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Esau Mercer

Royal Naval Reserve (Newfoundland)

Service No. 726X

World War I

Born: 17 March 1888

Died: 06 October 1981

Place of Birth: Bay Roberts

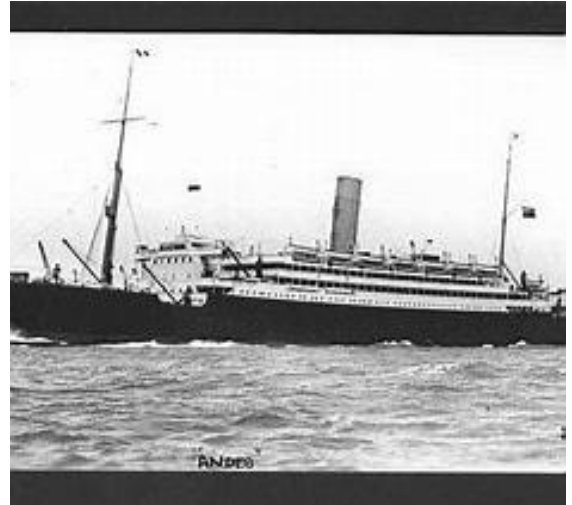
Parents: Esau and Fanny Mercer

Esau was 26 in the summer of 1914, when he made his way to the enlistment location in St. John's. The journey to get there was undertaken either by sea (ship) or by train and took at least a day or two to get there. He gave Roxbury, Massachusetts as his address upon enlistment.

His official service ledger record contains a series of handwritten entries and provides a picture of his war service by date, location and ships to which he was assigned.

The record entries are:

1. 21 Aug 14 – 05 Nov 14: **HMS Calypso** (the training vessel stationed in St. John's Harbour)
2. 06 Nov 14 – 27 Mar 15: **HMS Calyx**
3. 28 Mar 15 – 20 Apr 15: **HMS Victory 1**
4. 21 Apr 15 – 31 Jan 17: **HMS Andes**



HMS Andes

HMS Andes was an ocean liner built in 1913 for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. She was requisitioned in March 1915 and fitted with six 6-inch guns. Andes spent most of the war in 10th Cruiser Squadron, on the Northern Patrol, on duties around the Faeroe Islands and Iceland.

5. 01 Feb 17 – 24 May 17: **HMS Pembroke 1**
6. 25 May 17 – 14 Jun 17: **HMS Triton**
7. 15 Jun 17 – 22 Nov 17: **HMS Albert B.???????**
8. 25 Nov 17 – 06 Jan 19: **HMCS Niobe**
9. 07 Jan 19 – 08 Apr 19: **HMS Briton**. Shore demobilized and discharged.

It appears that in 1914 prior to enlisting, Samuel married a young lady by the name of Violet B. Parsons.

Newfoundland general census data for 1921, 1935 and 1945 provide no information for the Mercers.

It is known that that Esau and Violet had a daughter named Clarice Marie born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1923, so the assumption is that they spent their time in the United States and returned to Newfoundland in their latter years.

Margaret died in September 1965, while Esau passed in late 1981. They are buried in the New St. Matthew's Anglican Cemetery in Bay Roberts, Newfoundland.

Below is a clipping from The Guardian dated 06 November 1914 that mentions Esau and on the next page is Esau's Obituary from The Compass dated 21 October 1981.

*From The Guardian
06 November 1914*

Our Naval Reservists

The following Naval Reservists belonging to Bay Roberts and vicinity have gone to St. John's to join the Calypso:

Ralph Mercer, Mercer's Cove, son of William and the late Rachel Mercer.

Esau Mercer, Beachy Cove, son of Esau and Fanny Mercer

Ralph Barrett, French's Cove, son of Rebecca and the late George Barrett.

John Mercer, Bay Roberts West, son of Elizabeth and the late Thomas George Mercer.

William John Brown, Bay Roberts West, son of Wm. and Elizabeth Brown.

Samuel Brown, Bay Roberts West, son of Harry and Emma Brown.

Herbert and Walter Russell, Country Road, sons of John and Annie Russell.

Lorenzo Roberts, Country Road, son of Abram and Grace Roberts.

They are going to fight for their King and Country, and we hope they will uphold the best traditions of the seamen and fishermen of Newfoundland. We also pray that they will be protected from harm and danger while engaged in the discharge of their duties.

There are several others gone to St. John's from this locality whose names we have not secured. Will their friends please forward us their names for publication.

From The Compass
21 October 1981

**OBITUARY
MERCER**

Passed peacefully away at the Grace General Hospital, St. John's on Tuesday, October 6, Esau Mercer of Bay Roberts (East) in his 93rd year. Left to mourn their sad loss are three daughters: Mrs. Ellen Diming of Greensboro, North Carolina; Mrs. Marie Mercer of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; and Mrs. Grace Flewelling of Lexington, Mass.; nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. His wife, the late Margaret (Parsons) Mercer, predeceased him in 1965.

Esau Mercer served his country in the First World War under the command of the Royal Navy and at the time of his passing was the oldest living veteran of that war in Bay Roberts. He is also a survivor of the Halifax Explosion which took place during the First World War.

Uncle Esau resided at the Pentecostal Senior Citizen's Home for the past

three years. His funeral took place on Friday, October 9, at 2:00 p.m. from Baggs Funeral Home to St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Bay Roberts, where the service was conducted by Rev. Canon Smith.

Members of the Canadian Legion were in attendance and an honor guard from the Legion performed the duties of pallbearers. The Legion's ritual service at the graveside was conducted by the President of the Canadian Legion, Mr. Graham Bursey. The last post was sounded by the Past President, Mr. Roy Andrews. Donations in memory of Esau Mercer may be sent to the Cancer Society.

We were not there to see you die,

Nor clasp your hand to say good-bye;

But we will remember our whole lives through,

The last few hours we spent with you.

To us he has not passed away,

Nor has he wandered far;
Just entered God's most lovely room,

And left the door ajar.