

Climatizing Empire: Race, Landscape, and Colonial Nationalism in Newfoundland

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Abstract

My dissertation examines landscape in Newfoundland through intersecting histories of the built environment, colonial nationalism, and imperial ideology around the turn of the twentieth century. Under the aegis of Newfoundland's national policy, new landscapes were created that re-presented the island's climate and geography in profound ways. Drawing on textual sources, I make connections between the figuration of landscape in literature, architecture, planning, and exhibitions and the anxieties of British observers who depicted Newfoundland's fishing society as racially regressive. I argue that colonial elites created new temperate landscapes in an effort to situate British racial identities in Newfoundland, fashioning new geographies within their country's own borders, and making its natural environment resemble Britain's own. In doing so, Newfoundland's national policy simultaneously embodied a late nineteenth-century imperial project to turn colonial landscapes into a speculative frontier for the reestablishment of white virtues. New landscapes in Newfoundland recapitulated the desire of imperialists to reinforce British solidarity by climatizing distant parts of the empire. If acclimatization is the process by which organisms adapt to changes in their environment, colonial elites in Newfoundland set out to do the opposite: to climatize the empire itself by modifying its environments to suit the imaginary needs of white, European colonizers.

Résumé

Ma thèse examine le paysage de Terre-Neuve à travers des histoires croisées de l'environnement bâti, du nationalisme colonial et de l'idéologie impériale au tournant du XXe siècle. Sous l'égide de la politique nationale de Terre-Neuve, de nouveaux paysages ont été créés qui ont représenté le climat et la géographie de l'île de manière profonde. En me basant sur des sources textuelles, je fais des liens entre la figuration du paysage dans la littérature, l'architecture, la planification et les expositions et les inquiétudes des observateurs britanniques qui ont décrit la société de pêche de Terre-Neuve comme régressive. Je soutiens que les élites coloniales ont créé de nouveaux paysages tempérés pour tenter de situer les identités raciales britanniques à Terre-Neuve, façonner de nouvelles géographies à l'intérieur des frontières de leur pays et faire ressembler son environnement naturel à celui de la Grande-Bretagne. Ce faisant, la politique nationale de Terre-Neuve incarnait simultanément un projet impérial de la fin du XIXe siècle visant à transformer les paysages coloniaux en une frontière spéculative pour le rétablissement des vertus blanches. Les nouveaux paysages de Terre-Neuve ont rappelé le désir des impérialistes de renforcer la solidarité britannique en climatisant une partie éloignée de l'empire. Si l'acclimatation est le processus par lequel les organismes s'adaptent aux changements de leur environnement, les élites coloniales de Terre-Neuve tentent de faire l'inverse: climatiser l'empire lui-même en modifiant ses environnements pour répondre aux besoins imaginaires des colonisateurs blancs européens.

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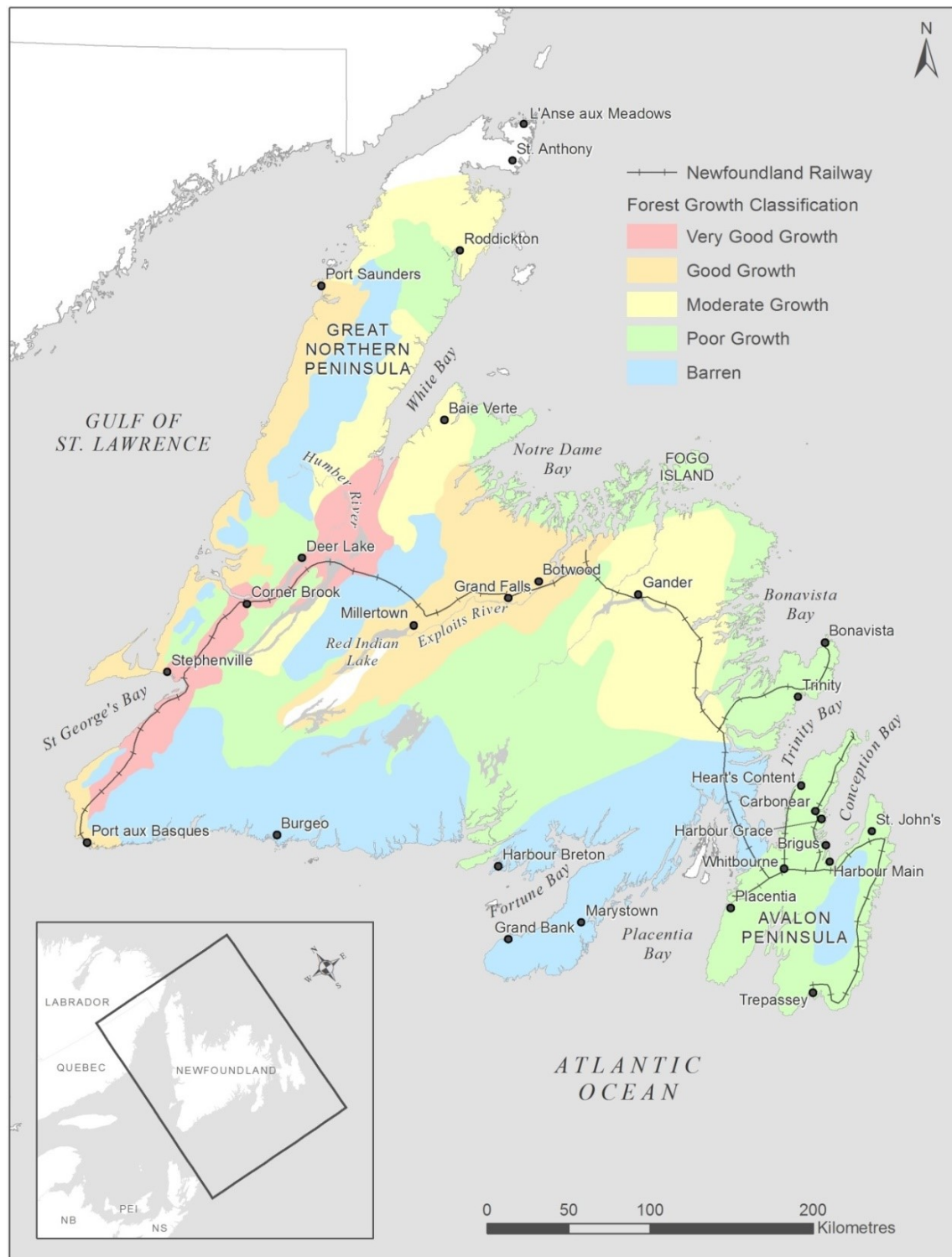
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Map of Newfoundland



Courtesy Lauren Allen; classification of forest growth based on *Report of the Newfoundland Royal Commission on Forestry, 1955* ([St. John's]: David R. Thistle, 1955), Map No. 5.

Chapter 1 — Introduction: Race, Landscape, and Colonial Nationalism

Our powers, physical, mental, and moral, our temperament and our disposition, depend upon events over which we have had no control, — upon a long line of ancestors from which we have been evolved; upon the race whose blood flows in our veins; upon the climate in which we are born; and we can only modify these by patient effort and to a limited extent.

- Moses Harvey, 1886.

In 1940, leaflets posted inside a guest house on Newfoundland's southern shore announced: "this house was built by Newfoundlanders." They informed visitors that the house "is built of spruce, fir and birch, all woods which grow in Newfoundland" and that the furniture "is made by Newfoundland men, many of whom never made furniture before." "The couch cover, bed spreads and curtains are made from Newfoundland wool," they continued, adding that "the house is designed to show what fine work can be done by men and women in Newfoundland."¹

Built at the height of the Great Depression, the Marystown guest house was a startlingly modern apparition in rural Newfoundland. The house stretched out over 900 square feet and was fitted with expensive, modernist furniture. Its floor was waxed to a high sheen. Among the only surviving images of the guest house is a closely cropped photograph now residing in the archives of the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library at Harvard University (Fig. 1.1). From this photograph, a number of formal features are evident that mark the house as alien to Newfoundland. Decorative window shutters, a balustrade topped balcony, and even the tripartite division of the building's volume were all exceedingly rare in rural Newfoundland. The strangest thing, though, was that the house was surrounded by freshly ploughed fields. Unlike the nearby community of Marystown, where wooden houses, wharves, and fishing stages were closely huddled around a bay, the guest house sat atop a distant ridge. Its large picture windows looked back upon a traditional working landscape, framing it as pleasant scenery.

¹ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "This House" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.



Fig. 1.1, Marystown guest house, ca. 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

In contrast, simplicity and survival were distinguishing features of domestic architecture in rural Newfoundland.² At the time, it was not uncommon for families of five, six, or more to live in houses that were half as large as the Marystown guest house. Traditional houses of English and Irish import were modest in appearance and efficient in design, often gathering the entire plan under a single, gable roof. Intuitive construction methods tailored to local conditions meant that homes could be copied, altered, and even moved; and most were perched upon rocks and hills to allow easy access to the water (Fig. 1.2). Plumbing and electricity were scarce and the majority of homes were built without professional guidance. Conversely, the Marystown guest house was designed by an American social reformer with the help of Canadian experts in economic cooperation and under the watchful eye of British authorities. The guest house may have been in Newfoundland, but it was certainly was not of Newfoundland.

² Simplicity, in his sense, should be confused with unsophisticated. Rural homes were stylistically simple, compared to the ornate, Victorian homes built by urban elites. Shane O'Dea, "Simplicity and Survival: Vernacular Response in Newfoundland Architecture," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* 8, no. 2 (1983): 4-11.



Fig. 1.2, A typical Newfoundland outport, ca. 1890 (Photo: Simeon H. Parsons). Simeon H. Parsons Photograph Album (Coll-343), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

The values advertised by the guest house were also categorically foreign. The guest house was part of a larger effort spearheaded by British commissioners to reorganize the economics and division of labour in rural Newfoundland. The majority of Newfoundlanders were rural fishermen. At the height the Great Depression, nearly a third of Newfoundlanders were drawing on public relief as fish prices collapsed and foreign markets shrank. The “dole” in Newfoundland was just 6 cents per day, not enough to feed most families. Moreover, the work of catching, cleaning, and curing the fish catch was typically divided among all members of the family, women and children included. Rural reconstruction was designed to redress these problems by encouraging homesteading and farming on a commercial scale. In an effort to spur progress in rural Newfoundland, commissioners settled fishermen on the land, masquerading them as agriculturalists.

Similarly, the guest house offered palpable lessons in economic self-reliance and the sexual division of labour. The house sat amidst an agricultural landscape and was surrounded by a small community of self-built homes. Even its building materials—wool textiles and spruce, fir, and birch lumber—implied its connection to a larger, productive landscape. The house's display of material wealth was meant to communicate the benefits of a subsistence lifestyle and its promise of social mobility. It also embodied a belief in the sexual division of labour. Women in Marystown received education in homemaking, domestic science, and hygiene. Their economic space was also clearly defined through the promotion of home-based crafts like weaving and knitting. Woollen bedspreads and curtains displayed in the guest house were spun, woven, and dyed by local women. And unlike most homes in rural Newfoundland, where the kitchen acted as a central social space, the guest house's kitchen was designed to be efficient and unseen.

Marystown was one of several experimental land settlements built during the late 1930s that imposed British environmental sensibilities on rural Newfoundland. In Britain, rural landscapes enhanced through cultivation and enclosure acted as outward signs of economic wellbeing, moral order, and control.³ Yet British commissioners discovered none of these features in Newfoundland. Moreover, although Newfoundlanders were of English and Irish stock, commissioners were struck by the denigrated condition of their Anglo-Saxon charges. In 1933, Newfoundland's responsible government collapsed, leading British authorities to reinstate direct rule over the country. It was the first time an independent British dominion had reverted to something resembling a crown colony. British authorities were deeply embarrassed at having to rule over a country that was almost uniformly white. They created new landscapes in the hopes

³ David Lowenthal, "European and English Landscapes as National Symbols," in *Geography and National Identity*, ed. David Hooson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 15-38.

of instilling economic and moral lessons in Newfoundlanders – lessons that would ameliorate their capacity to self-govern and reverse their racial regression. The guest house was part of a modern vision in which landscape, architecture, and social reform were conjoined.

Marystown was also bookend to a century long experiment to catalyze Newfoundland's progress by making the island's landscape into a mirror for Britain's own. In 1855, Newfoundland became a self-governing colony. It was around this time that colonial elites—a group including politicians, merchants, journalists, clergymen, and lawyers—envisioned a national policy of progress modelled on development patterns in other parts of British North America. In an effort to redress economic problems associated with the fishery, policy makers looked towards the island's interior as a site for industrial and cultural expansion. They advocated for the development of forestry, mining, tourism, and agriculture. However, this turn from the sea to the land was more than just an economic decision. Impelled by a late-Victorian concern for the preservation of white virtues throughout the Anglo-Saxon world, policy makers attempted nothing less than to reform their country's society by modifying its environment.

My dissertation examines landscape in Newfoundland through intersecting histories of the built environment, colonial nationalism, and imperial ideology around the turn of the twentieth century. Under the aegis of Newfoundland's national policy, new landscapes were created that re-presented the island's climate and geography in profound ways. Drawing on textual sources, I make connections between the figuration of landscape in literature, architecture, planning, and exhibitions and the anxieties of British observers who depicted Newfoundland's fishing society as racially regressive. I argue that colonial elites created new temperate landscapes in an effort to situate British racial identities in Newfoundland, fashioning new geographies within their country's own borders, and making its natural environment

resemble Britain's own. In doing so, Newfoundland's national policy simultaneously embodied a late nineteenth-century imperial project to turn colonial landscapes into a speculative frontier for the reestablishment of white virtues. New landscapes in Newfoundland recapitulated the desire of imperialists to reinforce British solidarity by climatizing distant parts of the empire. If acclimatization is the process by which organisms adapt to changes in their environment, colonial elites in Newfoundland set out to do the opposite: to climatize the empire itself by modifying its environments to suit the imaginary needs of white, European colonizers.

Progress was an ideal to which all Britons were meant to aspire, but the temperate landscape of Northern Europe was its material and moral epicentre. The cult of technological, cultural, and racial progress espoused by British intellectuals produced a fixation with landscapes at home and abroad. Consumable landscapes throughout the British world supplied the raw materials of industrial progress and consolidated the global superiority of British economic and military power. At the same time, the temperate landscape of Northern Europe was theorized as a seat for Anglo-Saxon identities and the virtues of British liberalism. These virtues included economic liberalism, but also standards for hygiene, the separation of gender spheres, masculinity, and individual responsibility. Productive and pleasurable landscapes were a wellspring for European industrialization and scientific enlightenment, and therefore of civilization itself. However, and as Newfoundland's leaders were well aware, landscapes that were outliers in this schema were judged quickly and cruelly. Unproductive landscapes were seen as barriers to economic and technological advancement, a source of social and sexual deviancy, and a mitigating factor in the efficient and rational application of politics. This environmental doctrine weighed on the minds of colonials in myriad forms of representation that distilled the empire into a recognizable set of economically and culturally valuable landscapes.

Newfoundland's leaders were loyal adherents to a British worldview and committed to a British model of linear progress which they hoped and tried to replicate at home. But this brand of progress posed special challenges in the North Atlantic context. Newfoundland was a fishing country and the island's predominantly rural culture remained isolated from the rest of the world. Moreover, the country's dominant maritime economy was the result of environmental conditions unique to the North Atlantic. The majority of the island was too cold and lacked sufficient soil to support the growth of large diameter timber. And few areas were fertile enough to support agriculture on a large scale.

Located on the eastern edge of North America, Newfoundland is bordered by the Labrador Current to its northwest, which funnels cold arctic water into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and the warmer Gulf Stream to its south. Although climatic conditions vary with topography, Newfoundland's growing season is generally short, its summers cool, and its springs typically wet. Across much of the island stretches a tundra-like landscape animated by mosses, grasses, and flowering bushes. Fertile and deep soils are a rarity in Newfoundland, excepting some regions on the west coast and in two sheltered river valleys in the interior, where boreal forests comprising mostly black spruce and an assortment of fir and pine rise to over 80 feet.⁴ For the most part, a shoreline of steep cliffs and jagged rock faces surround the island. Where inlets and bays punctuate this formidable barrier, rolling hills descend to meet the water's edge, giving way to a distinctive landscape of miniature trees, shrubs, and grasses rooted in a windswept layer of shallow soil.

These limitations were foremost in the minds of critics who associated Newfoundland's climatic and geographic constraints with its stagnating economy, a lack of gentrification and

⁴ Alan G. Macpherson and Joyce B. Macpherson, eds., *The Natural Environment of Newfoundland, Past and Present* (St. John's: Memorial University, Department of Geography, 1981).

industrialization, and social and gender improprieties in the fishery. In the eyes of British observers, Newfoundland was an anachronism within the empire – as theorized by Anne McClintock. The island’s society was a throwback to pre-modern times and appeared diametrically opposed to upwards, linear progress.⁵ But this criticism did not preclude remediation. Instead, it suggested that a path forward lie in the wholesale transformation of the natural environment itself.

The environmental contours of Newfoundland’s national policy highlight the need to study this movement through its relationship to a wider, British visual and scientific culture of landscape. Doing so reveals how metropolitan desires encroached on the forms and practices of colonial nationalism, as well as how colonials influenced metropolitan culture by fuelling its fear of white racial degeneracy. Indeed, Newfoundland reflected metropolitan anxieties to an uncanny degree. Newfoundland was colonized by Britishers, yet by the close of the nineteenth century their descendants were figured as socially and economically backwards. Moreover, since the colony did not possess a large native population, contamination through racial and cultural hybridization had to be ruled out. Instead, Newfoundland’s rural inhabitants were taken as further proof that racial regression was not strictly a native problem—as anthropologists and theorists had argued since the seventeenth century—but that all races, including whites, were susceptible to environmental conditions, and that certain environmental conditions would precipitate the demise of their civilization. It was a worldview that impelled Britons and colonials alike to “improve” their surroundings in the hopes of simultaneous “improving” themselves, whether through patient effort—as the Newfoundland clergyman Moses Harvey

⁵ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 40-42.

once suggested—or through more radical efforts to transpose temperate European landscapes abroad.⁶

As metropolitan authorities railed against the decline of white virtues at home and abroad, landscape emerged as a powerful tool for reaffirming Anglo-Saxon identities by forging cultural and environmental affinities with Northern Europe. Colonial elites created temperate landscapes in Newfoundland in an effort to make their country appear physically and perceptually compatible with a British imperial worldview and its twin pillars of civilization and progress. They attempted to incite their country's progress by endowing Newfoundland's landscape with economic and cultural value, diminishing their country's social and geographic otherness, and appeasing the anxieties of British observers for whom the island conjured reminders of modernity's failings at home. New landscapes were a proxy for the voices of political and intellectual leaders who preached social progress and self-reliance to Newfoundlanders in an effort to make them conform to British racial stereotypes.

Race, Progress, and Britishness

Newfoundland was first colonized by Europeans around 1,000 AD when Norsemen, blown off course from Greenland, made landfall at the tip of the Great Northern Peninsula. They returned and established an encampment at modern day L'Anse Aux Meadows—the earliest evidence of pre-Columbian, European presence in the Americas—but the settlement was later abandoned.

Newfoundland was rediscovered by Europeans under a British royal patent during the final

⁶ Anya Zilberstein finds, similarly, that over the course of the long eighteenth century a transatlantic network of scientific and learned elites “improved” the climate of the Atlantic Northeast using scientific observation and material processes. As European colonizers worked to acclimate themselves to New World settings, she argues, exchanges of meteorological data, plants, and people codified new forms of environmental knowledge and redefined ideas about the local climate. Anya Zilberstein, *A Temperate Empire: Making Climate Change in Early America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016); see also Jill H. Casid, *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).

decade of the fifteenth century. It served as a remote fishing outpost for nearly 300 years afterwards as British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Norman fleets arrived each season to share in the island's rich fishing grounds and land their offshore catch under the watchful eye of the British Admiralty. By 1800, a colonial fishing industry had emerged as immigrants from Ireland and the west of England settled hundreds of fishing communities known as outports in natural inlets and bays along the island's shoreline, erecting fishing stages, drying flakes, and tilts surrounded by "riddled" fences made from vertically woven saplings (Fig. 1.3). These isolated communities were the economic basis of Newfoundland's inshore fishery whose mainstay was dried and salted cod. However, population growth during this time also led to an influx of workers into the fishery and to a perceptible decline in fish stocks as fishing activity intensified. Faced with this economic pressure, colonial elites lobbied British authorities for an independent, elected Newfoundland government which was granted to them in 1854.⁷

⁷ On the history of Newfoundland from early settlement to independence, see Peter Neary and Patrick O'Flaherty, *Part of the Main: An Illustrated History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1986); Keith Matthews, *Lectures on the History of Newfoundland: 1500-1830* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1988); Patrick O'Flaherty, *Old Newfoundland: A History to 1843* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 1999); Sean T. Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).



Fig. 1.3, Fishing flakes and stages, Portugal Cove, ca. 1885 (Photo: Simeon H. Parsons). Newfoundland and Labrador album of photographs by Simeon H. Parsons, Library and Archives Canada.

The salt cod industry remained the most important source of income throughout the nineteenth century. Stagnant growth within the fishery coupled with a relatively small, tariff-based national income hampered the ability of lawmakers to stimulate the growth of secondary industries by capitalizing entrepreneurs.⁸ As a result, Newfoundland relied heavily on imported food and goods, possessed almost no roads, and had yet to adopt modern technologies, such as electricity and rail. Although by the 1880s a small percentage of Newfoundland's population was employed in manufacturing, timbering, and mining, the fishery continued to dominate cultural and political life. The country's financial affairs remained bound to a single resource, maritime economy.

⁸ Owing to the nature and organization of the fishery, Newfoundland's wealth was concentrated in the hands of relatively few. Lending practices and unpredictable catch rates from one season to the next made it difficult for fishing families to accumulate wealth. Likewise, the fishery was not a capital intensive industry. Fishery profits typically flowed to merchant houses based in England. And many fish merchants tied to English firms were reluctant to reinvest their profits in the country since they tended to view their residency in Newfoundland as temporary. Foreign investment was thus the only alternative to direct public expenditure. However, Newfoundland could ill-afford to acquire debt given the country's limited sources of income.

The psychological effects of this situation were acute. Everywhere the world was changing: steamships plied the Atlantic between Britain, Canada, and the United States, railways criss-crossed North America, and coal and iron were fuelling industrialization, urban growth, and the accumulation of wealth throughout the western world. As witnesses to this sweeping global change, Newfoundlanders began to suspect that their own country was lagging behind. Colonial elites feared that Newfoundland's progress was arrested and that the country was becoming economically and culturally isolated within the empire. In the words of historian Patrick O'Flaherty, "the need to catch up and a dread of falling further back were deeply felt."⁹

At the crux of Newfoundland's nationalist movement was a desire to demonstrate the country's membership in a transnational community of British people and institutions, the foundations of which were economic liberalism and membership in the Anglo-Saxon race. As Kurt Korneski observes, the importance of establishing British cultural identities in colonial settings increased during the latter half of the nineteenth century as changes to the political autonomy of several member states led to a reconceptualization of the empire itself. "Now there were two kinds of empire," he writes, "on the one hand were colonies of settlement inhabited by 'Britishers' whose status as such was evidenced by their conformity to the gender norms and individualism central to prevailing standards of Britishness. On the hand were dependencies – colonies whose population consisted primarily of 'lesser races.'"¹⁰

This reconceptualization yielded new cultural and racial hierarchies within the empire. Previously, racial theories sketched by anthropologists, ethnographers, and other scientific elites focused on colonial encounters, where cleavages between white settlers, Indigenous populations,

⁹ Patrick O'Flaherty, *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 2005), 1.

¹⁰ Kurt Korneski, "Race, Gender, Class, and Colonial Nationalism: Railway Development in Newfoundland, 1881-1898," *Labour/Le Travail*, no. 62 (2008): 80.

and slaves were pronounced. But as the sun set on British expansion, settler societies were subject to increased scrutiny through their comparison to the British homeland. This was especially true as rising international competition threatened Britain's global supremacy around the turn-of-the-century. Amid broad scale geopolitical shifts, authorities believed that promoting Anglo-Saxon solidarity was integral to Britain's economic and military superiority. New imperialists' set out to forge a "Greater Britain" by extending British capital and Anglo-Saxon culture around the world. In the eyes of imperialists, white settlers were Britannia's representatives overseas and were expected replicate to every extent possible the fullness of metropolitan life and its spirit of "progress" – a loosely defined set of cultural conditions that included industrialization, class conformity, and the separation of gender spheres. Whites who did not measure up to these expectations were consigned to history and dismissed as "uncivilized" by British writers, stoking doubt over the unbounded nature of progress at home, and precipitating fears of racial regression throughout the British world.¹¹

This crisis coincided with the emergence of a new discourse of exclusion in British race relations. Unlike earlier Victorians who believed that so-called "lesser races" could be assimilated to British standards, scientists now rejected the possibility of transformation. Instead, they believed that racial attributes were shaped by natural forces. Douglas Lorimer argues that, after 1870, a new language of race relations emerged through this science, leading a discourse of exclusion focused on the preservation of white virtues to displace earlier assimilation theories.¹²

This was a distinctly modern conception of race with roots in Enlightenment thought. Rather

¹¹ On the relationship of new imperialism to history, race, and the idea of progress, see Arthur D. Culler, *The Victorian Mirror of History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); David Newsome, *The Victorian World Picture: Perceptions and Introspections in an Age of Change* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997); Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and Future World Order, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

¹² Douglas A. Lorimer, "From Victorian Values to White Virtues: Assimilation and Exclusion in British Racial Discourse, C. 1870-1914," in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005), 109-34.

than physical differences alone, race was refracted through a set of socially constructed categories encompassing physical, sexual, and social differences, as well as the structural relationships between governing and governed, colonizer and slave, and men and women.¹³ Skin colour, ancestry, and even nationality no longer constituted membership in the Anglo-Saxon race. Race was a concept that allowed Britishers to differentiate themselves from other, non-civilized white members of the empire by setting standards for hygiene, sexuality, masculinity, and femininity. And the failure of some whites to uphold these standards sparked fears over racial regression and cultural degeneration within and without the British metropole. Colonists who failed to adopt British institutions and social mores were stripped of their Anglo identity at the same time as English social critics depicted prostitutes, domestic workers, and the working poor as fallen races within the realm of home. Indeed, degeneracy was a necessary antipode to Victorian progress, for—as McClintock notes—“the distance along the path of progress traveled by some portions of humanity could be measured only by the distance others lagged behind.”¹⁴

Although Newfoundlanders were the descendants of Irish and English settlers, during the second half of the nineteenth century their country elicited a crisis of race among British observers. Despite the country’s proud claim to be “Britain’s Oldest Colony,” Newfoundland’s racial affinity with Britain was complicated by a number of social and environmental conditions. Most Newfoundlanders were rural fishermen, often illiterate and with low levels of education. Rural residents were poor by British standards and many did not have access to basic services like medicine and education. Especially troubling was the use of barter within the fishery, an economic system that disadvantaged producers and perpetuated a cycle of indebtedness among

¹³ On the social construction of race and its imbrication with colonial conquest, see McClintock; Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995); Radhika Mohanram, *Imperial White: Race, Diaspora, and the British Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

¹⁴ McClintock, 75-131, quote p. 46.

Newfoundland fishing families. The truck system (as it was known) allowed fishers to obtain supplies from merchants at the beginning of each season on credit against their future catch. However, this cashless system afforded fishermen little protection against unpredictable catches or fluctuations in fish prices. It also allowed merchants to maximize their profits by manipulating the price of goods at the end of each season.¹⁵ In 1890, the liberal English critic Charles Wentworth Dilke complained that Newfoundland was the only country in the British Empire to allow “white-skinned workman” to be paid in goods rather than wages.¹⁶

Poverty and indebtedness were common among Newfoundland’s fishing class. And since the fishery was limited to the summer months, fishers often relied on public relief to survive the long winter. In addition to draining government treasuries, public relief was associated by British social reformers with alcoholism, gambling, and financial delinquency. Likewise, British authorities saw the dole as an economic crutch that perpetuated moral weaknesses and dependency on the state; both of which flew in the face of British liberal ideology with its emphasis on self-reliance and the moral worth of the individual. In the British liberal tradition, the state’s role was to provide moral guidance and the means to self-fulfilment by encouraging all able-bodied men to work.¹⁷

¹⁵ Barbara Neis, "Competitive Merchants and Class Struggle in Newfoundland," *Studies in Political Economy*, no. 5 (1981): 127-43; Gerald M. Sider, *Culture and Class in Anthropology and History: A Newfoundland Illustration* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁶ Charles Wentworth Dilke, *Problems of Greater Britain*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1890), 2: 298.

¹⁷ Michael Bentley, *The Climax of Liberal Politics: British Liberalism in Theory and Practice, 1868-1918* (London: Edward Arnold, 1987); Peter Weiler, *The New Liberalism: Liberal Social Theory in Great Britain, 1889-1914* (New York: Garland, 1987).



Fig. 1.4, Two women carrying codfish in Burgeo, Newfoundland, ca. 1900 (Photo: Robert E. Holloway). Item VA 143-86, Catherine (Kitty) Power collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Fig. 1.5, Men and women cleaning fish inside a stage, ca. 1900. Item IGA 32-8, International Grenfell Association photograph collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

At the same time, Newfoundland fishing families upset British gender norms. By helping to land, clean, and dry the annual fish catch, women and children were vertically integrated into the fishery – an industry perceived as masculine owing to its inherent dangers and pervasive vice

(Fig. 1.4 & Fig. 1.5).¹⁸ Scenes featuring “women, children, and cripples” atop the flakes spreading “half-dried fish before the welcome sunbeams” were an unwelcome sight to British visitors and cultural critics.¹⁹ Moreover, this mixing often resulted in transgressions against British social norms. Whereas in England, class and gender differences were carefully exhibited through specific behaviour and dress, Newfoundland women participated in men’s work while brazenly displaying their femininity. In 1848, one Church of England missionary complained that, in Newfoundland, “there is a great deal of abject poverty, mixed up with a fondness for dress and appearance, that is very painful. White veils and parasols adorn females who are seen at the herring pickling; indeed, there is scarcely an idea of any distinction in society, and it is almost impossible to impress the folly and absurdity of such contradiction to all that is becoming on them.”²⁰

Malnutrition, poor hygiene, and disease also contributed to the stigma of racial degeneracy in Newfoundland. These were seen as tell-tale symptoms of the poor and debased classes. In a report published in 1902, for example, the tuberculosis expert, Dr. James Sinclair Tait noted that Newfoundland had among the highest rates of tuberculosis in North America, warning that loss of life to the disease was also a “pecuniary loss” to the colony and detrimental to the “progress of a people.”²¹ Others pointed to inadequate housing, a lack of education, and poor diets among the country’s rural population as contributing to a rapidly spreading public health crisis centred on outport communities. These privations were often a source of embarrassment to colonial elites. In 1909 and 1910, two articles appeared in the American

¹⁸ On the sexual division of labour in the Newfoundland fishery, see Marilyn Porter, “‘She Was Skipper of the Shore Crew’: Notes on the History of the Sexual Division of Labour in Newfoundland,” *Labour/Le Travail*, no. 15 (1985): 105-23; Sean T. Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 68-70.

¹⁹ Robert B. McCrea, *Lost Amid the Fogs: Sketches of Life in Newfoundland, England's Oldest Colony* (London: Sampson Low, Son, & Marston, 1869), 176.

²⁰ Quoted in Philip Tocque, *Newfoundland: As It Was, and as It Is in 1877* (Toronto: John B. Magurn, 1878), 250.

²¹ James Sinclair Tait, *Tuberculosis* (St. John's: G. S. Milligan Jr., 1902), 52.

periodicals *Good Health* and *National Food Magazine* slandering Newfoundland's traditional economy by linking an appetite for the country's codfish with an elevated risk of contracting tuberculosis. The articles went on to describe in gruesome detail how men and women prepared the codfish amid filth and foul air, while expectorating freely over their product and its environs.²² By way of response, Newfoundland's prime minister and members of the Board of Trade circulated 200 copies of the article amongst the colony's elite, along with a confidential letter expressing the gravity of the article's accusations.²³

British observers seized on these differences as evidence of Newfoundland's lack of social and economic progress. Dilke, for example, derided the truck system and declared the colony's capital (and only) city, St. John's, to be the unhealthiest town in the civilized world. Indeed, Tait noted how the death rate in St. John's exceeded that of even the most hazardous manufacturing towns in England, calling the situation "nothing less than alarming and disgraceful."²⁴ Dilke was also critical of the fact that Newfoundland was the only self-governing colony to retain a denominational system of education.²⁵ The failings of this system were readily apparent. Whereas English public, non-denominational schools were established as early as the 1830s and elementary education made compulsory in England in 1880, in Newfoundland the enrolment of elementary age children remained as low as 50 per cent during the 1890s.²⁶

Newfoundland also inescapably called attention to the Irish question. Fishers from the southeast of Ireland helped settle Newfoundland from the late seventeenth century onwards.

²² John Harvey Kellogg, "Consumption from Fish - a New Source of Tuberculosis Infection," *Good Health* 45, no. 2 (1910): 103-05; Felix J. Koch, "How America Supplies the World with Fish," *National Food Magazine: What to Eat and How to Live* 27 (1909): 295-99.

²³ Newfoundland Board of Trade to Edward P. Morris, 3 March 1910, Box 72, NBTF-PANL.

²⁴ Tait, 52.

²⁵ Dilke, 1: 11-25.

²⁶ The administration of education in Newfoundland after 1874 was split between by the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, and the Methodist Church. To improve enrolment figures, in 1893 the government created a Council of Higher Education which they tasked with developing standardized curricula and testing. Frederick W. Rowe, *Education and Culture in Newfoundland* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1976), 21-23.

However, social and economic upheavals in Ireland shortly after the beginning the nineteenth century led to an influx of Irish immigrants in Newfoundland. In 1818, English naval officer Edward Chappell complained that Newfoundland's "lower classes are generally composed of turbulent *Irishmen*."²⁷ By 1830, the island's population was split nearly equally between Protestants and Catholics, which—as John Mannion observes—was "virtually synonymous with English:Irish."²⁸ The number of Protestants and Catholics remained roughly equal for most of the nineteenth century. Together, these faiths represented about two thirds of the island's population, with a smaller contingent of Methodists making up most of the remainder.²⁹ The highest concentration of Irish settlers was on the Avalon, but Irish communities also extended northwards, from St. John's to Fogo Island.

British intellectuals promoted defamatory Irish stereotypes as vocal and violent support for Home Rule grew. Motivated by events like the Fenian Rising of 1867, English writers characterized the Irish as lazy, Catholic, and backwards. They emphasized that the Irish were incapable of self-rule by typifying them as child-like and prone to violence and insobriety. By the 1860s, it was common for anthropologists, historians, and other intellectuals to express the belief that the Irish were a distinct race owing to physical and cultural differences which ranged from clothing and language, to food, physiognomy, technology, and material wealth.³⁰

²⁷ Edward Chappell, *Voyage of His Majesty's Ship Rosamond to Newfoundland and the Southern Coast of Labrador* (London: J. Mawman, 1818), 52.

²⁸ John J. Mannion, ed. *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography* (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1977), 7.

²⁹ *Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1911, Table I: Population, Sex, Condition, Denomination, Profession, Etc.*, (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1914), xv.

³⁰ On the construction of anti-Irish, racial stereotypes in Victorian England, see L. Perry Curtis, Jr., *Anglo-Saxon and Celts: A Study of Anti-Irish Prejudice in Victorian England* (Bridgeport, CT: Conference on British Studies at the University of Bridgeport, 1968); *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971); Richard Ned Lebow, *White Britain and Black Ireland: The Influence of Stereotypes on Colonial Policy* (Philadelphia: Institute for the Study of Human Issues, 1976); Hazel Waters, "The Great Famine and the Rise of Anti-Irish Racism," *Race & Class* 37, no. 1 (1995): 95-108; Kavita Philip, "Race, Class and the Imperial Politics of Ethnography in India, Ireland and London, 1850-1910," *Irish Studies Review* 10, no. 3 (2010): 289-302.

Descriptions of Irish Newfoundlanders by British writers often embodied these stereotypes. In 1881, Scottish botanist and explorer Robert Brown disparaged St. John's by comparing the city to "some Irish town," complete with dirty irregular streets and neglected *trottoirs*. "Here is the British policeman, and his prey, the Old World beggar," wrote Brown, "while the stray pig, which wanders about seemingly quite at home, brings into the mind of the newly-arrived visitor a flood of recollections of the Green Isle."³¹ Lorimer notes how late-Victorian writers like Brown racialized certain groups of people (European and non-) by contrasting their vices, such as treachery, dishonesty, and idleness, with the English virtues of "truth, fidelity and sincerity."³² Similarly, English writers blamed Irish vices for Newfoundland's underdevelopment, accusing Irish settlers of being unambitious, prone to debt, and uninterested in resources outside the fishery. They depicted Irish Newfoundlanders as primitive and uninterested in upwards progress. Chappell, for example, contrasted the "unwearied industry" of the Irish during the summer fishing season with "their unbounded licentiousness in winter."³³ Similarly, Robert Barlow McCrea, a British army officer stationed in Newfoundland during the early 1860s, believed that Newfoundlanders' "ignorance" and aversion to hard work stemmed from their Irish lineage: "that unstrung nationality, which forms the majority in this most ancient, yet still untitled, offshoot of the British crown."³⁴

Later writers also drew attention to the Irish presence in Newfoundland, including Dilke who called Newfoundland the "most Irish of our colonies."³⁵ However, Dilke was quick to remind his readers that Irish Newfoundlanders were not party to any Home Rule movement and

³¹ Robert Brown, *The Countries of the World*, 2 vols. (London: Cassell and Company, [1881]), 1: 220.

³² Douglas A. Lorimer, "Science and the Secularization of Victorian Images of Race," in *Victorian Science in Context*, ed. Bernard Lightman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 220, 22.

³³ Chappell, 52.

³⁴ McCrea, 97.

³⁵ Dilke, 1: 12.

“possess the fullness of Australian knowledge as to the doings of Dublin Castle officials.”³⁶

Nevertheless, sectarianism was a defining characteristic of public life in Newfoundland and had even led to several incidences of violence and rioting. Prior to a denominational compromise struck in the 1860s, political parties were formed along sectarian lines, inhibiting the ability of lawmakers to govern effectively and their willingness to govern equally.³⁷ And although overt examples of open sectarian conflict had subsided by the 1890s, critics seldom failed to mention denominational conflict in discussing Newfoundland’s turbulent political affairs.³⁸ Nor were accusations of an ineffectual political system entirely unfounded. Inequities between merchants and fishers were firmly engrained in Newfoundland’s social and political affairs, with contemporaries using the derogatory term “fishocracy” to describe the unequal power wielded by merchants, both as a result of their exploitative business practices and their considerable political influence since many prominent merchants also sat as members of the government.

The stigma of degeneracy impelled colonial leaders to progress in lockstep with the rest of the British world. In the eyes of imperialists, Newfoundland’s arrested development was a blight on the empire, undermining Britain’s global aspirations, and threatening the geopolitical security of the empire itself. Anachronistic economic, social, and political practices marked Newfoundlanders as degenerate subjects within the empire. However, the stigma of degeneracy also gave rise to what Laura Ann Stoler calls “historical negatives”: reverse-images created by colonial elites in the form of imagined futures, persuasive visions, and “non-events” stemming

³⁶ Ibid., 1: 13.

