



Corporal Oscar Augustus (also found as *Augustinian* on parish records) Vaughan (Regimental Number 337) is buried in Belvedere Roman Catholic Cemetery in the city of St. John's.

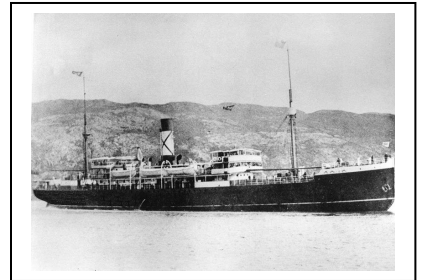
His occupations prior to military service recorded as those of both *tanner* and *carman*, and working for thirty-nine dollars and seventy cents a month, Oscar Augustus Vaughan was to be a recruit of the First Draft.

(continued)

He presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* on Harvey Road in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on September 7 of 1914, five weeks less a day after the *Declaration of War*. It was a procedure which was to pronounce him as being...*fit for foreign service*. On that same date Oscar Augustus Vaughan then enlisted also at the same venue – at the private soldier's rate of \$1.10 (ten cents of which was a *field allowance*).

Some three weeks were now to pass – during which period he was to undergo training – before he was to be attested on October 1. Just two days later again he then proceeded on October 3 to embark with the other personnel of the *First Five Hundred* onto the Bowring Brothers' vessel *Florizel* awaiting the contingent in St. John's Harbour.

(Right above: *The image of Florizel at anchor in the harbour at St. John's is by courtesy of Admiralty House Museum.*)



The ship sailed on the morrow to its rendezvous off the south coast of the Island where she was to join the convoy transporting the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Division across the Atlantic.

(Right: *Fort George, constructed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, still serves the British Army to this day. – photograph from 2011*)



In the United Kingdom Private Vaughan trained with the Newfoundland contingent: firstly in southern England; then in Scotland at Fort George – on the Moray Firth close to Inverness; at Edinburgh Castle – where it provided the first garrison from outside the British Isles; and later again at the tented *Stobs Camp* near the town of Hawick to the south-east of Edinburgh.

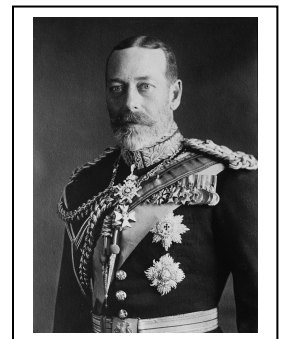


(Right above: *The Newfoundland Regiment on parade at Stobs Camp and about to be presented with its Colours on June 10, 1915 – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)

During the final days of the period spent at *Stobs Camp*, Private Vaughan of 'B' Company had been promoted to the rank of lance corporal – on July 29.

At the beginning of that August of 1915, the four senior Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', were then sent south to undergo a final two weeks of training, as well as an inspection by the King, at Aldershot; meanwhile the two junior Companies, the later-arrived 'E' and 'F\*', were sent to Scotland's west coast, to Ayr, where they were to provide the nucleus of the newly-forming 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion.

(continued)



(Preceding page: *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* – photograph from *Bain News Services* via *Wikipedia*)

*\*On July 10, 1915, 'F' Company had arrived at Stobs Camp from Newfoundland, its personnel raising the numbers of the unit to battalion establishment strength, and thus permitting it to be ordered to active service.*

*The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, comprising those four Companies, 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D', was thereupon attached to the 88<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 29<sup>th</sup> Division of the (British) Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.*

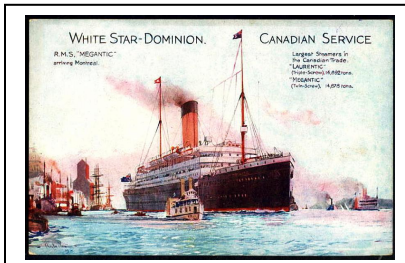
It had then been during the period spent at Aldershot that Lance Corporal Vaughan of 'B' Company – he was not alone in doing so - had been prevailed upon, he on August 13, to re-enlist for the duration of the war\*.

*\*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.*



(Right above: *Some of the men of 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' Companies of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment at Aldershot in August of 1915* – from *The Fighting Newfoundlander* by Col. G.W.L. Nicholson, C.D.)

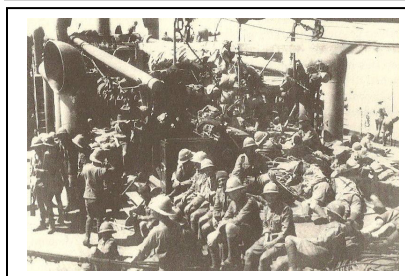
(Right: *The image of Megantic, here in her peace-time colours of a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.*)



On August 20, 1915, Lance Corporal Vaughan and his comrades-in-arms embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport onto the requisitioned passenger-liner *Megantic* for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks where, a month later – having spent two weeks billeted in British barracks in the Egyptian capital, Cairo - on September 20, he disembarked with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion at *Suvla Bay* on the *Gallipoli Peninsula*.



