

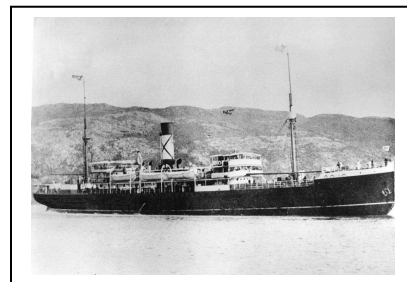


Lance Corporal Hubert Edgar Ebsary (Regimental Number 339) lies in Hill 10 Cemetery at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli – Grave reference V. C. 9.

His previous occupation previous to enlistment recorded as that of a cooper earning twelve dollars a week, Hubert Edgar Ebsary was a recruit of the First Draft. He was also a former member of the *Church Lads Brigade*.

Four weeks and two days after the *Declaration Of War*, he presented himself for medical examination at the *Church Lads Brigade Armoury* in St. John's, capital city of the Dominion of Newfoundland, on September 3, 1914. It was a procedure which was to find him...*fit for foreign service*.

Four days later again, on September 7, Hubert Edgar Ebsary then enlisted at the same venue at the daily private soldier's rate of \$1.10 (this including a ten-cent per diem field allowance).



There was now to be a further waiting-period of some three weeks – with training having been undertaken during that interim period – before Private Ebsary attested on October 1. He then embarked on October 3 with the others 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 1st Canadian Division across the Atlantic.

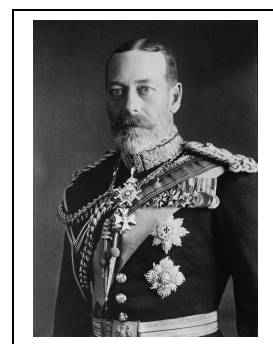
(Right above: Fort George, constructed in the latter half of the eighteenth century, still serves the British Army to this day. – photograph from 2011)

In the United Kingdom Private Ebsary 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 he was promoted to the rank of lance-corporal on April 24 and where the Newfoundland unit 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)

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 2nd (Reserve) Battalion.



(Right: 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)

(continued)

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

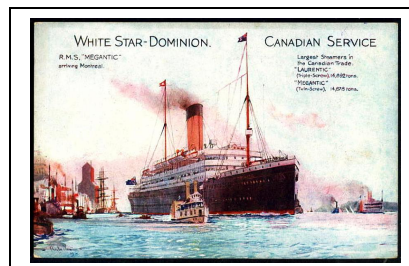
It had then been during the period spent at Aldershot that Lance Corporal Ebsary of 'B' Company – he was not alone in doing so - had been prevailed upon, he on August 13, to re-enlist for the duration of the war*.

****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 1st 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, in peace-time a 'White Star Line' vessel, is from the Old Ship Picture Galleries web-site.)

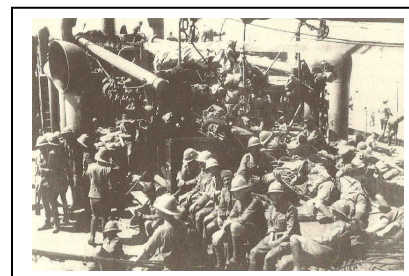


On August 20, 1915, Lance Corporal Ebsary and his charges embarked in the Royal Navy Harbour of Devonport onto the requisitioned passenger-liner Megantic for passage to the Middle East and to the fighting against the Turks where, a month later – having spent two weeks billeted in British barracks in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



(Right above: Kangaroo Beach, where the officers and men of the 1st 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. Remnants of a landing-craft are still clearly visible in the foreground on 'A' Beach. – photograph from 2011)

(Right: 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)



(continued)

(Right below: A century later, the area, little changed from those far-off days, of the Newfoundland positions at Suvla, and where the 1st Battalion was to serve during the autumn 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.***



There exists a document among his files which shows that the Governor of the Dominion of Newfoundland at about this time had seen fit to recommend further promotion to Lance Corporal Ebsary: PROMOTION. – REGIMENTAL ORDER. – By Sir Walter E. Davidson K.C.M.G., Officer Commanding. The Lt. Col. Has been pleased to approve the following appointment – To be Corporal – Lance Cpl. H. Ebsary (to date from Nov. 15th 1915).

Mention of it exists in two other place, however nothing more appears to have come of it.

November 26 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 Ebsary, however, as the fighting had subsequently resumed, was to be one of its first victims.

(Right above: A photograph taken from the Newfoundland positions showing No-Man's-Land at Suvla Bay in 1915 – from the Provincial Archives)

(continued)

(Right: A photograph from long range, showing the forward area at Suvla Bay and some of the Turkish positions overlooking it. Suvla Bay itself is to the left and the British and Newfoundlanders were fighting from left to right. One may discern a white horizontal mark in the very centre of that image: it is Azmak Cemetery wherein lie twelve Newfoundland dead – erroneously identified as Canadians by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. – photograph from 2011)



The son of Stephen Elias Ebsary, sea captain, wharf-master, and then foreman with the *Baine Johnson Company* of Water Street in the city and of Sarah Ebsary (née *Hingstone* or *Hingston* but also recorded as *Kingston*, deceased September 20, 1894)* of 147, the Southside, St. John's, he was brother to Alan-Eusebius, to Georgina-Kingstone (*Hingstone*), to Ella, to Laura-Lenna and possibly to William.

**The couple had married on January 27, 1883.*

***Stephen Elias Ebsary was to marry again on two occasions: on October 17, 1896, to Julia Ann Picco (also found as Picot), she deceased on April 2, 1906, the couple having parented Dorothy and Thomas-Merchant; then to a widow, Elizabeth Jane Penrose, whom he married on September 27, 1909 (she deceased prior to the 1921 Census) – no offspring appear to be recorded.*

Lance Corporal Ebsary was reported as having *died of wounds* in the 88th Field Ambulance at *Suvla Bay* on December 1, 1915, succumbing to bullet-injuries to the body incurred earlier in the day while serving with 'B' Company during what was otherwise a routine day.

Hubert Edgar Ebsary had enlisted at the declared age of twenty-four years. The family memorial in Forest Road Cemetery cites his age as twenty-four and a-half years at the time of his death at Gallipoli*: date of birth in St. John's, Newfoundland, July 27, 1891.

(The photograph of Private Ebsary is from the Provincial Archives.)

(Right above: A memorial which stands in the family plot – found in the General Protestant Cemetery in St. John's – commemorates the sacrifice of Lance Corporal Hubert Edgar Ebsary. – photograph from 2015)

(continued)



Lance Corporal Hubert Edgar Ebsary 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. Last updated – February 11, 2023.