³⁷ John P. Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

³⁸ Dilke, for example, wrote that “denominational feeling, especially as between Protestant and Roman Catholic, runs high in Newfoundland. Elections often turn upon it, and have sometimes been accompanied by riot and loss of life.” Dilke, 1: 14.

from the distresses and anxieties of their time.³⁹ For Korneski, the Newfoundland railway built from 1880 to 1898 represents an attempt to remove the stigma of degeneracy by mirroring western standards of progress. However, although Korneski correctly diagnoses the nature of Newfoundland's inferiority complex, he misplaces its overarching cause and cure.

Newfoundland's racial problem was also distinctly environmental in scope; and the temperate landscape of Northern Europe was its historical negative. The Newfoundland railway is just one instance among many where colonial elites attempted to answer for their country's racial aberrations by colonizing and creating new temperate landscapes.

Regenerative Landscapes

A love of landscape was a fixture of British cultural identities since the Enlightenment.

"Nowhere else," writes David Lowenthal, "is landscape so freighted as legacy. Nowhere else does the very term suggest not simply scenery and *genres de vie*, but quintessential national virtues."⁴⁰ By the late nineteenth century, the fullness of this legacy was readily apparent. Rural and urban landscapes epitomized the British nation by serving as "exemplars of moral order and aesthetic harmony."⁴¹ This was especially true as industrialization and rural-to-urban migration provoked anxiety among Britons. Urban pollution, crowding, and unemployment led writers and artists to express nostalgia for the countryside. Many felt that the abandonment of agrarian lifestyles had precipitated the decay of moral society in Britain and that restoring a love of nature would remedy the evils of industrial society. Romantic poets, painters, and craftsmen depicted the countryside as part of an unspoiled and imaginary past, far removed from the depravity and

³⁹ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton; Oxford, U.K.: Princeton University Press, 2009), 105-39.

⁴⁰ David Lowenthal, "British National Identity and the English Landscape," *Rural History* 2, no. 2 (1991): 213.

⁴¹ Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 5.

squalor of urban life. As increasing numbers of upper- and middle-class consumers visited and viewed the British landscape in myriad forms of popular entertainment, artists and writers strengthened geographically-based national identities by turning rural landscapes into symbols of social harmony and self-sufficiency.⁴²

At the same time, landscape was theorized as a key to western modernity. Resources like iron and coal were the lifeblood of industrialization; and picturesque landscapes studded with trees, hedgerows, and livestock were a cornerstone of artistic and cultural life throughout Britain. Colonial conquest also revealed that inhabitants of dissimilar geographies had not progressed in a similar, linear fashion. Consequently, natural scientists, geographers, and anthropologists promoted the idea that environmental factors influenced the physical and social evolution of the world's civilizations. They argued that climate and geography determined the moral and technological progress of human civilization.

One result of these views was that quantitative and qualitative descriptions of colonial landscapes increasingly figured as assessments of the racial characteristics of colonists themselves. In his analysis of nineteenth-century frontier literature, Robert Grant finds that many writers attempted to naturalize colonial identities by showing how social and cultural traits were “produced in the characteristics of the landscape itself.”⁴³ Whereas temperate environments like that of northern Europe were thought to be conducive to the development of civilized races—as

⁴² To preserve their rose-coloured vision of the countryside, artists deliberately excluded certain classes, creeds, and races from landscape imagery, along with any signs of injurious or immoral behaviour. They transformed the actual circumstances of peasants and fishermen in order to portray them as uncontaminated and virtuous. Christopher Wood, *Paradise Lost: Paintings of English Country Life and Landscape, 1850-1914* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1988); Anna Gruetzner Robins, "Living the Simple Life: George Clausen at Childwick Green, St Albans," in *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past 1880-1940*, ed. David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt, and Fiona Russell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 1-27; Nina Lübbren, "'Toilers of the Sea': Fisherfolk and the Geographies of Tourism in England, 1880-1900," *ibid.*, 29-63.

⁴³ Robert D. Grant, "'Delusive Dreams of Fruitfulness and Plenty': Some Aspects of British Frontier Semiology C. 1800-1850," in *Deterritorialisations... Revisioning Landscapes and Politics*, ed. Mark Dorrian and Gillian Rose (London; New York: Black Dog, 2003), 101.

evidenced by Britons themselves—threatening, insalubrious, or unproductive landscapes were associated with “social instability, moral degeneration, and cultural racial hybridization.”⁴⁴

English writers, for example, drew on Ireland’s physical geography to explain racial differences between themselves and their Irish peers. In 1905, Thomas Crosland argued that the Irish were “a people to themselves” on account of the damp, watery, and “preternaturally boggy” nature of their homeland. “The religious faculty in them has been highly developed, the commercial faculty might seem to have been left out of their composition,” he wrote, adding that “by nature they are a simple, cheerful, unambitious, warm-hearted race, and they have suffered accordingly.”⁴⁵

Not surprisingly, Newfoundland’s distinctive landscape was a preoccupation for many British observers. In his topographical and statistical description of North America published in 1831, the Surveyor General of Lower Canada, Joseph Bouchette, described how:

From the sea [Newfoundland] has a wild and rugged appearance, which is any thing rather than inviting. Its interior has been very imperfectly explored, and is therefore but little understood. [...] It appears, that this district is much intersected with lakes and rivers, is poorly wooded, and of a rocky and barren soil. Newfoundland, in this respect, differs amazingly from the other American colonies, producing little timber but what is dwarf and stunted, except on the margins of bays and rivers, where spruce, birch, and poplar sometimes grow to a considerable size.⁴⁶

Writers often drew connections between the island’s natural history and its social and economic conditions by discussing them in parallel. Bouchette’s survey is a typical example of how nineteenth-century observers made Newfoundland’s climate and geography appear bound

⁴⁴ Ibid., 106; see also *Representations of British Emigration, Colonisation and Settlement: Imagining Empire, 1800-1860* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁴⁵ Thomas W. H. Crosland, *The Wild Irishman* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1905), 9.

⁴⁶ Joseph Bouchette, *The British Dominions in North America*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 2: 180.

up with its social and cultural progress. His description of the island's physical geography preceded his summary judgement just a few pages later that "respectability and civilization" were of relatively recent origin in Newfoundland, and that both were very much a work in progress. The situation was "better than could be expected from a fishing station," he reported, but the country's economic and social advancement remained smothered by a lack of "improvement" on the land.⁴⁷

Later writers recorded similar views. In *The Countries of the World* (ca. 1881), Brown characterized Newfoundland's geography in the following terms: "none of the rivers are navigable for any distance, and the interior is entirely uninhabited, even by Indians." He described how "the soil is too sterile to admit of agriculture to any great extent," adding that "fogs often envelop the colony for weeks, while the climate is by no means of a character inviting to settlers."⁴⁸ Like many of his contemporaries, Brown believed that psychological and social characteristics were scientific fact, rather than learned behaviour, and that these characteristics stemmed from features of the natural world. Elsewhere, he associated positive climatic factors with a productive economy, good health, and strong mental and physical capacities. Yet Brown observed none of these traits in Newfoundland, calling it a "frigid" colony with undeveloped trees.⁴⁹

Withering descriptions of Newfoundland's natural environment testify to the importance Briton's placed on foreign landscapes in their search for colonial opportunity. Temperate landscapes, in particular, were of paramount importance as imperialism brought European

⁴⁷ Ibid., 2: 187. Bouchette conceded that the island's long and severe winters were not quite as bad as previously thought. He was also optimistic about the possibility of establishing an agricultural settlement on St. George's Bay, where he observed deep and fertile soils, heavy timber, and valuable mineral deposits.

⁴⁸ Brown, 1: 80, 238.

⁴⁹ Brown made these socio-climatic connections in discussing Prince Edward Island and San Francisco. Ibid., 1: 231, 312.

economic systems to bear on different regions of the world and as British artists and writers romanticized landscapes at home. This dual movement profoundly changed how Britons viewed colonial landscapes and their inhabitants, but it also underlined the importance of improving and stewarding the empire's physical geography in order to aid in the spread of British civilization.

The importance of furthering Britain's economic and cultural expansion was widely recognized as Germany, Russia, and the United States began to challenge Britain's global supremacy towards the end of the nineteenth century. Ewen Green asserts that, for constructive imperialists, "the solution to the new challenges facing the Empire was the Empire itself."⁵⁰ To stem Britain's declining prestige, English lawmakers attempted to curb their country's reliance on foreign goods by stimulating trade and expansion within the empire, while securing the British homeland against foreign threats by strengthening the bonds between Britishers.⁵¹ Similarly, by establishing descriptive and visual affinities between colonial landscapes and those of Northern Europe, imperialists revealed how distant regions of the globe were capable of supporting British institutions and values.

At the same time, the extent to which ideas about nation, race, and landscape were intertwined highlighted the difficulty of preserving British hegemony throughout the empire's periphery. As Elizabeth Helsinger observes, prior to the First World War the British nation was defined less in terms of its political geography and more in terms of its cultural demographics. Nation, race, and people were interchangeable terms among late-Victorian writers. Yet, at a certain point as one moved outward from the English centre, nation became empire and

⁵⁰ E. H. H. Green, "The Political Economy of Empire, 1880-1914," in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, ed. Andrew Porter (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 348.

⁵¹ In an inaugural speech at the Imperial Institute, for example, Irish political theorist William Lecky emphasized the importance of emigration to preserving British economic and military superiority in the face of rising international competition, arguing that the "English race" should "cling as closely together as possible." William E. H. Lecky, *The Empire: Its Value and Its Growth* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1893), 15.

citizenship became subjection. “Contiguity or distance, political status, genealogy, and race,” notes Helsinger, were all operative in creating “degrees of difference on a spectrum from national citizenship to national subjection.”⁵² For new imperialists, eradicating “degrees of difference” between the British nation and its periphery was of critical importance to the nation. As Member of the British Parliament Robert A. Macfie complained in 1870, “we call ourselves English, Scotch, and Irish, but not *British*,” that common nationality which should be “made more palpable and pervasive, more endearing and binding and stimulating.”⁵³ Extending British national identities to members of the United Kingdom, including Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, was relatively straightforward. However, notions of national unity were problematized in self-governing colonies, such as Canada, Australia, and Newfoundland, where racial, cultural, and environmental differences diminished the appearance of British solidarity.

Creating and colonizing new temperate landscapes permitted some of these differences to be erased. To spur progress within the empire and sustain British cultural life overseas, imperialists emphasized the need to create new industrial, recreational, and scientific landscapes. Likewise, Britain compelled its colonies to attract white settlers by establishing environmental and cultural affinities with the British Isles. In particular, British authorities promoted agricultural development as a way to improve the geopolitical security of Britain’s holdings, while redistributing England’s domestic population overseas. Consequently, economically and culturally valuable landscapes were a central feature of national policies drawn up by colonial governments around the world, reaffirming their commitment to notions of linear progress, and forging geographic similarities with Northern Europe. Indeed, as Korneski notes, Britishness was

⁵² Elizabeth Helsinger, *Rural Scenes and National Representation: Britain, 1815-1850* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 10.

⁵³ Robert A. Macfie, *Colonial Questions Pressing for Immediate Solution, in the Interest of the Nation and the Empire* (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1871), ix.

an exportable identity for use by colonial nationalists who sought to “legitimate their visions of the future by reference to it.”⁵⁴ At the same time as British artists and poets used features of the British landscape to craft nationalist ideas and support differentiation throughout the empire, colonial elites highlighted and augmented features of their own landscapes that merited advancement within a British racial hierarchy.⁵⁵

Newfoundland’s distinctive landscape, on the other hand, was a product of the cold North Atlantic region. And whereas English parks, gardens, and pastures were typically stewarded by wealthy and politically engaged Britons, Newfoundland did not possess a financially independent gentry, let alone a large middle class. In the minds of some, Newfoundland’s physical geography even undermined the legitimacy of its political independence. English journalist Richard Jebb, for example, proclaimed in 1905 that Newfoundland “has not, and never can have, the material basis of an independent national existence” since it was not “endowed with climatic or physical conditions to raise and support a population upon the national scale, and is doomed by nature to an inferior status, whatever the pretence of its political constitution.”⁵⁶

The desire to make Newfoundland conform to British social standards was strong among colonial elites, but pressure to adopt these standards also emanated from overseas. Britishness was an identity that implied conformance to the rules of civilization as preached by a cadre of social and scientific elite. Likewise, folded into Macfie’s desire that “we should feel, and speak, and act *everywhere as one people*” were deep-seated anxieties about British society at home,

⁵⁴ Kurt Korneski, “Britishness, Canadianess, Class, and Race: Winnipeg and the British World, 1880s-1910s,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 41, no. 2 (2007): 164; see also *Race, Nation, and Reform Ideology in Winnipeg, 1880s-1920s* (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2015).

⁵⁵ William Mitchell describes a similar, double movement that took place within British landscape representation as the expansion of artistic and cultural life overseas sparked a growing interest in the representation of home landscapes. William J. T. Mitchell, “Imperial Landscape,” in *Landscape and Power*, ed. William J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 17-18.

⁵⁶ Richard Jebb, *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905), 95-96.

typified by tenuous labour relations, widespread poverty, choking urban pollution, and a Malthusian fear of overpopulation.⁵⁷ Modernity's failing were evident in the perceived decline of Britain's working class and, by extension, the Anglo-Saxon race itself. This led to a resurgent interest in landscape's perceived ability to stem the decline of moral society, as well as the possibility of absorbing Britain's problems into the empire's periphery. During the 1930s, for example, English social reformers encouraged back-to-the-land migration throughout the British world as a way to combat soaring rates of unemployment and urban poverty.

As David Matless rightly points out, landscape was at the centre of English modernity, not its antipode. By linking climate, geography, and progress, British intellectuals encouraged the belief that improvements to the land would simultaneously improve the character of society. Matless, for example, argues that authorities used landscape to structure notions of English modern citizenship during the first half of the twentieth century, encouraging certain "bodily practices" in the English landscape (like rambling), while discouraging others (like nudism).⁵⁸ Similarly, Brian Doyle describes how Social Darwinism spurred the exercise of cultural authority in England around the turn-of-the-century in an effort to shape "from above the constituents of the national culture and national character," while removing "any tendencies towards degeneration within the national 'body.'"⁵⁹ Preserving rural landscapes was a key to authorities' efforts, notes Boyle. The National Trust, for instance, was founded in 1895 and was dedicated to preserving England's national heritage by keeping the country's physical geography intact.

New landscapes in Newfoundland were designed to have a similar, racially regenerative effect. Newfoundland was an independent colony populated by self-identified Britishers. Yet

⁵⁷ Macfie, ix.

⁵⁸ David Matless, *Landscape and Englishness*, 2nd ed. (London: Reaktion Books, 2016).

⁵⁹ Brian Doyle, *English and Englishness*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2003), 22.

these Britishers appeared economically, socially, and environmentally incompatible with Anglo identities, even though they were mostly white and of Northern European descent. To remedy this situation, colonial elites created landscapes that would lessen the country's social, economic, and environmental otherness, encapsulating imperial efforts to build a Greater Britain, and reconstituting Newfoundland's membership in the Anglo-Saxon world.

Standards of progress and civility preached by British observers were a distinct product of the metropole. And in Newfoundland, the interior of the island appeared the perfect outlet for these metropolitan desires. Colonial elites discovered a landscape in the interior that approximated Britain's own. They quickly leveraged this space in order to state their claim to modernity's onward march. Unlike the majority of Newfoundlanders who were fishermen fringed round the island's rocky coast, boosters for progress saw undeveloped forests, waterways, and mineral deposits as wasted industrial opportunities. They believed that new land-based industries would foster self-sufficiency and alleviate poverty in rural Newfoundland by providing wage paying jobs and year-round employment. Social progress would also be commensurate with material progress. Landward migration would improve health and educational standards by stirring interest in the scientific principles of nature (a cornerstone of the English industrial revolution), speed the development of a landowning leisured class (a pillar of the English political system), and define women's economic space by creating new home-based industries. At the same time, new leisure landscapes would integrate Newfoundland in European networks of tourism and commerce.

Methods

“Landscape,” writes Donald Meinig, “is an attractive, important, and ambiguous term.”⁶⁰

Throughout this study I use the term landscape to signify a synthesis of the natural and the manmade. Landscape comprises the physical world and its intellectual interpretation; it embodies and expresses cultural values; and it can be experienced either first hand or indirectly through its representation. John Stilgoe defines landscapes as connoting “some mix of the wild, the agricultural, and the structured (if structured means fitted with buildings), with the wild always pushing and shoving and changing.”⁶¹ It is important to add to this definition that our experience of landscape is always mediated by culture. Landscapes are created when people alter the natural world, either physically or by transcribing its features.

Stilgoe traces the meaning of the word landscape to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, where it appeared in Frisian, a language native to coastal regions of the Netherlands and Germany. The term *landschop* described earth shovelled into an embankment to protect against the sea. Sometime during the sixteenth century, the term was transmitted by seamen to England, where it was mispronounced *landskep*. English writers recorded the word around 1600, using either *landskep* or *landskip* to describe a style of painting in which land was seen across a body of water, distorting the original Frisian meaning, but preserving its maritime connection.⁶² It was not until the eighteenth century that the term became entirely divorced from the sea. In England, *landscape* came to refer to a painterly taste in natural scenery, permeating images, poetry, and gardens throughout the British Isles. At the same time, the intellectual and aesthetic gaze of the artist became synonymous with landscape appreciation. John Barrell remarks how, during the

⁶⁰ D. W. Meinig, ed. *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 1.

⁶¹ John R. Stilgoe, *What Is Landscape?* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2015), 215.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 2-5.

eighteenth century, contemplation of the English landscape ceased to be a passive activity, “it involved reconstructing the landscape in the imagination, according to the principles of composition that had to be learned, and were indeed learned so thoroughly that in the later eighteenth century it became impossible for anyone with an aesthetic interest in landscape to look at the countryside without applying them, whether he knew he was doing so or not.”⁶³

Stilgoe’s definition also captures the fact that landscape now encompasses a diversity of features and objects. His characterization of landscape is similar to that of cultural landscape historians, a diverse group of scholars whose work has coalesced since the 1980s with contributions from geographers, cultural historians, and anthropologists, as well as historians of art, architecture, and landscape architecture. Collectively, cultural landscape scholars have expanded the scope of landscape studies by bringing urban and vernacular landscapes into its fold, while drawing attention to the interdependence of everyday spaces, from buildings and rooms, to streets, fields, and yards.⁶⁴ The cultural landscape is also a peopled landscape. Cultural landscape historians emphasize how meaning is contingent on various social actors, including individuals who live, work, and recreate in landscapes, as well as to those write about, picture, and build them. A cultural landscape approach is one that seeks to include, rather than winnow

⁶³ John Barrell, *The Idea of Landscape and the Sense of Place: An Approach to the Poetry of John Clare* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 6. The term landscape evolved differently throughout Europe. In nineteenth-century Germany, for example, the term *landshaft* was used by geographers for political and administrative purposes. John Brinckerhoff Jackson, “The Word Itself,” in *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 1-8.

⁶⁴ The emergence of cultural landscapes as a distinct field within landscape studies is often credited to J. B. Jackson, a self-proclaimed, amateur scholar whose interests range from front lawns to roads, garages, hot-rods, and religion. He is particularly interested in how landscapes acquire specific meaning by reflecting and accommodating the everyday needs of people. See *The Necessity for Ruins and Other Topics* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980); *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); *Landscape in Sight: Looking at America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). Jackson’s writing has influenced a generation of scholars who study the reception and use of ordinary landscapes and buildings over time. See, for example, Pierce F. Lewis, “Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Some Guides to the American Scene,” in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*, ed. D. W. Meinig (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 11-32; Paul Groth, “Frameworks for Cultural Landscape Study,” in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, ed. Paul Groth and Todd W. Bressi (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 1-21; see also Chris Wilson and Paul Groth, eds., *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies after J. B. Jackson* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

out these multiple narratives, while embracing the friction that results when contradictory interpretations and experiences collide.

This study's methods are informed by cultural landscape studies. I take from this literature two premises. The first is that landscape is a socially constructed idea, a physical place, and a thing. Our perception and experience of the natural world is mediated by a host of different practices, sites, and institutions. Landscape is the result of this mediation; it is a product of the culture in which it exists and an intellectually pliable concept whose meaning is susceptible to change.⁶⁵ But landscape is also an active agent in shaping its surrounding culture; and because no culture is homogenous the meaning of landscape is often multiple and contested within a society. This latter observation points to a second belief which is that landscape is also a tool for administering power. Descriptions of landscape and alterations to the landscape are made with specific goals in mind and they invest landscape with authority by inscribing social, economic, and political ideas onto the physical world. More often than not, landscapes administer the views of powerful individuals and groups, turning their ideas into agents of reform by transferring them into real space. As William J. T. Mitchell famously observed, landscape is both a noun and a verb – it *is* and it *does* things.⁶⁶

The original meaning of the term landscape to describe a meeting place between the land and sea is of special relevance to Newfoundland. Historically, Newfoundland's landscape was a narrow band of coastal forest and rocky shore pressed up against the foaming sea. For fishing

⁶⁵ Denis Cosgrove's *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (first published in 1984) is a foundational study in this regard. Cosgrove argues that landscape is an ideological concept through which people express their "imagined relationship to nature, and through which they have underlined and communicated their own social role and that of others with respect to external nature" (15). Influenced heavily by structural Marxism, Cosgrove demonstrates how methods of viewing the landscape were adjusted from the fifteenth century onwards in Europe and America as capitalist production took hold. He finds that throughout history landscape has served to harmonize social-environmental relations through visual pleasure and that representation was (and remains) a privileged means of producing knowledge. Denis Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, 2nd ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998).

⁶⁶ William J. T. Mitchell, ed. *Landscape and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

families, this local landscape was a source of food, fuel, and building materials with which to build their homes, fish flakes, and stages.⁶⁷ In contrast, colonial elites promoted an understanding of landscape centered on the island's distant interior, one in which the sea was a mere picturesque interlocutor. But this idea had to be nurtured and taught before it could take hold.

This study is concerned with how new landscapes instructed aspects of Newfoundland's elitist national policy. I focus on two kinds of landscapes: physical landscapes and representational landscapes. Physical landscapes include towns, buildings, and parks, while representational landscapes include drawings, photographs, and text. But these boundaries are not always clear. Some landscapes, like exhibitions, are physical and representational all at once. Likewise, physical landscapes were often turned into representational ones. These slippages are significant since, as Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles remind us, technologies of representation reconfigure how landscapes are viewed.⁶⁸ Images and descriptions of landscape ascribed new meaning to physical places, while allowing them to be circulated and reproduced in ways that magnified their impact. At other times, however, physical and representational landscapes appear co-dependent in Newfoundland: both reinforced notions of acceptability and taste by teaching their respective audiences to view the natural world in specific terms, and both assimilated parts of the country to a distinct vision of modernity formed in the minds of colonial elites.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ In recognition of the importance of coastal forests as a resource to fishing communities, in 1898 Newfoundland's government enacted a three-mile "fishermen's reserve" to protect coastal landscapes from encroaching industrial interests. Sean T. Cadigan, "Recognizing the Commons in Coastal Forests: The Three-Mile Limit in Newfoundland, 1875-1939," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 21, no. 2 (2006).

⁶⁸ Dianne Harris and D. Fairchild Ruggles, eds., *Sites Unseen: Landscape and Vision* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2007).

⁶⁹ Many scholars argue that representations of nature are mutually constituted in the built environment, altering the social-natural divide. Gina Crandell, for example, argues that painting and photography influenced the design and layout of physical landscapes by "pictorializing" nature. She writes that, throughout history, "we have defined and judged nature on the basis on its conformity with pictures" (3). She cites the eighteenth-century English landscape garden as one example where landscape designers attempted to emulate painterly conventions in the design of real

Throughout this study I treat images and descriptions of landscape—as Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels suggest—“not as ‘illustrations’, images standing outside [landscape], but as constituent images of its meaning or meanings.”⁷⁰ Moreover, I agree with scholars who argue that the cultural authority of landscape imagery stems partly from the deceptive authority of landscape itself.⁷¹ Mitchell, for example, writes that “[landscape] naturalizes a cultural and social construction, representing an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable.”⁷² By rendering political thought in a seemingly natural subject matter, representational landscapes made radical ideas about Newfoundland’s present and future appear to stem from within the natural world itself.⁷³ Landscape representation made the country’s politics and natural environment appear mutually constitutive, allaying concerns about the feasibility of Newfoundland’s national policy, and making its revolutionary claims seem unobtrusive.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, representational landscapes crafted an argument for landward colonizing by highlighting the (allegedly) better life of people who visited and worked

space. Gina Crandell, *Nature Pictorialized: "The View" in Landscape History* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). Likewise, Alexander Wilson’s examination how nature is copied and discussed in postwar North American society—from advertising to telecommunications, architecture, and museum displays—reveals how our experience of nature is mediated by a host of representational practices which, in turn, influence the design of physical places. Alexander Wilson, *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991). Christine Macy and Sarah Bonnemaïson arrive at a similar conclusion. In discussing nature’s centrality to American national identities during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they argue that architecture offered “prototypes” of how to “build and dwell the American landscape” by incorporating and representing elements of the natural world (6). Christine Macy and Sarah Bonnemaïson, *Architecture and Nature: Creating the American Landscape* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003).

⁷⁰ Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels, eds., *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1.

⁷¹ Anne Whiston Spirn, "The Authority of Nature: Conflict and Confusion in Landscape Architecture," in *Nature and Ideology: Natural Garden Design in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1997), 249-61.

⁷² Mitchell, *Landscape and Power*, 2.

⁷³ Mitchell argues that landscape simultaneously ideologizes an observer’s relationship to the natural world, while remaking the natural world into a cultural representation – a process, he claims, that effaces landscape’s readability. By way of example, he points to the development of landscape painting as a pictorial mode during and after the sixteenth century which paralleled the rise of imperial authority and its institutions. By viewing these pictures in terms of global imperialism, he writes, one can see how landscape was “tailor-made for the discourse of imperialism, which conceives itself precisely (and simultaneously) as an expansion of landscape understood as inevitable, progressive development in history, and expansion of ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ into a ‘natural’ space in a progress that is itself narrated as ‘natural’” (17). "Imperial Landscape," 5-34.

in Newfoundland's interior. Illustrated travel guides, souvenirs, books, and scientific documents turned the island's interior into an advertisement for material and social progress by focusing attention on its unfolding industrialization. Yet this imagery was also deceptively stable. As Dianne Harris and David Hays remind us, landscape views acquire their cultural authority by positioning social actors on both sides of the view plane.⁷⁴ Similarly, representational landscapes made progress appear inevitable in Newfoundland's interior at the same time as many individuals who travelled there experienced appalling working conditions, crippling dependencies, and a loss of autonomy. Differences between the reality and representation of landscapes in the interior were pronounced. By promulgating elitist fantasies in the popular imagination, representational landscapes were a stabilizing, political force that simultaneously structured the conditions under which Newfoundlanders lived and worked.⁷⁵

The political dimension of landscape is embodied in what Kenneth Olwig terms the "substantive landscape" and what Don Mitchell refers to as "landscapes of justice." The substantive landscape is "not just an idealized cultural image," writes Olwig, but "an arena for labour, social practice and speech and text, in which every externalization of an object in practice [...] is an objectification of human thoughts and feelings – a political landscape."⁷⁶ Landscape, in

⁷⁴ Dianne Harris and David L. Hays, "On the Use and Misuse of Historical Landscape Views," in *Representing Landscape Architecture*, ed. Marc Treib (London; New York: Taylor & Francis, 2008), 22-41.

⁷⁵ In her study of the Lombardy region in eighteenth-century Italy, Dianne Harris argues that idealized drawings of villas and their agrarian surroundings acted as stabilizing agents during a period of intense cultural change. As enlightened absolutism wrought changes to the region's economic, social, and political systems, landscape representation acted as a counterweight to this upheaval, reaffirming the status of wealthy families, and preserving the social positioning of Lombard elites. Dianne Harris, *The Nature of Authority: Villa Culture, Landscape, and Representation in Eighteenth-Century Lombardy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). Similarly, in examining the interplay between the material production of landscape and its visual representation in the California agribusiness during the first three decades of the twentieth century, Don Mitchell finds that popular pictures and descriptions of the Californian landscape structured the conditions under which migrants workers lived and worked, deadening their struggle against unfair labour practices, and obscuring the human cost of California's scenic landscape. Don Mitchell, *The Lie of the Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

⁷⁶ Olwig is critical of iconographic studies that reduce landscape to a pictorial symbol, while overlooking the role of representation in reifying abstract political ideas (usually those of the propertied class) and the laws that organize

this sense, is a both a visual space and a context for community, culture, and custom.⁷⁷ This belief is echoed by Don Mitchell who challenges landscape scholars to bring about greater social justice by addressing landscape as a “material reality, a place lived, a world produced and transformed.”⁷⁸ Both he and Olwig are critical of iconographic studies that strip landscape representation of its environmental, economic, and legal complexities, while overlooking landscape’s role in reifying the abstract political ideas of propertied elites. “By taking the political landscape into consideration,” they write, “the landscape becomes core both to the appreciation of places that delight, as well as to the understanding of the conflicts that make such places socially and culturally vital.”⁷⁹

This conflict is palpable in new landscapes in Newfoundland, the substantiveness of which surfaces through a comparison of their political representation, material reality, and lived

territory within a state or nation. By conflating physical environments with aestheticized scenes, he argues, landscape imagery facilitates a “‘treasonous’ confusion between the landscape represented in the visual image, the environment to which it refers, and the ideas it concretizes” (36) – a process he characterizes as “alienating.” Kenneth R. Olwig, “Representation and Alienation in the Political Land-Scape,” *Cultural Geographies* 12, no. 1 (2005): 19-40, quote p. 36.

⁷⁷ Olwig is critical of two diverging approaches within the field of cultural geography that view landscapes as either a legal unit of territory or the result of human environmental perception. Rather, he argues that landscape should be viewed as a synthetic space, a “nexus of community, justice, nature, and environmental equity, a contested territory” (630-1). He calls this nexus the substantive landscape. Unlike iconographic landscapes, substantive landscapes are real rather than apparent. The substantive landscape is one “in which issues of environment, economics, laws, and culture are all important,” and where landscape *also* functions as “a symbolic medium to be perceived, read, and interpreted on the ground, in written texts, and through artistic images” (645). In tracing the historical meaning of the word landscape in the Dutch, German, and English languages, Olwig reveals how landscape has, at various times, signified both territorial *and* community units of social, political, and legal standing, comprising the city, the country, and nature. “Recovering the Substantive Nature of Landscape,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 86, no. 4 (1996): 630-53.

⁷⁸ Don Mitchell, “Cultural Landscapes: Just Landscapes or Landscapes of Justice?,” *Progress in Human Geography* 27, no. 6 (2003): 793. Mitchell extends this discussion in his exploration of the working conditions of Mexican migrants who participated in bracero programs in California during and after the Second World War. Images of the Californian landscape multiply and fracture as Mitchell discusses labour conditions alongside the (sometimes) conflicting and (sometimes) complimentary interests of growers, bureaucrats, domestic workers, union organizers, and activists. *They Saved the Crops: Labor, Landscape, and the Struggle over Industrial Farming in Bracero-Era California* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).

⁷⁹ Kenneth R. Olwig and Don Mitchell, eds., *Justice, Power and the Political Landscape* (Abingdon, U.K.: Routledge, 2009), 2. Dianne Harris also argues for greater political engagement on the part of historians, pointing out that the construction of personal and group identities in the built environment is inescapably bound to the political, social, and economic interests of the (usually powerful) groups who create buildings and landscapes. Dianne Harris, “Social History: Identity, Performance, Politics, and Architectural Histories,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 64, no. 4 (2005): 421-23.

experience. Towns, factories, camps, and homesteads were designed to encourage and teach Anglo racial identities by structuring the lives of their occupants. Just as often, however, new landscapes propagated exploitative practices, engendered class conflict, and led to outright calamity. Studying the experience of working-class individuals reveals how Newfoundland's landscape modernity was a subjective experience for people of different classes, and how—more often than not—a significant gap existed between the vision espoused by elites and the lives of rural families upon whom this vision was imposed.

Landscape was a highly politicized subject in turn-of-the-century Newfoundland. Whereas landscape was an established feature of artistic, intellectual, and economic life in Canada or the United States, colonial elites created new landscapes in Newfoundland in an effort to subvert the country's maritime identity and traditions. Landscape was an agent of moral, social, and economic reform and was administered to Newfoundlanders from up on high. Yet Newfoundland's national policy also embodied many of the same injustices it professed to eradicate. Indeed, new landscapes often reproduced deep-seated structural inequalities within Newfoundland society, while suppressing working-class identities. At the same time, landscape and politics were fused in late-Victorian imperial policy. As empire builders sketched connections between progress, respectability, and the natural world, landscape emerged as a political tool for re-establishing the boundaries of racial membership throughout the British Empire and reaffirming the superiority of England at its centre.

Contributions

Scholars have shown convincingly that landscape traces socially constructed ideas about race onto the physical world. By allowing certain individuals and groups to physically and visually

appropriate the natural world, landscapes inscribe these individuals' privilege and authority onto the surrounding built environment, crafting specific visions of citizenship and alienating others. Dianne Harris, for example, asserts that landscape is an "active agent in the formation of ideas about race, identity, belonging, exclusion, and minoritization."⁸⁰ Likewise, scholars have shown that landscape and race are mutually constituted in diverse settings, from southern plantations to National Socialist gardens in Germany, Midwestern ski resorts, and urban dog parks.⁸¹

My study contributes to our understanding of how landscapes reproduce racial differences by rendering the limits of inclusion and exclusion visible in society. Unlike existing studies, however, *Climatizing Empire* explores how landscape and race were co-produced in a relatively homogenous, settler society. In particular, I contribute original research into a neglected topic by linking ideas about landscape, race, and empire through a late-Victorian concern for the preservation of white virtues. In addition to highlighting the importance of colonial networks in producing racial encounters, I emphasize how new degrees of racial difference emerged in independent colonies as the growing autonomy of member states sparked fears over white racial regression throughout the British world, critically influencing the forms and practices of colonial nationalism. The preservation of white Anglo identities was a prerogative for Britishers; and landscape was a key to these preservation efforts.

Landscapes participate in processes of racial identification by staging personal and group identities, as well as inscribing social relations onto the physical environment. But racial differences are not always overt, as in the dichotomies white/black, native/ethnic, or

⁸⁰ "Race, Space, and the Destabilization of Practice," *Landscape Journal* 26, no. 1 (2007): 2.

⁸¹ Dell Upton, "White and Black Landscapes in Eighteenth-Century Virginia," *Places* 2, no. 2 (1984); Annie Gilbert Coleman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," *Pacific Historical Review* 65, no. 4 (1996): 583-614; Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, "The Nationalization of Nature and the Naturalization of the German Nation: 'Teutonic' Trends in Early Twentieth-Century Landscape Design," in *Nature and Ideology: Natural Garden Design in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1997); Heidi J. Nast, "Puptowns and Wiggly Fields: Chicago and the Racialization of Pet Love in the Twenty-First Century," in *Landscape and Race in the United States*, ed. Richard H. Schein (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 237-49.

colonizer/slave. As Dianne Harris shows in her excellent study of the postwar suburb, notions of middle-class domesticity linked to home ownership systematically heightened awareness of American identities during the postwar years by minoritizing some whites, including Jews, Italians, and other European immigrants. Federal loan programs exacerbated traditional racial cleavages in American society by effectively barring some groups from home ownership, including African Americans. However, other tacit indicators of racial differences were also embodied in the suburban landscape of owner-occupied homes. Harris argues, for example, that suburban yards were stages for activities and objects whose display or concealment indicated the homeowner's ethnicity. Whereas white identities were associated with privacy in the form of fences, neatness in the guise of clipped lawns and ornamental planting beds, and a love of recreation expressed through the display of furniture and labour-saving machines, hallmarks of ethnic and racial otherness included loud behaviour, lavish or unkempt gardens (including for food production), and visible signs of work, such as laundry.⁸²

Landscape's contribution to processes of racial identification is also multi-faceted since encounters with landscape occur through reading, visiting, and viewing landscapes, as well as by living and working in landscapes. Elizabeth Kryder-Reid, for example, reveals how over the course of the nineteenth century romantic texts and images transformed California Mission gardens from sites of colonial control into aestheticized, tourist friendly monasteries. By focusing attention on newly cultivated courtyard gardens, she argues, romantic nationalists promoted a Spanish "fantasy past" that legitimated white, Anglo superiority on behalf of church and state. Mission gardens, writes Kryder-Reid, mythologized Spanish identities by rendering

⁸² Dianne Harris, *Little White Houses: How the Postwar Home Reconstructed Race in America* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

these identities in a landscape that visitors perceived to be “just a garden.”⁸³ Similarly, Leslie Bank argues that seaside landscapes in the East Cape of South Africa were a frontier for cultural politics. As black rural-to-urban migration accelerated in the 1950s, blacks occupied beach-side resorts that were formerly reserved for genteel Britons, developing distinct forms of beach culture that combined aspects of white, middle-class behaviour with “rituals of social distinction” that were central to African township culture.⁸⁴ These and other studies highlight landscape’s role in supporting ideas of nationhood by fostering an exclusive sense of belonging based on notions of ethnic superiority.⁸⁵

Similar, disparate power relations were central to processes of racial identification in turn-of-the-century Newfoundland. Landscape acquired its agency in Newfoundland because influential and powerful people wanted it to. Often, these disparate power relations were expressed through an assault on perceived working-class vices, such as poverty, low morality, and poor health.⁸⁶ Similarly, by encouraging certain social groups to take pleasure in viewing, dwelling, and working in nature, new landscapes allowed elites to instruct aspects of Newfoundland’s twentieth-century identity, localizing abstract political ideas within the island’s interior, and weaving economic, social, and moral messages into its representation.

⁸³ Elizabeth Kryder-Reid, *California Mission Landscapes: Race, Memory, and the Politics of Heritage* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 134.

⁸⁴ Leslie Bank, "Frontiers of Freedom: Race, Landscape and Nationalism in the Coastal Cultures of South Africa," *Anthropology Southern Africa* 38, no. 3-4 (2015): 248-68.

⁸⁵ See also Lily Kong and Brenda S. A. Yeoh, *The Politics of Landscapes in Singapore: Constructions of "Nation"* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003); Paul A Shackel, *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape* (Lanham, MD: AtlaMira Press, 2003); Thomas M. Lekan, *Imagining the Nation in Nature: Landscape Preservation and German Identity, 1885-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Divya P Tolia-Kelly, *Landscape, Race and Memory: Material Ecologies of Citizenship* (Abingdon, U.K.; New York: Routledge, 2016).

⁸⁶ In discussing identity politics in turn-of-the-century Winnipeg, Korneski also points out that the same elites who promoted British identities stood to benefit the most from a British liberal society, one in which their own power, wealth, and status would be preserved and social unrest subdued. Korneski, "Britishness, Canadianess, Class, and Race: Winnipeg and the British World, 1880s-1910s," 161-84.

Throughout this study, I draw extensively on archival material, including newspapers, personal correspondence, government reports, maps, architectural drawings, and photographs. The majority of these archival documents are not part of the current scholarly record. They also shed light on specific topics for which little to no scholarship exists, including the architecture of Newfoundland's pulp and paper industry, depression-era cooperative reforms, and Newfoundland's participation at international exhibitions.

