



Between the Crosses

written by Will Huggins
directed by Daniel Llewelyn Williams

A dialogue between generations, this unique theatrical experience tells a powerful true story of survival, reunion and hope, amidst the chaos of the first world war.

Edgar Huggins, WWI veteran and the last surviving Durham Light Infantryman, speaks to his great nephew William from beyond the grave in a recorded interview.

He talks about how he joined-up because he wants to work with horses and travel to Australia, but finds himself on the front line.

Between the bullets, between the bomb blasts and a million miles away from any war poets we discover that not even The Great War can strip this man of his humour.

Written and performed by Will Huggins, Edgars' real life great nephew, this theatrical documentary will delight, move and inspire you to learn more about your own connections to the Great War.

A powerful portrayal and recount of WWI veteran Edgar Huggins' life experiences before, during and after war, this show is emotionally-charged and educational.

This production is brought to you by Flying Bridge Theatre, the award winning company who's past productions include "*A Regular Little Houdini*" and "*Not About Heroes*".



Contact: info@flyingbridgetheatre.co.uk / wrehuggins@gmail.com



Tech Ryder

The piece is very flexible and will suit small to mid-sized venues best.

Run time: 60mins

Get in time: 3-4 hrs

Stage Dressing

- Open black box.
- Black Masking on sides and top.
- Black curtain on back wall. Or plain, dark cyc. Or plain dark bare back wall.

Lights

- General cover in straw. Strong front and good (aerial) side cover.
- Par cans or frenels w/ red gels on US bar directed onto back wall, cyc or back curtain.
- 4 x Special Profiles from FOH bar (see diagram);
 - o 1 x DSC
 - o 1 x MSL
 - o 1 x MSR
 - o 1 x USC (With shutters to make a rectangle)

Furniture

- 1 x small table (to be used as a work desk)
- 1 x standard chair to suit small table.

Sound

- Sound to be run from Qlab on company's MacBook pro.
- Small jack to connect to your desk.

Other requirements

House technician to assist in focus and plot.

Please advise which lighting desk you use!

Between the Crosses Lighting

- **General cover in straw. Strong front and good (aerial) side cover.**

- **Par cans or frenels w/ red gels on US bar directed onto back wall, cyc or back curtain.**

- **4 x Special Profiles from FOH bar;**

o 1 x DSC (Documents)

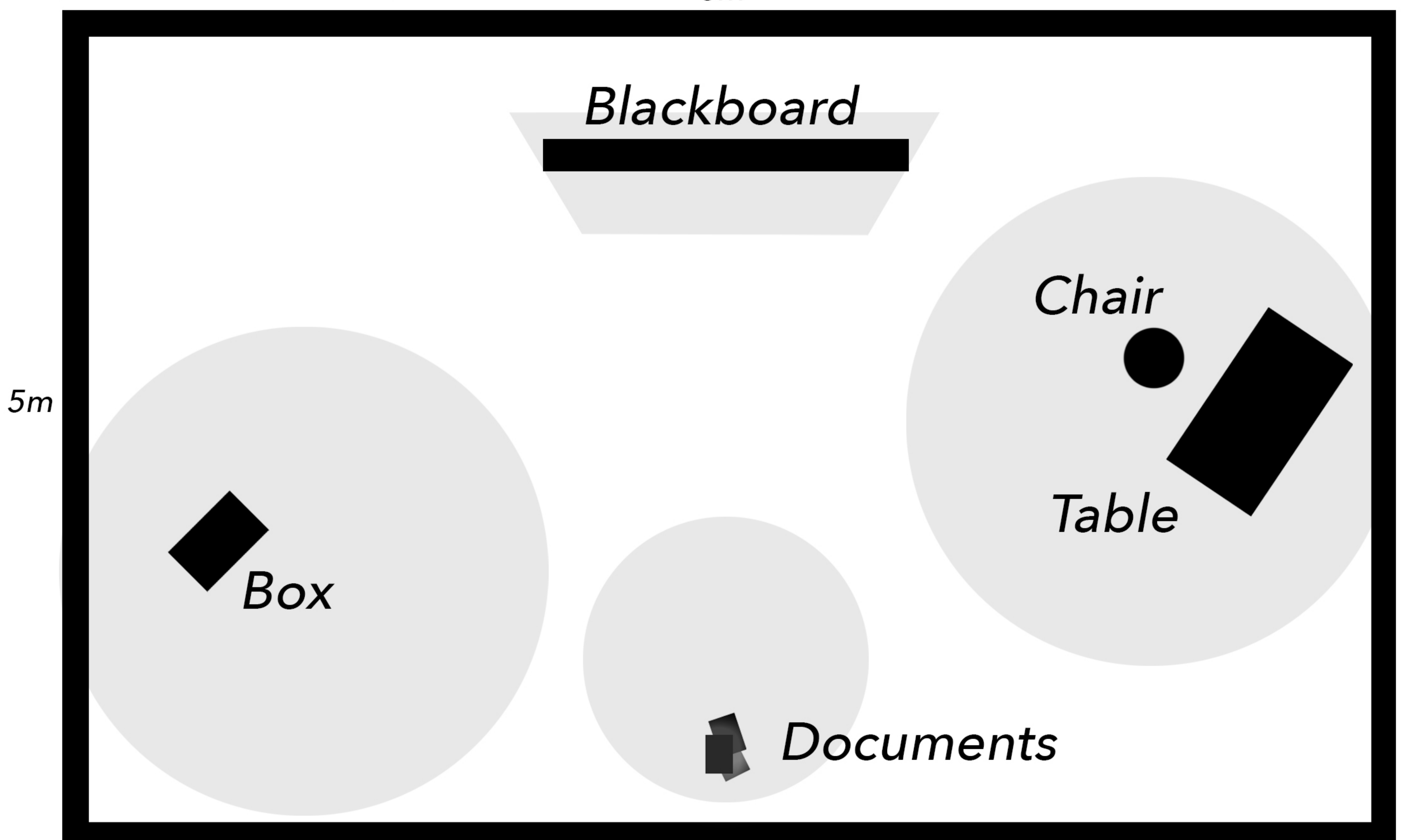
o 1 x MSL (Chair and Table)