(Right above: *Kangaroo Beach, where the officers and men of the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Newfoundland Regiment, landed on the night of September 19-20, 1915, is to be seen 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 taken in 2011)



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**(Preceding page: 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: A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion was to serve during the fall of 1915 – photograph from 2011)**

**Not only in the area where the Newfoundland Battalion was to serve but, even since the very first days of the operation in April of 1915, the entire *Gallipoli Campaign*, including the operation at *Suvla Bay*, would prove to be little more than a debacle: Flies, dust, disease, the frost-bite and the floods – and of course the casualties inflicted by an enemy who was to fight a great deal better than the British High Command\* had ever anticipated – were eventually to overwhelm the British-led forces and those of the French, and it would finally be decided to abandon not only *Suvla Bay* but the entire *Gallipoli* venture.**

**(Right: An un-identified Newfoundland soldier in the trenches at Suvla Bay – from Provincial Archives)**

**\*Many of the commanders chosen were second-rate, had been brought out of retirement, and had little idea of how to fight – let alone of how to win. One of the generals at Suvla, apparently, had handed in his resignation during the Campaign and had just gone home.**



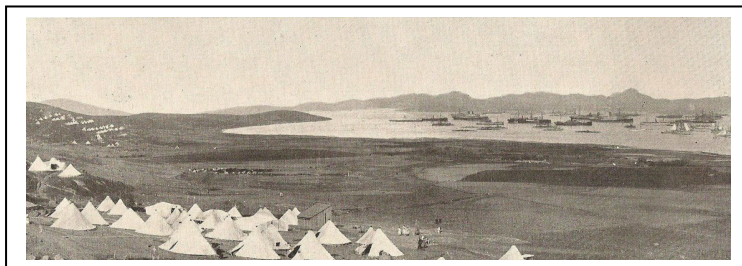
**November 25 was to see a freak rain-, snow- and ice-storm strike the Suvla Bay area and the subsequent floods had wreaked havoc amongst the forces of both sides. For several days, survival rather than the enemy was to be the priority.**

**There were to be many casualties on both sides, some of them, surprised by the sudden inundation of their positions, fatalities who had drowned in their trenches – although no Newfoundlanders were to be among that number. Numerous, however, were those afflicted by trench-foot and by frost-bite.**

**Lance Corporal Vaughan was to be one of them.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**(Right: A busy Mudros Bay and its minuscule port on the island of Lemnos at some time in 1915, showing only a few of the many Allied medical units established there, many of them under canvas – from Illustration.)**



**(continued)**

On December 16, 1915, Lance Corporal Vaughan was evacuated to the 24<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station at *Suvla Bay* before being admitted into, on December 22\* six days later, the 16<sup>th</sup> Stationary Hospital at *Mudros Bay* on the Greek island of Lemnos some fifty kilometres distant. By that time he had been diagnosed as suffering from frostbite and trench-foot.

*\*Even if this date is correct, he must have been transferred at least three days prior, as the British abandoned the Suvla Bay area entirely on the night of December 19-20, 1915, having begun the operation days earlier.*

From the island of Lemnos he was invalided on the 26<sup>th</sup> of December, Boxing Day of 1915, onto the Cunard trans-Atlantic liner – but by now His Majesty’s Hospital Ship - *Aquitania*, which had by that time been requisitioned by the Admiralty and was to serve later as a troop-transport. Lance Corporal Vaughan was on his way back to the United Kingdom.



(Right above: *HMT Olympic on the right lies at anchor along with HM Hospital Ship Aquitania, centre, at Mudros Bay in the autumn of 1915. – from a photograph from the Imperial War Museum, London*)

(Right: *Some of the vessel’s peace-time facilities being used as a hospital ward on board Aquitania – from a photograph originally from the Cunard Archives*)



Upon his arrival in England, he was admitted into the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital in the southern Borough of Wandsworth on January 3. After ten days of further treatment and convalescence, Lance Corporal Vaughan was granted the customary ten-day furlough accorded military personnel upon release from hospital – in his case the period of leave was to officially be from January 13 to 22 of the New Year, 1916.