Cultural landscape historians caution against using elite forms of culture (literature, painting, philosophy, etc.) to support broader arguments about cultural identity. In particular, their work highlights the agency of minoritized groups to resist elitist impositions by appropriating and altering landscapes. Elitist landscapes reinforce lines of privilege and difference. Yet by embodying these overt power structures, landscapes also create opportunities for individuals and groups to transgress against authority. It is for this reason, writes Rebecca Ginsburg, "that we can speak of multiple landscapes—coexisting, sometimes competing modes of engagement with a single site."⁸⁷ Multiplicities often arise when considering the actions of individuals who live and work in landscapes. Landscapes of slavery, for example, were often multiple in their modes of engagement. Plantation landscapes at once institutionalized the control and surveillance of slaves and created opportunities for enslaved workers to undermine the institution of slavery by manipulating the built environment to secure their own privacy, preserve their cultural traditions, and nurture feelings of social solidarity.⁸⁸ Likewise, scholars of urban

⁸⁷ Rebecca Ginsburg, *At Home with Apartheid: The Hidden Landscapes of Domestic Service in Johannesburg* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 4. In examining the ways that African women occupied white suburban spaces in apartheid Johannesburg during the 1960s and 1970s, Ginsburg reveals how black domestic workers engaged in surreptitious activities, gossip, and movements. These activities ran counter to the ideological messages circulated in the white press, where, by rendering the lives of black workers, their spaces, and activities invisible, pictures and descriptions of the suburban landscape reinforced white privilege as a normative perspective in South Africa.

⁸⁸ Clifton Ellis and Rebecca Ginsburg, eds., *Cabin, Quarter, Plantation: Architecture and Landscapes of North American Slavery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

parks emphasize how efforts by social reformers to impart moral and civic lessons on ethnic minorities were often frustrated as many individuals usurped parks for their own purposes, creating affirming cultural displays.⁸⁹

Similarly, tensions between the representation of landscape and its actual experience are a continuous undercurrent within Newfoundland nationalism. New landscapes were not simply a by-product of Newfoundland nationalism. By inscribing Newfoundland's national policy onto everyday spaces and the lives of working-class citizens, new landscapes were also an arena where politics interfaced with daily life and where nested scales of governance and agency simultaneously haunted the efforts of social and economic reformers.

My dissertation addresses this undercurrent by contrasting the ambitions of elite policy makers with everyday activities and spaces in rural Newfoundland. Newfoundland's national policy was an elitist project, but rural fishing families were its principal concern. Many of the archival documents used throughout this study stem from elite culture. Government records, stamps, and photographs were produced and published by cultural elites and were often circulated for political or economic gain. More often than not, these "official" documents validate a progressive image of Newfoundland's national policy and reveal a hegemonic desire to situate British racial identities in Newfoundland. However, other textual sources—including newspapers, private letters, and confidential revelations—expose how alternative identities were localized in the daily lives of rural inhabitants, as well as in those of working-class individuals who laboured and lived in new landscapes.

At the same time, this study highlights the material and representational tactics that allowed colonial elites to popularize and implement their vision, despite its contrary social and

⁸⁹ Galen Cranz, *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982); Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992).

ecological premises. Landscape was a fixture of colonial nationalism in Newfoundland, yet the relationship of the physical and representational landscapes to this movement has not been explored. Scholars often point out the incompatibility of Newfoundland's national policy with the country's social, economic, and environmental reality (an incompatibility underscored by the country's financial collapse in 1933 and confederation with Canada in 1949). However, little attention has been paid to landscape's role in advancing this policy by reflecting progressive liberal values in Newfoundland. By reaffirming connections between climate, geography, and progress in Newfoundland, new landscapes lent authority to lawmakers' national policy, while situating its social and economic claims in the surrounding natural world.

Thesis Structure

My dissertation examines a series of physical and representational landscapes that situated Anglo-Saxon racial identities in Newfoundland. Chapters explore how Newfoundland's national policy was constituted in a variety of settings and how its civilizing message was addressed to different groups, including Newfoundland's own fishing society, prospective tourists and investors, and authorities in London. Each chapter highlights one aspect of Newfoundland's national policy—tourism, forestry, agriculture, etc.—analyzing its ambitions in terms of contemporary racial anxieties and their historical negative: the temperate landscape of Northern Europe. In particular, I explore how Newfoundland's national policy unfolded through a series of tensions between contending forces, including the ambitions of lawmakers, imperialist doctrine, and Newfoundland's traditional rural culture. I also highlight the divergent experience of working-class individuals who lived and laboured in new landscapes. For, as Stoler writes, the study of negatives calls for careful attention to “the uneven presence of what was imagined as

possible, the tension between what was realizable and what was romance, between plausible plans and implausible worlds.”⁹⁰ Studying colonial nationalism alongside turn-of-the-century imperial ideology highlights the illusory nature of Newfoundland’s national policy, the tenacity of its racial beliefs, and its fraught environmental premise.

In chapter two I examine how representational landscapes created during the second half of the nineteenth century embodied and emboldened Newfoundland’s national policy. I first contextualize the dissertation’s approach in terms of Newfoundland historiography and then analyze how literary descriptions, pictures, and scientific documents materialized nationalist and imperial beliefs in the island’s interior. Influenced by the galvanizing discourse of Romanticism and Victorian science, image makers—ranging from adventurers and natural scientists to surveyors and photographers—descended on Newfoundland’s interior during the nineteenth century. I argue that writers, artists, and photographers idealized the island’s interior by equating temperate features of its landscape with economic, social, and physical regeneration. Of particular interest is the way that representational landscapes popularized Newfoundland’s national policy and its underlying racial beliefs through the concomitant rise of the illustrated, touristic press.

Chapter three explores how the rise of the pulp and paper industry in Newfoundland shaped a discourse of economic self-reliance at the beginning of the twentieth century. Self-reliance was a core feature of modern, Anglo identities which the pulp and paper industry promised to restore. In the British liberal tradition, self-reliant individuals were principled, independent, and male. They were able to “make-do” in a variety of situations, while taking charge of their own intellectual, spiritual, and material advancement. By creating opportunities for individuals to escape the cyclical poverty associated with the fishery and encouraging their

⁹⁰ Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, 108.

contact with nature, paper making and logging were both theorized as promoting self-reliance. This was especially true of pulpwood logging, an important adjunct to the paper industry, where migratory labour practices and log architecture built-in-situ became a locus for ideas about working-class self-sufficiency. However, an examination of living conditions, labour practices, and public health in Newfoundland's interior reveals a different set of conditions. In images and descriptions of Newfoundland's forest industry, colonial elites misrepresented loggers and their spaces of labour, constructing a romantic archetype for Newfoundland's working class, and refuting contemporary accusations of racial regression.

Chapter four explores efforts to create a landed middle class in Newfoundland by encouraging agriculture on a commercial scale. Agriculture was a barometer of progress and civilization in the eyes of British observers and a key part of Newfoundland's national policy. Colonial elites believed that, in addition to removing individuals from the fishery, farming would teach economic responsibility and act as a seat for social normativity in Newfoundland. In the first part of chapter four, I examine agricultural promotions at three divergent scales, from statutory laws to government-run experimental farms, and private country estates. I argue that colonial elites created instructional landscapes in emulation of English landed-elites, leveraging their political arguments, and proffering their own social mobility as a model for reforming Newfoundland's working class. I then turn my attention to agriculture under the Commission of Government. From 1934 to 1941, British commissioners promoted class mobility and social conformity in Newfoundland under the aegis of a land settlement program. In particular, I focus on a small holdings land settlement created in 1939 by the American social reformer Mary Ellicott Arnold. In Marystown, Arnold promoted the reform capabilities of self-help landscapes,

while overseeing a program of agricultural homesteading, self-built housing, and domestic education.

Chapter five examines Newfoundland's representation at a series of London-based world's fairs, where elites fashioned new national identities by establishing landscape as a central feature of colonial life. Exhibitions were sites of ideological clarity that allowed colonial elites to transform Newfoundland society with considerably greater ease than could be achieved within the country's own borders. They also highlight how metropolitan desires weighed on the minds of policy makers. Park-like settings, orderly waterways, and gleaming white buildings were common features at exhibitions, framing colonial geographies in a manner sympathetic with British environmental expectations. This message was recapitulated by British authorities who sought to address geopolitical anxieties and domestic unemployment by encouraging development and white emigration throughout the empire. By subjecting Newfoundland to an imperial vision in which landscape played a unifying role, exhibitions acted back—I argue—shaping the practices and reception of colonial nationalism at home and abroad. At the same time, exhibitions cast doubt on Newfoundland's policy of progress by evoking self-conscious comparisons with the resource landscapes of other nations and formalizing an international order in which Newfoundland played a minor role.

Chapter 2 — Regenerative Landscapes: Representing Progress in Newfoundland's Interior

Many of the earliest descriptions and images of Newfoundland's landscape were authored by visiting Europeans and were either sparse in terms of information or meant to substantiate rumours of a remote, fog- and ice-bound island, more akin to Greenland than to the rest of North America. Descriptions and images of Newfoundland circulated in the popular press typically reinforced a negative view of the island's natural environment. An engraving published in the American literary journal *Ballou's Pictorial* in 1855 is a case in point. The engraving depicts the landing of Venetian explorers John and Sebastian Cabot on the "pitiless coast of Labrador" (an expression borrowed from the American poet John G. C. Brainard¹) during their discovery voyage of 1497 under a British royal patent (Fig. 2.1).² *Ballou's* rendition of the landing—an event that took place in June—is not a happy one.

The scene presented to the gaze of the Cabots and their followers was not, as our engraving shows, inviting. Horent cliffs overhanging the rough surges, dark ravines tenanted by polar bears, and rude savages, scowling headlands, gloomy even in midsummer, and wearing the eternal frown of a chill nature.³

¹ See John G. C. Brainard, "The Captain. A Fragment," in George B. Cheever, *The Poets of America* (Hartford: Silas Andrus and Son, 1847), 88.

² The exact location of Cabot's landing is unknown. However, during the nineteenth century the significance of this event grew as political and intellectual leaders sought to establish nationalist myths about Newfoundland's founding by British explorers. In 1878, Philip Tocque—a Church of England clergyman born in Carbonear—argued that Cabot made landfall at Cape Bonavista – a level table of land covered in "meadows and gardens" at the time of Tocque's writing. Tocque, 1, 143.

³ M. M. Ballou, "Discovery of North America," *Ballou's Pictorial* 8, no. 14 (1855), 216.

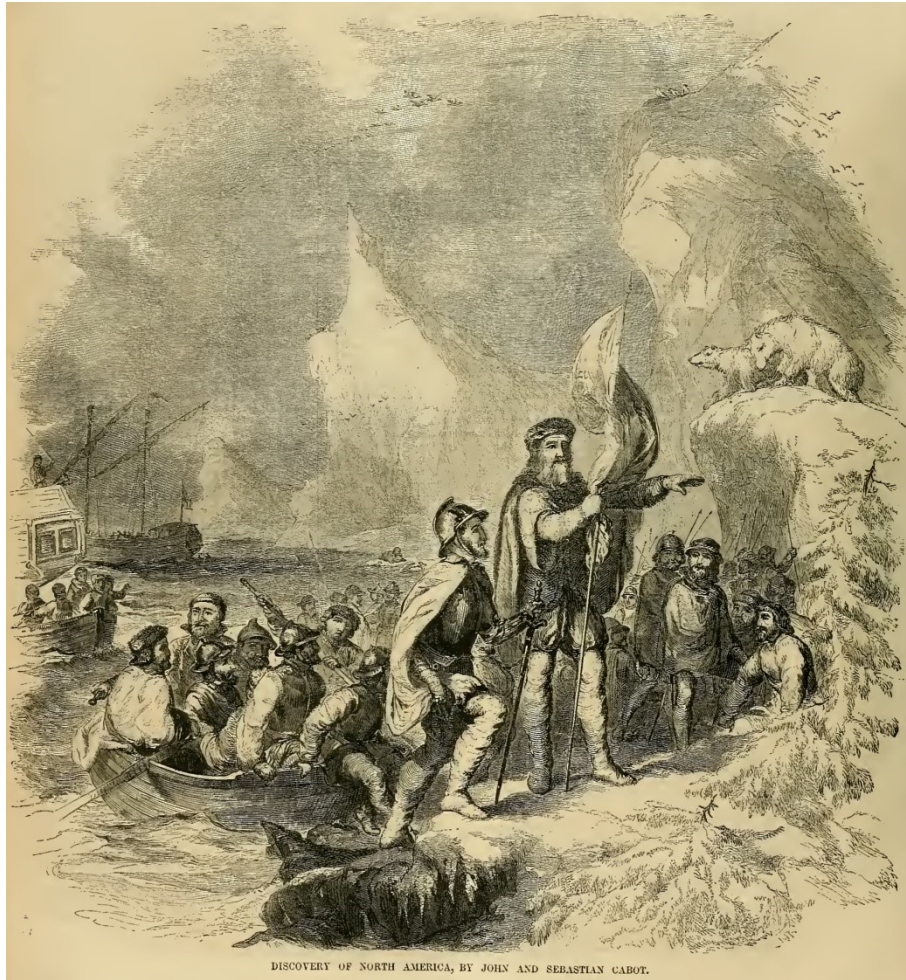


Fig. 2.1, Discovery of North America by John and Sebastian Cabot. M. M. Ballou, "Discovery of North America," *Ballou's Pictorial* 8, no. 14 (1855), 216.

The engraving and text capture well how foreigners imagined the North Atlantic coast during the early nineteenth century: an inhospitable landscape studded with miniature trees and perpetually enveloped in fog and ice. Whether the explorers are about to be frozen, starved, or devoured alive is anyone's guess, but what is certain is that a panoply of dangers await them. Nor were differences between Newfoundland and Labrador foremost in the minds of readers

since many texts treated these two areas as contiguous. In *The Countries of the World*, for example, Robert Brown grouped them together under the heading “Arctic and sub-Arctic lands.”⁴

Such was the predominant view of Newfoundland until after mid-century when adventurers, sportsmen, and natural scientists began to describe the country anew by steering attention towards temperate landscapes in the island’s interior. Descriptions of Newfoundland’s interior were exceedingly rare prior to the second half of the nineteenth century. And images were even rarer prior to the 1890s. For the most part, the interior was a vast and unfamiliar space accessible only by canoe or foot. However, this physical inaccessibility did not prevent colonial elites from viewing it as a frontier of progress. Over the course of the nineteenth century, literary descriptions, drawings, and photographs of Newfoundland’s interior were created as part of a systematic effort to revise attitudes about the island’s climate and geography by mediating its representation. Representational landscapes transformed Newfoundland’s interior into an epistemic space, where new knowledge about the country’s past, present and future was produced.

This chapter examines literary descriptions, drawings, and photographs of Newfoundland’s interior created by tourists and scientists who arrived in increasing numbers over the course of the nineteenth century. In particular, I examine these documents through their relationship to two intellectual movements: Victorian Romanticism and scientific environmental determinism. I argue that romantic and scientific images were a climatizing force in Newfoundland. Both encouraged the application of universalizing knowledge and practices to the island’s landscape; and both encouraged the idea that temperate landscapes exerted a civilizing influence on mankind. Similarly, romantic and scientific imagery idealized the island’s interior by equating its landscape with upwards social mobility and linear progress. In

⁴ Brown, 1: 238.

descriptions and images of Newfoundland's interior, landscape appeared as a racially regenerative force – one that would reverse the degenerative effects of the fishery and revive rural fishers' latent, Anglo-Saxon virtues.

The importance of landscape imagery was twofold. For the vast majority of Britons, the only way to encounter the interior was in pictures or literary descriptions. Comfortable accommodations and transportation were a prerequisite for European travellers. By the 1880s, Red Cross Line steamships featuring luxuriously appointed rooms plied the Atlantic between New York, Liverpool, and St. John's. However, the island's interior remained inaccessible to all but the most adventurous tourists and nature seekers until after the arrival of the railway. Instead, mass media ushered Newfoundland's interior into popular culture. Descriptions and images of interior landscapes proliferated in books, guides, and almanacs as new technologies allowed illustrated print media to be reproduced cheaply and easily, making Newfoundland's interior accessible to a wide range of foreign readers, and establishing specific truths about the island's natural environment.

At the same time, descriptions and images of Newfoundland's interior made this space a locus for ideas about self- and national improvement by ascribing social and economic value to its landscape. Throughout the nineteenth century, educated Britons fantasised about the possibility of returning to nature to escape the social and environmental problems associated with industrial modernity. Romantic artists and authors transformed landscape into a moral universe, where the contaminating influences of pollution, urban crowding, and labour unrest were supplanted by pastoral beauty, righteous conduct, and a rural work ethic. Similarly, scientists assigned new value to the natural world at home and abroad by revealing how previously unknown plants and minerals could be turned into useful products or used to improve

existing industrial processes. Victorian science revealed that progress was linked to specific features of the natural world, cementing the belief that climate and geography influenced the social and economic evolution of nations.

The rediscovery of Newfoundland's interior by cultural and scientific elites during the nineteenth century unleashed a series of similar re-readings. Scenic views of thick forests and rushing waterways evoked a romantic, back-to-nature ideal; tourism and sporting introduced civilizing upper- and middle-class activities into Newfoundland's interior; and scientific documents enumerated the island's valuable natural resources. In doing so, descriptions and images of the island's interior testified to landscape's ability to regenerate Newfoundland's fishing society, while validating one of core beliefs of colonial nationalism; namely, that economic diversification was not only feasible but a probable path to moral and material improvement in Newfoundland.

Representational landscape enriched the island's interior in some ways and simplified it in others. By defining Newfoundland's interior in terms of its opportunities for moneyed leisure and entrepreneurship, authors and image makers simultaneously dissociated the interior from Newfoundland's traditional economy and culture. They also removed traces of Indigenous Peoples. These erasures resemble David Hughes' account of how British writers "simplified" Africa by constructing an alternate universe in fiction and travel writing, where landscapes, plants, and animals were emphasized, and blacks diminished.⁵ Similarly, authors and image makers simplified Newfoundland's interior in order to make it appear suited to British expansionary interests. Boosters for progress promoted Newfoundland's interior as a frontier for social and economic development by juxtaposing the virtues of its landscape with deplorable

⁵ Hughes argues that literary escapism anticipated efforts by white settlers to transform the African landscape itself by planting gardens and developing large scale irrigation works. David McDermott Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe: Race, Landscape, and the Problem of Belonging* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

conditions in the fishery. However, rather than erase rural fishing families in their entirety, authors emphasized how, by migrating in this direction, romantic scenery and valuable commercial resources in the island's interior would impel Newfoundlanders' racial progress. They depicted temperate landscapes as a key to lifting the stigma of anachronism from rural Newfoundland.

Situating Newfoundland

Newfoundland and its associated islands stretch out over 111,000 square kilometres and are surrounded by 9,650 kilometres of shoreline.⁶ The main island is roughly triangular in plan. One side of this triangle is formed by the Great Northern Peninsula which faces the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Strait of Belle Isle to its west, opposite mainland Labrador. The Avalon Peninsula forms the opposing tip of the island which points south east towards the open waters of the Atlantic Ocean (Fig. 2.2). Connected to the main island by a narrow isthmus just five kilometres wide, the Avalon represents less than a tenth of Newfoundland's overall landmass, but is historically the most populous region of the island.

⁶ These figures do not include the significantly larger territory of Labrador which represents an additional area of nearly 295,000 square kilometres.

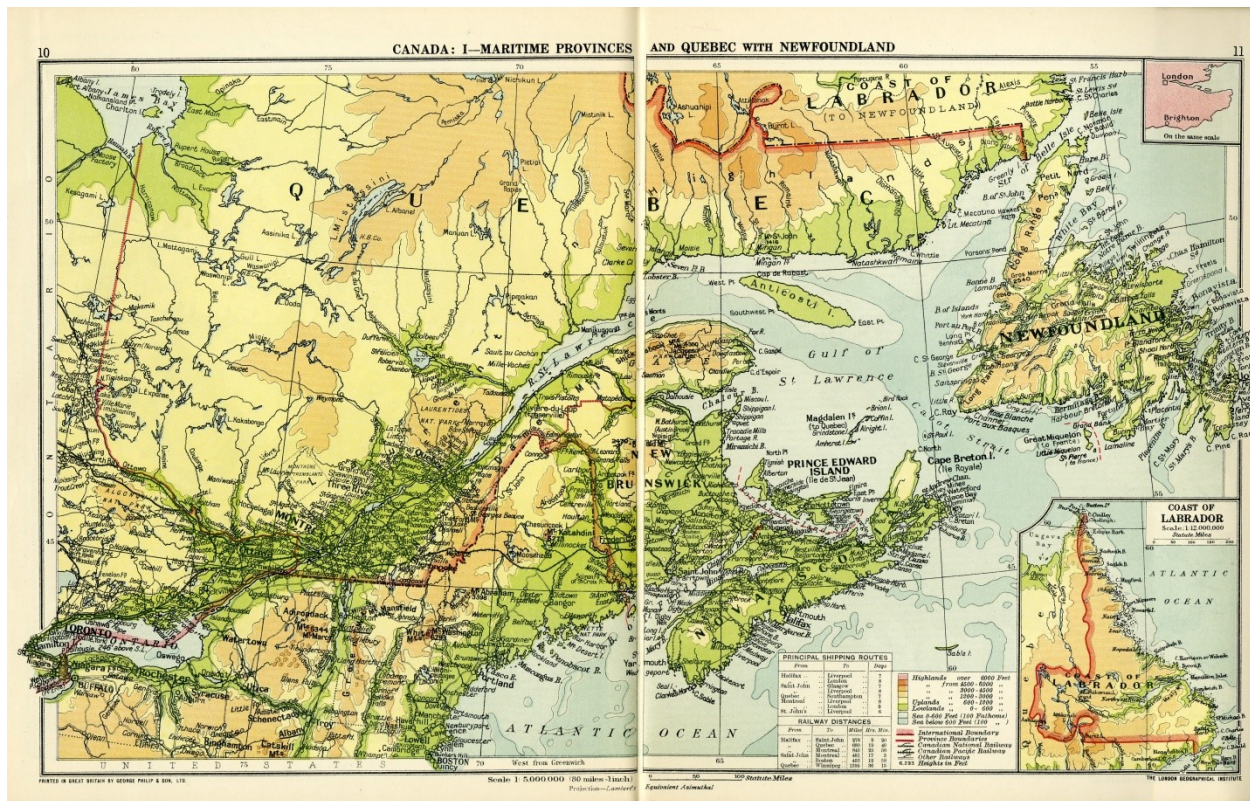


Fig. 2.2, Map showing Newfoundland in relation to Canada's Maritime Provinces and Quebec. *Phillips' Dominion Atlas of Comparative Geography for use in Canadian Schools* (Toronto: Moyer School Supplies Ltd., 1932), 10-11.

European fishing fleets visited Newfoundland annually from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century, coming ashore to land and dry their catch before returning overseas. Beginning in the sixteenth century, British colonial administrators imposed mercantilist policy on the island in the interest of West Country merchants. Each spring, fishing fleets from around the world rushed to Newfoundland to claim seasonal property rights over bays and inlets (known as fishing rooms). Fishing crews erected temporary wooden buildings to process, dry, and salt cod fish. Mercantilist policy forbade settlement on the island to preserve this system of property rights, but British authorities also preferred a migratory fishery to permanent settlement owing to the shortness of Newfoundland's fishing season, the island's poor agricultural potential, and a lack of employment opportunities during the winter. Nevertheless, a permanent inshore fishery

was created as English merchants took advantage of declines in the French and American fisheries after the Seven Year's War and American Revolution. Over the course of the eighteenth century, English and Irish settlers established hundreds of small fishing communities along the island's extensive shoreline.

Population growth also placed strain on the fishing industry. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Newfoundland's permanent population numbered fewer than ten thousand. However, by the middle of the nineteenth century it had climbed to over 120,000; and by the beginning of the twentieth century, it had doubled again. As the island's population increased more workers joined the fishery, leading to a perceptible decline in catch rates. Fishermen responded to these ecological pressures by adopting new technologies, such as seines, traps, and butlows, hastening the depletion of local fish stocks.⁷ Faced with mounting economic pressure in the fishery, a group of recent British immigrants lobbied authorities in London for an independent, elected Newfoundland government. Responsible Government was established in Newfoundland in 1854 and the country's first general election was held on May 7, 1855.⁸

Colonial elites believed that responsible government would allow them to transform Newfoundland into a diverse, industrial nation. In addition to obviating the problems arising from an over-extended fishery, they believed that new land-based industries would modernize Newfoundland's economic and social affairs by lessening the country's reliance on imported goods and removing individuals from the fishery. Anti-settlement laws were relaxed during the 1820s. However, the salt cod industry remained at the heart of social and economic life in Newfoundland throughout the nineteenth century, with almost nine in ten people employed in the

⁷ Sean T. Cadigan, "The Moral Economy of the Commons: Ecology and Equity in the Newfoundland Cod Fishery, 1815-1855," *Labour/Le Travail*, no. 43 (1999): 9-42.

⁸ Representative government was established in Newfoundland in 1832 with the creation of a bicameral legislature consisting of an elected House of Assembly and a crown-controlled Legislative Council. However, this two-tiered system proved unworkable and calls for self-rule were soon renewed.

fishery prior to the 1880s.⁹ To remedy this, policy makers adopted an unofficial, national policy of progress. Newfoundland's national policy signalled the country's commitment to civilizing progress and was designed to lift the country out of its underdeveloped state by stimulating the growth of land-based industries.

Responsible government was a fraught project from the beginning. In their zeal to create economic alternatives to the fishery, policy makers ignored other influential factors in Newfoundland's centuries-long development, including the fact that the island's climate and geography inhibited agriculture and timbering. Rather than dwell on these environmental shortcomings, colonial elites encouraged the idea that discriminatory imperial policy had impeded the development of social, legal, and political institutions in Newfoundland and prevented its industrialization.¹⁰ In reality, British mercantilist policy had been ineffective at preventing settlement on the island.¹¹ Likewise, national policy advocates turned a blind eye towards the many home-grown problems plaguing Newfoundland's progress, including the fact that government mismanagement of the fishery had prevented its modernization, and that poor quality control practices had caused Newfoundland fish merchants lose market share to other European suppliers.¹² However, by theorizing a break with the past, colonial elites made Newfoundland's progress appear natural and inevitable since responsible lawmakers were now in a position to reverse the country's historical misfortunes.

⁹ David Alexander, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," in *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 28.

¹⁰ Daniel W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records* (London; New York: MacMillan, 1895).

¹¹ Keith Matthews has fiercely criticized the use of "conflict theory" to construct master narratives about Newfoundland's economic underdevelopment. He argues that constitutional historians have prioritized political and legal frameworks without taking into account the effectiveness of this legislation, as well as other geographical, climatic, and cultural forces in Newfoundland. Keith Matthews, "Historical Fence Building: A Critique of the Historiography of Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Studies* 17, no. 2 (2001): 143-65.

¹² David Alexander, "Development and Dependence in Newfoundland 1880-1970," *Acadiensis* 4, no. 1 (1974): 3-31; "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," 17-39; Shannon Ryan, *Fish out of Water: The Newfoundland Saltfish Trade, 1814-1914* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1986).

At the same time, Newfoundland's national policy exacerbated differences between a small group of urban elite and a far greater number of rural inhabitants. Arguments in favour of Newfoundland's national policy emanated from St. John's. The city was home to roughly 20 per cent of the island's population. It was also here that several English-owned merchant houses established their stores and shipped Newfoundland fish to markets in Europe, South America, and the United States. St. John's was the seat of government, the country's principal port, and home to Newfoundland's wealthy and politically influential merchant elite. Unlike fishermen who were resolute in their orientation towards the sea, political and intellectual leaders in St. John's believed that colonizing the island's interior would catalyze their country's progress.

Expansionary interests characterized political affairs during the latter half of the nineteenth century. National policy advocates passed laws designed to encourage agriculture, forestry, and settlement in the interior, such as the Homestead Law of 1873 and Crown Lands Act of 1884. In particular, they promoted development in the vicinity of the Gander, Exploits, and Humber rivers, where deep soils and warm temperatures were conducive to agriculture and timber growth. The rivers were also a potential source of water power with which to electrify future industries. Prospectors in the vicinity of Red Indian Lake at the headwater of the Exploits River even hinted at the presence of coal – the lifeblood of industrialization throughout the western world. In 1881, construction began on the Newfoundland railway – a 17-year-long project designed to give access to resources throughout the interior and that set the country on an irreversible path to financial ruin five decades later.

Historians often link the environmental and economic short-sightedness of Newfoundland's national policy to the collapse of responsible government in 1933 when, amidst mounting public debt, members of the government forfeited self-rule in exchange for British

loans needed to avoid bankruptcy. Sean Cadigan, for example, accuses the country's leaders of being ignorant "of the basic ecological constraints that had defined previous societies in Newfoundland."¹³ Others emphasize how home-grown religious, ethnic, and class conflict frustrated productive reforms.¹⁴ Similarly, Peter Neary argues that Newfoundland's constitution gave the country "attributes of sovereignty without great substance, and responsibility without many compensating advantages."¹⁵ Despite their overwhelming desire to initiate reform, lawmakers' efforts were hampered by their country's continued reliance on imported goods and foreign debt, as well as an economically unpredictable fishery. Moreover, unlike Canada's Maritime Provinces who were similarly disadvantaged, Newfoundland was unable to draw on the more extensive resources of a federation. Instead, writes Neary, independence caused Newfoundland to "live dangerously and alone."¹⁶

By focusing on the political and economic machinations of Newfoundland's national policy, historians have not paid sufficient attention to its modes of dissemination or to its underlying, racial and environmental concerns. The present study addresses this scholarly gap. In particular, I draw attention to landscape's role in structuring and popularizing Newfoundland's

¹³ Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 3. Cadigan is highly critical of the core, nationalist belief that Newfoundland could be made economically self-sufficient. He argues that by the 1830s the depletion of inshore fish stocks and an expanding population base combined to produce an ecological crisis in Newfoundland. Despite the island's geographical and climatic restraints, political leaders had little choice but to propose interior development as a way to increase domestic food production and create new employments. Disaster ensued, explains Cadigan: "Sadly, 'responsible' government would become the quixotic ideal of generations of politicians who were never able to come to grips with the material reality of people who lived by the sea" (125).

¹⁴ S. J. R. Noel, for instance, writes that politics in Newfoundland "reflected not only the traditional cleavages of ethnicity and religion but also the underlying potential of the people to realign their loyalties on the basis of economic class." According to Noel, Newfoundland's political history "may be viewed as a struggle between those who sought to preserve the existing economic system by maintaining and exploiting existing social cleavages and those who sought to bring about social and economic changes by persuading the majority of the people of the paramountcy [*sic.*] of their common class interests." S. J. R. Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 5. The extent of this internal conflict is underlined by Patrick O'Flaherty who, in his adroitly titled book *Lost Country*, characterizes Newfoundland's turbulent political history from 1843 to 1933 as "often bittersweet if not simply tragic." O'Flaherty, *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933*, vii; see also James Hiller, "A History of Newfoundland, 1874-1901" (Doctoral Thesis, Cambridge University, 1971).

¹⁵ Peter Neary, *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World, 1929-1949* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 11.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

national policy, as well as landscape's racial import in the context of turn-of-century British imperialism.

The period from 1855 to 1949 is also beset by a lack of built environment scholarship. This lack is partly on account of a scholarly preoccupation with the theme of cultural and geographic isolation. Ironically, the same isolating forces blamed for producing underdevelopment in turn-of-the-century Newfoundland are now celebrated by historians who credit the country's marginalization with having preserved its distinct, rural culture. Indeed, prior to Confederation marginalism constituted a way of life in rural Newfoundland; as evidenced by an array of culturally specific language, craft, and song, combining English, Irish, Scottish, French, Canadian, and Mi'kmaq influences.¹⁷

Historians of architecture and landscape have also embraced the concept of marginalism in order to highlight the eccentricity of Newfoundland's building culture prior to the twentieth century. Architectural historian Shane O'Dea, for example, argues that ephemeral timber and log-framed buildings built by settlers responded to "marginalism both in their structure and their style."¹⁸ He sees vernacular timber and log frame houses, fishing stages, and drying flakes as evidence that early building culture was directly related to migratory fishing practices and colonial law prohibiting settlement of the island. This view has been extremely productive in so far as it has caused vernacular studies to flourish in Newfoundland. Following the creation of a Department of Folklore at Memorial University in 1968, much of this work has been guided by a folklorist approach to interpreting buildings and landscapes. Drawing on fieldwork and

¹⁷ See, for example, Gerald Pocius, *Textile Traditions of Eastern Newfoundland* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979); J. D. A. Widdowson, George M. Story, and William J. Kirwin, *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Herbert Halpert and J. D. A. Widdowson, *Folktales of Newfoundland: The Resilience of the Oral Tradition* (New York: Garland, 1996).

¹⁸ Shane O'Dea, "Newfoundland: The Development of Culture on the Margin," *Newfoundland Studies* 10, no. 1 (1994): 76.

interviews, folklorists emphasize the embeddedness of Newfoundland's building culture in its social contexts, while drawing connections between historic patterns of land use, material culture, and the everyday lives of residents in rural communities.¹⁹

Folklore's dominant position within architectural and landscape studies and its predominantly rural focus has produced some major omissions as well.²⁰ The reasons for these omissions are political as well as methodological. The establishment of folklore as a field within Newfoundland studies coincided with a renaissance in the arts during the 1960s and 1970s

¹⁹ Luminaries of this type include David Mills, Gerald Pocius, Richard MacKinnon, and Robert Mellin. David B. Mills, "The Evolution of Folk Architecture in Trinity Bay," in *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography*, ed. John J. Mannion (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1977), 77-101; Gerald Pocius, "Architecture on Newfoundland's Southern Shore: Diversity and the Emergence of New World Forms," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, no. 1 (1982): 217-32; Richard MacKinnon, *Vernacular Architecture in the Codroy Valley* (Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2002); Robert Mellin, *Tilting: House Launching, Slide Hauling, Potato Trenching, and Other Tales from a Newfoundland Fishing Village* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008); "Living Well in a Changing Cultural Landscape: The Ludlow Premises in Joe Batt's Arm," in *Despite This Loss: Essays on Culture, Memory and Identity in Newfoundland and Labrador*, ed. Ursula A. Kelly and Elizabeth Yeoman (St. John's: Memorial University, Institute of Social and Economic Research, 2010).

²⁰ Architectural and landscape studies are relatively scarce in Newfoundland. Most existing architectural surveys focus on tracking the diffusion of art historical styles in civic and ecclesiastic settings. Studies of this type include Shane O'Dea, *The Domestic Architecture of Old St. John's* (St. John's: Newfoundland Historical Society, 1974); Roger Bill, Allison Earle, and Jane Lewis, "Reports on Selected Buildings in St. John's Newfoundland," ed. National Historic Parks and Sites Branch/Historical Research Section (CIHB) (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, 1974); R. R. Rostecki, "The Early Court Houses of Newfoundland," ed. Historical Research Section (CIHB) (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977); Peter Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, Cahiers De L'institut Du Patrimoine De L'uqam (Québec: Éditions MultiMondes, 2008). Other architectural studies are primarily pictorial or descriptive in nature, with most doubling as a plea for preservation. See, for example, Newfoundland Historic Trust, *A Gift of Heritage: Historic Architecture of St. John's* (St. John's: Valhalla Press, 1975); *Ten Historic Towns: Heritage Architecture in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Valhalla Press, 1978); Fred Buffett, *Pictorial History of Newfoundland School Architecture* (St. John's: Creative Printers & Publishers, 1985); David J. Molloy, *The First Landfall: Historic Lighthouses of Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1994); Jean Edwards Stacey, *Historic Homes of Newfoundland* (St. John's: DRC Publishing, 1998). The question of landscape and its design is also seldom discussed outside a handful of working landscapes and private gardens. James E. Candlow, *But Summer Will Come: A Structural History of Hawthorne Cottage* (St. John's: Newfoundland Historic Parks Association, 1996); Robert Mellin, "The Edible Landscape of a Newfoundland Outport," *Open House International* 34, no. 2 (2009): 96-106. Likewise, urban studies (many of which are autobiographical in nature) have focused almost exclusively on St. John's, where urban affairs present a stark contrast to outport communities. Helen Porter, *Below the Bridge: Memories of the South Side of St. John's* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1979); Melvin Baker, *Aspects of Nineteenth Century St. John's Municipal History* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1982); Melvin Baker, Robert Cuff, and Bill Gillespie, *Workingmen's St. John's: Aspects of Social History in the Early 1900s* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1982); Harold Horwood, *A Walk in the Dream Time: Growing up in Old St. John's* (St. John's: Killick Press, 1997); Alan G. Macpherson, ed. *Four Centuries and the City: Perspectives on the Historical Geography of St. John's* (St. John's: Department of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2005); Frank J. Kennedy, *A Corner Boy Remembers: Growing up in St. John's* (St. John's: Breakwater, 2006); Paul O'Neill, *The Oldest City: The Story of St. John's, Newfoundland*, 2nd ed. (Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, NL: Boulder, 2008).

fuelled by resurgent nationalist sentiment. In the aftermath of Confederation, an influx of federal spending transformed the lives of Newfoundlanders and created visible evidence of the Province's passage into a modern era. Canadian goods, chain stores, television, and radio flooded into Newfoundland at the same time as provincial leaders made major investments in health and educational reforms, infrastructure, and rural resettlement.²¹ But with rapid change came an impending sense cultural loss. Anti-modern sentiment spread quickly during the 1960s and 1970s. Critics of modernization reacted by turning their attention to Newfoundland's pre-industrial heritage which they viewed as politically and culturally uncontaminated and where they now located the Province's authentic cultural identity. Artists, writers, and other public figures argued that commercialization and rural-to-urban migration were erasing traditional ways of life in rural Newfoundland.²² At the same time, many scholars turned their attention to documenting and recording the island's disappearing rural culture.²³ Folklore was inextricably bound up in this politico-historical project. Indeed, as Newfoundland historian Jerry Bannister argues, by helping create new categories of authentic and counterfeit within Newfoundland scholarship, folklore encouraged a "philosophy of history that contrasted the unspoilt past with the corrupted present."²⁴

²¹ Confederation was designed to integrate Newfoundland within a North American economy, as well as to expose Newfoundlanders to Canadian cultural influences. This was in part to help raise standards of living across the island, but also to counteract traditional values and customs that progressive intellectuals perceived as backwards. Among these was Newfoundland's first premier, Joey Smallwood, who set out drag Newfoundlanders "kicking and screaming" into the postwar world. Stephen Crocker, "Hauled Kicking and Screaming into Modernity: Non-Synchronicity and Globalization in Post-War Newfoundland," in *Canadian Cultural Studies: A Reader*, ed. Sourayan Mookerjee, Imre Szeman, and Gail Faurschou (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2009), 425-40. see also Bren Walsh, *More Than a Poor Majority: The Story of Newfoundland's Confederation with Canada* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1985); David Clark MacKenzie, *Inside the Atlantic Triangle: Canada and the Entrance of Newfoundland into Confederation, 1939-1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986).

²² James Overton, "Sparkling a Cultural Revolution: Joey Smallwood, Farley Mowat, Harold Horwood and Newfoundland's Renaissance," *Newfoundland Studies* 16, no. 2 (2000): 166-204.

²³ Jeff A. Webb, *Observing the Outports: Describing Newfoundland Culture, 1950-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

²⁴ Jerry Bannister, "Making History: Cultural Memory in Twentieth-Century Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Studies* 18, no. 2 (2002): 181.

Bannister's dismissal of folklore as nostalgic is somewhat misplaced. Gerald Pocius, for example, explicitly challenges the characterization of Newfoundland's vernacular building culture as "unspoilt," pointing to the importance of transnational material, economic, and cultural exchanges in shaping rural environments from the sixteenth century onwards.²⁵ Likewise, folklorists have made important contributions to a critical discourse on heritage practices in Newfoundland precisely on account of their vehement opposition to nostalgic recreations.²⁶ Yet Bannister is correct in pointing out that folklore has created blind-spots within Newfoundland historiography. In particular, folklore's pre-eminence within architectural and landscape studies has resulted in a marked disinterest in studying the reciprocal effects of globalizing processes on Newfoundland's built environment around and after the turn-of-the-century.²⁷ Inattention to the built environment during Newfoundland's independent period is a case in point.

