gosport.



*\*Although it appears to be nowhere stated that this 'flu was the source of his illness.*

(Right above: *This un-dated aerial view of the Royal Hospital Haslar in Gosport is from the www.qaranc.co.uk website – 'Qaranc' is the Queen Alexandra Royal Army Nursing Corps in which the author's mother served.*)

There appears to be very little information to be gleaned from available documents a propos the family of Hugh Daniel Campbell. That which is entered below has been primarily extracted from letters written to the Newfoundland Government by a Reverend Father Joy in which he pleads the case of Mrs Catherine (found also as *Kate*) Campbell, a long-time widow, for her request for separation money to be recognized as legitimate and to be acted upon – as it eventually was – and from the government forms sent at the time in the hope of qualifying for said money.

The son of Daniel S. Campbell, former farmer/ fisherman, born circa 1856 and deceased about 1896-97 and of Catherine Campbell, she and her sons of Crabbes Station in 1911, and later of Campbell's Creek, he was also brother to Stephen, James, John-Archibald\*, Michael and Edward.

Seaman Campbell is reported in the Newfoundland Death Register as having...*died of illness – pneumonia...*in the Royal Hospital, Haslar, on September 8 of 1918 although elsewhere – on the Royal Navy War Grave Roll is one such case, his grave-marker another – the date has been entered as having been September 28 of that same year.

(Right: *A Memorial Scroll, a copy of which was distributed to the families of those who had sacrificed their life while serving in the Newfoundland Royal Naval Reserve*)



(continued)



**Seaman Campbell served only in the Royal Navy and not in the service of Canada as cited in some sources, notably the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.**

**Seaman Hugh Daniel Campbell was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal).**



**\*John Archibald Campbell, brother of Hugh Daniel, enlisted into the Newfoundland Forestry Corps on April 28, 1917, and was a forester of the first detachment to leave Newfoundland on May 19 on board the 'Florizel' for passage to Halifax. From there the draft of ninety-nine men crossed the Atlantic to the United Kingdom and Dunkeld, Scotland, where the Newfoundland Forestry Corps was stationed.**

**(Right: The River Tay as it flows through Dunkeld: The Forestry Corps worked here, on the hills that one sees in the distance. – photograph from 2011)**



**Towards the end of 1918 letters from home sent to the Newfoundland Department of Militia and thence to the Corps Commanding Officer, these citing the recent death of two of her other sons, requested the return of Corporal Campbell to aid his widowed mother.**

**The request was eventually allowed, although by that time the war was over, and he returned home in March of 1919 to be finally discharged on April 17 – perhaps to return, as he desired, to his former occupation with the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Corporation in Grand Falls.**

**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 22, 2023.**