

Remembering the sacrifices of those with SC connections who served their country 100 years ago.

Published in the Timaru Herald 6 May 2017

By Ted Hansen

Private Herbert Lionel Edman, No.6/3007

Herbert (known as Bert) was born at Christchurch on 3 August 1893, only son of John (1846-1910) and Kate Miriam (1866-1924 nee Ford) Edman. After his father's death at Lyttelton in 1910, his mother Kate remarried in 1913, to Martin Mansson, a Swedish seaman. Herbert was educated at the Lyttelton Primary School. By 1915 he was working in Timaru as a packer man for W. Evans (flour millers) of Beswick Street, and his address was care of Mrs Beaumont of Stafford Street, Timaru.

On 12 June 1915 he enlisted for war service, and was posted to C Company, 2nd Battalion of the Canterbury Infantry Regiment. His mother, Mrs Katie Mansson of Hawkhurst Road (later 3 Jacksons Terrace) Lyttelton, was listed as his next of kin. He was described as being single, 5 foot 10 ½ inches tall, Church of England, his chest measuring 31 ½ - 34 inches, of dark complexion, brown eyes, black hair and having good teeth. Shortly after entering Trentham Camp, on 9 July, he was admitted to hospital for 10 days with influenza.

Training completed, he embarked from Wellington with the 7th reinforcements, Canterbury Infantry Regiment, on 9 October 1915. His contingent was bound for Suez, Egypt, and their transport was either the Aparima, Navua or Warrimoo (HMNZT 32, 33 or 34). Not long after arriving in Egypt, he was in hospital and only out of hospital a few days, he was, on 15 December, admitted to the Isolation Hospital at Choubra, suffering from diphtheria and discharged on 23 December to the base depot at Zeitoun.

On 8 March 1916 at Moascar, he was posted to D Company, 2nd Battalion Canterbury Infantry Regiment, and embarked for France on 7 April 1916. Later in the year his unit was at Goose Alley which was near Flers on the Somme. During an attack on 21 September, he was reported missing in the field and was not found until two days later with gunshot wounds to his back. He was immediately admitted to No.11 Stationary Hospital at Rouen.

Herbert was embarked the same day, on the hospital ship Maheno, for England, and admitted to No1 NZ General Hospital at Brockenhurst on the 24th. There he was to survive for another six weeks but died of his wounds on 11 November. Burial followed on 13 November 1916 in the Brockenhurst (St Nicholas) Churchyard, Hampshire, England.

His name is commemorated on the Timaru Cenotaph, Lyttelton War Memorial and his father's headstone in the Lyttelton Cemetery. After the war, his mother, Kate Mansson, by then living at 3 Jackson's Terrace, Lyttelton, was sent his war medals, the 1914-1915 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal, plus a plaque and scroll.