Under the aegis of Newfoundland's national policy, political leaders encouraged the importation of ideas, materials, money, and expertise. Prominent among these importations were certain beliefs concerning the value of temperate landscapes in the island's interior. Throughout the nineteenth century, British artistic and scientific elites highlighted the cultural and economic importance of temperate landscapes at home and abroad. The landscape of Northern Europe became a wellspring of nationalist sentiment as urbanization and commercialization sparked fears over the decline of traditional British values. Likewise, imperialists saw colonial landscapes

²⁵ Gerald Pocius, *A Place to Belong: Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991).

²⁶ Robert Mellin, "House Form in Newfoundland: Vernacular to Neovernacular," *Open House International* 13, no. 1 (1988): 68-70; Gerald Pocius, "Is It Authentic, Is It Real, Does It Matter?: The Lesson from Professional Wrestling and Buildings," in *Bean Blossom to Bannerman, Odyssey of a Folklorist: A Festschrift for Neil V. Rosenberg*, ed. Martin Lovelace, Peter Narváez, and Diane Tye (St. John's: Folklore and Language Publications, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2005), 343-64.

²⁷ Robert Mellin's survey of postwar architecture is a rare example of a study that addresses the political stakes of design in twentieth-century Newfoundland. Indeed—as Mellin shows—modern architecture was an essential component of Smallwood's progressive agenda in the decades following Confederation, lending visual authority to his future-minded policies, and fostering global cultural and economic exchanges. Robert Mellin, *Newfoundland Modern: Architecture in the Smallwood Years, 1949-1972* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011).

as a key to preserving Britain's global pre-eminence in the face of rising international competition. Intellectuals, lawmakers, and other cultural authorities believed that landscape was critical to advancing British expansionary interests abroad and regenerating British society at home. Similarly, Newfoundland's interior was a nexus for the formation of transnational knowledge around the turn-of-the-century. In particular, the importation of British landscape sensibilities highlighted two things: firstly, that colonizing Newfoundland's interior would strengthen Anglo-Saxon racial continuity by regenerating fishing families' moral and economic virtues; and secondly, that the island's "harsh" and "barren" coast was inconsequential to British imperial interests.

Romanticizing Landscape

Landscape's increasing importance within western culture was a symptom of modernity itself. Paradoxically, nature emerged as an antipode to the modern world at the same time as it was furnishing the raw materials needed for industrialization. Indeed, Britons' longing for rural life grew in proportion to urbanization and industrialization during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The rise of industrial society in Britain was associated with abject working conditions in factories and mines, urban crowding and labour unrest, and vices, such as prostitution and alcoholism. To displace the visual threats of industrial and urban decay, romantic artists and writers focused on rural landscapes and their citizens, turning the English countryside a symbol of a better, Golden Age.²⁸

²⁸ See, for example, Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973); Helsinger; David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt, and Fiona Russell, eds., *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past 1880-1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Roger Ebbatson, *An Imaginary England: Nation, Landscape, and Literature, 1840-1920* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Robert Burden and Stephan Kohl, eds., *Landscape and Englishness* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006).

Romanticism can be traced to enlightenment theorists who sought to describe a science of sensibility by exploring physical and emotional responses to natural phenomena. Natural philosophers, poets, and other intellectuals were drawn to nature for its ability to manifest a wide variety of sensations and emotions in viewers. In his 1757 treatise on aesthetics, for example, Edmund Burke organized natural phenomena into two categories—the beautiful and the sublime—according to their formal and emotional characteristics. In Burke’s view, beauty was comprised of smooth and stable forms that evoked pleasant or tranquil sensations, while the sublime consisted of unstable or unfathomable forms that caused emotional disturbances in viewers.²⁹

Burke’s aesthetics had a decisive influence on the literary and visual arts. Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, artists drew on nature’s visceral appeal to the senses to study questions of perception, knowledge, and the self that were central to romantic theory.³⁰ Burke’s writings were also instrumental in establishing the picturesque movement in painting and garden design. Picturesque theorists essentialized all artistic landscapes by prescribing a balance of sublime and beautiful qualities. Within English landscape painting, for example, the picturesque “formula” dictated minimizing the presence of figures (especially any obvious signs of labour) and ennobling the landscape in a classical manner, while retaining its roughened and irregular contours. Compositional techniques included a clearly divisible and darkened foreground with an illuminated middle- and background, as well the use of framing objects (*repousoir*) in the form of trees or mountains to focus the eye. One effect of this formula was to limit the types of

²⁹ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1757).

³⁰ Morris Eaves cautions that in comparing romantic literature and contemporary painting, scholars need also take into account technological differences between printed words and images, the whims of international art markets, and the social and historical differences between celebrated British poets and their lesser-known peers (i.e. painters). Morris Eaves, "The Sister Arts in British Romanticism," in *The Cambridge Companion to British Romanticism*, ed. Stuart Curran (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 229-61.

landscapes that were considered worthy of study. It also turned nature appreciation into an intellectual activity by encouraging individuals to learn and apply these rules and to seek out picturesque landscapes for personal contemplation.³¹

At the same time, conservative imagery asserted landscape as a basis for racial and cultural continuity amongst Britishers. Romantic nationalists reacted to the horrors of industrial society by situating British racial and cultural characteristics in the landscape itself. Agricultural labourers, tenant farmers, and cottage industry workers were esteemed by writers and painters for their seeming self-reliance and wholesomeness. Romantic artists contrasted the moral discipline of labour in rural and agrarian settings with the depravity of urban life, making the British landscape appear to be a progenitor of national virtues.³² Moreover, romantic imagery naturalized this commentary since it allowed artists to operate within a seemingly descriptive mode of representation, while depicting Britain's working poor in a highly prescriptive manner. Leading British painters like Thomas Gainsborough, George Morland, and John Constable, for example, suppressed class consciousness among upper-class viewers by depicting rural labourers as passive subjects in the landscape.³³

By the middle of the nineteenth century, romanticism's influence had migrated into popular culture. Romantic imagery was a staple feature of commercial visual culture as new imaging technologies, such as lithography and photography, made nature a fully reproducible commodity. Romantic landscapes appeared in a variety of new formats, ranging from illustrated collectibles and souvenirs, to popular entertainments like panoramas, exhibitions, and

³¹ Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), 24-38.

³² Williams; Helsing; Ebbatson.

³³ John Barrell, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting 1730-1840* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Ann Bermingham, *Landscape and Ideology: The English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

picturesque tours.³⁴ At the same time, nature appreciation and tourism became virtually synonymous during the nineteenth century. Whereas tourism was formerly reserved for moneyed elite, during the nineteenth century middle- and working-class tourism became more common as leisure time multiplied with agricultural improvements and as wage labour expanded. Initially, tourism focused on the British Isles. But as mass travel transformed the late nineteenth-century landscape, travellers radiated outwards towards distant parts of the globe.³⁵

In particular, British travellers quested after picturesque landscapes in search of social and physical renewal. Passively consuming landscapes was an activity associated with the intellectual and moral cultivation of the self since the eighteenth century – a belief embodied in the expansive country houses and picturesque gardens dotting the English countryside. Similarly, activities like hunting, canoeing, and camping were prized by nineteenth-century travellers for their ability to revive the mental and physical spirit of earlier pioneers. British back-to-nature tourists assaulted their over-civilized sensibilities in an effort to reaffirm Victorian notions of manliness and self-reliance.³⁶ An example of this sort of adventuring is given by the explorer and St. John's native William Epps Cormack.³⁷ In 1822, Cormack made a blundering attempt to walk

³⁴ Gillen D'Arcy Wood, *The Shock of the Real: Romanticism and Visual Culture, 1760-1860* (Houndmills, U.K.; New York: Palgrave, 2001).

³⁵ On the emergence of British tourism and its relationship to Romanticism see Andrews; Ian Ousby, *The Englishman's England: Taste, Travel and the Rise of Tourism* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Benjamin Colbert, ed. *Travel Writing and Tourism in Britain and Ireland* (Basingstoke, U.K.; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

³⁶ Nature tourism was a cultural phenomenon in North America as well after the closing of the western frontier spurred wilderness preservation efforts towards the end of the nineteenth century. Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 141-60.

³⁷ Born in St. John's, Cormack was an explorer and natural history enthusiast who was educated in Scotland and who worked briefly as an agriculturalist in Canada. His object in traversing Newfoundland was threefold. In addition to gathering evidence about the island's natural history and resources, Cormack hoped to promote the establishment of inland settlements and discover proof of the Beothuck, or "Red Indians," who he revered. George M. Story, "Cormack, William Eppes," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cormack_william_eppes_9E.html.

clear across Newfoundland's interior, during which he nearly starved and froze to death.³⁸

Harrowing as this might seem, Cormack's adventure captures perfectly the spirit of nineteenth-century Romanticism. The picturesque combination of "pleasure, pain, and anxiety" Cormack discovered in the island's interior was a guarantee of nature's authenticity, granting him a temporary break from civilization, "succeeded by the delight of being again restored to society."³⁹

Counterpoint to adventurers like Cormack were a growing number of armchair tourists for whom books acted as a substitute for real encounters with picturesque landscapes. Over the course of the nineteenth century, a large and growing body of travel literature was addressed to this group. Literature sought to evoke travel vicariously by supplying detailed and vivid descriptions of the materiality of the physical world, allowing readers to inhabit distant places from the comfort of their living rooms, and inculcating in them a love of landscape.⁴⁰ It was towards this audience, for example, that Cormack addressed his *Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland* (1856), a book based on notes he compiled during his expedition, and that he filled with observations about the island's natural features and scenery. Other authors used images to similar effect. In 1857, for example, Reverend William Grey published a book containing eleven colour sketches of Newfoundland (and thirteen of Labrador) made during a

³⁸ Cormack embarked on his four month journey at the end of August and with the help of a lone Mi'kmaq guide. By October, overnight frosts were frequent. And in mid-October, the first snowfall arrived, deep enough to extinguish their camp fire. Having exhausted their provisions and unable to hunt, Cormack and his guide were soon weakened and miserable. Luckily, they came upon a Mi'kmaq encampment, where they were graciously fed and warmed. However, difficult winter conditions continued to plague their journey. Cormack complained frequently of fatigue, exhaustion, and exposure as cold weather and snow made progress and sleep difficult. They reached St. George's Bay early in November and, having had nothing to eat for two days, promptly broke into an untended cabin and pilfered its stores. William E. Cormack, *Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland* (St. John's: Morning Chronicle, 1873).

³⁹ Ibid., 82.

⁴⁰ Onno Oerlemans, *Romanticism and the Materiality of Nature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 148-99; Nicola J. Watson, *The Literary Tourist: Readers and Places in Romantic and Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke, U.K.; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

voyage around the island.⁴¹ Grey captured the island as a series of picturesque views, depicting it as an unpeopled, pastoral landscape, carpeted in a verdant layer of green, and studded with rolling hills (Fig. 2.3 & Fig. 2.4).⁴²



Fig. 2.3, Aquaforte, Newfoundland. William Grey, *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Ipswich: S. H. Cowell, Anastatic Press, 1858), n.p.

⁴¹ William Grey, *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Ipswich: S. H. Cowell, 1858). William Grey was a clergyman and diocesan architect who moved to Newfoundland in 1849 after being appointed principal of Queen's College in St. John's. He relocated to Portugal Cove soon afterwards and became a key figure in the dissemination of Gothic Revival principles in Newfoundland and Labrador. See Frederick Jones, "Grey, William," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/grey_william_10E.html.

⁴² Grey was hired in 1848 to work as a chaplain under Bishop Edward Field on a visitation to Bermuda and Newfoundland. Feild was a devout ecclesiologist who was horrified by the appalling conditions he witnessed in rural Newfoundland. He attempted to recruit fishermen to the Anglican faith by raising Gothic churches and recruiting missionaries. In 1857, Grey accompanied Feild on voyage of visitation to Newfoundland and Labrador, during which time he prepared sketches for his future publication. Coffman, 124-25; see also Edward Feild, *Extracts from a Journal of a Voyage of Visitation, in the 'Hawk,' 1859, by the Bishop of Newfoundland* (London: Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 1860).



Fig. 2.4, Starve Harbour, Newfoundland. William Grey, *Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Ipswich: S. H. Cowell, Anastatic Press, 1858), n.p.

The commercialization of romantic landscape imagery made it an instrument for viewing and interpreting colonial geographies as well. New World landscapes were often featured in commercial visual culture since their exoticism appealed to British audiences and since their wilderness was considered more authentic than Britain's own. At the same time, Romanticism's influence spread around the world as colonial artists looked to Europe for inspiration.⁴³ Similarly, many artists and writers exploited Britons' love of landscape to encourage overseas settlement and travel. They depicted New World landscapes as an escape from the moral ruins of Europe's increasingly commercialized society, promising spiritual and physical renewal through contact with unspoilt nature. As Robert Grant observes, authors steered the attention of readers towards temperate features of distant landscapes, while plying Victorians' sensitivity to the evils of unemployment and class conflict. By combining visions of an "alternative society" with

⁴³ Members of the Hudson River School, for example, depicted sublime American landscapes with an intense, psychological power. Bryan Jay Wolf, *Romantic Re-Vision: Culture and Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century American Painting and Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

descriptions of foreign landscapes, he argues, frontier literature depicted New World settings as ideal sites to rebuild a better, British society.⁴⁴

Images of Newfoundland's interior communicated a similar message. However, images of the interior were not produced on a commercial scale until the final decade of the nineteenth century. Photography was introduced into Newfoundland shortly after mid-century.⁴⁵ But photographs of the interior remained scarce until the railway ushered a large number of visitors into the island's interior and—with them—camera technology. Beginning in the 1890s, photographs of the interior were projected at public lectures in St. John's using lantern slides and displayed at the Newfoundland Museum. Around this time, commercial photographers also circulated images of the island's interior in printed mass media, drawing attention to temperate features of the island's landscape, and emphasizing on a new scale the importance of nature as a source of physical and social renewal in Newfoundland.

The work of Newfoundland-born photographer Simeon H. Parsons exemplifies this shift. Parsons was among the most prolific photographers in Newfoundland. He entered into the photographic business during the late 1860s, opening his first studio in 1871, and relocating to St. John's the following year.⁴⁶ His primary business was portraiture and he often travelled by

⁴⁴ Grant, "'Delusive Dreams of Fruitfulness and Plenty': Some Aspects of British Frontier Semiology C. 1800-1850," 107.

⁴⁵ The invention of commercial photography is usually dated to 1839 when the French inventor Louis Daguerre developed a process for recording light exposure onto a reactive metal-plate. Five years later, the English inventor William Fox Talbot pioneered his salted paper print process which he described in *The Pencil of Nature* (1844). Initially, both processes were constrained by the lengthy exposure times required to capture an image. This technological restriction made buildings, landscapes, and portraits ideal subjects for photographers. Later refinements reduced exposure times, as well as the size and bulk of camera equipment. This encouraged photographers to leave the studio and to expand the limits of their gaze. The earliest photographic studios in Newfoundland also date from the middle of the nineteenth century. Studios were located in St. John's and specialized in the production of portraiture and other commemorative images. Several photographers are known to have travelled around the island offering photographic services to outport residents. Regrettably, none of their work survives today. Antonia McGrath, *Newfoundland Photography, 1849-1949* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1980), n.p.

⁴⁶ Born into a fishing family, Parsons was a carpenter and upholsterer who became interested in photography in 1854 after a portraitist visited his home in Harbour Grace. Parsons was internationally recognized for his work which was exhibited in Europe and often reproduced in print media in Newfoundland and overseas. Anthony

steamer around the island and to Labrador to sell his services. Initially, Parsons' landscape views were limited to a narrow band of landscape around the island's perimeter. Most views featured sites near St. John's that were popular among picnickers and urban leisure seekers. An album of his photographs housed at Library and Archives Canada is illustrative in this regard. The large, leather-bound volume contains 39 pages to which over 100 photographic prints and postcards (dating mostly from 1884 to 1886) are mounted with handwritten labels below. In the majority of the photographs the camera is either facing, or very near the water's edge. Excepting the occasional waterfall or pastoral scene, most of his photographs are of rugged coastlines, sailing vessels, fishing tilts, drying flakes, and icebergs. Interrupting these are other, impromptu, street level views, featuring rural families, school children, fishermen, sealers, and outport homes. For one excursion, Parsons journeyed fifteen kilometres inland up Flat Bay Brook (near St. George's) then climbed to the top of Steel Mountain with his camera. However, rather than aim his camera towards the vast interior he chose a view looking back towards the flattened headlands of the bay.

By the 1890s, Parsons had shifted his attention towards the interior of the island. Inland landscapes were an attraction to Parsons because of their commercial value. He produced a number of leather bound albums for sale in his St. John's studio filled with images of picturesque cascades, placid fishing holes, and wide rivers throughout the interior. Moreover, the sale of these albums was doubly beneficial to Parsons since many sportsmen and tourists who visited the island also hired photographers to accompany them and document their exploits. In 1907, for example, the renowned British explorer and big game hunter Frederick Selous published an

P. Murphy, "Parsons, Simeon Henry," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/parsons_simeon_henry_13E.html.

account of his hunting excursions to Canada, the United States, and Newfoundland which he illustrated using several of Parsons' photographs.⁴⁷

Parsons' enthusiasm for inland scenery was echoed by other photographers, including Robert Edwards Holloway. In 1874, Holloway travelled from England to St. John's to serve as principal of the Wesleyan Academy (later the Methodist Academy/College). He was a prolific amateur photographer and at one point even drew the ire of Parsons who complained that Holloway's eagerness to document events at the Academy was hurting his own business.⁴⁸ During his tenure in St. John's, Holloway made several journeys to the island's west coast and interior which he photographed prodigiously. His photographs were widely circulated inside and outside of Newfoundland, appearing in numerous publications. In 1899, six of Holloway's picturesque views of the French Shore appeared in the popular *Illustrated London News*.⁴⁹ And in 1905, a collection of Holloway's photographs was published under the title *Through Newfoundland with the Camera*. The book contained mostly unpeopled landscape scenes taken along the coast, close-ups of cascades and rivers in the interior, and views of Holloway's own family members fishing and yachting on the Humber (Fig. 2.5 & Fig. 2.6). These, and other photographs were available for purchase in St. John's at a growing number of art stores and book sellers, including at Holloway Studios, established in 1908 by Holloway's two children, Elsie and Bert.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Frederick C. Selous, *Recent Hunting Trips in British North America* (London: Witherby & Co., 1907).

⁴⁸ Ruby L. Gough, *Robert Edwards Holloway: Newfoundland Educator, Scientist, Photographer, 1874-1904* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 68.

⁴⁹ "Newfoundland the French Shore Question," *Illustrated London News*, 14 January 1899: 40-41.

⁵⁰ Holloway died in 1904 at the age of just 54 following a prolonged illness. However, in 1908 his son and daughter—Elsie and Bert—opened Holloway Studios in St. John's, drawing on the thousands of glass plate negatives left to them by their father. Gough, 195.



Fig. 2.5, Herring Neck, Notre Dame Bay, ca. 1900 (Photo: Robert E. Holloway). Robert E. Holloway, *Through Newfoundland With the Camera*, rev. ed. (London: Sach and Co., 1910), 66.



Fig. 2.6, Breakfast Head, Humber River, ca. 1900 (Photo: Robert E. Holloway). Robert E. Holloway, *Through Newfoundland With the Camera*, rev. ed. (London: Sach and Co., 1910), 92.

The replication of picturesque conventions by photographers was partly due to entrenched habits, but also the commercial value of this imagery. Picturesque descriptions and images reproduced in books and albums fuelled a voracious appetite for landscape among Victorian readers. Writers and image makers were sensitive to popular tastes. Authors, for example, often compared Newfoundland's interior to a succession of picturesque scenes.⁵¹ Similarly, business considerations dictated that photographers eliminate social and environmental eyesores from their images, much as earlier painters had. Out of the 122 images in Holloway's album, for example, less than fifteen describe commercial fishing activities and less than five show people at work in the fishery, hauling nets, steering ships, or harvesting whale blubber. In contrast, roughly a third of the album is dedicated to landscape scenery, including views of icebergs, waterfalls, as well as activities, such as camping, fishing, and yachting in the interior.

Yet Parsons' and Holloway's photographs also reveal how there was a social dimension to image makers' praxis. By consciously and unconsciously replicating picturesque viewing traditions, photographers imbued Newfoundland's interior with romantic sensibilities, including the belief that nature would have a restorative effect on those who encountered it.⁵² In one photograph by Parsons, for example, Selous stands proudly with rifle in hand in front of his camp, his left leg raised triumphantly atop a magnificent stag (Fig. 2.7). He appears as the embodiment of the virile and self-reliant, Victorian male – qualities instilled in him by the surrounding wilderness. Likewise, although Holloway included many photographs of rural

⁵¹ Writing about Newfoundland's interior in 1871, for example, Richard Lewes Dashwood stated that, "the panoramic effects of such a voyage are very beautiful, the changes are not too rapid to mar the completeness of each picture, and the succession of scenic elements falls harmoniously and softly on eye and mind, allowing them quietly to imbibe the beauty, the blending of light and shade, or pristine nature and her scenes." Richard Lewes Dashwood, *Chiploquorgan: Or, Life by the Camp Fire in Dominion of Canada and Newfoundland* (Dublin: Robert T. White, 1871), 269-70.

⁵² For a discussion on the relationship of early landscape photography to painting, see Liz Wells, *Land Matters: Landscape Photography, Culture and Identity* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), 30-35.

Newfoundland in his album, his views of fishing settlements are devoid of economic and social life. Indeed, his photographs bear a strong resemblance to those of Grey: both men pictured fishing settlements from above and afar so that only the picturesque outlines of buildings and the surrounding craggy landscape were visible; both men drew attention the commercial and cultural value of Newfoundland's landscape by diminishing the visibility of rural fishing families.



Fig. 2.7, Camp near Howley, Newfoundland, 1900 (Photo: Simeon H. Parsons). Frederick C. Selous, *Recent Hunting Trips in British North America* (London: Witherby & Co., 1907), facing p. 69.

Indeed, Parsons' and Holloway's photographs highlight how the island's interior was both a part of Newfoundland and apart from it in critical ways. Both photographers promoted a class-based vision of Newfoundland's interior by associating its landscape with recreation and aesthetic pleasure. Camping, hunting, and nature appreciation were hallmarks of British Romanticism and its back-to-nature ideal. But these were also distinctly class-based activities reserved for middle- and upper-class tourists who enjoyed degrees of financial independence. Likewise, by drawing connections between the island's landscape and moneyed leisure,

descriptions and images of Newfoundland's interior spoke to certain intractable Anglo virtues, including masculine self-reliance, and a willingness to cultivate intellectual and social refinement through contact with the natural world.

Terra Nullius

The inclusion of certain classes of people in Newfoundland's interior was often at the expense of others, including Indigenous Peoples and the working poor. Writers and image makers steered attention towards the island's interior, while simultaneously emphasizing its geographic isolation and de-peopling its landscapes. This was necessary in order to make the interior compatible with romantic notions of wilderness – a primeval landscape free of modernity's corrupting influence. Similarly, by omitting undesirable social elements from Newfoundland's interior, writers and image makers purified its landscape of the economic and social malaise evident in the fishery, reinforcing the belief that landward migration would grant new degrees of social mobility to its members.

In 1885, Commander William Robert Kennedy of the Royal Navy celebrated the wildness of Newfoundland's interior in his *Sport, Travel, and Adventure in Newfoundland and the West Indies*. His book offered an account of several forays he made to the island's interior, while captaining a ship tasked with protecting the Newfoundland fishery from 1879 to 1881. To accompany his text, he had several engravings made based on his own sketches. In one image a crew of men are shown resting at a campsite on the edge of the Humber River. Four men gather around a fire to cook and smoke their pipes, while another two sit in front of a small log cabin on the bank of the river. Beyond this happy scene is an impenetrable wall of thick evergreens and underbrush (Fig. 2.8). The engravings are an affirmation of Kennedy's belief that Newfoundland

was “a rough wild country, where every man carries a gun and shoots where he pleases.”⁵³

Similarly, Kennedy extolled the fact that, in Newfoundland, “there are no inhabitants at any distance from the coast.”⁵⁴



Fig. 2.8, Halt on the Portage—Humber River. William R. Kennedy, *Sport, Travel, and Adventure in Newfoundland and the West Indies* (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1885), 171.

The idea that Newfoundland’s interior was uninhabited was repeated by many nineteenth-century writers. In 1856, for example, Cormack claimed that Newfoundland’s interior was “totally unknown.”⁵⁵ This dictum was repeated by Selous as late as 1907.⁵⁶ This was patently untrue. Prior to European contact, Newfoundland’s interior was inhabited on a seasonal basis by

⁵³ William R. Kennedy, *Sport, Travel, and Adventure in Newfoundland and the West Indies* (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1885), 148.

⁵⁴ One exception to this rule, Kennedy observed, was on the Codroy and Humber Rivers, where several settlers had established farms. *Ibid.*, 25-26.

⁵⁵ William E. Cormack, *Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland* (St. John's: Printed at the Office of the Morning Post and the Commercial Journal, 1856), 3.

⁵⁶ Selous, 14.

the Beothuk, or “Red Indians” – so-called because they painted their bodies using red ochre. The Beothuk were migratory hunter-gatherers who lived on the coast and wintered overland, fishing during the summer and hunting caribou in the fall. As European settlement increased along the coast, the Beothuk retreated inland, where infectious disease and malnourishment precipitated their decline. In 1829, the death of Shanawdithit—a young Beothuk woman who abdicated to St. John’s after most of her family were killed—led several Europeans to theorize that the Beothuk were extinct.⁵⁷

Writers also disenfranchised a second group of inland inhabitants: the Mi’kmaq nation. During the 1760s, many Mi’kmaq established themselves permanently in Newfoundland following the defeat of the French by British forces in Nova Scotia. Likewise, migratory Mi’kmaq hunters had visited Newfoundland for centuries, to the extent that contemporary scholars now view Newfoundland as part of the Mi’kmaq’s traditional territory.⁵⁸ During the nineteenth century, many Mi’kmaq families migrated between the coast and the interior on a seasonal basis, establishing overland trapping lines and canoe routes.

Writers seized on these migrations as evidence of the fact that Mi’kmaq families were not inland inhabitants properly speaking. In 1915, Newfoundland-born geologist and surveyor James Patrick Howley emphasized how the decline of the Beothuks was hastened by the arrival of the

⁵⁷ On the history and decline of the Beothuk, see Ingeborg Marshall, *A History and Ethnography of the Beothuk* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014). The Beothuk remained an object of fascination for European and Newfoundland explorers. Indeed, one of Cormack’s goals in 1822 was to gather evidence relating to the Beothuk in Newfoundland. He later founded the Beothick [*sic.*] Institution in St. John’s and arranged to have Shanawdithit placed under his care so that he could record her dying testimony. Cormack’s fascination with the Beothuk also lived on through Howley, who collected Beothuk artefacts and fragments of historical writing while serving as director of the Newfoundland Geological Survey. Howley’s artefact collection was displayed at the museum in St. John’s (for which he was the curator). And he later assembled these fragments into the first comprehensive history of the Beothuk published in 1915. James P. Howley, *The Beothuks or Red Indians: The Aboriginal Inhabitants of Newfoundland* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1915); see also Jeff A. Webb, “A Few Fabulous Fragments: Historical Methods in James P. Howley’s the Beothuks,” *Social History* 50, no. 101 (2017): 89-112.

⁵⁸ Dennis A. Bartels and Olaf Uwe Janzen, “Micmac Migration to Western Newfoundland,” *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 10, no. 1 (1990): 71-94; Charles A. Martijn, “Early Mi’kmaq Presence in Southern Newfoundland: An Ethnohistorical Perspective, C.1500-1763,” *Newfoundland Studies* 19, no. 1 (2003): 44-102.

“semi-civilized Micmacs [*sic.*] from Cape Breton and Nova Scotia [who] found their way across the Gulf and invaded his territory.”⁵⁹ Similarly, in 1911 Patrick Thomas McGrath declared that Newfoundland “has no aboriginal peoples and no subject races” on the basis that the Mi’kmaq were merely “emigrants from Nova Scotia.”⁶⁰ This was despite the fact that visiting sportsmen and adventures often hired Mi’kmaq as guides, precisely because of their expert knowledge of the interior. The two distant paddlers in Kennedy’s engraving are probably Mi’kmaq guides. And Cormack’s lone companion in 1822 was a Mi’kmaw with whom he trained for several weeks before departing overland. In fact, Cormack owed his life to the Mi’kmaq he encountered along the way. Having embarked on his journey with only one week’s provisions and unable to hunt on account of an early snowfall, Cormack might have starved were it not for the fact that he chanced upon a Mi’kmaw encampment, where he was graciously fed and warmed. Many Mi’kmaq also formed part of the scientific survey team tasked with making a geological and topographical survey of the island’s interior after 1864.⁶¹

The dispossession of aboriginal inhabitants in Newfoundland’s interior highlights how European notions of wilderness were beset with contradictions. Wilderness was an ideal not a reality. Back-to-nature enthusiasts fetishized uninhabited New World landscapes, yet the majority of these landscapes were already home to Indigenous Peoples. Likewise, as tourism’s economic footprint grew, wilderness was invaded by railways, roads, and hotels offering civilized comforts to travellers. Writers and artists resolved these contradictions by removing traces of human activity from the land and making the relationship between industry and nature

⁵⁹ Howley, 25.

⁶⁰ Patrick Thomas McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century* (London: Whitehead, Morris & Co., 1911), 205.

⁶¹ William J. Kirwin, George M. Story, and Patrick O’Flaherty, eds., *Reminiscences of James P. Howley: Selected Years* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1997), xlix, lxi.

appear harmonious.⁶² Elements of the landscape that were incongruous with a romantic mindset were erased in paintings, pictures, and photographs, or made to appear as if they were an extension of the natural world itself. For example, although “Indian” guides were important adjuncts to the modern tourism industry, writers and artists typically portrayed them as wild and uncivilized. Indigenous Peoples were depicted as being more a part of nature than of human society, reinforcing the belief that they occupied a “permanently anterior time within the geographic space of the modern empire.”⁶³

Representations of Newfoundland’s interior contributed to idea that Indigenous Peoples were atavistic intruders in the modern world. An account of the island’s interior by British military officer Richard Lewes Dashwood is illustrative in this regard. In the 1860s, Dashwood made a hunting trip to the interior with the assistance of a Mi’kmaw guide, Joe. And in 1871 he compiled a book of his experience. Dashwood was surprised to discover that his guide not only possessed a house with a “decent carpeted parlour” and “several prints hung upon the walls,” but wore clothing of a “high order of respectability” and carried a silver watch and chain.⁶⁴ These civilizing features were disturbing to Dashwood since they appeared to undermine the primitiveness of Newfoundland’s interior. Complaining that “it was surprising to see the Indians of such an out-of-the-way place so well off,” he proceeded to remonstrate against his guide’s civilized airs by dispossessing him of culture and class.⁶⁵ He belittled his guide’s imperfect speech, showed him to be an inept woodsman, and attributed his wealth to the fact that he charged unfair prices and hoarded his money: “a more scheming, avaricious rascal I never met

⁶² Leo Marx, for example, argues that American writers reconciled notions of wilderness with encroaching industrial development by nurturing a pastoral, “middle way” in which landscape and mechanization appeared fully compatible. Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 1964).

⁶³ McClintock, 30.

⁶⁴ Dashwood, 270.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 259-60, 89.

with among the camps of the red skins.”⁶⁶ This unmasking allowed Dashwood to reassure readers just a few pages later that Newfoundland was “more wild than in any part of North America.”⁶⁷

Of course, Indigenous Peoples were not the only atavistic members of Newfoundland society. Fishing families were also anachronistic in the eyes of British observers. And they, too, provided a foil for viewing and interpreting the island’s landscape. Unlike the fishery which was associated with economic dependence, idleness, and ambiguous gender spheres, activities like hunting and camping embodied a masculine, self-reliant ideal. Indeed, as Jeffrey McNairn writes, nature tourism and hunting were activities “fraught with economic and moral lessons” for Victorians.⁶⁸ Assertions of masculinity in travel and hunting narratives contrasted with the vices of European commercial and urban society. They showed how mind, body, and spirit could be preserved through contact with wilderness, even in the face of Europe’s increasingly mechanistic and commodity-based society, while rendering class and gender differences highly visible. In 1913, for example, the Welsh-born photographer and naturalist Arthur Dugmore gave this approving recommendation to campers in Newfoundland’s interior: “it is all very primitive, but it has a strong appeal to the man with good red blood in his veins. The namby-pamby has no place out in those woods and hills; he is not wanted, and for his own sake it were better that he stayed at home and found his sport among the domesticated game of old England.”⁶⁹

Indeed, writers used the interior to demarcate a space of social progress within Newfoundland, contrasting the virtues of wilderness with the vices of rural fishing families.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 259.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 267.

⁶⁸ Jeffrey L. McNairn, "Meaning and Markets: Hunting, Economic Development and British Imperialism in Maritime Travel Narratives to 1870," *Acadiensis* 34, no. 2 (2005): 3-25, quote p. 23.

⁶⁹ Arthur Radclyffe Dugmore, *The Romance of the Newfoundland Caribou: An Intimate Account of the Life of the North American Reindeer* (London: William Heinemann, 1913), 168.

Dashwood, for instance, was fiercely critical of Newfoundland fishers who he found to be “exceedingly poor and improvident people.”⁷⁰ This was partly on account of the truck system, he claimed, but also because of their refusal to take up life on the land, especially as farmers. In his estimation, Newfoundland fishermen were ignorant, lawless, wasteful, technologically backwards, and fiercely denominational. Likewise, Kennedy’s description of the interior contrasted sharply with his account of social and economic conditions in the fishery. He painted a bleak portrait of life in rural Newfoundland based on his experience carrying out magisterial duties on behalf of the Royal Navy. Kennedy blamed the truck system for causing widespread poverty in rural Newfoundland and argued that the burden of debt forced many fishing families to forgo necessities like food, clothing, and education, leading disease to become rampant.⁷¹

Descriptions and images of landscape mollified racial anxieties by scrubbing the island’s interior of negative connotations attached to the fishery. By contrasting work and leisure, disease and health, and scarcity and plenty, traveller’s accounts made the interior appear far removed from problems in rural Newfoundland. Likewise, by invoking *terra nullius*—“nobody’s land”—in Newfoundland’s interior, elites were able to project their own desires onto this allegedly blank space. Unlike rural Newfoundland which appeared mired in corruption and depravity, the island’s interior stood for an alternate and uncontaminated universe of economic and social possibility.

⁷⁰ Dashwood conceded that the plight of Newfoundland fishermen was largely on account of their elected leaders who he characterized as incompetent and corrupt. However, he maintained that fishermen were not entirely blameless in this regard since they were also “free and independent electors.” Dashwood, 248.

⁷¹ Kennedy, 27-41.

Environmental Determinism

Nineteenth-century science provided another set of theories for viewing and interpreting Newfoundland's interior. The nineteenth-century landscape was a scientific landscape. Science fuelled Britain's progress by revealing new uses for plants, minerals, and other substances. It also revealed how distant colonies were of economic and strategic importance to the metropole by supplying the raw materials of progress, including iron ore and coal – the two pillars of nineteenth century economic and military expansion. Industrial progress throughout the west was underwritten by natural resources which allowed for improvements in transportation, communication, and warfare. Other industrial and commercial products like rubber, sugar, and tea, were produced exclusively in the colonies and refined in Britain. Indeed, the economic importance of the natural and physical sciences was firmly established by the nineteenth century. Industrialization made nature a cornerstone to the material progress of nations – a relationship underscored by the term “natural resources,” first used by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776. Likewise, industrialization highlighted the importance of scientific discoveries in spurring economic growth and consolidating Britain's imperial power.

Scientific culture also reinforced connections between race, landscape, and climate. Observations about flora, fauna, and climate recorded by scientific elites were also evidence that Britain's cultural and economic expansion was aided or impeded by certain geographies. Regions of the globe with climates similar to Britain's were considered ideal for colonization, but as geographies deviated from this temperate ideal so too did their perceived capacity to accommodate British settlers and cultural institutions. Much of this theory stemmed from broader notions of environmental determinism which held that climate influenced the physical, social, and cultural evolution of the world's civilizations. British intellectuals believed that

climate accounted for different species of plants and animals, but also the different races and cultures of humankind.

Environmental determinism was a concept with roots in classical and enlightenment thought. Sixteenth-century natural philosophers divided the world into five climatic zones, allowing them to speculate on the suitability of New World geographies for European settlement based on their latitudinal alignment.⁷² Surrounding the two poles were the northern and southern frigid zones. In the centre was the equatorial “torrid” zone, bounded by Tropic of Cancer and Tropic of Capricorn. Between the frigid and torrid zones lay the northern and southern temperate zones. Territories located within these last two zones were considered ideal for European expansion. This theory was taken up by seventeenth-century writers who used variations in climate to explain national and regional cultural characteristics. French writer Abbé Du Bos (1670-1742), for example, linked race and geography by drawing connections between the artistic genius and character of different nations and their respective climates, while advancing the belief that certain climates were unwholesome to European travellers. These suspicions were echoed by contemporaries like Montesquieu (1689-1755) who argued that exposure to new climates could be fatal to the physical and moral character of colonizers.⁷³

During the nineteenth century, Social Darwinists advanced the idea that geography influenced the physical and mental traits of its inhabitants, while applying an evolutionary framework to the progress of human societies. Anthropologists, for example, argued that all humans had descended from an original European race and that racial types were the result of the degenerative effects of climate. Their work led to the founding of the Anthropological Society of

⁷² For an overview of environmental deterministic thought during the long eighteenth century and its bearing on colonial practices in the American Northeast, see Zilberstein, 26-38.

⁷³ James R. Fleming, "Climate and Culture in Enlightenment Thought," in *Historical Perspectives on Climate Change* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 11-19.

London in 1863 and—after 1871—the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain.

Anthropology sustained the idea that European cultural and political institutions were dependent on specific geographic conditions, as well as the belief that Europeans were unsuited to live in foreign environments since biological differences rendered white bodies vulnerable to extremes of heat or cold.⁷⁴

Social Darwinists instrumentalized race within an imperial discourse, but they also highlighted the precarious nature of colonizers' work. Indeed, environmental determinism posed special problems for colonizers since it held that individuals acclimatized to one region would become physically and mentally degraded if they relocated to another. Regions of the world outside the temperate zone were considered inhospitable to British bodies and British culture. In *The Descent of Man* (1871), for example, Charles Darwin maintained that the various human races were distinct and unchangeable, observing that “at present, civilised nations are everywhere supplanting barbarous nations, excepting where the climate opposes a deadly barrier.”⁷⁵ Much of this theory centered on the tropics, where hot and humid climates were associated with the spread of disease and thought to have impeded the civility of tropical inhabitants.⁷⁶ Within Western tropical discourse, white colonizers were theorized as “fragile outsiders” who required constant protection from the surrounding climate by erecting

⁷⁴ This view was challenged by polygenists in Britain during the 1850s. In lieu of a common origin thesis, polygenists argued that racial typologies were based on immutable biological differences and that the different races were an array of unique species. Consensus was elusive, however, and both camps maintained that human civilization was susceptible to the surrounding environment. For an overview of this debate, see Milford H. Wolpoff and Rachel Caspari, *Race and Human Evolution* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1997), 57-76; John P. Jackson and Nadine M. Weidman, *Race, Racism, and Science: Social Impact and Interaction* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004), 29-96; David N. Livingstone, *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Human Origins* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), 109-200.