(Right above: *The main building of what was to become the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital during the Great War was opened, on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1859, as a home for the orphaned daughters of British soldiers, sailors and marines. – photograph from 2010*)

(Right: *Newfoundland patients, unfortunately unidentified, convalescing at the 3<sup>rd</sup> London General Hospital, Wandsworth – courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs. Lillian Tibbo*)



Apparently he then was then posted to the Regimental Depot, but, for some unrecorded reason, did not report to *duty* there until January 29.

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The Regimental Depot at Ayr had by then been established during the summer of 1915. This was to be the overseas base for the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Reserve) Battalion of the Newfoundland Regiment from where re-enforcement drafts would be despatched – as of November of 1915 up until January of 1918 - to bolster the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion's numbers, at first to the Middle East and then later to the Western Front.



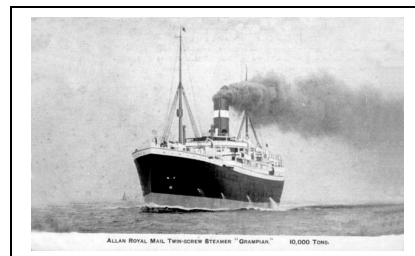
(Right above: *An aerial view of Ayr – probably from the period between the Wars: Newton-on Ayr, where the 'other ranks' were quartered, is to the left of the River Ayr and the Royal Borough, where were housed the officers, is to the right.* – by courtesy of the Carnegie Library at Ayr)

It was at Ayr that Corporal Vaughan – having been further promoted as of February 12, 1916 - was to spend the following eighteen months. There were now, however, to be more – and more serious – medical problems.



(Right above: *The High Street in Ayr as shown on a postcard of the time, the imposing Wallace Tower – it stands to this day (2017) - dominating the scene* – by courtesy of Reverend Wilson Tibbo and Mrs Lillian Tibbo)

A document from May of 1917 records the opinion of the Medical Officer at Ayr that...*No. 339 Cpl Vaughan. O. is unlikely to be fit for Service with the Expeditionary Force for Six (6) months, on account of Tuberculosis (pulmonary). I recommend that he be posted to the Depôt at St. John's, Newfoundland.*



On June 6 of that same year, 1917, Corporal Vaughan was embarked onto His Majesty's Transport *Grampian* for the repatriation journey from Liverpool to the port-city of Québec from where he travelled back to Newfoundland, to arrive there June 30.

(Right above: *The image of Grampian of the Allan Line is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site. Only intermittently used as a troop-transport, the vessel was to survive the Great War only to be gutted by fire in 1921, then abandoned; she was finally to be scrapped in 1925.*)



He was the son of Henry Vaughan, *shoemaker* and employee of the *Nfld. Boot & Shoe Mfg. Co. Ltd.*, and of Ellen Vaughan (née *Dwyer*) of Leslie Street in St. John's - of 40, Brine Street, as of 1920 and, soon afterwards, of 137, George Street.

(*The photograph of Private Vaughan is from the Provincial Archives*)

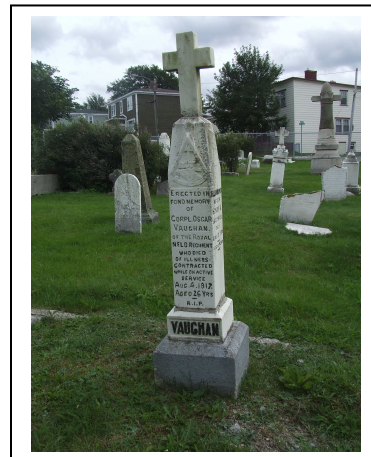
Oscar Augustus was brother to Sergeant Francis Joseph Vaughan (Regimental Number 481) who died in service in St. John's on May 22, 1918; to Private Joseph Patrick Vaughan (Regimental Number 800), reported as *missing in action* then later *presumed dead* at Monchy-le-Preux; to Private Herbert Augustine Vaughan (Regimental Number 2742) who

survived but was badly wounded; to Charles Henry; to Albert Edward; to George; to Joseph Edward; to Henry; to Michael Leo, and to a single sister, Pauline.

Upon his return to St. John's, Corporal Vaughan was immediately admitted into the *Jensen Camp* at Blackmarsh Road on the outskirts of the city, where he was reported to have *died of sickness*, of pulmonary tuberculosis, only a month later, on July 4 of 1917.

Oscar Augustus (*Augustinian*) Vaughan had enlisted at the *declared* age of twenty-three years: date of birth in St. John's, Newfoundland, August 14, 1891 (from the Newfoundland Birth Register).

(Right: *The monument to the memory of Corporal Vaughan and of Private Herbert Vaughan which stands in Belvedere Cemetery, St. John's – photograph from 2010*)



Corporal Oscar Augustus (*Augustinian*) Vaughan was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).



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 – February 8, 2023.