o 1 x MSR (Box)

o 1 x USC (With shutters to make a rectangle focused on Blackboard)

Specials Diagram

8m



Audience



What the Critics Say



The Advertiser (Australia) by Chloe Metcalfe - March 6, 2018

A powerful portrayal and recount of WWI veteran Edgar Huggins' life experiences before, during and after war, this show is emotionally-charged and educational.

The passionate performance by Will Huggins breathes life into Edgar's story, providing a brief glimpse into the experiences many veterans remained quiet about after surviving the war.

Combining spoken word with audio excerpts of an interview with Edgar, it is very well orchestrated and I found myself engulfed by the story and performance.

Huggins' passionate delivery is outstanding and it's wonderful to see a show discussing the cost of veterans remaining quiet about their experiences.

One of the last of his kind, *Between the Crosses* celebrates the life of a veteran who always chose to focus on the positives.



Adelaide Fringe Review by David Robinson - March 6, 2018

BETWEEN THE CROSSES sees Will Huggins tell the story of his great-uncle Edgar's experiences during the First World War with the Durham Light Infantry. He is assisted by the recorded voice of Edgar himself, using excerpts from an interview conducted by the Imperial War Museum shortly before his passing in 1991.

The evening begins as a seemingly straightforward lecture-style presentation, blackboard and all. However, the show evolves into something much more engaging as Huggins immerses himself in the performance.

The show is quite light-hearted; there are a few laughs to be had, yet *BETWEEN THE CROSSES* manages to powerfully convey the boredom and dread felt by young soldiers amid the uncertainty of conflict, as well as the dilemma faced by those "lucky" enough to survive.

Edgar's recorded voice seems matter-of-fact when talking about his service on the front lines, but official war records tell a different story; one that he seems to have forgotten. This non-recollection is the focal point of the story. Why is it that so many survivors of war cannot bring themselves to open up about their time spent away? Is it a deep sadness for the loss of so many friends and comrades, a sense of guilt about surviving, or simply that the horror of war cannot be conveyed in words alone?

Huggins does a remarkable job. This is a very fast-moving one (well, two) man show; the dialogue flows at an impressive rate of knots yet it is delivered articulately and with much feeling. Huggins manages to combine details of the highest-level causes of the Great War, explanations of a few of his great-uncle's offhand comments, some military history and his own recollections of Edgar. All of which provide a meaningful insight into the reasons why war is savoured by those who don't go, yet rarely mentioned by those who do.



Broadway World Adelaide by Barry Lenny - March 6, 2018

Between the Crosses is based on recordings made by Edgar Huggins, the last surviving member of the Durham Light Infantry, telling of his experiences at Ypres and the Somme in WWI. Like so many survivors of all wars, he spoke little or nothing to his family about that time in his life.

Will Huggins recalls, when he was a small boy, his uncle showing him his wounds and mentioning the trenches. After Edgar's death, he researched the history of his late uncle's regiment and its involvement in the Great War, and also found a recording made by his uncle. This play draws on that recording, and even includes a few brief passages from it.