⁷⁵ Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1871), 1: 154.

⁷⁶ Philip D. Curtin, *Death by Migration: Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1989); David Arnold, *The Problem of Nature: Environment, Culture and European Expansion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); László Máthé-Shires, "Imperial Nightmares: The British Image of 'the Deadly Climate' of West Africa, C. 1840-74," *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 8, no. 2 (2001).

environmental barriers, such as specially designed clothing.⁷⁷ As David Livingstone points out, the tropics were a quadrilateral interest to Victorian colonizers, comprising “medical diagnosis, colonial imperative, Darwinian demography and moral evaluation.”⁷⁸

Environmental determinism was a highly racialized concept. It explained differences between the advanced, industrial West and the rest of the world; often it was justification for the imperial domination of lesser civilizations. In particular, deterministic theories placed tropical inhabitants squarely at the bottom of civilization’s ladder. Europeans believed that tropical races were inherently lazy, irrational, and prone to sexual deviancy and drunkenness. These were all considered typical symptoms of a hot and humid climate. Writers pointed to these climatically induced differences as justification for increased colonization. As late as 1911, for example, American geographer Ellen Churchill Semple sketched an anthropological geography of the world in her book *Influences of Geographic Environment*, writing that the “Northern Hemisphere, blessed with an abundance of land and a predominant Temperate Zone location, is able to lord over the Southern, so insular in its poverty of land.”⁷⁹

At the same time, deterministic theories highlighted the need to improve colonial landscapes in order to promote the development of British institutions and social norms. British sociocultural evolutionists believed that all civilizations were in a state of progressing towards a Northern European ideal. In the *Origin of Civilization* (1870), English polymath Sir John Lubbock argued in favour of a progressive development thesis by sketching the evolution of various social and cultural institutions (marriage, religion, language, laws) from savagery to their

⁷⁷ Dane Kennedy, "The Perils of the Midday Sun: Climatic Anxieties in the Colonial Tropics," in *Imperialism and the Natural World*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 118-40.

⁷⁸ David N. Livingstone, "Tropical Climate and Moral Hygiene: The Anatomy of a Victorian Debate," *British Journal for the History of Science* 32, no. 4 (1999): 93.

⁷⁹ Ellen Churchill Semple, *Influences of Geographic Environment on the Basis of Ratzel's System of Anthropo-Geography* (London: Constable & Company, 1911), 392.

modern, northern European form. Despite Darwin's own stated resistance to using simple taxonomies in the consideration of human civilization, Lubbock and others theorized that cultural forms developed gradually and in a unilineal fashion, with northern Europe standing at the apex of this evolutionary trend.⁸⁰ At the same time, other writers highlighted geography's and climate's role in determining how quickly or slowly a civilization could advance in this direction. Indeed, according to Victorian notions of natural law, the evolution of plants, animals, technology, and race were inextricably related. Darwin, for example, associated resource rich landscapes with advanced social and economic societies, arguing that the distribution of civilized men and nations was directly related to the geographical distribution of so-called "useful" plant life.⁸¹

Learned elites believed that plant and seed exchanges, irrigation, deforestation, cultivation, and other scientific improvements would gradually temper the empire's diverse holdings, making them hospitable to British economic and cultural interests. According to Anya Zilberstein, improvers in the Atlantic northeast trusted that they were "creating mutual reforms in local society and environment" and that "progressive improvement would erode any sharp distinctions between the region and other cultivated, temperate places."⁸² Likewise, in British North America pioneers believed that clearing and cultivating the land would prevent their moral and physical degeneration by tempering the region's northern environment and—ultimately—make it resemble Europe's own. Still, others argued in favour of adaptation, arguing that a

⁸⁰ Jackson and Weidman, 88-93; Paul Crook, *Darwin's Coat-Tails: Essays on Social Darwinism* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 29-43.

⁸¹ Darwin argued that plants native to regions like Australia and Africa had not evolved through natural selection and were therefore a hindrance to the progress of human civilization in these locales. Rebecca Preston, "'The Scenery of the Torrid Zone': Imagined Travels and the Culture of Exotics in Nineteenth-Century British Gardens," in *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*, ed. Felix Driver and David Gilbert (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 197.

⁸² Zilberstein, 151.

northern climate would instil Canadian settlers with physical strength, hardiness, and a love of liberty.⁸³

Arguments in favour of environmental determinism were pronounced around the turn of the twentieth century. As Dane Kennedy points out, although medical advances during the latter half of the nineteenth century allowed Europeans to better control tropical disease, determinist theories remained prevalent throughout the Western world. This was especially true among American theorists after the Spanish-American war in 1898 which saw control of several tropical and sub-tropical territories transferred to the United States. American expansion into the tropics revived interest in the relationship between climate and the mental and physical fitness of colonizers. Theories “became charged with new a sophisticated explanatory models,” writes Kennedy, and spoke to “the deep-felt anxieties of colonists concerning their physical health and security, their cultural values, and the racial character of their economic and social privileges.”⁸⁴

Supporters of modern colonialism encouraged links between climate and social behaviour in order to reveal how certain nationalities were unsuited to industrial occupations, and therefore incapable of exploiting their own geographical wealth. In *Civilization and Climate* (1915), for example, American geographer Ellsworth Huntington plotted the distribution of the world’s “human energy” in relation to climate (Fig. 2.9). By dividing the world into five climatic zones—in accordance with sixteenth-century natural philosophy—Huntington’s map illustrated how productive energy was concentrated in temperate regions across Northern Europe and parts of North America. As climates deviated from a temperate ideal, the capacity of their inhabitants to efficiently perform industrial labour also declined. As Daniel Ryan observes, Huntington’s

⁸³ Suzanne Zeller, "Environment, Culture, and the Reception of Darwin in Canada, 1859-1909," in *Disseminating Darwinism: The Role of Place, Race, Religion, and Gender*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers and John Stenhouse (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 91-122.

⁸⁴ Kennedy, 118-19.

“map naturalised the industrial world as the appropriate location for civilisation. How else could it, when methods were based on the British climate as ideal.”⁸⁵

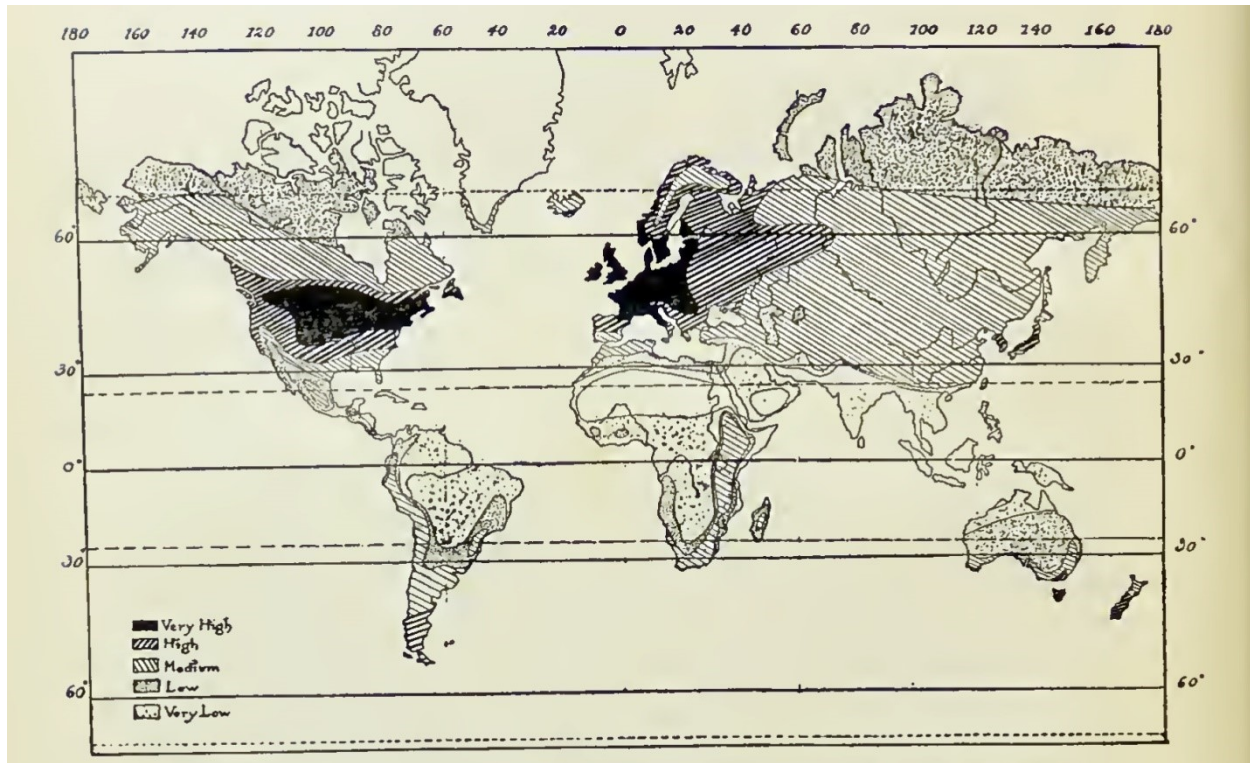


Fig. 2.9, The Distribution of Human Energy on the Basis of Climate [sic.]. Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilization and Climate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915), 142.

Indeed, the pre-eminence of northern temperate climates was a constant theme for twentieth-century writers. Huntington, for example, believed that England’s “climatic excellence” was conducive to mental and physical activity.⁸⁶ Likewise, in the *Expansion of Races* (1909), Charles Edward Woodruff argued that the superiority of whites was—in part—

⁸⁵ Daniel J. Ryan, "Civilising Comfort: 1914-1945," in *Proceedings of 7th Windsor Conference: The Changing Context of Comfort in an Unpredictable World, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, U.K., 12-15 April 2012* (London: Network for Comfort and Energy Use in Buildings, 2012), n.p; see also Fleming, "The Climatic Determinism of Huntington," 95-106.

⁸⁶ Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilization and Climate* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915), 130.

due to the invigorating qualities of northern climates.⁸⁷ He also maintained that it was impossible for Europeans to acclimate themselves to unfamiliar regions of the world, arguing that despite thousands of years of “mixing” and intermarriage in Europe, “nature has been unable to make a type fit to live in every climate, from Northern Scotland to Malta.”⁸⁸ Woodruff’s writing was influenced by his time spent in the Philippines as a member of the American medical corps and by the work of American economist William Zebina Ripley. In 1899, Ripley published his influential *The Races of Europe*, where he argued for a tripartite division of European racial types, presaging the rise of scientific racism and eugenics.⁸⁹ Civilization was fundamentally a product of race according to Ripley. He believed that hereditary action and environmental factors act in concert to influence socio-cultural change. In arguing for the superiority of northern Europeans, Ripley attributed a significant role to geology, climate, and other physical characteristics in the surrounding landscape (especially the ability of the soil to support agriculture), contributing to what Heather Winlow calls the “hierarchicalization” of the landscape “through the manipulation and division of racial data.”⁹⁰

Although many writers conceived their arguments primarily in terms of the tropics, others used climate to draw conclusions about racial demography on a global scale. In arguing that land was the basis of all social activities, for example, Semple described how society’s relationship to the land was weakest “in primitive communities where the group has established only a few slight and temporary relations with its soil,” but grew “stronger with every advance in civilization involving more complex relations to the land.”⁹¹ In her mind, civilization and land

⁸⁷ Charles Edward Woodruff, *Expansion of Races* (New York: Rebman Company, 1909).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 272.

⁸⁹ William Z. Ripley, *The Races of Europe: A Sociological Study* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1899).

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; see also Heather Winlow, “Mapping Moral Geographies: W. Z. Ripley’s *Races of Europe* and the United States,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96, no. 1 (2006): 119-41.

⁹¹ Semple, 53.

use moved forward in lock-step, from the establishment of permanent settlements, to the “differentiated use of the soil” (i.e. mineral resources), and—finally—the establishment of “extra-territorial” relations. Modern societies were thus a product of their own soil – a belief leading Semple to conclude that polar and subtropical environments had a “retarding” effect. The broader a nation’s “geographic base, the richer, more varied its resources, and the more favourable its climate to their exploitation,” she asserted, “the greater may be its historical significance.”⁹²

Colonial elites in Newfoundland understood well that a congenial climate and abundant natural resources were prerequisites for progress. Howley even named one his dogs after Thomas Huxley, the famed English biologist known for his advocacy of Darwin’s natural selection theory.⁹³ While it is impossible to know what conclusions Darwin might have drawn about Newfoundland (his interest in the island was limited to its unique variety of dog), other writers drew connections between the country’s seemingly underdeveloped society and its cold climate and geography.⁹⁴ Indeed, Semple believed that “island people” were naturally disadvantaged on account of their “poverty of animal and plant forms” and prone to “divergence” on account of their isolation.⁹⁵ Symptoms of this isolation included archaic customs, speech habits, poverty,

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Kirwin, Story, and O’Flaherty, lxi. Huxley was well-known in Newfoundland for his involvement in two Royal Commissions concerning the sea fisheries conducted in 1862 and in 1866. He also gave an address at the International Fisheries Exhibition in 1883 which Newfoundland attended, arguing that the exhaustion of fish stocks was impossible since any reduction in the supply would act as a check on fishing activity. Jennifer Hubbard, “In the Wake of Politics: The Political and Economic Construction of Fisheries Biology, 1860-1970,” *Isis* 105, no. 2 (2014): 364-78.

⁹⁴ Paul H. Barrett and R. B. Freeman, eds., *The Works of Charles Darwin*, vol. 19: Variations of Animals and Plants Under Domestication, Volume 1 (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 35, 38.

⁹⁵ Semple, 411. Semple argued that connections to the outside world, maritime transportation, and time were all factors influencing the degree of divergence among islanders. However, she maintained that an island environment “asserts always some power to isolate. This is due not only to the encircling moat of the sea, but also to the restricted insular area, too small to attract to itself the great currents of human activity which infuse cosmopolitan ideas and innovations, and too poor to buy the material improvements which progress offers” (442).

and—in some extreme cases—a “low valuation of human life” (i.e. cannibalism).⁹⁶ In discussing Newfoundland, however, she noted only that the island supported a large population by balancing “a generous sea against an ungenerous soil.”⁹⁷

British observers were more pointed in their criticism. In 1842, British geologist Joseph B. Jukes published an account of his excursions in Newfoundland, listing information about the island’s geology and landscape alongside biting social commentary. Despite his assertion that “the whole population is British, both actually and in thought and feeling,” Jukes found ample evidence to the contrary.⁹⁸ He noted how sectarian disagreement had paralyzed the country’s political system; described how archaic customs, such as mummering (a Christmas house-visiting custom involving disguises), persisted in rural areas; and gave a horrific account of the seal industry which he characterized as cruel and barbaric. These cultural differences appeared to stem from differences in the landscape. Jukes noted how extensive agriculture was impossible on account of the country’s poor climate and soils. He also doubted the presence of significant coal or other mineral deposits in Newfoundland. In the interior, he encountered difficult and wet terrain that made him sick with exhaustion, writing “what would I not have given for a few miles of the fine turf of old England, or even a heathery Scotch mountain.”⁹⁹

Educating Science

Environmental determinism highlighted the importance of climatizing Newfoundland. The country’s failure to adopt modern British economic and social norms appeared to confirm the long-held belief that Anglo-Saxon racial characteristics were tethered to features of the natural

⁹⁶ Ibid., 464.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 450.

⁹⁸ Joseph B. Jukes, *Excursions in and About Newfoundland*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1842), 1: 244.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 1: 127; see also Kirwin, Story, and O’Flaherty, lii-liii.

world, as well as the suspicion that deviant climates would cause racial regression among European colonizers. Newfoundland was populated for centuries by whites of Northern European descent, yet these Europeans now appeared economically and socially incompatible with Anglo identities. To allay these fears and address their underlying environmental cause, colonial elites looked to science and science education. In particular, colonial elites believed that science would debunk spurious rumours about the country's climate, while drawing attention to new resources and temperate landscapes in the island's interior. Similarly, scientific educators in Newfoundland attempted to improve the island's physical and social topography by inculcating citizens in the practice of science and encouraging their contact with nature.

Victorian science accorded the environment a leading role in furthering the material and moral progress of society. Science was a product of civilized society and a love of science was equated with a love of the natural world. Likewise, during the late nineteenth century British public scientists promoted the idea that science education would foster good citizenship by promoting proper social habits and improving civic behaviour, especially among the lower classes.¹⁰⁰ Scientific information was made widely accessible to the British public in the form of lectures, periodicals, and pamphlets. And unlike the physical sciences—such as chemistry and mineralogy—which required professional training, the natural sciences were presented as an elite and amateur enterprise. British school children were encouraged to study nature from a young age; and the pursuit horticultural, botanical, and entomological studies was encouraged among men and women, from members of the working class right up the aristocracy.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Frank M. Turner, "Public Science in Britain, 1880-1919," *Isis* 71, no. 4 (1980): 589-608.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*; Bernard Lightman, "'The Voices of Nature': Popularizing Victorian Science," in *Victorian Science in Context*, ed. Bernard Lightman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 187-211; *Victorian Popularizers of Science: Designing Nature for New Audiences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

At the same time, technical nomenclature and methods granted professional scientists special authority in describing the natural world. Geologists, botanists, and chemists were among these professionals. But so were map makers, surveyors, and engineers who transformed landscapes into valuable commercial resources by commuting them into texts and images. The transformative power of science is described by Alan Bewell who characterizes the nineteenth century as a “translational” culture. Unlike translators who seek to preserve the authenticity of their source, however, Victorian scientists attempted to improve upon nature by showing how it could be administered, controlled, and consumed for commercial purposes. Scientists translated “things from one place, state, form, or condition to another,” writes Bewell, revealing how Britain could augment its power and enrich itself culturally and materially, while placing nature “on the cutting edge of new forms of knowledge, new disciplinary formations, and new economic and aesthetic possibilities.”¹⁰² These translations occurred primarily through printed words and images. Indeed, as Bewell notes, print culture was a principal medium for discussing and interpreting the natural world during the nineteenth century. Scientific documents, including reports, surveys, maps, and photographs, modernized landscapes around the world by revealing them to be a source of wealth and knowledge.

The desire to reveal hidden wealth in Newfoundland’s interior led to the founding of the Newfoundland Geological Survey in 1864. In 1839, the government invited Jukes to conduct a preliminary study of the island, but this study was quickly abandoned owing to a lack of money. Efforts were resumed in 1864 when Alexander Murray (a former director of the Geological Survey of Canada) was invited to conduct a geological survey in Newfoundland.¹⁰³ Together

¹⁰² Alan Bewell, *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 6-7, 34.

¹⁰³ Born in Scotland, Murray was a former assistant to Sir William Logan, the director of the Geological Survey of Canada established in 1842. Murray was educated at the Royal Naval College and was a former seaman and an avid

with a small crew of men, Murray made several voyages around the island by schooner, collecting mineral samples for analysis by Canadian labs, and taking topographical measurements and notes to aid in the preparation of geological maps.¹⁰⁴ In 1865, Murray began making forays into the interior of the island, where he quickly turned his attention to the discovery of “economic materials,” such as coal, copper, stone, and agricultural soils.¹⁰⁵

The geological survey was an educational enterprise. Members of the survey oversaw the production of scientific documents, such as reports and maps, as well as their dissemination. Photographs, maps, and other documents produced by the geological survey sponsored a worldview in which nature was an exploitable resource for cultural and economic gain. They also depicted science as a civilizing activity in its own right. Jukes’ successor, Alexander Murray, was convinced of science’s uplifting capabilities, asserting in his first report in 1865 that the value of science was “recognized by the civilized world at large.”¹⁰⁶ Unlike Jukes’, however, Murray’s mission was optimistic and twofold. In addition counteracting rumours about Newfoundland’s landscape contrived to “foster ignorance and prejudice, and to retard civilisation,” Murray sought to catalyze Newfoundland’s progress by encouraging members of its society to become budding, empirical scientists.¹⁰⁷ In a lecture at the St. John’s Athenaeum in

sportsman. He also worked briefly as an agriculturalist in Upper Canada, where he operated a small farm. Robert Bell, "Alexander Murray," *Canadian Record of Science* 5, no. 2 (1892): 81-82; see also Michael Staveley, "Saskatchewan-by-the-Sea: The Topographic Work of Alexander Murray in Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 77 (1981): 31-41.

¹⁰⁴ Edward Tompkins, "The Geological Survey of Newfoundland," in *Museum Notes 11* (St. John's: Newfoundland Museum, Historic Resources Division, 1991), n.p.

¹⁰⁵ Alexander Murray, *Report on the Geology of Newfoundland for 1865* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1866); *Preliminary Report Upon the Geological Survey of 1867* (St. John's: Printed by R. Winton, 1867).

¹⁰⁶ Alexander Murray and James P. Howley, *Geological Survey of Newfoundland* (London: Edward Stanford, 1881), 52.

¹⁰⁷ Alexander Murray, "Geography and Resources of Newfoundland," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 47 (1877): 268.

1869, for example, Murray instructed his audience (including Newfoundland's Governor and most members of legislature) in new ways of viewing their surrounding environment.¹⁰⁸

For instance, many of the idle boys that go about shooting little birds for mere mischief, were they to learn the art of taxidermy, save the skins of their birds nicely and sell them, they might be the direct means of discovering a species previously unknown [...]. The seal-fisher or deer-hunter, by simply saving a few heads of different kinds, and especially by saving the teeth might be the immediate means of discovering some unknown principle of zoology; while any body [*sic.*] with a moderately good eye, and a desire to use it, is capable of recognizing an organism when displayed in a stone.¹⁰⁹

Murray believed that creating and disseminating scientific knowledge was of vital importance to Newfoundland's progress. By turning the "good eye" of the natural scientist towards the island, he explained, the country's "dreary and barren aspect" would be transformed through a closer "acquaintance with the facts."¹¹⁰ In his estimation, these "facts" included abundant harbours, fertile valleys, a superior climate, and many features attractive to sportsmen. The task of science and science education was to reveal these facts, transforming attitudes about the social and economic value of the island's natural environment at home and abroad.

Murray transmitted these beliefs to Howley. Not long after he arrived in Newfoundland, Murray suffered a painful injury and so sought an assistant to help him conduct the arduous field work associated with the survey. His assistant was the 21 year old, Newfoundland-born surveyor James Patrick Howley. Murray taught Howley surveying techniques and practical geology, forming the young man in his own image.¹¹¹ Howley effectively spearheaded the geological

¹⁰⁸ Bell, 85.

¹⁰⁹ Alexander Murray, *The Economic Value of a Geological Survey, Being a Popular Lecture before the Athenaeum of St. John's, Newfoundland, Delivered the 15th of February, 1869* (Montreal: Printed by John Lovell, 1869), 7.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹¹¹ Kirwin, Story, and O'Flaherty, xxiv, xxxi.

survey from 1868 to 1902 and served as its official director after Murray's retirement in 1883.¹¹² Like his mentor, he believed that mineral and timber resources in Newfoundland's interior could be developed on a scale similar to the mining and timber industries in Canada. He also believed that science education would catalyze Newfoundland's progress by instilling a love of nature in its youth and facilitating their social mobility. To this end, in 1876 Howley authored a primer on Newfoundland's geography for use in schools with a view to encouraging a "more exalted conception" of the island's worth.¹¹³

Scientific knowledge pertaining to Newfoundland was disseminated in documents produced by members of the geological survey. The survey's findings were conveyed in a series of reports and maps that embodied the translational logic of nineteenth-century science. Annual and special reports identified geological formations likely to contain coal, listed economic materials, such as gypsum, copper, and lead, and classified the island's geography according to its capacity to support timber growth and intensive agriculture. Geological maps visualized this information, allowing viewers to interpret information on and beneath the earth's surface. Murray and Howley published their first geological map of Newfoundland in 1873, followed by a topographical map in 1879. These were the first maps to describe the interior since a rough sketch made by Cormack after his expedition in 1822.¹¹⁴

Scientific documents relating to the survey were also highly authoritative. Geological reports and maps made claims to specialist knowledge and were produced using technical instruments. Murray and Howley, for example, collected topographical data using compass bearings and astronomical calculations, measured distances using a micrometer telescope and a

¹¹² Tompkins, n.p.

¹¹³ James P. Howley, *Geography of Newfoundland for the Use of Schools* (London: Edward Stanford, 1876), viii.

¹¹⁴ Other extant maps of the interior were partial and dated to the eighteenth century. Among these were maps by English explorer James Cook who sailed up the Humber River in 1767 and Lieutenant John Cartwright who sailed up the Exploits River in 1768.

theodolite, and calculated heights using two aneroid barometers. They then transferred these measurements to large-scale drawings which were redrawn as maps.¹¹⁵ Howley continued to publish maps after Murray's death in 1884, including a large colour-coded map in 1907 detailing Newfoundland's mineral wealth and indicating a number of definitive mineral strikes along the coast and in the vicinity of the new railway (Fig. 2.10).

¹¹⁵ Kirwin, Story, and O'Flaherty, xxii-xiii.

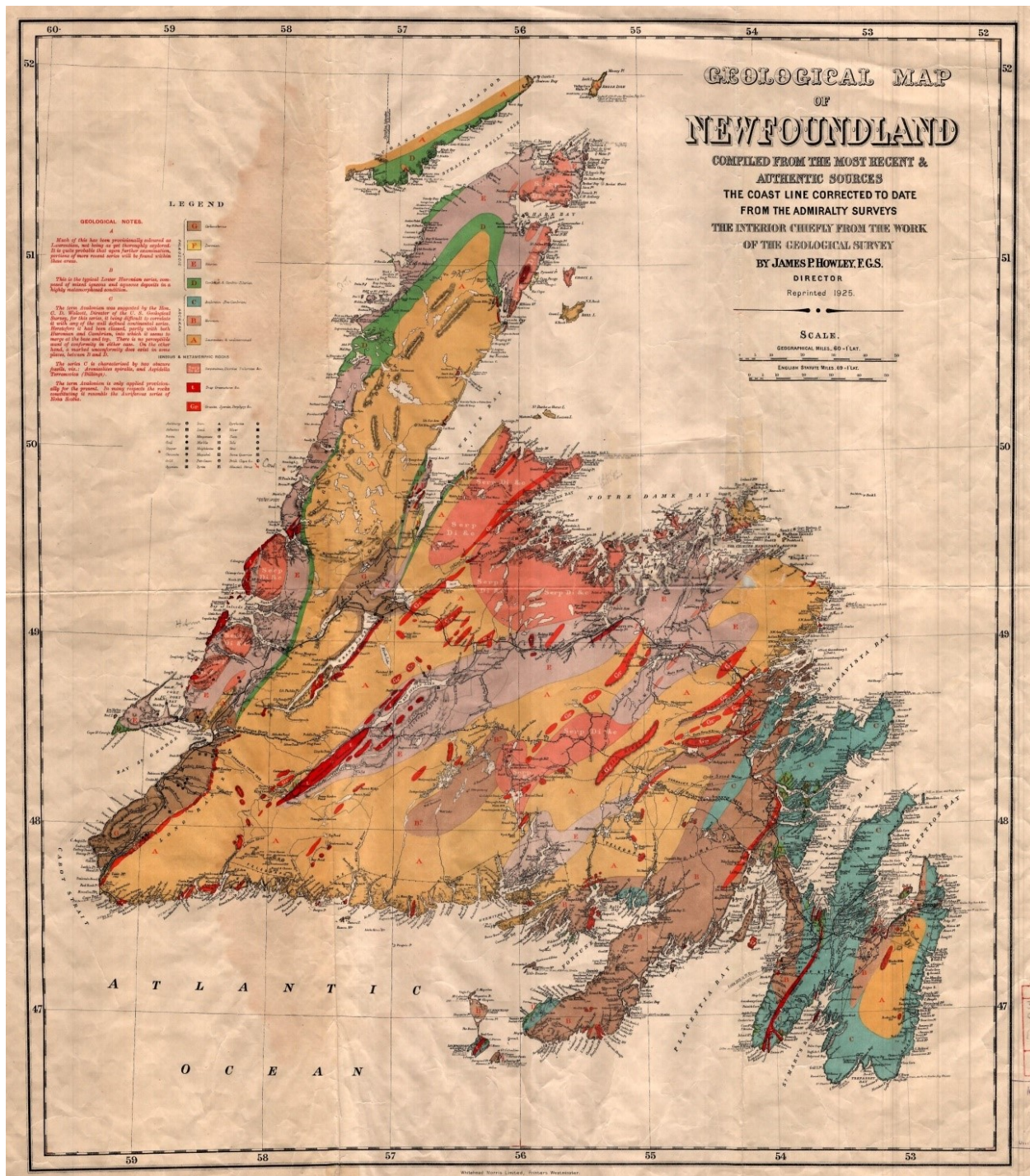


Fig. 2.10, James P. Howley, *Geological Map of Newfoundland: Compiled from the Most Recent & Authentic Sources, The Coast Line Corrected to Date from the Admiralty Sources, the Interior Chiefly from the Work of the Geological Survey*, 1907 (1925 reprint). Digital Map Collection, University of Toronto Map & Data Library.

Howley's map illustrates how scientific authority helped obscure the geological survey's underlying nationalist ideology.¹¹⁶ Indeed, his map appeared to embody a vast amount of knowledge and authority. In addition to its precisely drawn coastline, the map's colour-coded regions indicated different geological formations and their historical origins, so that the single drawing incorporated over four billion years of history.¹¹⁷ Likewise, a series of symbols indicated the location of definite mineral strikes across the island, including the location of economically valuable minerals, such as coal, iron, and gold, as well as the location of useful building materials, such as marble, stone, and clay. Even Howley's subtitle testified to his map's topographical and geological acumen, being—as it were—“compiled from the most recent [and] authentic sources.” This is despite his admission elsewhere that his map was substantially incomplete. Within the map's legend and in small red letters, he cautioned readers that much of the area “provisionally coloured as Laurentian”—by far the greater portion of the map and indicated in yellow—was imprecise owing to a lack of exploration.

As Suzanne Zeller points out, scientists who inventoried the natural world stimulated nationalist expansion plans by revealing resource networks in the landscape. In Canada, for example, Victorian scientific pursuits supported political arguments for confederation and helped colonists imagine a “transcontinental national existence” by showing how different parts of North America contributed uniquely to the national enterprise.¹¹⁸ Howley's map performed a similar duty by presenting a persuasive visual argument for landward colonization. It located the

¹¹⁶ J. B. Harley writes that scientific accuracy was a “talisman of authority” in modern cartography that masked its underlying ideology. J. B. Harley, “Maps, Knowledge, Power,” in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 277-312; see also “Deconstructing the Map,” in *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text & Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape*, ed. Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan (London: Routledge, 1992), 231-47.

¹¹⁷ Howley identified rock formations dating from the Archaean Eon (4 to 2.5 billion years ago) up to the relatively recent Palaeozoic Era (541 to 252 million years ago), as well some recent formations aged just 245 million years.

¹¹⁸ Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009).

majority of mineral deposits on either the island's west coast (where coal and lead are shown to be abundant), in Notre Dame Bay (into which the Exploits River flowed, and where copper was discovered), or along the route of the railway, marked by a thick, black line snaking its way across the island's interior. Indeed, most of the survey data in the interior corresponds to areas identified by Murray in 1877 as being "fit for settlement" on account of their ability to support timber growth and agriculture. Most of these areas were in close proximity to the Exploits, Humber, and Gander Rivers whose landscapes and climate he relished. To help convince members of the Royal Geographical Society of his vision, Murray conjured up a picturesque scene, complete with "smiling fields and cheerful villages" and resounding with "the axe of the lumberer and the lowing of the oxen."¹¹⁹ In contrast, Murray dismissed the southern portion of the island and its coast as "a dreary, desolate waste, almost void of vegetation," typifying it as "cold, gloomy, and unattractive as any land can very well be."¹²⁰

A scientific outlook was also encouraged by educators, such as Holloway. Holloway was a natural history enthusiast and a key figure in the promotion of science education in Newfoundland. Inspired by several courses he attended at the College of Science in South Kensington, Holloway established a science curriculum at the Methodist Academy which he modelled on Huxley's teachings. Likewise, the new Methodist College completed in 1894 contained a well-appointed laboratory, where Holloway taught courses on mineralogy and chemistry.¹²¹ He introduced his students to botanical and entomological field work and collected

¹¹⁹ Murray, "Geography and Resources of Newfoundland," 278. Murray included in his article a version of his and Howley's 1873 map with the areas deemed fit for settlement coloured green.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 273.

¹²¹ Gough, 46; see also "Robert Edwards Holloway: Science and Science Education in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1874-1904," *Newfoundland Studies* 11, no. 2 (1995). Holloway later sat on the Council for Higher Education which determined the syllabus for school examinations throughout Newfoundland. He also served as a public analyst in the Department of Agriculture and Mines and helped found the Newfoundland Historical and Statistical Society. See Anthony P. Murphy, "Holloway, Robert Edwards," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/holloway_robert_edwards_13E.html.

plants, rocks, and minerals for use in his lessons, developing these into a large personal collection and—later—a museum.¹²² In particular, Holloway believed that science education would lessen Newfoundland's dependence on the fishery and create social mobility among its lower classes. To encourage this, he opened up his courses to the public on several occasions and lectured on scientific subjects in St. John's.¹²³

Holloway's interest in photography also dovetailed with his teaching interests. He created an extensive library of lantern slides for use in his teaching and lecturing. He also gave courses on the use of the camera. Indeed, natural scientists considered the camera an ideal observation tool for its seeming ability to faithfully reproduce nature without the subjective intervention of an artist. Mechanical reproduction encouraged the belief that the camera itself and not the camera operator produced photographic views. Late nineteenth-century viewers were also unlikely to question the indexicality of photographs, even though the careful selection and framing of views and the posing of objects and people within them invested photographs with a high degree of subjectivity. Photographs conveyed the same authority as other scientific documents.¹²⁴

The first photographs of Newfoundland's interior were taken by Howley.¹²⁵ He included a camera with his survey equipment as early as 1890, periodically sending glass plate negatives back to St. John's to be developed.¹²⁶ Howley's "view camera" consisted of a tripod and mechanical apparatus into which glass plate negatives were inserted. Images were focused through a ground glass lens by shortening or lengthening a leather bellows while the

¹²² Robert Edwards Holloway: *Newfoundland Educator, Scientist, Photographer, 1874-1904*, 86, 124-25.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹²⁴ In scientific circles, new imaging technologies disciplined observational methods by encouraging the elimination of subjective knowledge and even the professionalization of sight itself. Lorraine J. Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2010).

¹²⁵ He was not the first person to photograph the island's landscape for this purpose, however. In his report of 1867, for example, Murray remarked that a series of photographic views taken around Tilt Cove were commissioned from a Mr. Dicks in St. John's. Murray and Howley, 115.

¹²⁶ William J. Kirwin, Patrick O'Flaherty, and Robert C. Hollett, eds., *Reminiscences of Forty-Two Years of Exploration in and About Newfoundland* (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2009), 1097.

photographer peered at the scene (there was no view-finder) from beneath a black hood.

Negatives were then exposed to the light by pulling away a dark gate and clicking open the camera's shutter.¹²⁷

Unlike his reports and maps which drew on scientific nomenclature to assert their authority, Howley's photographs are decidedly painterly in their appearance and execution. For the most part, he documented picturesque scenes which he described in his diary using epithets, such as pretty, lovely, and sylvan, or took photographs of his camp and other residents of the island he encountered along the way (Fig. 2.11 & Fig. 2.12).



Fig. 2.11, Marble Mountain Lower Humber, ca. 1890 (Photo: James P. Howley). Robert C. Hollett and William J. Kirwin, *An Album of James P. Howley's Photographs* (St. John's: Memorial University English Language Research Centre, 2010), n.p.

¹²⁷ Ibid., n1306.



Fig. 2.12, Camp at commencement Grand Lake portage Junction Brook Humber, ca. 1890 (Photo: James P. Howley). Robert C. Hollett and William J. Kirwin, *An Album of James P. Howley's Photographs* (St. John's: Memorial University English Language Research Centre, 2010), n.p.

Indeed, Howley's use of the camera contrasts with the camera techniques of other surveyors. Many scientific photographers sought to differentiate their work from that of commercial photographers by breaking with picturesque conventions. Their photographs espouse an ideology of human control over nature, not passive consumption. British surveyors, for example, valued the camera more for its ability to reveal hidden truths about a landscape by reducing its experience to a two dimensional plane.¹²⁸ Similarly, photographs by the American surveyor Timothy O'Sullivan eschew popular, scenic conventions, emphasizing the territorial and resource value of landscape, and making new disciplinary claims to its representation.¹²⁹ In

¹²⁸ James R. Ryan, "Imperial Landscapes: Photography, Geography and British Overseas Exploration, 1858-1872," in *Geography and Imperialism, 1820-1940*, ed. Morag Bell, Robin Butlin, and Michael Heffernan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 53-79.

¹²⁹ Joel Snyder argues that the pedagogical and disciplinary ambitions of American landscape photographers during the 1860s and 1870s varied considerably depending on their intended audience. Unlike businessmen-photographers who produced images for middle-class consumption and who conceived of their work in terms of other popular paintings and illustrations, surveyors and other scientific photographers resisted understanding landscape in these terms. Joel Snyder, "Territorial Photography," in *Landscape and Power*, ed. William J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 175-201.

contrast, Howley rarely used the camera to record important scientific discoveries.¹³⁰ His “charming” scenes resembled landscapes reproduced in the commercial press.

Howley’s photographs highlight the extent to which recreation and industrialization were seen as complimentary, commercial activities in Newfoundland’s interior. Colonial elites believed that tourism was critical to the success of their national policy by luring to capital to Newfoundland. Temperate landscapes would attract moneyed tourists, sportsmen, and other first-class visitors who, in turn, would invest in the country’s undeveloped mineral, timber, and agricultural resources. Howley echoed this belief by creating a body of writing and photographs apart from his survey reports and maps. Likewise, although he did not illustrate his official reports (he rarely even mentions his use of the camera in these documents), he was highly aware of the didactic power of his photographs in dispelling myths about the island’s geography and climate.¹³¹ Accordingly, Howley circulated his photographs in the popular press.¹³² He even attempted to photograph caribou on numerous occasions – a difficult task considering the amount of time needed to set up and focus his camera. Other scenic landscapes by Howley were displayed at the Newfoundland Museum in St. John’s, an institution dedicated to fostering investment in Newfoundland’s interior, and for which Howley served as director after 1887. It was on account of these activities that Howley asserted in his report for 1891 and 1892 that the

¹³⁰ Two exceptions to this rule are in 1892 and 1897 when Howley photographed coal seams. Kirwin, O’Flaherty, and Hollett, 1315, 618.

¹³¹ In 1888, for example, Howley lamented his inability to capture a “charming picture” formed when the bright, setting sun caused a nearby wooded ridge to become reflected in the smooth and placid water of Noel Paul’s Brook. Such a photograph, he claimed, would prove useful in dispelling “illusions about the interior.” Ibid., 964.

¹³² In 1894, Howley’s photograph of a canoe excursion on the Humber River appeared in an American produced booklet of souvenir views (with an introduction by Moses Harvey). Anonymous, *Newfoundland Illustrated: "The Sportsmen's Paradise"* (Concord, N.H.: T. W. & J. F. Cragg, 1894), 61. Another photograph by Howley of a beach on Grand Lake appeared in the St. John’s-based *Centenary Magazine* in 1898, see *Centenary Magazine* 2, no. 10 (1898), facing p. 16.

inclusion of a camera with his survey outfit had dispelled doubts over the importance of the interior by furnishing evidence of its natural resources *and* scenic value.¹³³

A devout nationalist, Howley believed that the geological survey would foster economic and social progress in Newfoundland. His reports leave little doubt that island's soil, trees, and minerals would provide abundantly for its people – an abundance that the fishery had so far failed to provide. His descriptions of rural life in Newfoundland became pallid and uninspired over the course of his career, while those of the interior and west coast became increasingly vivid and optimistic.¹³⁴ At the same time, Howley's diaries and field books reveal how he parlayed his love of nature into the work of the survey. He equated science with intellectual enlightenment and hunting and camping with physical rejuvenation.¹³⁵ The “woods and wild beast, and even the mosquitoes” were more appealing to Howley than city life; and he wrote often of the “charms of the woods life, away from the sounds and sights of civilization,” as well as the need to bring this knowledge “to the notice of my fellow countrymen.”¹³⁶

To encourage others to commune with nature, Howley compiled his survey notes into a manuscript (published posthumously) which he filled with cheerful stories of fishing, hunting, and camping in the interior. At times, Howley's *Reminiscences* resemble the happier moments from Cormack's *Narrative*. Indeed, Cormack—a fellow St. John's native—remained something of a hero figure to Howley throughout his career. Similarly, at a meeting of the Daughters of Empire in 1913, Howley quoted at length from the German scientist and explorer Alexander von

¹³³ Howley had hoped to include a series of views of the Humber River Valley in his report that year, but the engravings were not completed in time. James P. Howley, *Report on the Humber Valley and Central Carboniferous Area of the Island* (St. John's: Robinson & Co., 1917), 7.

¹³⁴ Kirwin, Story, and O'Flaherty, lxiv.

¹³⁵ Howley acquired his passion for nature during his childhood which he spent at his family home and farm at Mount Cashel on the outskirts of St. John's. Ibid., xxvii.

¹³⁶ Kirwin, O'Flaherty, and Hollett, 92, 143. When government retrenchment interrupted his work in 1895, Howley longed for the interior, complaining that “for the first time in twenty-seven years I found myself at Midsummer still in St. John's chafing under the forced idleness and deprivation of outdoor employment” (1497).

Humboldt's treatise *Cosmos* (1845), stating that "mere communion with nature, mere contact with the free air, exercise a soothing yet strengthening influence on the wearied spirit, calm the storm of passion, and soften the heart when shaken by sorrows to its inmost depths."¹³⁷ He encouraged members of both sexes and all classes to devote their free time to nature studies, arguing that some branches of the natural sciences—including botany, entomology, and conchology (shells)—were better suited to women than men.¹³⁸ "To learn all that there is to be learned about any country," he stated, "should be the aim of every well informed person."¹³⁹

The Touristic Press

The circulation of romantic imagery and scientific information was aided in no small part by the touristic press. Indeed, by the close of the nineteenth century promotional print media was the principal venue for discussing Newfoundland's interior, eclipsing in volume and visibility the efforts of earlier promoters. Mass media made landscape imagery accessible to new audiences at home and abroad. In an effort to highlight the island's congeniality to tourists, settlers, and entrepreneurs, promotional writers combined landscape imagery with scientific and statistical information extracted from the geological survey, interweaving romantic and imperial sensibilities. Promotional writers revealed how Newfoundland's interior was suited to the expansion of British cultural and economic interests, as well as a regenerative landscape capable of transforming the country's rural working class and catalyzing their racial progress.

In her examination of the Welsh nationalist movement, Susan Pitchford finds that tourist literature advanced nationalist goals by permitting groups to re-evaluate such "givens" as race,

¹³⁷ James P. Howley, *Nature Studies, with Observations on the Natural History of Newfoundland* ([St. John's]: s.n., 1913), 3.

¹³⁸ He told members of the Daughters of Empire to devote their leisure time, "above all to the floral beauties of the field or forest, or the wonderful products of the sea-shore." *Ibid.*, 4.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

landscape, and geography, as well as to contest specific viewpoints that were felt to be negative.¹⁴⁰ In Newfoundland, negative racial stereotypes were linked to entrenched beliefs about the island's inhospitable climate and geography. Indeed, writers circulated negative ideas about Newfoundland's natural environment well into the late nineteenth century. In 1896, for example, one North American guide book reported that Newfoundland's "climate is almost as harsh and forbidding as its coasts," pointing out that more agreeable areas on the west coast were not likely to attract "any but the most adventurous tourists, and these will not be troubled by the lack of such conveniences as highways, hotels, and regular communication."¹⁴¹ To refute these views, promotional writers focused on temperate features in the island's interior, while highlighting the country's recent industrial and scientific achievements.

In particular, writers drew upon geographical comparisons to correct damaging ideas about Newfoundland's physical geography and climate. Investors, settlers, and tourists were sensitive to how a colony's natural features compared to those of England.¹⁴² And climatic and resource congruities were an attraction to tourists and capitalists alike.¹⁴³ Accordingly, promoters emphasized how similarities existed between Newfoundland's climate and that of the British Isles, while transposing features of the European landscape onto Newfoundland's interior. Idioms like "The Norway of the New World" and "Britain's Oldest Colony" both entered into popular use during the late nineteenth century. But writers' efforts did not stop there. In his book

¹⁴⁰ Susan Pitchford, *Identity Tourism: Imaging and Imagining the Nation* (Bingley: Emerald Group, 2008).

¹⁴¹ Charles D. Roberts, *The Canadian Guide Book* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896), 228, 38.

¹⁴² Readers' sensitivity to geographic comparisons was partly on account of the abundance of misleading promotional literature. Settlers who were persuaded to move to Australia, for example, were dismayed to discover that the country's sandy soil was unsuitable for growing grains and that the continent was home to many poisonous snakes and other irritants. Grant, "'Delusive Dreams of Fruitfulness and Plenty': Some Aspects of British Frontier Semiology C. 1800-1850," 104-05.

¹⁴³ A similar, comparative strategy appears in nineteenth-century American promotional literature which sought to attract investors, settlers, and tourists by suggesting environmental and resource congruities with other well-known regions. Malcolm Lewis G., "Rhetoric of the Western Interior: Modes of Environmental Description in American Promotional Literature of the Nineteenth Century," in *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 179-93.

Newfoundland: As It Was, and as It Is in 1877 (1878), Philip Tocque railed against the foreign press, arguing that “the climate of Newfoundland has been misrepresented by almost every writer.”¹⁴⁴ In a chapter dedicated to the natural history, climate, and meteorology of Newfoundland, he made frequent comparisons between the island’s natural features and those of Britain, Canada, and United States.¹⁴⁵ Likewise, in discussing the island’s zoology Tocque referred to Newfoundland as the “Ireland of America.” Elsewhere, he included a meteorological chart comparing barometer and thermometer readings taken in Newfoundland and England throughout the year, showing that their weather was nearly identical.¹⁴⁶ Similar arguments were repeated in London. On hearing a paper read by the Newfoundland lawyer Robert Pinsent in 1885, for example, the chairman of the Colonial Institute surmised that the dispute between the French and English over the rights to Newfoundland’s shores was on account of the fact that the island’s climate was “so much like the Channel weather.”¹⁴⁷

At the same time, writers attempted to smooth over inescapable differences in the region’s climate and environment. In particular, writers encouraged the idea that the bracing features of Newfoundland’s northern climate made the island a natural sanatorium and health retreat.¹⁴⁸ Their claim was not unprecedented. English colonists in the American Northeast, for example, claimed that the region’s relatively cooler climate positively influenced residents’

¹⁴⁴ Tocque, 456.

¹⁴⁵ Tocque was a Church of England clergyman born in Carbonear but who left Newfoundland in 1850 to travel the United States and Canada’s Maritime Provinces as a backwoods Anglican preacher. Marjorie M. Doyle and Patrick O’Flaherty, “Tocque, Philip,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/tocque_philip_12E.html; Tocque wrote his treatise after visiting the island briefly in 1876. His treatise combined history writing with a gazetteer-style survey of the island, using romantic imagery to give meaning and colour to its many facts and figures. In introducing the geology of Newfoundland, for example, Tocque cited the Swiss poet Johann Lavater and William Shakespeare, quoting from the last three lines of *As You Like It* (1623), where the now exiled and penniless Duke speaks of “sermons in stone” to educe the spiritual wisdom of his newfound love for nature. Ibid., 460.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 449-51, 73.

¹⁴⁷ Robert J. Pinsent, “Newfoundland—Our Oldest Colony,” in *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1885), 270.

¹⁴⁸ Tocque, 456; Moses Harvey, *Newfoundland as It Is in 1894: A Hand-Book and Tourists' Guide* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1894), 233.

moral and physical character, discursively extending “the cultural and climatic cartography of the temperate zone to include themselves.”¹⁴⁹ Similarly, Canadian writers advanced a progressive reading of their country’s physical environment by arguing that the emergence of Canada’s political, industrial, and urban society constituted a victory over the vicissitudes of the north.¹⁵⁰

Touristic literature was designed to appeal to a wide range of readers, ranging from arm chair tourists to occasional visitors, entrepreneurs, and potential emigrants. Indeed, because of this diverse readership boundaries between touristic and settlement literature were not always clear. Both fuelled colonial expansion by luring visitors, settlers, and capital to the far reaches of the British Empire. Pocket-sized guides, compendiums, and survey-style gazetteers were printed in large quantities during the second half of the nineteenth century and were published throughout Canada, the United States, and Europe. Many of these books were designed for upper- and middle-class tourists. They promised readers encounters with unspoilt wilderness, while assuring them that well-appointed hotels, comfortable rail cars, and efficient communications were close at hand.¹⁵¹ Others, however, sought to appeal to prospective investors as well, listing diverse details about a country’s history, economy, and culture, alongside social and political commentary, as well as information about a country’s physical geography and climate. A 1915 edition of *Stanford’s Compendium of Geography and Travel*, for example, included an account of valuable resources in Newfoundland, such as timber, minerals, and game; provided details about the colony’s main exporting industries, its railway and

¹⁴⁹ Zilberstein, 36.

¹⁵⁰ Zeller, "Environment, Culture, and the Reception of Darwin in Canada, 1859-1909," 91-122.

¹⁵¹ Destinations that combined rugged wilderness with modern hotels and transportation were especially prized since they offered the possibility of primitive encounters without jarring the safety and comfort standards of middle-class tourists. Rustic amenities in American national parks, for example, exemplified this balance, see Macy and Bonnemaïson, 71-135.

steamship connections; and gave an historical sketch of the island, from discovery to independence.¹⁵²

In particular, writers attempted to show how foreign countries fit within a Western progress narrative. As Robert Grant notes, settlement literature appealed to potential settlers by marshalling the physical, commercial, and social geography of a colony “under the rubrics of ‘regularity’, ‘progress’ and ‘future prosperity.’”¹⁵³ Similarly, touristic writers parsed the environmental, economic, and social characteristics of a country, searching for evidence of civilization and progress, or a lack thereof. In turn, this evidence was grounds for speculation about a country’s future prospects. Details concerning a country’s educational system, national debt, commercial trade, and religious leanings were all indicative of a country’s capacity for future progress. Books on Newfoundland typically signposted events, such as the landing of the first transatlantic telegraph cable at Heart’s Content, the extraction of copper at Notre Dame Bay, and—especially—the Newfoundland railway. Indeed, as one writer for the *Compendium* observed, the railway had lifted the country “from a chronic state of financial embarrassment to a position of progress.”¹⁵⁴

By drawing on the work of James Howley, Moses Harvey, and Daniel Prowse, the *Compendium* also reveals how nationalist ideas radiated outwards from Newfoundland. Most foreign authors drew on the work of local surveyors, scientists, historians, and other cultural writers to formulate their descriptions of a place. Indeed, Murray and Howley’s geological reports were among the most frequently cited documents in Newfoundland travel guides. At the time, the geological survey represented the only comprehensive account of the island’s climate

¹⁵² Henry M. Ami, ed. *Stanford's Compendium of Geography and Travel (New Issue), North America*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, Canada and Newfoundland (London: Edward Stanford, 1915).

¹⁵³ Grant, “Delusive Dreams of Fruitfulness and Plenty”: Some Aspects of British Frontier Semiology C. 1800-1850,” 107.

¹⁵⁴ Ami, 1001.

and geography. In drawing on this work, however, touristic writers also transmitted the survey's underlying nationalist ideology, including its obsession with Newfoundland's interior. In 1881, the popular Canadian guidebook *Lovell's Gazetteer* included a brief, two and a half page entry on Newfoundland, where the editors asserted that, from Murray's report on the interior, "there is reason to believe that its resources, both agriculture and mineral, are of very considerable importance."¹⁵⁵ Likewise, the English historical writer Edgar Sanderson noted in his voluminous *The British Empire in the Nineteenth Century* (1898-9) that recent explorations in the interior had refuted "calumnies concerning 'a dreary wilderness,' spread by fishing interests."¹⁵⁶ By 1908, *Lovell's Gazetteer* was able to declare with no uncertainty that, in Newfoundland, "there is no large extent of territory, the resources and nature of which are not known," adding that "the old idea as to the utter worthlessness of the interior has given place to a much more generous estimate of the character and wealth of the colony."¹⁵⁷ Similar sentiments were echoed by writers around the world.¹⁵⁸

Descriptive commentary in touristic literature was supported by the inclusion of photographs. The circulation of photographs increased dramatically during the final decade of the nineteenth century as new printing technologies lowered reproduction costs and gave rise to new media like the picture postcard.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, photography's reproducibility made landscape

¹⁵⁵ P. A. Crosby, ed. *Lovell's Gazetteer of British North America* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son, 1881), 325.

¹⁵⁶ Edgar Sanderson, *The British Empire in the Nineteenth Century: Its Progress and Expansion at Home and Abroad* (London: Blackie & Son, 1898-9), 5: 317.

¹⁵⁷ G. Mercer Adam, ed. *Lovell's Gazetteer of British North America* (Montreal: John Lovell & Son, 1908), 684.

¹⁵⁸ Ronald Rompkey, "The Representation of Newfoundland in Nineteenth-Century French Travel Literature," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 25, no. 2 (2010): 183-96. A sixth edition of Ticknor's popular guide to the Maritime Provinces published in Boston in 1888 reported that although visits to Newfoundland were limited to bays and villages around the coast accessible only by steamer, "in the interior of the island are vast and unexplored regions, studded with large lakes and mountain ranges." *The Maritime Provinces: A Handbook for Travellers*, (Boston: Ticknor and Company, 1888), 187.

¹⁵⁹ Kathleen Stewart Howe, "Travel Photography," in *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography*, ed. John Hannavy (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1404-08.

imagery accessible to a wide range of viewers.¹⁶⁰ In 1907, Selous supplemented his description of the island's interior with photographs by Parsons. And in 1915, a new issue of *Stanford's Compendium of Geography and Travel* contained photographs of the Humber River taken by Holloway alongside a description of the island's climate and landscape.



Fig. 2.13, Sport in the interior. *Newfoundland Sporting Souvenir* (St. John's: Ayre & Sons, [1910]).

Touristic literature produced in Newfoundland also focused attention on the interior of the island. Illustrated print media proliferated in St. John's around the turn-of-the-century. Booksellers and publishers created souvenirs, albums, illustrated folders, and postcards. This literature was designed principally for tourists and other visitors, but souvenirs and books were also cherished as collectibles, given as gifts, and used to decorate the interior of homes across the

¹⁶⁰ On the emergence of commercial landscape photography and its connection to visually based tourism during the late nineteenth century, see Steven Hoelscher, "The Photographic Construction of Tourist Space in Victorian America," *Geographical Review* 88, no. 4 (1998): 548-70; Robin Lenman, "British Photographers and Tourism in the Nineteenth Century: Three Case Studies," in *Visual Culture and Tourism*, ed. David Crouch and Nina Lübbren (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 91-108; Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan, eds., *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003).

island. Descriptive text and advertisements were typically printed alongside images in souvenirs. Many featured photographs of the fishery, icebergs, and rural settlements, together with landscape views taken in and around St. John's. Other publications, however, were filled with picturesque landscapes and scenes of camping, fishing, and hunting in the interior. Among these were picture postcards available at Parsons' Art Store in St. John's, as well as many "sporting" souvenirs, such as those produced by Ayre and Sons (Fig. 2.13). Likewise, the bookseller and stationer S. E. Garland produced dozens of books and folders containing views of the interior by Holloway and Parsons.¹⁶¹ Added to these were several lavishly illustrated guides created by publicists at the Reid Newfoundland Company (owners and operators of the country's railway).¹⁶²

For many individuals, descriptions and images circulated in the touristic press were the first and only contact they had with the interior of the island. However, multiplying images of the interior in the touristic press also conveyed to these individuals a distinctly modern vision for Newfoundland.¹⁶³ Touristic literature highlighted the importance of the interior as a space of genteel leisure, scientific enquiry, and industrial progress, linking its landscape with material improvement in Newfoundland, and visibly reducing the role of the fishery. One illustrated booklet produced in 1902 went so far as include a drawing of a "cube of iron ore" extracted from the Dominion Iron and Steel Company's mine on Bell Island, lending irrefutable concreteness to its economic and scientific claims. Indeed, touristic literature was increasingly a platform for promoting Newfoundland's national policy. In the introductory essay to his collection of

¹⁶¹ See, for example, S. E. Garland, *Newfoundland: The Ancient Colony and Its Many and Varied Attractions*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Jas. Byrne Co., [1901]); *City of St. John's, the Capital of Newfoundland: Illustrated Photogravures from Original Photographs by Newfoundland's Leading Artists*, (St. John's: S. E. Garland, [1910]).

¹⁶² Reid Newfoundland Co., *Fishing and Shooting in Newfoundland and Labrador: Their Attractions for Tourists and Sportsmen* (St. John's: Reid Newfoundland Co., 1903); *Newfoundland and Labrador: Unrivalled Resorts for the Tourist, Health Seeker and Sportsman* (St. John's: Reid Newfoundland Co., [1910]).

¹⁶³ "Newfoundland, Illustrated Souvenir," (New York: South Publishing Co., 1902), n.p.

photographs published in 1905, for example, Holloway emphasized the importance of the fishery to the cultural and economic lives of Newfoundlanders. He gave a detailed account of the daily lives of fishermen, praising their kindly and generous character.¹⁶⁴ For a second edition published in 1910, however, Holloway's children revised the book's introduction in order to focus attention on agriculture and forestry in the interior. They even switched the frontispiece from a view of an iceberg to an industrial scene in Grand Falls, where the country's first paper mill had recently opened.¹⁶⁵

The social benefits of this policy were elaborated by a number of Newfoundland writers. Among the most prolific nineteenth-century writers was Moses Harvey, an Irish-born clergyman who arrived in Newfoundland in 1852. Beginning in the 1860s, he mounted a "massive publicity campaign on behalf of the colony," authoring myriad journal articles, newspaper columns, and books.¹⁶⁶ A fierce nationalist, Harvey laid bare his faith in the ability of education, science, and technology to speed Newfoundland's intellectual and material progress. He also subscribed to a social evolutionist view of human progress which he outlined in a series of three lectures published in 1886 under the title *Where Are We and Wither Tending?* Harvey emphasized the importance of education and heredity in shaping racial progress, contending that "man possess an immense power over the physical, intellectual, and moral improvement of his race."¹⁶⁷ The natural world also figured prominently in this equation. For this reason, he urged reconciliation between religion and science. By enabling a better understanding of the divine laws that

¹⁶⁴ Robert Edwards Holloway, *Through Newfoundland with the Camera* (St. John's: Dicks and Co., 1905), 9.

¹⁶⁵ *Through Newfoundland with the Camera* (London: Sach and Co., 1910).

¹⁶⁶ Patrick O'Flaherty, *The Rock Observed: Studies in the Literature of Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 73-74.

¹⁶⁷ Moses Harvey, *Where Are We and Wither Tending?: Three Lectures on the Reality and Worth of Human Progress* (Boston: Doyle and Whittle, 1886), 98-99.

governed nature, he wrote, science had permitted the conquest of nature, thereby granting the ability to “control largely the destiny of our race.”¹⁶⁸

Colonizing new landscapes in the island’s interior was thus a key to unlocking Newfoundland’s progress in Harvey’s mind – an idea he promoted vigorously in and around St. John’s. He was a frequent lecturer at the Athenaeum. And in 1873, he published a revised edition of Cormack’s *Narrative* in the hope that Cormack’s careful botanical and geological observations would stimulate additional interest in the interior. This was followed in 1883 by a primer on Newfoundland history for use in schools, where Harvey drew attention to the colony’s substantial, land-based resources.¹⁶⁹

Harvey’s magnum opus, a *Hand-Book and Tourists’ Guide to Newfoundland*, exemplifies his social evolutionary views and their underlying, environmental determinism. Published in 1894, Harvey’s book drew on features of the island’s climate and geography to present a racial argument for landward migration. Despite the “privations and hardships” of fishermen and the insular and “primitive” characteristics of rural families, he argued, Newfoundland’s climate had simultaneously fortified rural inhabitants, imbuing them with piety, robust health, and an appreciation for “simple pleasures.”¹⁷⁰ Moreover, he argued that these innate moral and physical features made Newfoundlanders ideally suited to the conditions of modernity and industrialization. Citing the reports of the geological survey, Harvey wrote that:

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 114.

¹⁶⁹ *Text-Book of Newfoundland History, for the Use of Schools and Academies* (Boston: Doyle and Whittle, 1885).

¹⁷⁰ *Newfoundland as It Is in 1894: A Hand-Book and Tourists’ Guide*, 196, 203, 36. Harvey did not go so far as to advocate abandoning the fishery altogether. Instead, he believed that with wise management the fishery would “ever prove a source of national wealth” (148).

For the development of those yet dormant resources there is a robust race of people who have served a rough apprenticeship of toil and danger amid the billows—men of bone and muscle, whose lives are mainly passed in the open air in a wholesome bracing climate, and whose habits of life are simple. They need but some Moses [*sic.*] to lead them, not out of, but into the wilderness to fell the giants of the forest, to drain the marsh and swamp, to drag up the treasures of the mine and to make the valleys wave with a golden harvest.¹⁷¹

Harvey's *Hand-Book* was updated and republished under different titles in 1897, 1900, and in 1902.¹⁷² Yet its central message remained the same. In 1900, he reminded readers that Newfoundlanders were “derived exclusively from the Saxon and the Celtic races,” arguing that “this is not unimportant, for race counts for a good deal. Climate, modes of life, general environments may do much to modify racial characteristics and tendencies, but can never wholly efface them.”¹⁷³ In particular, Harvey believed that colonizing in the direction of the island's interior would revive rural inhabitants' Anglo characteristics by ridding them of their economic and social malaise. In 1894, he declared that “these poverty stricken people will not continue to cling to the naked rocks and starve when they can find work, good wages, land for settlement, fuel for the gathering along the newly-opened line of railway,” adding that “as their material condition improves higher wants will be experienced and civilizing influences will extend.”¹⁷⁴

Other Newfoundland writers also drew on the survey's findings to extrapolate a theoretical future for their country. Tocque, for example, included testimony by Murray and

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 36.

¹⁷² See *Newfoundland in 1897* (London: S. Low, Marston & Co., 1897); *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island* (St. John's: S. E. Garland, 1900); *Newfoundland at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: A Treatise of History and Development* (New York: South Pub. Co., 1902). Harvey's *Hand-Book* was preceded by a co-authored volume written with the novelist Joseph Hutton in 1883, as well as a shorter hand-book outlining the island's natural resources published by Harvey in 1886, see Joseph Hutton and Moses Harvey, *Newfoundland: The Oldest British Colony, Its History, Its Present Condition, and Its Prospects in the Future* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1883); Moses Harvey, *Hand-Book of Newfoundland: Containing an Account of Its Agricultural and Mineral Lands, Its Forests, and Other Natural Resources* (Boston: Printed by Doyle and Whittle, 1886).

¹⁷³ *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island*, 147.

¹⁷⁴ *Newfoundland as It Is in 1894: A Hand-Book and Tourists' Guide*, 78.

other experts in his book to furnish a “reliable” description of the island’s climate and geography, including the discovery of coal on the west coast – an area, Tocque noted, with “all the elements of future greatness.”¹⁷⁵ Similarly, in a second edition of his popular *History of Newfoundland* (1896), Daniel Woodley Prowse appended several of Howley’s reports to a last chapter, where he speculated on the possibility of opening new mines and paper manufactories in the interior.¹⁷⁶ These views were repeated in travel guides and gazetteers produced overseas. In 1894, Harvey contributed an essay to the popular series of guidebooks produced by the German publisher Karl Baedeker. Quoting liberally from the reports of the geological survey, Harvey speculated that the river valleys in the interior would soon become “seats of a large agricultural population.”¹⁷⁷

Promoters also continued to evoke similarities between the island’s interior and the British landscape. In 1897, Harvey attached twelve of Holloway’s landscape views to his treatise to help intensify Newfoundland’s “English characteristics” – a feature of the country’s landscape, he felt, that was especially evident in the vicinity of the Humber River, where watery ravines, gem-like lakes, and rolling hills called to mind the British Isles.¹⁷⁸ “Taken as a whole,” he assured readers, “the climate of the island is more temperate and more favourable to health

¹⁷⁵ Tocque, 235.

¹⁷⁶ The first edition of Prowse’s *History* (1895) appeared just months after a run on the banks caused Newfoundland’s banking system to collapse, along with several heavily indebted merchant houses. The only allusion to the interior was at the end of a chapter documenting the on-going construction of the railway. However, the second edition of Prowse’s *History* (published just one year later) located the country’s future prospects in a definite manner. In a chapter on the “Present Position and Future Prospects of the Colony,” he expounded at length on the coal seams and iron deposits revealed by the geological survey and speculated on their transformative potential. Daniel W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records*, 2nd ed. (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896), 538-58.

¹⁷⁷ Karl Baedeker, ed. *The Dominion of Canada with Newfoundland and an Excursion to Alaska* (Leipzig: Karl Baedeker, 1894), 100. Harvey’s essay was reprinted in 1900 and in 1907 (with revisions by the editor) for new editions of the guide.

¹⁷⁸ Harvey, *Newfoundland in 1897*, 154; see also Gough, *Robert Edwards Holloway: Newfoundland Educator, Scientist, Photographer, 1874-1904*, 140.

than that of the neighbouring continent.”¹⁷⁹ Indeed, photographs were instrumental in nurturing analogies between Newfoundland’s interior and other temperate regions. By aping picturesque conventions, photographers related Newfoundland’s interior visually and experientially to a pantheon of economically and culturally important landscapes throughout the world. Specific focal arrangements and compositional techniques allowed images of Newfoundland landscape to operate as “spatial architecture,” to borrow historian of photography Liz Wells’ expression, creating an imaginary substitute for the out of doors in which a viewer’s memory and past experience of landscape merged with the image itself.¹⁸⁰ By 1900, Harvey’s book was visually enriched with over ninety photographs and illustrations. The majority of these images were of bucolic landscapes and picturesque views of camping, canoeing, and wildlife throughout the island’s interior. They were unassailable evidence of Harvey’s belief that Newfoundland’s climate was marred neither by “intense summer heats” or “fierce colds.”¹⁸¹

Testimonials by British tourists and scientists corroborated those of local writers. In 1905, Prowse published his *Newfoundland Guide Book* – a project that aimed to “give a reliable account of the Colony” by publicizing the opinions of notable Britons, including William Kennedy, Frederick Selous, and the renowned naturalist John Guille Millais.¹⁸² In reality, Prowse’s “reliable account” was a highly selective description of the island’s salient, British

¹⁷⁹ Harvey, *Newfoundland in 1897*, 109.

¹⁸⁰ Wells describes how the frame in landscape views serves a rhetorical purpose by helping to recreate “the actual experience of looking at – or being within – an environment.” By focusing a viewer’s attention within the perspectival geometry of the image and delineating the space of the photograph, she writes, “focal arrangements and composition operate as spatial architecture,” merging a viewer’s memory of physical and sensorial experiences with the mediated space of the image. Wells, 43-44.

¹⁸¹ Harvey, *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island*, 27.

¹⁸² Daniel W. Prowse, *The Newfoundland Guide Book, 1905: Including Labrador and St. Pierre* (London: Bradbury, Agnew, [1905]), 1. Frustrated by the lack of development in Newfoundland’s interior, political leaders solicited Prowse to write a *Guide Book* to help “sell” the interior to prospective tourists and investors. As an unofficial government publication, the *Guide Book* enjoyed wide circulation. Starting in 1909, the book’s distribution was aided by the Newfoundland Board of Trade. The Board sent gratis copies of the *Guide Book* along with official government reports and statistics to publishers and news services seeking descriptive information about the island, as well to prospective visitors who enquired about its climate, accommodations, and other sites of interest.

features. According to the book's contributors, these features included unrivalled "picturesque beauty," a climate that is "never too hot or too cold," and "plain food, hard exercise, and the pure invigorating air of the northern wilderness."¹⁸³ At the same time, an essay by Howley drew attention to "remarkable" similarities between Newfoundland and the British Isles, "both in their physical geography and their geological formation."¹⁸⁴ To create further appeal, Prowse listed the colony's mineral, timber, and agricultural resources, channelling Howley's belief that "the light of modern scientific research" had revealed the island to be "one of Nature's treasure houses."¹⁸⁵ Practical details concerning shipping routes, banking and postal services, and hotels were included alongside this scientific information, highlighting the island's suitability to moneyed tourists *and* British business interests. At Prowse's urging (and with assistance from the Newfoundland government), Millais later published an account of his hunting trip to the island in *Newfoundland and its Untrodden Ways* (1907), where he included several of his signature taxonomic wildlife paintings.¹⁸⁶

Nineteenth-century print culture encouraged and abetted state-sponsored internal expansion in Newfoundland.¹⁸⁷ In particular, representational landscapes popularized certain "truths" about Newfoundland's interior that supported landward colonization; namely, that its

¹⁸³ Ibid., 3, 56, 180.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 128.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 133.

¹⁸⁶ J. G. Millais, *Newfoundland and Its Untrodden Ways* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907). Millais was a hunter, painter, and close friend of Prowse. He was renowned for his illustrations of wildlife which he compiled into his encyclopaedic *The Mammals of Great Britain and Ireland* published in three volumes from 1904 to 1906. He was also well aware of the promotional value of big game in Newfoundland. In a slightly morose drawing entitled *A Dream of Howley*, Millais lampooned the reckless slaughter of caribou during their annual migration by hysterical crowds of sportsmen. Indeed, in 1902 Newfoundland's government was forced to pass an Act for the Preservation of Deer in an attempt to regulate the activities of American and British hunters (as well as Newfoundlanders themselves) who visited the interior in increasing numbers. James Overton, "Tourism Development, Conservation and Conflict: Game Laws for Caribou Protection in Newfoundland," in *Recreational Land Use: Perspectives on Its Evolution in Canada*, ed. John Marsh and Geoffrey Wall (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1982), 354-64.

¹⁸⁷ Matt Johnston argues, similarly, that print culture in nineteenth-century America established forms of knowledge and models of consumption that supported American westward expansion. Matt Johnston, *Narrating the Landscape: Print Culture and American Expansion in the Nineteenth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016).

landscape was culturally and economically valuable; that it was unpeopled; and that colonizing in this direction would expedite the progress of rural fishing families. As images and descriptions of the island's interior multiplied in the pages of the popular press, connections between Newfoundland's landscape and the interest of British consumers, travellers, and investors blossomed. Print culture showed how the island's interior embodied a temperate ideal and indeed even resembled the British landscape. Moreover, by revealing recreational and industrial opportunities in the interior, representational landscapes showed how landscape could act as a regenerative force in Newfoundland. By following in the footsteps of British tourists and capital, rural fishers would be reinvigorated in the island's interior, reviving their Anglo-Saxon character, and restoring them to the light of civilization.

Chapter 3 — Paper City and Papermen: Building Self-reliance in Newfoundland's Forest Industry

In 1909, a series of articles by the English writer William Beach Thomas glorified life and work in Newfoundland's nascent logging industry.¹ Describing the "elemental lives of cheery woodmen," Beach Thomas called Newfoundland loggers a "perfect example of complete manliness," adept at making do with the materials at hand, and possessed with proclivity for "self-help."² The architecture of logging camps provided further evidence of this refinement. In another article, he described how men built their own houses "with the woodman's art," using wide pine trunks chinked with moss to protect against wind and water: "Here was a house where joy and energy had gone to the building. The men who were to live in it had built and designed it. Here was a company such as Thoreau, the wood-lover, said he had never come upon in civilisation."³

Beach Thomas was not alone in aggrandizing the effect of Newfoundland's forest industry on members of the working class. In one widely circulated photograph of a logging camp taken around 1911, for example, a group of lumbermen pose proudly in front of two log structures covered in tar paper. In the foreground are several freshly fallen trees, intimating that the camp architecture sprung from the surrounding forest. But the cabin is not so rude as to inhibit comfort (the nearest bunkhouse even has a plate glass window in the gable end). Uniformed men on horseback flanked by men carrying axes stand to one side of the bunkhouse, neatly dividing the image in half and creating an uncanny symmetry between labour and its architecture. The group of men appear contented and empowered and the surrounding architecture is concrete evidence of this claim: both exude autonomy and self-reliance. In 1910,

¹ William Beach Thomas was employed in London as a writer on rural subjects for the Harmsworths' *Daily Mail*. At Alfred Harmsworth's request, Beach Thomas visited Newfoundland in 1909 as an agricultural consultant and later wrote a series of four articles for the *Daily Mail*, celebrating the opening of the new paper mill. The articles were also reprinted in the *Evening Telegram* in St. John's.

² William Beach Thomas, "'Paper' Woods," *Daily Mail*, 10 November 1909: 6; William Beach Thomas, "The River of Exploits," *Daily Mail*, 24 November 1909: 6 (reprinted in *Evening Telegram*, 14 December 1909: 3).

³ William Beach Thomas, "The Loggers," *Daily Mail*, 23 November 1909: 6 (reprinted in *Evening Telegram*, 23 December 1909: 3).

an engraving of the image was featured on a government-issued nine cent stamp, circulating its uplifting message throughout Newfoundland and around the world (Fig. 3.1 & Fig. 3.2).



Fig. 3.1, Early logging camp, ca. 1910. Grand Falls Windsor Heritage Society.

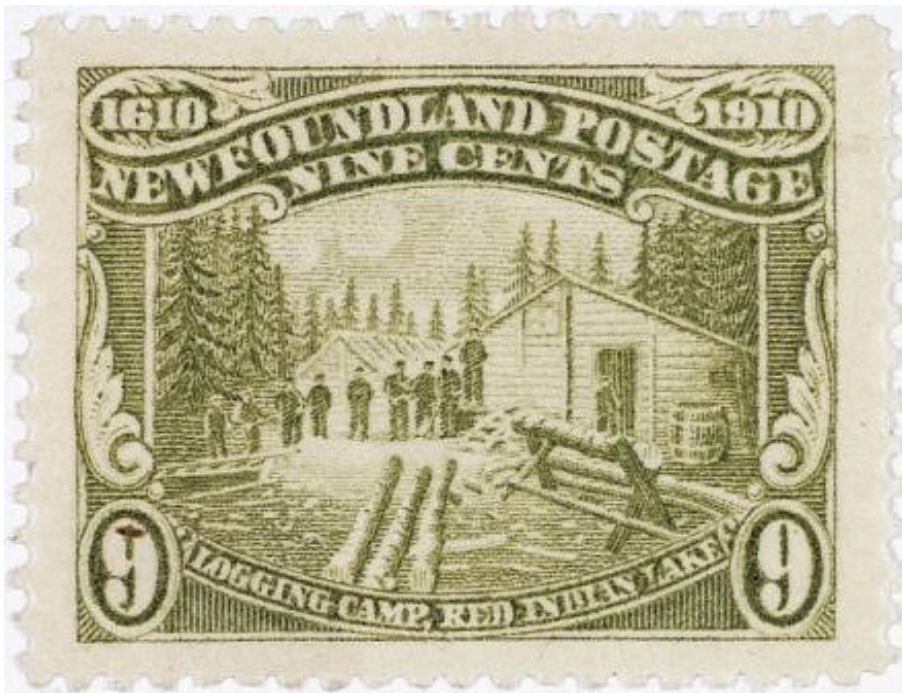


Fig. 3.2, Newfoundland nine cent stamp (identified as a logging camp near Red Indian Lake), 1910. Library and Archives Canada. © Canada Post Corporation

This chapter examines two related landscapes and their role in shaping a discourse of self-reliance in Newfoundland: the company town and paper manufactory created by British industrialists at Grand Falls in 1909, and migratory lumber camps used in the harvest of pulpwood. By creating opportunities for individuals to escape the fishery and its cyclical financial dependencies, paper making and logging were activities associated with individual economic self-sufficiency. Moreover, the paper industry as a whole appeared poised to improve Newfoundland's self-reliance on a national scale by diversifying the country's economy away from the fishery.

Self-reliance was an intractable feature of late-Victorian liberalism and a quintessential Anglo-Saxon virtue in the eyes of British cultural critics. Stemming from an Enlightenment faith in the power of reason and liberty, self-reliance was an ideal that extended from individuals to nations and even the empire itself. At its core, self-reliance evoked the image of the masculine, liberal working man, "manly as much by virtue of their 'sinew and muscle' as by their temperance, self-reliance, and possession of women in the home."⁴ Self-reliant individuals were principled, independent, and male – qualities that gave them the confidence and ability to "make-do" in any number of situations, while taking charge of their own intellectual, moral, and material progress.

Fears over the decline of traditional liberal virtues peaked around the turn-of-the-century. As communication and transportation improvements fuelled a second industrial revolution in Britain, urbanization, secularism, and class-based politics produced disillusionment towards the working man. Unlike their agricultural peers, urban industrial workers appeared deficient in manly self-reliance. They did not own land and lived in crowded and dirty cities, where illness

⁴ Susan Kingsley Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain, 1640-1990* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), 226; see also Daniela Garofalo, *Manly Leaders in Nineteenth-Century British Literature* (Ithaca, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 2008).

and vice were rampant. Wage labour also appeared to have severed the causal relationship between work and reward, causing laziness and greed to spread within the working classes – as evidenced by sporadic labour unrest. At the same time, a burgeoning feminist movement challenged notions of masculinity and independence that were central to liberalism. In small but growing numbers, women left the home to enter colleges, take up white-collar jobs, and fight for an extension of the franchise ⁵ “One by one,” writes Peter Mandler, “the classic traits associated with English national character were being cast into doubt. Either the English were not exemplifying their supposed characteristics, or those characteristics looked like dubious assets in the modern world. Self-reliance itself, the very core and pith of the national character, was questioned.”⁶

These fears dovetailed with those of imperialists who theorized the deterioration of Anglo-Saxon virtues throughout the colonies. By most accounts, rural families in Newfoundland were among the most self-reliant people in the world. Newfoundlanders grew and fished their own food, built their own boats, homes, flakes, and wharves. They knit their own clothes and hauled their own fuel. Yet the self-reliant capabilities of fishing families were seldom recognized as such. In particular, fishers’ dependence on merchant credit during the fishing season and public relief during the winter appeared antithetical to a liberal philosophy of individualism. Charles Dilke, for example, complained that public relief spent on able-bodied men in Newfoundland contributed directly to the “destruction of the self-reliance and independence of the population.”⁷ Likewise, Joseph Jukes argued that the truck system had made Newfoundland’s lower classes deficient in “manly independence and self-reliance,” comparing the dependence of

⁵ Kent, 229-55.

⁶ Peter Mandler, *The English National Character: The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 108.