Will Huggins presents a high-energy, fast-paced, good-humoured performance that shows great respect and affection for his uncle Edgar, as well as a vast knowledge of that campaigns in which he was involved. It is interesting that Edgar only joined the Territorial Army, the Terriers, prior to the conflict, in order to work with the horses.

Huggins begins his narrative with the early life of his uncle, his love of horses, and describes how he ended up in the Durham Light Infantry, placing it alongside the bigger events. His description of how a small problem in the Austro-Hungarian Empire suddenly spread to become a world war is cleverly constructed and brings forth considerable laughter.

His detailed and rapid-fire account of the entire time that his uncle's regiment spent at the front, and of all of the others involved in the action, almost makes one's head spin. You have to see this sensational scene to believe it, and it is only a brief part of the production. This is a wonderful, warm tribute to one of the many who went to war in 1914, and one of the few who returned, and Will Huggins is sensational, both as the writer and as the performer of this remarkable work. Do not miss it.



The British Theatre Guide - Review by Graeme Strachan - August 11, 2017

While we lament on the doomed youth and heroise the tragic fallen in war, what becomes of those who never fell, but came home to a world lacking the understanding and the skill to help them?

This is one of the questions arising from Will Huggins's play *Between the Crosses*, a surprisingly cheerful and occasionally laughter-provoking account of the late Edgar Huggins, a soldier in the Durham Light Infantry and survivor of World War One.

Through the use of a blackboard, a few pieces of chalk and a handful of props, Huggins recounts the history of his Great Uncle's journey through The Great War and obliquely shows the horrors untold through the real-life recorded account of the man, mercifully repeating the, at times, garbled and indistinct recordings made "with awful microphones" as well as enacting some conversations in full, and in accent.

It creates a vivid and personal picture of a very real man, with simple and achievable goals and the drive to complete them, a man whose life and plans were thrown hither and yon by war and yet, in years to come, he'd laugh, joke and be quite dismissive of the battles and death he'd seen.

Huggins manages to create a genuine sympathy for a man he clearly held dear, if never really knew, and within the scant details recorded on the Imperial War Museum interviews and the official war record, there's the story of a man, one hidden from view but utterly evoked by the performance.



The Wee Review - by Graeme Strachan - August 13, 2017

The Army's arrival at the Fringe under the banner *Army @ The Fringe* and a partnership with Summerhall has been met with disagreement from certain quarters. "The mainstreaming of militarism within UK culture," no less. You could say that. Or you could say that this is an open access arts festival and if the men and women of our armed forces wish to be part of it, fair play to them. Besides, if this were a sinister plot to lead our innocent youth into the maw of the military-industrial complex rather than a very mild PR exercise, they'd do better than starting with a one man play about the horrors of World War I.

Between The Crosses by Wales' Flying Bridge Theatre is essentially a theatrical lecture about one Durham Light Infantryman's experience at Ypres and the Somme. The man giving the lecture, Will Huggins, is the great-nephew of the soldier, Edgar Huggins, and it's told using a recording made by the Imperial War Museum of the old man shortly before his death. Snippets from this recording enable Will to effectively "interview" Edgar to get a first hand account, while details from official reports provide an emotionless, and occasionally brutally objective, context. As Will says, both accounts concur on factual detail, but Edgar

veers away at crucial junctures as if recoiling from the memory. In some ways, *Between The Crosses* aims to fill the gap of experience in between.

It's accessibly and fluently delivered, with key points being noted on a large blackboard. A rattled-off history of World War I might have a few pedants hmm-ing, but sounds accurate to these ears, and conveys well the tragic domino effect of events. Similarly impressively, Huggins launches a detailed explanation of army structures and deployment, sketching troop movements on the board. It almost deliberately loses the audience in detail, but in so doing, makes its point about the chaos of war.

Huggins Jr. has a rare humility as a performer in not making it all about him. He puts Edgar front and centre, framing his words for maximum effect, and avoiding adding too much of his own interpretation to them. It's a generous act. Edgar comes across as something of a star. He talks of his love of horses, which eventually came in handy, and of his ambition to travel to Australia, which sadly went unfulfilled. He's less forthcoming on the war, playing down any talk of the privations he faced. There's few of the cliches of trench life in here, mainly because Edgar himself doesn't mention them.

There's another poignant moment when Will reveals his nan, Edgar's sister-in-law is being laid to rest this very day at the age of 101. This play makes a fitting tribute to her, Edgar and their whole generation.