⁷ Dilke, 1: 18.

fishermen upon the merchants to that of the Irish upon their priests.⁸ Others, including Moses Harvey, blamed commercial distresses in the fishery for undermining rural families' self-reliance and self-respect.⁹

In Britain, authorities looked to new forms of public and private paternalism as a way to preserve workers' self-reliance. Whereas classic liberals championed self-reliance in the form of a laissez-fair, free market economy, late-Victorians embraced political practices that provided degrees of aid and social welfare to individuals in the hopes of producing new citizen consumers. They envisioned "a meritocratic society of self-reliant and responsible citizens," in which the state's own interests and actions were aligned with individual desires.¹⁰ For, as Robert Eccleshall notes, "self-reliance, so prized by earlier liberals, was not a panacea for the ills of society. Government, as the organized intelligence of the community, had also to combat those defects of economic competition which deprived some people of the necessities of civilized life."¹¹ This shift was encouraged by English philanthropists and social critics who highlighted the pervasiveness of English poverty, as well as the inability of poor individuals to alter their circumstances. They argued that a healthy and productive workforce would stem Britain's declining international prestige by improving economic efficiency and military strength.¹² This

⁸ Jukes, 1: 241. Jukes concluded that, despite the country's environmental shortcomings, Newfoundlanders were honest and industrious and possessed the virtues "of all hardy races exposed to the toils and dangers of an adventurous life" (1: 238).

⁹ Moses Harvey, *A Short History of Newfoundland: England's Oldest Colony*, 2nd ed. (London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Co., 1890), 108.

¹⁰ Judith A. Neiswander, *The Cosmopolitan Interior: Liberalism and the British Home 1870-1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2008), 8.

¹¹ Robert Eccleshall, *British Liberalism: Liberal Thought from the 1640s to 1980s* (London: Longman, 1986), 43.

¹² Among the leading advocates for social welfare reform was English Methodist preacher and Salvation Army founder William Booth. From 1886 to 1903, Booth conducted surveys in London that highlighted the extent of the city's poverty, as well as its root causes: illness and unemployment. Booth's findings were contained in a series of reports published in nine volumes between 1892 and 1897, see William Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, vol. 1-9 (London: Macmillan and Co., 1892-1897).

led to a series of reforms to public health, education, and municipal governance in Britain during the late nineteenth century – signalling the emergence of the British welfare state.¹³

The pulp and paper industry extended welfare state ideology and its underlying discourse of self-reliance to Newfoundland. It was also a paternalistic enterprise, reflecting the multiplicity of late-Victorian liberalism with its twin concern for individual freedoms and state-sponsored control. Indeed, the city of Grand Falls embodied a British, individualistic ideal. Named for the nearby falls from which the city and mill drew its electricity, the city was planned and built along the most modern lines. Likewise, Newfoundland's first paper city was designed to be a self-sufficient economic unit, combining production and labour, and facilitating access to the surrounding productive landscape. At the same time, the company used its systemic control to promote middle-class values among its workers, using moral guidance, recreation, and economic regulation to neutralize labour unrest. Employees in Grand Falls were well-paid and the company attended to their every occupational, dwelling, and health needs. Similar attention was paid to workers who were engaged in cutting, hauling, and driving pulpwood throughout the island's remote interior.

As Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler argue, European colonies were sites where the politics of inclusions and exclusion were “worked out” using a “grammar of difference” to qualify notions of citizenship and participation.¹⁴ Newfoundland's interior was a nexus of similar, grammatical concerns. Politicians and industrialists attempted to spatialize white virtues in Newfoundland's interior by imposing strict rules on its membership and shaping the conditions

¹³ On the origins and rise of the British welfare state, see James R. Hay, *The Origins of the Liberal Welfare Reforms 1906-1914* (London: Macmillan, 1975); Rex Pope, Alan Pratt, and Bernard Hoyle, eds., *Social Welfare in Britain, 1885-1985* (London; Dover: Croom Helm, 1986); Geoffrey Finlayson, *Citizen, State, and Social Welfare in Britain 1830-1990* (Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon Press, 1994); Chris Renwick, *Bread for All: The Origins of the Welfare State* (London: Allen Lane, 2017).

¹⁴ Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, eds., *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 3.

under which these members lived and worked. In particular, they believed that forestry would restore fishers' independence by introducing them to industrial wage labour, or—as one lawmaker put it—“skilled” labour, and therefore “more valuable labour.”¹⁵ In words and pictures, colonial elites depicted the interior as a locus for working-class self-sufficiency, theorizing the forest industry's progressive influence. But these visualizations also distorted the actual experience of living and working in Newfoundland's interior: Grand Falls was closed to everyone except the company's employees; the promise of full employment remained unfulfilled; and industry and labour were often at odds. Representational landscapes consolidated a progressive vision of Newfoundland's forest industry, repatriating its structural inequalities and mitigating its exclusionary practices.

The same is true of landscapes associated with pulpwood logging. In addition to the town and paper manufactory at Grand Falls, the company established a series of satellite communities up and down the Exploits River valley, forming a supply chain and facilitating the movement of migratory forestry workers. Each winter fishermen left settlements along Newfoundland's coast to cut and haul pulpwood in remote work camps located throughout the island's interior, returning in the spring to participate in the annual seal hunt and fishery. In the second part of this chapter, I turn my attention to the experience of migratory workers and to ephemeral labour and building practices in the logging industry. In particular, I examine how colonial elites used loggers and logging camps to construct a romantic archetype for Newfoundland's working class, elevating their self-sufficiency to a national virtue, and effacing the identities of working-class people.

¹⁵ Quoted in *Harbor Grace Standard*, 15 December 1883: 2.

Civilizing Landscapes

The first photographs of Newfoundland's Exploits River were taken by the geologist and surveyor James Patrick Howley during an expedition to the island's interior in 1890 – the first time Howley included a camera as part of his surveying equipment.¹⁶ Among these pictures is a photograph showing a dramatic stretch of the river known as Grand Falls, where surging white water cut its way through a large outcropping of rock (Fig. 3.3). Howley later compared the Exploits River to the “aorta of the human body.” As it traversed the “heart of the country,” he explained, the river supplied magnificent forests, fertile plains, and scenic views, the likes of which had long been dreamed of by Newfoundland's economic reformers.¹⁷ Other esteemed descriptions of the Exploits River valley were written into the reports produced by Howley and Alexander Murray as part of the geological survey. It was partly on account these reports that, in 1875, Newfoundland's government commissioned a railway survey along a meandering route that passed through the Exploits River valley and near Grand Falls. Completed in 1898, the railway opened up vast amounts of territory for development across the island's interior. However, Grand Falls remained the heart of this new frontier.

¹⁶ Kirwin, O'Flaherty, and Hollett, 1095.

¹⁷ James P. Howley, “The Valley of the Exploits,” *Our Country*, n.d., File 3.03.044, Box 8, Howley Family Papers, MUN.



Fig. 3.3, Grand Falls on the Exploits River, 1890 (Photo: James P. Howley). Robert C. Hollett and William J. Kirwin, *An Album of James P. Howley's Photographs* (St. John's: Memorial University English Language Research Centre, 2010).

Howley's photographs and writing highlight how new landscapes projected a civilizing influence by equating the interior with upwards progress and civility. Indeed, the Newfoundland railway was conceived precisely in these terms. Railway construction was a hallmark of technological progress throughout the British world and rail travel an important element of British cultural life. Across the British countryside and throughout the colonies, comfortably appointed railcars carried increasing numbers of upper- and middle-class travellers. Building a railway was thus a critical step in eliminating differences between Newfoundland, Britain, and other civilized parts of the empire. Indeed, as James Hiller aptly observes, the railway was a "wand of progress" in the eyes of Newfoundland intellectuals and politicians.¹⁸

Excepting a new copper mine opened at Tilt Cove in 1864, by the 1870s government efforts to encourage development in the interior by granting licenses to prospectors and awarding subsidies to individuals who cleared land were ineffectual. This, combined with a prolonged

¹⁸ James Hiller, "The Railway and Local Politics in Newfoundland, 1870-1901," in *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 123.

depression in the price of fish, led several professional and political leaders to consider seriously the possibility of building a railway in Newfoundland. Harvey was among those who believed that a railway was needed to give access to the agricultural, timber, and mineral resources enumerated by the geological survey since 1865. Indeed, locating carboniferous formations likely to contain coal—the lifeblood of railways around the world—was a central interest of the survey.¹⁹ In 1875, Newfoundland’s government led by Frederick Carter studied the possibility of building and financing a railway and commissioned a railway survey from the Scottish-born, Canadian railway engineer Sir Sanford Fleming.²⁰ In 1878, Carter was succeeded by William Whiteway who made the railway a central issue of his party’s election platform. The first tracks were laid in 1881.²¹

¹⁹ Kirwin, Story, and O’Flaherty, xx.

²⁰ Fleming was a devout railway advocate who envisioned the Newfoundland railway as a short-cut from New York to London. He hoped that St. John’s would act as a terminus for the Canadian Intercolonial Railway, a project linking the Pacific to the Atlantic across British North America and which Fleming had also surveyed. He even conducted a preliminary railway survey in Newfoundland at his own expense in 1868, plotting the most direct route across the island in order to eliminate an estimated four days shipping time to London. Fleming’s proposal showed the Canadian portion of the railway terminating in New Brunswick. From here, ferries would deliver rail cars to Newfoundland’s west coast before carrying on towards St. John’s. Unlike the Canadian portion of the railway, however, Fleming’s proposed route in Newfoundland traversed uninhabited territory and barren land mostly unsuitable for settlement. Hiller, "The Railway and Local Politics in Newfoundland, 1870-1901," 124-25. *The Newfoundland Railway, 1881-1949*, Pamphlet Number 6 (St. John’s: The Newfoundland Historical Society, 1981), 4-5.

²¹ Several obstacles had to be overcome before the railway could be built. The cost of the project was estimated to be \$8.5 million and the British government made clear that it was unwilling to help fund the enterprise. Moreover, Fleming’s survey placed the railway’s western terminus on the politically sensitive French Shore, where treaty rights prohibited this type of development. British lawmakers had no interest in reopening negotiations with France. To circumvent these problems, Whiteway tried to lure prospective railway companies to Newfoundland by offering them land grants and subsidies. In 1880, he passed the Railway Act which authorized raising a \$5 million loan to construct a 350 mile section of track from St. John’s to Halls Bay, giving access to fertile land and timber located near the Gander and Gambo Rivers. Whiteway’s government then entered into an agreement with an American syndicate who formed the Newfoundland Railway Company. In addition to owning and operating the line, the company was promised a cash subsidy of \$180,000 a year for 35 years and land grants totalling 5,000 acres per mile. Whiteway’s government was defeated in 1885, but the construction of branch railways continued under the premiership of Robert Thorburn. Thorburn used railway construction to provide relief funding in districts that were politically advantageous to his party. Efforts to complete the railway were renewed when Whiteway was returned to power in 1889. The government awarded a contract to the Montreal-based industrialist Robert G. Reid to finish the Halls Bay line. And in 1893, a second contract was struck to extend the railway across the Exploits River and to terminal at Port aux Basques, an area on Newfoundland’s west coast located outside the French treaty zone. Both contracts stipulated that the government pay Reid \$15,600 per mile. Since the British government refused to guarantee any loans to finance railway construction, money was initially raised through tariffs and private

Liberal notions of working-class self-sufficiency and masculinity were central to railway politics in Newfoundland. Promoters believed that the railway would lessen Newfoundland's dependence on the fishery, while providing stable, wage-paying jobs to working-class men. The extent to which the railway was conceived as a civilizing project is highlighted by Ambrose Shea, a member of Whiteway's government and one of the first voices within government to push for the railway solution. In 1883, Shea attacked the precarious economics of the fishery, which he blamed for producing a condition of "supineness" amongst Newfoundlanders and blinding them to sources "comfort and independence" in the interior.²² Likewise, Shea was critical of women and girls who engaged in "demoralizing employment in the fishery and on the wharves," arguing that the railway would create "wholesome" and "appropriate" occupations for the delicate sex in new agricultural settings.²³

Following a series of prolonged delays, the railway was completed in 1898 and a (controversial) contract was struck to operate the line.²⁴ It was a momentous occasion for boosters like Harvey who felt the railway's "quickenning touch of civilization" was a harbinger of "vitalizing forces" in Newfoundland.²⁵ He championed the impending "material and social revolution" that the railway would bring about, giving rise to "new men, new life, new industries and new customs."²⁶ Other writers joined in this view, including Daniel Prowse who argued that

corporations. Nevertheless, Newfoundland's public debt increased from \$4.1 million in 1890 to over \$17 million in 1900, of which \$10.7 million was directly attributed to the railway. *The Newfoundland Railway, 1881-1949*, 8, 14.

²² Quoted in *Harbor Grace Standard*, 15 December 1883: 2.

²³ Quoted in *ibid.*

²⁴ In 1897, the railway arrived at Port aux Basques to much fanfare. It was completed the following year. However, the prospect of operating the new railway at a loss, combined with an unprecedented level of national debt, forced the government to negotiate a new contract with Reid. In exchange for generous land grants, Reid agreed to operate the railway for a period of 50 years and formed the Reid-Newfoundland Co. to oversee this task. The agreement was designed to incentivize Reid to develop his land holdings in order to make the railway profitable. However, this incentive was soon obviated after Reid sold his land holdings back to the government in 1901. Hiller, "The Railway and Local Politics in Newfoundland, 1870-1901," 138-41.

²⁵ Harvey, *Newfoundland at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: A Treatise of History and Development*, 152; *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island*, 174.

²⁶ *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island*, 5-6.

new forms of industrial labour and global connectivity precipitated by the railway would liberate fishing families from merchant oppression and lift them out of their isolation.²⁷

No permanent settlements were established in Newfoundland's interior by the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁸ However, an increase in milling activity quickly depleted Newfoundland's stock of white pine, leaving only softwoods like black spruce and fir trees that were unsuitable for lumber manufacture.²⁹ This led the government to make several changes to the Crown Lands Act. In an effort to attract permanent settlers to Newfoundland's interior, the government passed legislation encouraging the harvest of pulpwood.³⁰ Attracting pulp and paper manufacturers was seen as desirable since the industry was capital intensive and required significant permanent infrastructure, including water power, manufactories, roads, and rail.³¹

It was partly on account of these changes that the colony was visited in 1903 by representatives of the Harmsworth publishing empire based in London. They were eager to open a paper manufactory in North America.³² To secure the Harmsworths' patronage,

²⁷ Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records*, 621-22. Born in Newfoundland to English parents, Prowse was educated in St. John's and in Liverpool before practicing briefly as a barrister and entering politics in 1861. He served as a member of Newfoundland's lower house until 1869 when he was appointed circuit court judge. Through his judiciary work, Prowse gained insight into the practices of the fishery, including the truck system which he came to view as deeply flawed. This experience also stirred his interest in the history and legal development of the fishing industry, leading him to publish *A History of Newfoundland* in 1895. G. M. Story, "Prowse, Daniel Woodley," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/prowse_daniel_woodley_14E.html;

²⁸ By 1901, there were roughly 200 sawmills operating across the country. James Hiller, "The Origins of the Pulp and Paper Industry in Newfoundland," *Acadiensis* 11, no. 2 (1982): 46-49.

²⁹ Pine harvesting accelerated quickly after 1853 when the United States ratified a free trade deal allowing British timber and lumber to enter the American market duty free. Newfoundland joined the free trade agreement in 1855. However, the deal led British timber to be diverted away from Newfoundland, creating a large market for locally sawn timber. O'Flaherty, *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933*, 64.

³⁰ The act was amended in 1884, 1890-91, and again in 1903.

³¹ Efforts to promote landward industrialization were redoubled after 1904 when France relinquished its exclusive development rights on Newfoundland's west coast—the so-called French Shore—as part of the Treaty of Utrecht. Peter Neary, "The French and American Shore Questions as Factors in Newfoundland History," in *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 95-122.

³² Alfred Harmsworth (later Lord Northcliffe) and his brother Harold Harmsworth (later Lord Rothermere) owned England's largest publishing empire. Harmsworth-owned publications included the London *Daily Mail*, *Daily*

Newfoundland's government led by Robert Bond made several generous concessions, including granting a 99 year lease on water, mineral, and timber rights, reducing rent and royalty fees, and eliminating import tariffs on machinery and construction material.³³ In St. John's, opposition to the government's proposal was swift as politicians and newspapers chose sides. Opponents of the deal accused the government of giving away the colony's resources to a "rich English firm."³⁴ Bond retorted that Newfoundland's interior was presently being wasted and that, in addition to attracting much needed foreign capital to the country, Newfoundlanders would benefit by the creation of innumerable high paying jobs, comparable to those in Canada and the United States.³⁵ In 1905, the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company was formed by the Harmsworths who proceeded to secure contracts for nearly 6,000 square kilometres of timber lands. In addition to the industrial works and infrastructure needed to process and transport paper, the Harmsworths created a permanent settlement to house the company's workforce located deep in Newfoundland's interior near the shores of the Exploits River.

By providing wages to thousands of working-class individuals, railway construction helped crystalize an image of the self-reliant, masculine industrial labourer in Newfoundland's interior.³⁶ During the early 1890s, more than 2,000 men were employed building the railway.

Mirror, *Evening News*, and many other newspapers. See Max Sir Pemberton, *Lord Northcliffe: A Memoir* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, [1922]).

³³ Hiller, "The Origins of the Pulp and Paper Industry in Newfoundland," 52-54.

³⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 11 April 1904: 4; another contentious point was the company's right to evict "trespassers" from its timber lands, including tourists and hunters. This latter point was struck from the final bill as virulent opposition forced the government to make several minor changes to the contract. *Ibid.*, 59-60.

³⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 1 May 1905: 4.

³⁶ Working-class men in St. John's rushed to apply for jobs when the first rails were laid in 1881. By 1883, the number of men employed in railway construction exceeded 1200. Foremen and supervisors were imported to oversee the work, but the vast majority of railway workers were Newfoundlanders who were paid 8 cents an hour to work as pick-and-shovel men. Conditions were not ideal. Frozen ground and snow prevented progress during the winter months. Men were also required to supply their own tools. Much of the grading was done with garden spades since few families in Newfoundland owned shovels. Progress was also slow. By 1884, only 135 kilometres of track had been laid across a barren stretch of the Avalon Peninsula. The Newfoundland Railway Company was forced into bankruptcy that same year, leading the project to be abandoned by its receivers in London. A. R. Penney and Fabian Kennedy, *A History of the Newfoundland Railway, 1881-1988* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 2003), 9-18.

Men worked a ten hour workday and were paid one dollar a day in cash or in the company's own paper money. Because of the peripatetic nature of railway work, labourers also created their own rudimentary houses, using poles cut from the surrounding forest and tar paper and nails furnished by the company. Workers' cabins often spread out along eight to ten kilometres of track and had to be reconstructed at regular intervals as the line progressed. Some men chose to accommodate their entire families in these cabins, where they slept on tree boughs and covered themselves with birch rind to keep dry.³⁷

The railway's paternalistic effect was short lived, however. As railway construction drew to a close in 1898, politicians began searching for new opportunities to carry on its civilizing mission. The pulp and paper industry took up where the railway left off. In addition to providing new economic opportunities for Newfoundlanders, the industry promised to raise social standards, encourage self-reliance, and forge material ties to Northern Europe. Evidence of progress was palpable in the company town of Grand Falls, a city based on the underlying principles of the garden city, and where the company used its paternalistic control to promote social harmony and the separation of gender spheres.

According to Andrew Herod, company town owners pursued "social engineering through spatial engineering," shaping and manipulating the built environment to further their economic, political, and cultural goals.³⁸ Similarly, social clubs, parks, athletic grounds, and hospitals in Grand Falls were designed to stabilize and pacify the company's labour force. Company owners built social infrastructure to provide moral and physical guidance to workers, improving their efficiency and encouraging their deference to authority. Likewise, the imposition of English

³⁷ *Daily News*, 18 July 1962: 5; the company later established camps and charged workers \$2.50 per week for lodging and meals, or 15 cents a meal for itinerant workers. *Ibid.*, 39-40.

³⁸ Andrew Herod, "Social Engineering through Spatial Engineering," in *Company Towns in the Americas: Landscape, Power, and Working-Class Communities*, ed. Oliver J. Dinius and Angela Vergara (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011), 21.

social standards in Grand Falls was deemed necessary by British investors who feared that cultural differences would impede their economic interests in Newfoundland. Shareholders in London, for example, quickly pointed out the anomaly of situating the modern industry of paper making in a country of socially and technologically backwards fishermen.³⁹ To address this fear, the company's British owners directed all aspects of social and work life in Grand Falls. In addition to operating a state-of-the-art paper mill, they organized excursions for employees, sponsored local sports teams, and hosted annual exhibitions and athletic competitions. They attempted to acclimate Newfoundlanders to new industrial occupations by instilling in them a faith in technological progress and the rationality of governance.

Social-spatial engineering was a central feature of the Garden City Movement, an English town planning movement founded by Ebenezer Howard in 1898 with the publication of his influential book *To-Morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*.⁴⁰ The birth of the Garden City Movement coincided with a period of intense concern over Britain's declining power and prestige. Many critics linked this decline to the exodus of rural workers and the growth of an urban working class. Crowded and polluted cities were suspected a source poverty, insobriety, promiscuity, and disease. The garden city was designed to remedy these social ills and, in turn, spark improvement among the working classes. Frederick Aalen, for example, asserts that Howard "was more interested in social change than in physical forms," adding that his garden city was "a vehicle of fundamental social transformation."⁴¹ Howard surrounded himself with radical liberals and socialist thinkers within the English reform movement, drawing inspiration

³⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

⁴⁰ The volume was revised in 1902 and published under the new title *Garden Cities of To-Morrow*.

⁴¹ Frederick H. A. Aalen, "English Origins," in *The Garden City: Past, Present and Future*, ed. Stephen V. Ward (London; New York: Spon Press, 1992), 28.

from the works of John Stuart Mill, Edward G. Wakefield, Edward Bellamy, and other nineteenth-century writers who called for the reestablishment of a rural and urban balance.

In an effort to uphold the existing economic and social order, proponents of the Garden City Movement promoted a paternalistic approach to the planning and administration of new towns. In particular, they believed that reconnecting town dwellers with the English countryside would reinforce rural virtues and lead to the development of a superior civilization. As Aalen observes, nineteenth-century social reformers were deeply “concerned with the salvation of the countryside and rural life” which they viewed as superior for its alleged social hygiene, racial purity, and moral and physical welfare.⁴² Writers such as William Booth went one step further, arguing that colonies were an ideal location to re-create a moral and self-reliant English society, far from the ruinous influence of unplanned English cities. In 1890, he proposed relocating segments of the population from “darkest England” to new settlements overseas, where mandatory religious observance would ensure strict moral order, and where uncontaminated air would preserve the health of inhabitants. In his mind, paternalistic controls would simultaneously grant residents new degrees of freedom and reinforce their Anglo superiority by making landscape a central feature of their lives.⁴³

Similarly, garden city theorists highlighted how paternalism was a pathway to greater self-reliance. Quoting Lord Roseberry, Howard claimed that his garden city “borrowed from Socialism its large conception of common effort [...] and from Individualism the preservation of self-respect and self-reliance.”⁴⁴ Garden cities were “neither distinctly municipal nor distinctly individualistic,” he claimed, but represented a reconciliation of free-market interests with an

⁴² Ibid., 36-39, quote p. 36.

⁴³ William Booth, *In Darkest England, and the Way Out* (London: Salvation Army, 1890).

⁴⁴ Ebenezer Howard, *Garden Cities of To-Morrow* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1965), 85.

individual and collective desire for social and material improvement.⁴⁵ Howard was also shrewd economist. His ideal garden city was a model of economic self-sufficiency. In 1898, he calculated the exact cost of a model, garden city for 32,000 inhabitants to be £263,000 and outlined a system of cooperative land management and ownership to fund its creation.⁴⁶ Even the sanitary aspects of his design were considered from an economic point of view. He proposed a system of sewers flowing from the centre of the town towards an agricultural periphery so that human waste could be reemployed as fertilizer.⁴⁷

There can be little doubt that the Harmsworths viewed Grand Falls in a similar light. Both Alfred Harmsworth and his brother, Harold, were advocates of the Garden City Movement. In 1902, Harold contributed £1,000 towards the construction of a garden suburb at Hampstead Heath in London for which Raymond Unwin served as architect.⁴⁸ Likewise, Alfred corresponded with Howard in 1903, gave free advertising to the Garden City Movement in his newspapers, and became an investor in the first experimental garden city at Letchworth.⁴⁹

Indeed, Grand Falls resembled Howard's ideal garden city and its English prototypes in a number of ways. The city was organized around a series of, sweeping curvilinear streets that integrated scenic views and landscape into the urban experience.⁵⁰ Contact with nature was also encouraged through the adoption of a distinctly hierarchical plan, much like Howard's own. To ensure a healthy living environment and preserve landscape features, Grand Falls was divided into separate residential, commercial, and industrial quarters. The paper mill was located near the

⁴⁵ Ibid., 96.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 82.

⁴⁷ Howard proposed raising additional rent from agricultural tenants in exchange for this service. Ibid., 61-62.

⁴⁸ Standish Meacham, *Regaining Paradise: Englishness and the Early Garden City Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 152.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 86; Stephen V. Ward, *The Peaceful Path: Building Garden Cities and New Towns* (Hatfield, Hertfordshire, U.K.: Hertfordshire Publications, 2016), 26, 34, 104-05.

⁵⁰ Jeffrey P. Ward, "White Coal: The Birth of a Company Town 100 Years Ago," *Plan Canada* 45, no. 3 (2005): 32-35.

river's edge and warehouses and maintenance sheds were spread out along the length of the railway as is passed from north to south and west to east along the southern edge of town. A commercial area at the centre of city anchored the town plan. Flanking the downtown were two separate districts containing houses. The first, described by a large circular road bisected with avenues and streets, contained smaller lots for workers' housing. While the other, located to the north and nearby the athletic grounds, commanded a view of the river and featured larger, landscaped building lots (Fig. 3.4).

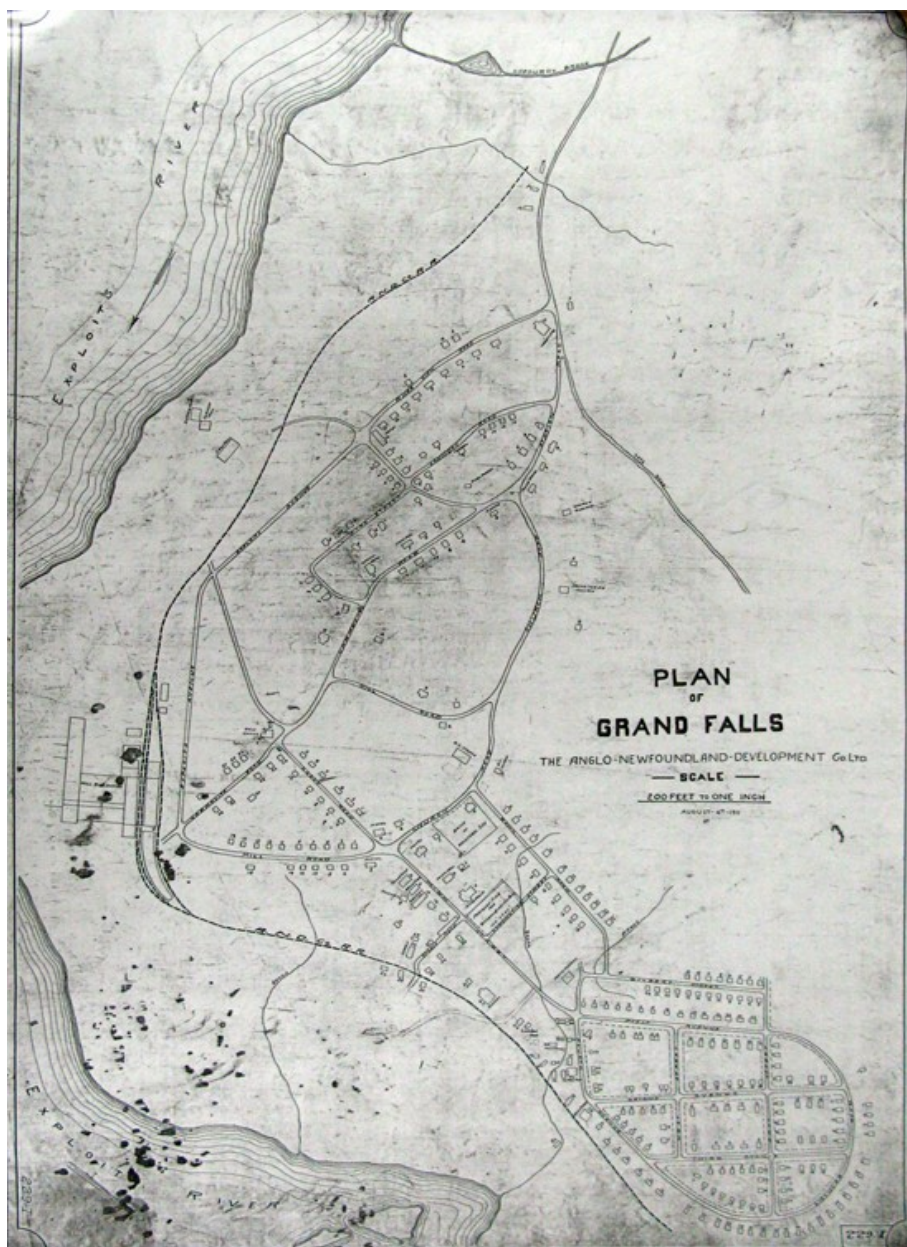


Fig. 3.4, Plan of Grand Falls, 1911. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

Consider also a drawing made around 1910 which shows the city embedded in a non-existent, rural landscape (the city resembled a construction site at the time).⁵¹ The image is

⁵¹ The exact provenance of this drawing is not known. The drawing was located by the author in a vertical file at the Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society. The paper is badly aged, but the colour wash is well preserved. The date—1910—is written in ball point pen over top of some fainter lines. Other clues as to the drawing's date include the fact that only one religious building is shown: the Roman Catholic Church. The Catholic church was not completed until 1912, but by that time there were also several other churches in close proximity to it. Nor is the adjoining Catholic

steeped in an ethos of rural racial regeneration: the seamless blending of town and mill indicate a harmonious relationship between industry and labour; prominent churches and public buildings signal industrial capitalism's role in bettering the moral and material circumstances of workers; and orderly garden plots and laundry on the line imply an invisible, domestic sphere in which women are concealed (Fig. 3.5). This reading is reinforced by the presence of two spectators on the lower right hand side of the drawing – a man and a woman in impeccable Victorian dress (Fig. 3.6). The man points with his cane towards the dam on the Exploits River, an explicating gesture that simultaneously steers our eye towards an English flag flying above Grand Falls House (a second English flag also brackets the left hand side of the drawing). The conspicuous promenaders are didactic viewers, drawing our attention to the quintessential Englishness of Grand Falls – the basis of its social order. Like the garden city, the drawing embodies the belief that temperate landscapes can simultaneously power industrial progress and restore the virtuous features of a pre-industrial life.

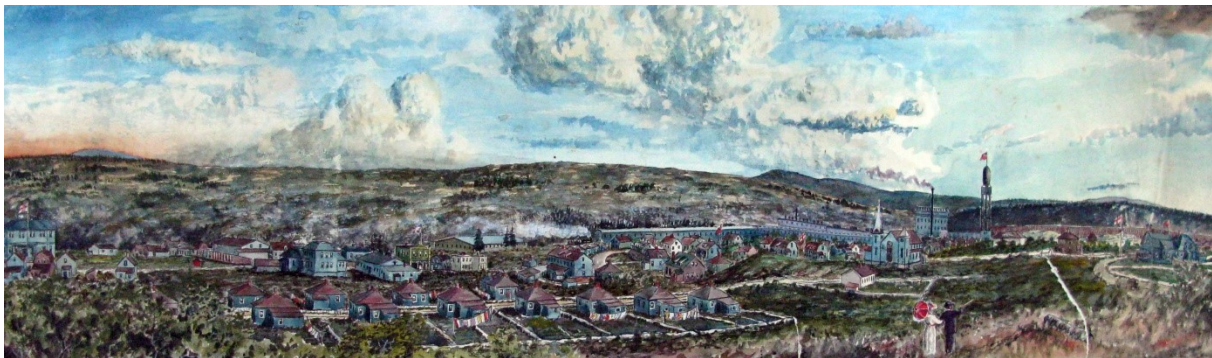


Fig. 3.5, View of Grand Falls, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

school, opened in 1914, depicted in the drawing; or the scandal ridden public building which was substantially completed by 1913. The drawing may have been a cartoon of a larger painting created for the Festival of Empire in 1911. The proportions of the cartoon and painting are not the same (the finished painting covered one wall of Newfoundland's pavilion and was 22 feet long and 15 feet high). Nevertheless, the drawing may have served as inspiration to the Parisian artists who completed the final work.



Fig. 3.6, (detail) View of Grand Falls, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

Industrial Paternalism in the Paper City

Political opponents of the Harmsworth deal fell silent once construction of the industrial works and townsite got underway. Building the Grand Falls works was a massive endeavour that relied on foreign capital, expertise, and equipment. It was the fruition of Newfoundland's leaders' efforts to modernize their country by courting global industry and trade. The industrial works alone included an immense dam on the Exploits River measuring 880 feet long and 27 feet high, two enormous steel penstocks 15 feet in diameter and 2,000 feet long, and a concrete powerhouse beneath the falls fitted with German turbines (Fig. 3.7). Designed by a New York engineer, the reinforced concrete paper mill was one of the most technologically advanced facilities of its kind in the world. It was also the largest building in Newfoundland, stretching out over eight acres.⁵² Machinery for the mill was imported from New York, including three large paper machines and 24 circular stones used for grinding wood into pulp and weighing three tones

⁵² *Evening Telegram*, 14 April 1908: 6.

each.⁵³ Over the course of its construction, the mill was visited by experts from the United States, Canada, and England.⁵⁴ In addition to the manufactory, a branch railway was built leading to a deep sea port, where wharves, warehouses, and steamers were needed to transport the finished paper to London.⁵⁵ Building the Grand Falls townsite was no less of a feat. By the summer of 1909, the town contained over 100 residences and the company's sawmill was processing nearly 75,000 logs each day to meet the feverish pace of construction.⁵⁶



Fig. 3.7, View of the Grand Falls dam under construction, 1907. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

Labour was a touchstone issue for colonial elites who believed that the evils of the truck system and cyclical poverty in the fishery could be alleviated through the provision of wage labour. Grand Falls seemed to prove this point. Although foreign engineers and foremen were enlisted to oversee the work, Newfoundland supplied most of the construction labour. The company recruited men from across the island, especially those who had experience building the railway. By the spring of 1907, some 300 men were employed constructing Grand Falls, with

⁵³ *Evening Telegram*, 11 July 1908: 7; *Evening Telegram*, 11 September 1909: 5; several Newfoundland companies also contributed industrial expertise and equipment. A boiler was manufactured by the Terra Nova Boiler Works. And Moore and Co.'s was hired to install a plumbing and steam-heating plant. *Evening Telegram*, 4 December 1905: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 7 October 1907: 4.

⁵⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

⁵⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 4.

⁵⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 8 September 1909: 4.

reports suggesting that the number would soon top 1,000.⁵⁷ Men began to arrive in droves from across Newfoundland in search of employment.⁵⁸ Nearly 18,000 yards of earth had to be moved to build the penstocks alone, for which 2,000 tons of steel and half a million rivets were needed.⁵⁹ The company also paid high wages. “Pick and shovel” men earned \$1.25 per day and carpenters received upwards of \$1.40 to \$1.60 per day.⁶⁰

Enthusiasm towards the industry reached a fever pitch following the opening of the paper mill in 1909. To mark the occasion, the journalist and political propagandist Patrick Thomas McGrath authored a commemorative pamphlet, where he described the paper making process in detail, reproduced several images of the industrial works under construction, and declared that Newfoundland was on the cusp of a new industrial era.⁶¹ He pointed out that wages paid by the company that year amounted to nearly \$750,000 and highlighted the fact that the mill continued to be staffed in large part by Newfoundlanders.⁶² This latter fact was especially redeeming since shareholders in London believed that the country’s fishermen—who they painted as backwards—would not take readily to industrial occupations.⁶³ In 1913, Alfred Harmsworth happily dispelled these fears, boasting that no fewer than 97% of the people employed in the Grand Falls mills were Newfoundlanders and that poverty in the new town was virtually unheard of.⁶⁴ These figures were seen as proof that Newfoundlanders were not only capable industrial workers but naturally suited to industrial occupations on account of their intrinsic mechanical

⁵⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 27 May 1910: 7.

⁵⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 29 April 1907: 6.

⁵⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 8 October 1909: 4.

⁶⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 30 April 1907: 4.

⁶¹ Patrick Thomas McGrath, *Newfoundland's New Industry: A Souvenir and a Record Issued to Commemorate the Opening of the Pulp and Paper Mills at Grand Falls, River of Exploits, Newfoundland, by Lord Northcliffe, October 9, 1909*. (Grand Falls: Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co., [1909]).

⁶² *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶³ Alfred Harmsworth argued against these concerns in 1908 by praising the Newfoundland labourers who were engaged in building Grand Falls. *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

⁶⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 19 September 1913: 7-8.

ingenuity and self-reliance – qualities instilled in them by the demanding and frugal life of the fishery.⁶⁵ Individuals who took high paying jobs with the company were treated as minor celebrities in local newspapers across the island. Others resigned public posts to take up employment in the booming company town.⁶⁶



Fig. 3.8, View of the Grand Falls paper mill, ca. 1910. Robert E. Holloway, *Through Newfoundland With the Camera* (London: Sach and Co., 1910), frontispiece.

⁶⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 29 September 1910: 4.

⁶⁶ In St. John's, a constable resigned and a police officer left his post to take up work in the frontier town. *Evening Telegram*, 23 March 1909: 5; *Evening Telegram*, 1 July 1911: 6; the frontier town elicited such curiosity in St. John's that clubs began organizing excursions to Grand Falls to witness its prosperity first hand. *Evening Telegram*, 1 October 1909: 5.

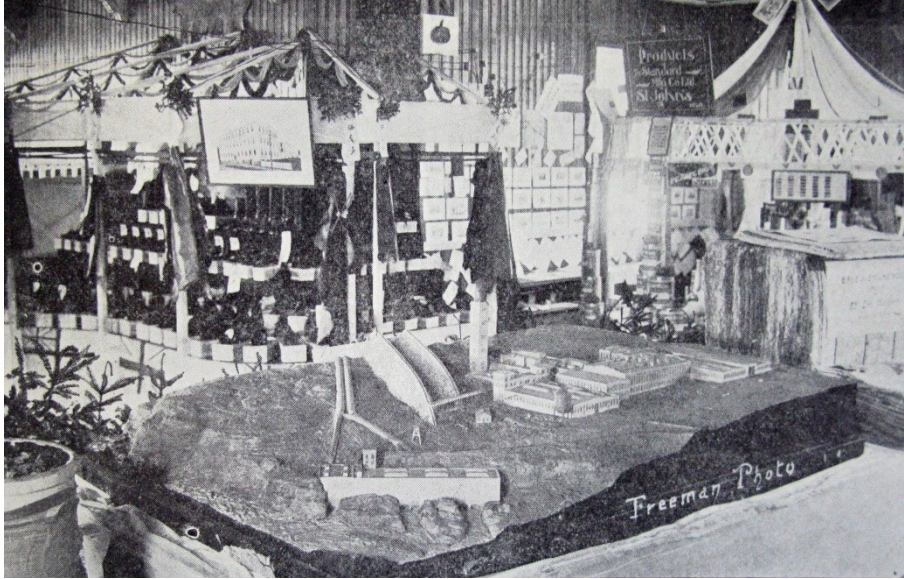


Fig. 3.9, Model of the Grand Falls paper mill on display at the Harbour Grace industrial exhibition, 1910. *Pictorial Harbor Grace: Agricultural and Industrial Newfoundland* ([Harbour Grace]: Printed at the Harbor Grace Standard Office, [1910]), n.p.

Images and descriptions of Grand Falls validated progressive ideas about the pulp and paper industry in Newfoundland. Images of the town and mill were reproduced in books, postcards, and films. In 1910, a photograph of the paper mill served as frontispiece for a revised edition of Robert Holloway's *Through Newfoundland With the Camera*, along with a new, lengthy essay detailing the colony's mineral, timber, and agricultural resources (Fig. 3.8). Grand Falls was also integral to Newfoundland's representation at international exhibitions, serving as an endorsement and advertisement for political leaders' national policy. At the same time, Newfoundland's second city was promoted across the island in an effort to elucidate Newfoundlanders about their own incipient modernity. An image of the paper mill appeared on a government-issued 10 cent stamp in 1910. And a model of the industrial works was displayed at an agricultural and industrial exhibition held in Harbour Grace that same year (Fig. 3.9).



Fig. 3.10, Workers' housing on Monchy Road, Grand Falls, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

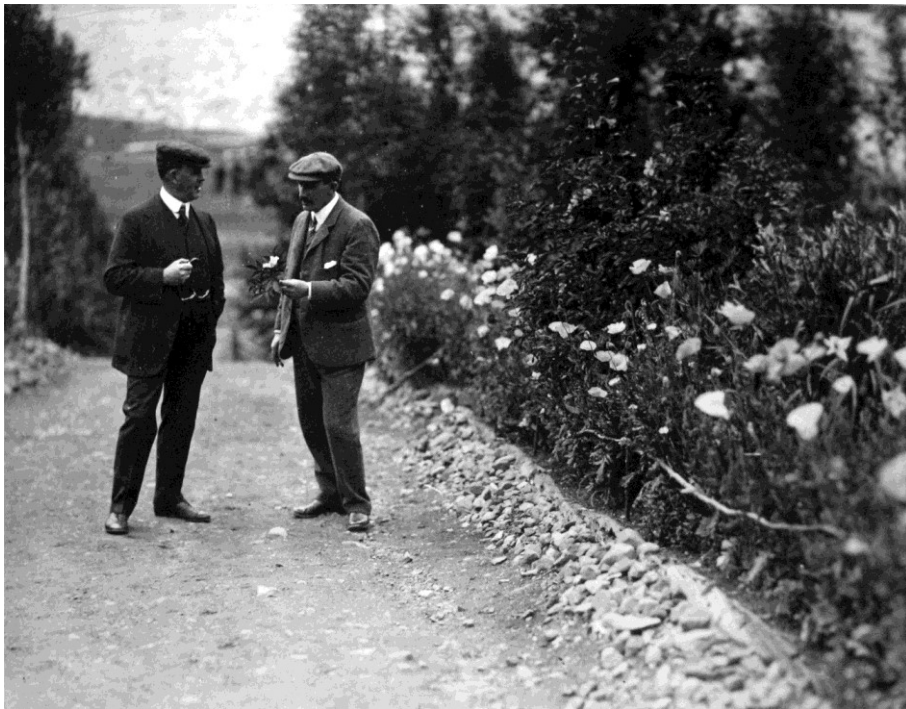


Fig. 3.11, Alfred Harmsworth's English garden, Grand Falls, 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

In particular, promoters underlined nature's role in catalyzing social and economic progress in Grand Falls. Indeed, landscape unified the city, the surrounding environment, and the

lives of its residents. Spacious lots and meandering streets allowed natural elements and views to be incorporated into the design of the city. Houses were billed as “pretty cottages,” even though they had modern amenities unlike any other place on the island (Fig. 3.10).⁶⁷ Grand Falls was fully electrified at a time when St. John’s was the only other place on the island with access to electricity. Unlike St. John’s, however, the city had spacious streets ranging from over 60 to 100 feet wide.⁶⁸ The company also established a model farm and dairy and invited British and Canadian agriculturalists to visit the inland town and tour the island, lecturing on the capability of its soils.⁶⁹ Even residents were enlisted in a budding agricultural economy. Houses had front and rear gardens and the company sponsored an annual exhibition of gardening and crafts.⁷⁰ For his part, Alfred Harmsworth constructed an extensive pleasure garden at his private residence in Grand Falls, using soil and seeds imported from England. The houses’ terraced garden overlooked the company’s athletic field on the banks of the Exploits River below (Fig. 3.11).

Local and foreign writers championed Grand Falls’ civilizing effect on Newfoundlanders. McGrath, for example, argued that besides awakening other countries to the fact that Newfoundland possessed “other resources than those of the sea,” Grand Falls would spur the country’s social progress by introducing Newfoundlanders to the “everyday conveniences of more advanced civilization.”⁷¹ The Harmsworths also encouraged the idea that Grand Falls was a civilizing enterprise. In 1910, a cartoon appeared in *The British and Colonial Printer and Stationer* featuring a Robinson Crusoe-like figure standing astride the new paper mill. The mill is

⁶⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 18 September 1906: 5.

⁶⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 9 December 1910: 6. St. John’s was electrified for the first time in 1900. A powerhouse in Petty Harbour with a small flume and Westinghouse Generators provided electricity to the capital. Harvey, *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island*, 175-80.

⁶⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 21 October 1909: 6.

⁷⁰ In 1917, Professor P. J. Shaw of the Truro Agricultural College was invited to judge the displays. *Evening Telegram*, 5 October 1917: 3.

⁷¹ McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century*, 84, 210.

shown sitting atop a crude map of Newfoundland, buoyed by several rolls of paper bearing the initials of Harmsworth publications (Fig. 3.12). Part publicity and part jest, the cartoon nonetheless reveals how the Harmsworths saw themselves as the torch-bearers of progress in Newfoundland. Like Crusoe—the archetypal civilizer—they believed their task was to deliver Newfoundland from a savage to a civilized state. A bleaker message within the cartoon conveys the urgency of this task. Namely, that without the Harmsworths’ patronage, Newfoundland was sunk.



Fig. 3.12, The new Robinson Crusoe and his New Found Land of Paper. *The British and Colonial Printer and Stationer* (February, 1910).

Indeed, the Harmsworths were keenly-aware of the importance of promoting progress in Grand Falls in order to secure their economic interests in Newfoundland. Company paternalism was designed to neutralize labour unrest and promote efficiency, using moral guidance, recreation, and economic regulation. Similarly, Howard's town planning theory dovetailed perfectly with the interests of English industrialists by showing how the built environment could

be used to shape a permanent and civil workforce. In 1889, an article entitled “Men as Town Makers” appeared in *The Harmsworth Magazine*, highlighting how town planning could be applied to the benefit of industry. The article detailed a series of “one man towns,” praising the paternalistic methods of industrialists like John Grubb Richardson, an Irish linen merchant whose model town at Bessbrook was said to be the only Irish town “without a public-house or a pawnbroker’s shop.”⁷² By providing stable employment and social infrastructure in the form of parks, baths, and schools, and even facilitating property ownership in some cases, paternalistic company towns were seen as creating passive and productive employees.⁷³



Fig. 3.13, Company excursion to Botwood Field, 1918. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

⁷² Arthur Birnage, "Men as Town Makers: Some Famous Captains of Industry," *The Harmsworth Monthly Pictorial Magazine* 3 (1899-1900): 225-30.

⁷³ For example, George Cadbury—heir to the Cadbury cocoa and chocolate empire—permitted workers to own their houses in his model town at Bournville.

Amenities in Grand Falls highlight how the company used its systemic control to promote efficiency in the guise of middle-class values. The city streets were lined with schools, open spaces, a club house, and a town hall. The local hospital was even fitted with surgical equipment and operating beds from the London Hospital.⁷⁴ These and other social welfare projects were paid for out of the Northcliffe Trust Fund established in 1908 with a seed donation of \$10,000 by Alfred Harmsworth.⁷⁵ At the same time, the company encouraged a pious, religious life and sought to diminish sectarian conflict by constructing churches for every conceivable denomination in Newfoundland, including Protestants, Roman Catholics, Methodists, and Presbyterians, as well a separate building for use by the Salvation Army.⁷⁶ Selling liquor in Grand Falls was also illegal and punishable by large fines.⁷⁷ In 1910, Grand Falls was proclaimed one of the driest towns in North America. And in 1912, one paper maker boasted that “there are no beer shops at all” in Grand Falls and that drunkenness in the city was at an all-time low.⁷⁸

Grand Falls also reinforced boundaries between male and female spheres—work and home—more so than anywhere else on the island. In particular, the company accorded specific roles to women in line with British standards for femininity, casting them in the role of homemakers, gardeners, and crafters. At its annual exhibition, the company distributed prizes for potted flowers, vegetables (mostly root), textiles and clothing, preserved berries and fruits, and gardens under cultivation. Most, if not all of these goods, were produced by women and their stay-at-home families since men—and only men—were expected to work long hours at the mill.

⁷⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 29 October 1909: 5; *Evening Telegram*, 29 November 1909: 6.

⁷⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

⁷⁶ Churches in Grand Falls were located along the adroitly named Church Road. *Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1911, Table Iii: Church Buildings, Superior and Board Schools, Charitable and Other Institutions, Etc.*, (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1914), 270.

⁷⁷ In 1910, one man was caught selling liquor without a license in Grand Falls and Bishop's Falls. He was fined 50\$ for the former offence and \$100 for the latter. *Evening Telegram*, 31 March 1910: 4.

⁷⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 18 January 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 5 August 1912: 4.

Other activities sponsored by the company also reinforced normative gender roles. Sports clubs were created for men and the company sponsored baseball, cricket, football, boxing, and wrestling teams. Women were encouraged to attend company-led excursions and picnics, where they and their children donned fashionable attire (Fig. 3.13). Census figures also suggest that the company preferred to hire married rather than single men. By 1921, only 12% of the population were unmarried adults over the age of 20.⁷⁹ Working hours at the mill were also adjusted to reinforce family life at home. Grand Falls was the first place in Newfoundland to observe daylight savings time, permitting mill workers to start one hour earlier in the morning in exchange for being let out one hour earlier in the afternoon.⁸⁰

“Working Out” Modernity in Grand Falls

Despite its appearances, the Harmsworths’ civilizing mission was beset by numerous challenges and paradoxes. Indeed, Newfoundland’s forest modernity was “worked out” in a number of unseemly ways. Whereas Howard sought to reinforce self-reliance by balancing paternalistic interference with individual freedoms in his garden city, Grand Falls reveals how industrial leaders used paternalism to different ends. Rather than promulgate a society of self-reliant Britishers, Grand Falls was designed—first and foremost—to shield the company’s economic

⁷⁹ The 1911 census indicates that the population of Grand Falls was 1,643, but does not elaborate on the composition of this figure. For the purpose of the census, Grand Falls was included in the larger district of Twillingate. *Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1911, Table I: Population, Sex, Condition, Denomination, Profession, Etc.*, xxx. The *Evening Telegram* gave slightly different figures in 1911, reporting that the company town was home to 1,760 people, of whom 565 were children. *Evening Telegram*, 19 May 1911: 6. The proportion of adults to children in Grand Falls is better illustrated by the 1921 census. By 1921, the population of Grand Falls had increased to 3,768. Of these individuals, 1,358 were married and another 1,549 were under the age of 15, leaving just 861 individuals who were unmarried adults over the age of 15, or roughly 22% of the population. Similarly, only 461 individuals were unmarried adult over the age of 20, or roughly 12% of the population. *Census of Newfoundland Labrador, 1921, Table I: Population, Sex, Condition, Denomination, Profession, Etc.*, (St. John's: s.n., 1923), xviii, 194-96.

⁸⁰ *Western Star*, 12 April 1916: 2. Daylight savings time was implemented in Britain in 1916 as a measure to save coal during wartime. In 1907, however, the English home builder William Willett argued against standard time and the “wasting” of sunlight hours. By changing the clocks in April and September, Willett explained, more time would be available for leisure and healthy recreation and money could be saved by reducing the need for artificial lighting. See William Willett, *The Wasting of Daylight* (London: William Willett, 1907).

interests by upholding existing social hierarchies. There were also strict limits to the Harmsworths' paternalism, a feature of their enterprise that placed the company and government at cross-purposes on several occasions. Likewise, although the company retained absolute control over living and working conditions in Grand Falls, the city was still subject to the whims of government, which could easily undermine the company's authority, as well as the appearance of self-reliance in Newfoundland's interior.

Conflict between the government and the company stemmed from the deal reached with the Harmsworths in 1905. By granting generous concessions to the English firm, the government attracted the ire of Canadian and British papermakers, as well as opposition members in the House of Assembly.⁸¹ To avoid renewing this debate, Newfoundland's government was careful not to appear to make any further concessions and acted suspicious towards the company. This latter fact is illustrated by the government's refusal to grant the company additional land title to secure a safe supply of drinking water for the new town.

One of the company's first priorities was to safeguard public health in Grand Falls. Alarming reports about the state of public health in Newfoundland were foremost in the minds of company directors. In 1907, the company applied for a parcel of land north of Grand Falls to secure an uncontaminated water supply for the future town.⁸² Securing the parcel was necessary, they argued, in order to prevent future settlement north of the railway station. The station abutted a small brook that discharged into the Exploits River, from which the town's water supply was drawn.⁸³ After reviewing the company's request, the government concluded that the application violated the terms of their agreement. The company, they pointed out, was permitted to select

⁸¹ Hiller, "The Origins of the Pulp and Paper Industry in Newfoundland," 57-58.

⁸² Mayson Beeton to Governor in Council, 29 May 1907, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Mayson Beeton to Thomas Long, 5 July 1907, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁸³ R. A. Brehm to Edward P. Morris, 7 September 1911, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

land for “telegraphs, telephones, railways, tramways or roads [...] mills, works, factories, warehouses, [...] wharves, piers, docks or other shipping facilities,” but *not* for the provision of fresh water.⁸⁴ Astonished and frustrated by the government’s decision, the company protested that if settlement were to occur north of the railway it would almost certainly pollute the local water source.⁸⁵ The government was unmoved by this plea.⁸⁶ Instead, they dispatched a surveyor to Grand Falls. He recommended that the extent of the reservation be limited to within several hundred feet of streams and a nearby lake and that the area immediately north of the railway station be withheld from public sale.⁸⁷ However, the government failed to act on this advice and within a year squatters had begun to occupy the area north of the station.⁸⁸ Alarmed by this development, the company enlisted a Canadian health specialist to report to the government about the “serious menace” posed by the railway settlement.⁸⁹

Events came to a head when Grand Falls suffered its first outbreak of typhoid in 1910. The number of cases grew quickly and in less than a week the outbreak had spread to nearby logging settlements.⁹⁰ A second, temporary hospital was built by the company and several private houses were converted to accommodate fever sufferers.⁹¹ After two months of battling the epidemic, the quarantine at Grand Falls was finally raised.⁹²

⁸⁴ Under the terms of their agreement, the company was entitled to select up to 10,000 acres of land for these specific uses. J. A. Kent to Arthur Mews, 30 August 1907, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁸⁵ Memorandum re: Grand Falls Water Supply, n.d., File GN 8.3, Box 1, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

⁸⁶ The government secretly hoped that an additional townsite or agricultural settlement would eventually be built on this land instead. Mayson Beeton to Robert Bond, 15 July 1908, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Robert Bond to Mayson Beeton, 31 July 1908, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁸⁷ Arthur Mews to Mayson Beeton, 10 August 1908, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; J. A. Clift to Robert Bond, 11 September 1908, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁸⁸ W. Scott to S. D. Blandford, 23 September 1910, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁸⁹ Mayson M. Beeton to Edward P. Morris, 23 September 1910, File GN 8.3, Box 1, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

⁹⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 20 September 1910: 4.

⁹¹ *Evening Telegram*, 3 October 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 8 October 1910: 4.

⁹² *Evening Telegram*, 7 November 1910: 7.

Faced with new and incontrovertible evidence of the need for greater cooperation in Grand Falls, political leaders were forced to take action. They allowed the company to fence the remaining lots north of the railway station to prevent further occupation and dispatched an inspector from the department of public health to report on the situation.⁹³ The inspector was sympathetic to the company's cause. He recommended that the government enlist the company's health officer to report regularly on the situation.⁹⁴ However, the government was reluctant to pay one of the company's private employees and so tasked the local magistrate with inspecting and reporting on local sanitary conditions instead.⁹⁵ Frustrated by the government's continued inaction, the company built a bacteriological laboratory to monitor the town's water supply as the railway settlement continued to grow unchecked (Fig. 3.14).⁹⁶



Fig. 3.14, Grand Falls Station, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

⁹³ Copy of Minute of Council, 17 October 1910, File 2, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁹⁴ R. A. Brehm to Edward P. Morris, 7 September 1911, File 2.A, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁹⁵ Robert Watson to H. F. Fitzgerald, 23 September 1911, File 2.A, Box 1, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

⁹⁶ *Daily Star*, 27 September 1916: 7; *Evening Telegram*, 19 September 1913: 7.

Other features of the built environment in Grand Falls also undermined the progressive aims of Newfoundland politicians and boosters. Indeed, rather than addressing the racial anxieties of colonial elites, the city's planning and architecture embodied and exhibited these anxieties. In particular, company-built housing and restrictions on land ownership in Grand Falls established hierarchies of privilege and power that reinforced divisions between Newfoundlanders, foreign specialists, and the company's English owners.

Conservative features of the built environment in Grand Falls reflected the Harmsworths' conservative social views. Property ownership and political influence were inextricable in England. However, the reform act of 1884 had diluted the political power of landed elites by extending the vote to all property owning men *and* those who paid an annual rent greater than £10. This, together with a series of financial reforms enacted around the turn-of-the -century, rallied conservative aristocrats to attempt to preserve their power. Leonard Seabrook describes how efforts to increase direct taxation, redistribute credit, and limit the privileges of landlords "threatened established social and political positions of the landed aristocracy and the aspirations of newly monied individuals" since both groups drew their authority from their social position.⁹⁷ Although by the close of the century just 10.6% percent of households in England were owned by their occupants, Seabrook notes how "English upper classes, including all associated with gentlemanly capitalism, sought to defend their social, political, and economic 'positional premium' of owning property by denying others access to it."⁹⁸

Alfred Harmsworth was among the defenders of aristocratic government. Indeed, he was opposed any weakening of aristocratic power, including in the form of state socialism and

⁹⁷ Leonard Seabrooke, *The Social Sources of Financial Power: Domestic Legitimacy and International Financial Orders* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006), 66.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

taxation schemes that targeted the rich.⁹⁹ He also controlled nearly half of the morning and evening newspaper circulation in Britain and often used his newspapers (for which he acted as an editor and censor) to fight lawmakers' progressive reforms. He opposed women's suffrage and campaigned against the National Insurance Act of 1911, which introduced health insurance for workers.¹⁰⁰

Aristocratic conservatism was commuted into the physical fabric of Grand Falls, reinforcing social and nationalistic distinctions. Alfred Harmsworth alluded to this fact in a speech in 1908, where he proclaimed that Grand Falls was progressing from a "shack stage" to a "house stage."¹⁰¹ The "shacks" to which he referred were temporary shelters built by Newfoundland labourers out of economic necessity. Despite the high wages paid to construction workers, men had to pay their own railway fare to reach the interior of the island. The company also deducted monthly room and board and doctor's fees amounting to over a week's pay from those who chose to stay in company-owned bunk houses.¹⁰² As a result, many labourers elected to forgo company housing, constructing their own rudimentary shelters, and foraging and hunting for their meals in the nearby forest.¹⁰³ Reminiscent of the temporary shelters that once lined the railway, workers' "shacks" consisted of a simple pole frame clad in tar paper and appeared all along the length of the Exploits River, wherever construction labour was needed (Fig. 3.15).

⁹⁹ From the Chicago Tribune, 21 March 1917, reprinted in J. Lee Thompson, *Politicians, the Press and Propaganda: Lord Northcliffe and the Great War, 1914-1919* (Kent, OH; London: Kent State University Press, 2013), 139-40.

¹⁰⁰ Alfred Harmsworth later converted to the cause of the women's suffrage in 1916. Ann Scott, *Ernest Gowers: Plain Words and Forgotten Deeds* (Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 22-23; Billie Melman, *Women and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties: Flappers and Nymphs* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 16-17.

¹⁰¹ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

¹⁰² Labourers were charged \$10 each month for room and board and another 40 cents for doctor's fees. *Evening Telegram*, 30 April 1907: 4.

¹⁰³ *Evening Telegram*, 15 May 1907: 6.



Fig. 3.15, Workers' shack near Millertown Junction, ca. 1890 (Photo: James P. Howley). Robert C. Hollett and William J. Kirwin, *An Album of James P. Howley's Photographs* (St. John's: Memorial University English Language Research Centre, 2010).

Spatial hierarchies were retained in the town's progression to "house stage." Company housing visualized hierarchies of authority and privilege by distinguishing labourers from superintendents and executives who enjoyed larger and more ornate homes. The company developed several housing types with different floor plan arrangements, roofs, verandas, and other details to produce architectural variety within the town. Labourers were housed in one of three, single-storey bungalow types. Each bungalow contained a kitchen, living room, and as many as three bedrooms (Fig. 3.16). Skilled workers were housed in one of three cottage-types that contained as many as seven rooms split over two levels.¹⁰⁴ A similar, two-storey cottage-type was reserved for company foreman (Fig. 3.17). All of the homes in Grand Falls had front and rear porches that gave access onto a garden. The company also built a small number of duplexes according to two different plans. These larger homes had as many as ten bedrooms and were likely intended for single men and boarders. Indeed, very few were built since the company

¹⁰⁴ Two slightly smaller "Horwood" types (named after the Horwood Lumber Company who supplied some of the timber and construction labour) were also developed, featuring a two-storey plan and gable roofs.

preferred to hire married men. Company executives were installed in large estates in a separate and secluded neighbourhood.¹⁰⁵

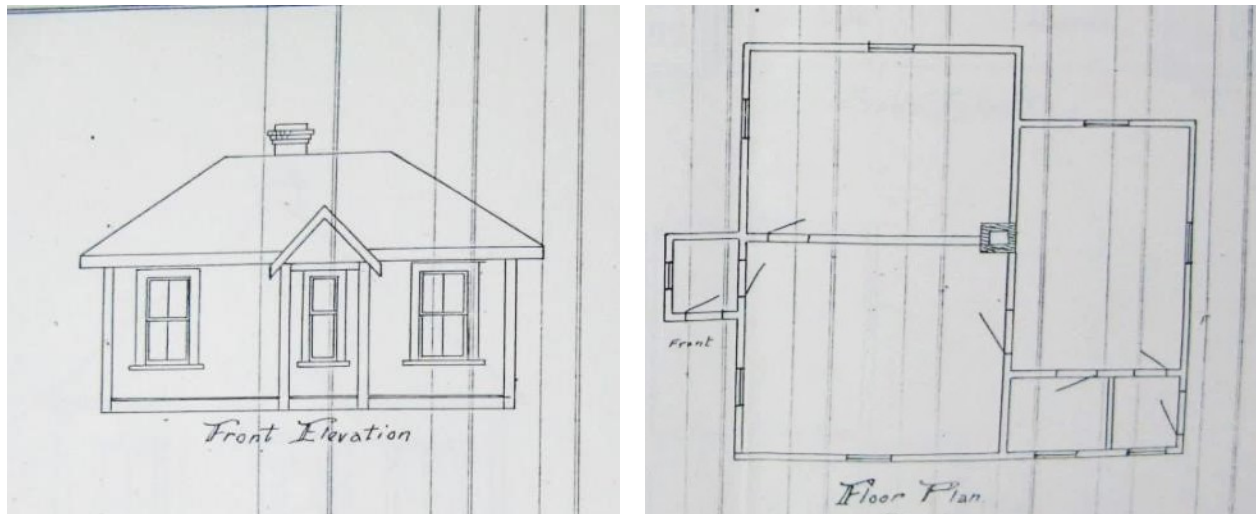


Fig. 3.16, Plan and elevation of a typical worker's bungalow, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

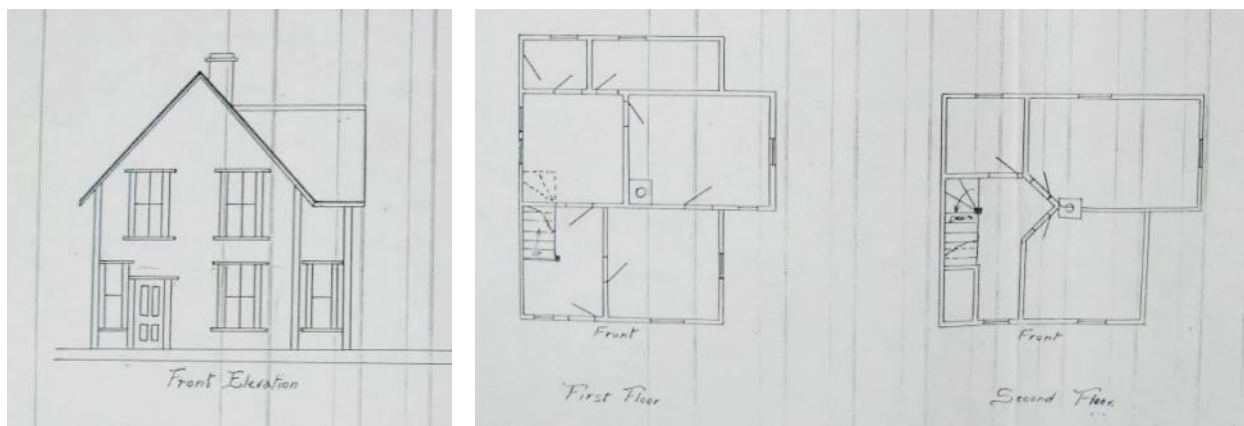


Fig. 3.17, Plan and elevation of a typical foreman's cottage, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

The most spectacular homes were reserved for the company's English owners and director. Crowning the townsite on a raised hill overlooking the river and the mill was the stately Log House built for the company's managing director, Mayson Beeton. Adjoining the Log

¹⁰⁵ Among the first residences to be built in 1907 were two large houses for the chief surveyor (Mr. Scott) and the company's general superintendent. *Evening Telegram*, 28 May 1907: 4.

House was the even more spectacular Grand Falls House, designed in the English Tudor style (a fixture of the aristocratic countryside) and surrounded by terraced gardens. Used by guests of the company and by the Harmsworths during their infrequent visits to Newfoundland, the Grand Falls House cost an estimated \$40,000 to build. It alone employed 300 workers over the course of construction (Fig. 3.18).¹⁰⁶

The effect of this planning and architectural variety was to distinguish Newfoundlanders from foreign workers. Spatial privileges contributed to the feeling that the pulp and paper industry “was in, but not of, Newfoundland.”¹⁰⁷ Workers with specialized skills were imported from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada and often placed in supervisory roles. In addition to those of the company owners, several of the most prominent houses in Grand Falls were occupied by foreign workers, including that of Jim Judge, an American immigrant who became the company’s electrical superintendent, and a sprawling manor built for the company’s Norwegian-born vice president, Hagbard Hanson (Fig. 3.19).

At the same time, restrictions on home ownership prevented Newfoundlanders from becoming socially mobile within an English class system. To deter social and political unrest, the company denied employees the right to ownership in Grand Falls, limiting their economic freedom and creating new forms of economic dependence. These restrictions ran counter to the notion of self-reliance. However, the benefits of restrictive paternalism would become clear when workers led an unsuccessful strike against the company in 1921.

¹⁰⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 8 September 1909: 4; Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society, *Grand Falls-Windsor: The Place and Its People* (Grand Falls-Windsor: Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society, 2005), 293.

¹⁰⁷ Robert A. MacKay, *Newfoundland: Economic, Diplomatic, and Strategic Studies* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), 101. The effect of these differences diminished in time. By 1921, for example, 93% of Grand Falls residents were born in Newfoundland. *Census of Newfoundland Labrador, 1921, Table I: Population, Sex, Condition, Denomination, Profession, Etc.*, 196.



Fig. 3.18, Grand Falls House, ca. 1920. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.



Fig. 3.19, Vice-President's House, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

Similar social and economic hierarchies were reflected in the daily lives of Grand Falls residents. Despite the relatively high wages paid by the company, the cost of living in Newfoundland's isolated interior remained high. Rather than allow their employees to purchase houses, the company charged rental rates that were higher than anywhere else on the island. Imported food and goods were also costly as a result of rail freight. One government employee estimated that the cost of living in Grand Falls was at least 25% higher than elsewhere in Newfoundland.¹⁰⁸ The company also limited its paternalism to permanent employees. North of the railway station the growing community of itinerant workers and ramshackle buildings remained socially and materially segregated from the company town.¹⁰⁹

One final example serves to illustrate how the built environment was an arena for working out self-reliant identities in Newfoundland's interior. The Grand Falls public building also reveals a problematic thread in Newfoundland's policy of progress. In many respects, Newfoundland's political leaders were unprepared for the social and economic cost of Grand Falls' futurity. As uncontrolled spending and worsening economic conditions undermined efforts to achieve self-reliance at a national scale, Grand Falls remained an exceptional and isolated space in Newfoundland's interior, precipitating further conflict between the government and the company.

The government's responsibilities in Grand Falls included providing policing, postal, and justice services. To accommodate these services, the government agreed to erect a public building on a site given to them by the company. The building was to include a post office, a court house, and a custom house, as well as a constable's apartment and cells for prisoners. The

¹⁰⁸ Postmaster General to John R. Bennett, 10 April 1915, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹⁰⁹ Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society, 96-98.

cost of the building was not to exceed \$5,000.¹¹⁰ In September 1910, the government asked the St. John's-based architect Jonas C. Barter to prepare plans for the public building.¹¹¹ By the spring of 1911, however, construction of the new building had not begun and angry Grand Falls residents circulated a petition imploring the government to take action. Other writers soon joined this chorus, arguing that Grand Falls' value as an "advertisement of the resources of the country" was being undermined by the government's failure to provide adequate public services there.¹¹² What the government didn't reveal was that construction of the new building had been delayed on account of its soaring cost.¹¹³

The company soon found creative ways to pressure the government into action. They tripled the rent on the house temporarily occupied by the local magistrate and constable, then threatened to evict them.¹¹⁴ The company also chastised the government in a steady stream of correspondence, cautioning them that people in Grand Falls "were beginning to grumble regarding the present Government."¹¹⁵ By 1912, accusations of government neglect were renewed. Amidst a maelstrom of negative press, the government agreed to proceed with construction of the public building, despite more than tripling their initial budget (Fig. 3.20).¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ William Scott to Edward P. Morris, 2 December 1910, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹¹¹ Robert Watson to Jonas C. Barter, 20 September 1910, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹¹² *Evening Telegram*, 18 August 1911: 4.

¹¹³ Jonas C. Barter to Robert Watson, 8 March 1911, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹¹⁴ The company claimed the amount of \$180/annum for the house. The constabulary had been paying only \$50/annum. Inspector General to D. Morison, 21 February 1911, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Vincent Jones to Robert Watson, 1 April 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; the Colonial Secretary responded to the company's eviction threat with the promise that revisions were underway to the public building and that construction would commence that summer. Vincent Jones to Robert Watson, 21 May 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹¹⁵ Vincent Jones to Robert Watson, 10 April 1911, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹¹⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 19 January 1912: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 5 February 1912: 7; *Evening Telegram*, 16 February 1912: 7; the government agreed to a tender price of \$16,250, but these funds were soon exhausted and the executive council was forced to approve another \$2,500 to complete the public building. Department of Public Works to John R. Bennett, 17 July 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Copy of Minute of Executive Council, 26 October 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Robert Watson to James Harris, 30 July 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Robert Watson to M. Walsh, 30 July 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.



Fig. 3.20, Grand Falls Public Building, 1917. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

As the public building neared completion in 1913, controversy was renewed when the company refused to provide water and sewerage to the building at a discounted rate.¹¹⁷ This proposition elicited another spate of angry letters in which the government complained that the proposed service rates amounted to an unfair “tax” on a building which the company had insisted they undertake in the first place.¹¹⁸ The company retorted that it was simply “a business

¹¹⁷ The company requested \$200 annually for these services. L. R. Cooper to James Harris, 19 December 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; the government offered to pay a service rate similar to those charged in St. John’s, which amounted to less than a third of the company’s asking price. However, the company rejected this offer on the basis that St. John’s was a municipality and not a private venture. Robert Watson to Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co., 31 January 1913, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; L. R. Cooper to Robert Watson, 5 February 1913, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹¹⁸ Robert Watson to Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co., 21 December 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

transaction,” and nothing more.¹¹⁹ In the end, the government was forced to acquiesce to the company’s demands.

Not long after the building was completed, the government was surprised to discover that the constable was still living in a company-owned house and that the apartment in the basement of the public building was being occupied by the caretaker instead. This arrangement came to light when the caretaker demanded a raise in his salary in exchange for feeding and guarding the prisoners whose cells were adjacent his new home.¹²⁰ Once more, the company threatened to evict the constable if they did not receive full rent, a prospect leading Newfoundland’s Inspector General to threaten to withdraw the constable from Grand Falls altogether.¹²¹ This latest rejoinder did not sit well with the company who appealed directly to the Prime Minister.¹²² Apparently, on seeing the finished apartment the constable had elected to remain in company housing. Not only did the apartment lack a coal and vegetable cellar, there was no morgue in the building, no water closets in the prisoners’ cells, and access to the cells was provided through a

¹¹⁹ Vincent Jones to Robert Watson, 12 February 1913, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹²⁰ Hedley Whitemarsh to John R. Bennett, 17 April 1915, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, PANL; Department of Public Works to John R. Bennett, 13 November 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, PANL; a similar situation erupted when the government appointed customs officer took up residence in a company-owned house. The customs officer thought the government should pay his housing costs. But the government disagreed. The company meanwhile, having received no rent from either party, threatened to evict the officer. Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co. to John R. Bennett, 13 & 29 May 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, PANL; Deputy Colonial Secretary to M. P. Cashin, 29 June 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹²¹ Deputy Colonial Secretary to Charles H. Hutchings, 29 June 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, PANL; John Sullivan to L. R. Cooper, 29 October 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹²² The company claimed that the situation was “deadlocked.” The initial arrangement, they argued, was meant to be a temporary one, pending completion of the government building. They complained that the Constabulary was paying a mere \$50 per annum when similar residences in Grand Falls fetched upwards of \$120 per annum. “It is solely a question of business with us,” they wrote, “we have many applicants, for the house is a large one, and in a popular locality.” Vincent Jones to Edward P. Morris, 3 November 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

shared entrance to the furnace room.¹²³ In the end, the company agreed to extend the constable's lease by 12 months at a reduced rate, during which time the government promised to find new accommodations for the caretaker and renovate the public building.¹²⁴

Papermen

By establishing material connections to London, Grand Falls' highlighted in cognitive terms Newfoundland's growing importance within the empire. At the same time as Grand Falls appeared to eradicate social differences between Britishers and Newfoundlanders by transforming the latter into self-reliant wage earners, the paper industry as a whole appeared to eradicate geographical differences between Newfoundland and Britain by conjoining the island's interior with the rest of the empire.

Grand Falls was part of a supply chain that began in Newfoundland's interior and ended at Fleetway House in London. The paper manufacturing process relied on a series of coordinated operations located up and down the Exploits River valley. At the very top of this supply chain were the company's logging operations. Each spring, pulpwood was driven towards the mill along the river. Logs were drawn out the river by men with long, hooked staffs and placed on an inclined conveyor. The logs were then sawn into smaller "junks" measuring 32 inches in length before being transported by conveyor over a 50 foot high trestle which delivered the junks to the top of an immense stock pile (Fig. 3.21). From here, junks were sent to the mill, where they were stripped of their bark, treated with chemicals, and ground into pulp with millstones. Sulphuric

¹²³ The Constabulary complained that these points had been raised in 1912 by the Inspector General after reviewing the architect's plans, but that no action was taken to remedy them. Charles H. Hutchings to Robert Watson, 28 November 1912, File 17.K, Part 2, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹²⁴ Charles H. Hutchings to Colonial Secretary, 23 November 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, PANL; L. R. Cooper to Arthur Mews, 11 December 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, PANL; Charles H. Hutchings to John R. Bennett, 16 December 1914, File 17.K, Part 1, Box 8, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

acid used in the pulp making process was stored in a tower that rose high above the mill and town.¹²⁵ The last stage of paper manufacturing involved pressing and drying the pulp into large sheets. In 1909, three paper machines, each 156 feet wide, churned out paper at a rate of almost 600 feet per minute. Finished rolls of paper were sent by rail to Botwood, where the company operated a deep water port during the summer months, and shipped to England.¹²⁶ From there, the Harmsworths' Amalgamated Press circulated newspapers printed on Newfoundland newsprint to millions of Britishers around the world.



Fig. 3.21, Log pile in Grand Falls, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

By highlighting the economic value of temperate landscapes in the island's interior, paper making also showed how Newfoundland could further imperial interests by spreading British industry and its civilizing influence to the far reaches of the empire. Alfred Harmsworth claimed that Swedes in the Millertown district thought the island's climate was even better than their

¹²⁵ In 1916, a digester and two sulphite machines were added to the mill, allowing pulp to be manufactured using a chemical process. *Western Star*, 11 August 1916: 8; *Evening Telegram*, 15 September 1916: 6.

¹²⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 8 October 1909: 4.

own.¹²⁷ And in 1912, Member of the British Parliament Cecil Harmsworth declared that timber and pulp resources in Newfoundland's interior were inexhaustible.¹²⁸ Similarly, promotional images and descriptions of the paper industry signalled Newfoundland's connection to Britain and the larger British world, with the paper mill itself standing as a symbol of Newfoundland's incipient modernity and racial progress. Images of the mill appeared in books, photographs, and souvenirs. And in 1910, an engraving of the mill appeared on a government-issued ten cent stamp. In particular, paper making appeared to prove—once and for all—that fishermen could be transformed into an industrial workforce. Cecil Harmsworth agreed, arguing that whereas Newfoundland was once regarded as a “country of dogs, fogs, and logs,” paper making revealed that the island was home to “the finest race of colonials to be found within the boundaries of the British Empire.”¹²⁹

Celebratory accounts of the paper industry rendered invisible the actual experience labourers who lived and worked in Grand Falls. Discrepancies between the promise and experience of modernity were especially evident inside the paper mill. Workers ranged from skilled labourers—such as machinists and papermen—to unskilled labourers who drove, cut, and processed the raw logs into pulp. Lured by the prospect of high wages and secure employment, mill workers soon suffered the hazards of early industrial labour. Work related injuries in the paper town were numerous and frequent. Shortly after the mill opened, one man lost his life and another had both his legs broken when a piece of timber broke free from a hoist and swung violently to the ground.¹³⁰ Others were electrocuted in the power house, drowned in the river, or

¹²⁷ *The Times*, 16 December 1909: 18.

¹²⁸ *The Times*, 8 November 1912: 10.

¹²⁹ *The Times*, 8 November 1912: 10.

¹³⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 21 July 1910: 5. *Evening Telegram*, 22 July 1910: 4.

caught in moving machinery.¹³¹ In 1911, a horrific injury occurred in the “slasher” house when a man fell across a saw blade and was nearly severed in two.¹³² Mill workers were a variety of ages, but those engaged in the most menial and dangerous tasks were typically young men (Fig. 3.22). In 1917, a sixteen year old boy was crushed to death in a conveyor.¹³³ That same year, a man fell to his death from the top of the acid tower, prompting the company to remind the uneasy public that signs were posted throughout the plant reading: “Remember, Safety first; Take no Chances.”¹³⁴ Injured workers were treated at the Grand Falls hospital, where the company imported and fitted many artificial limbs.¹³⁵

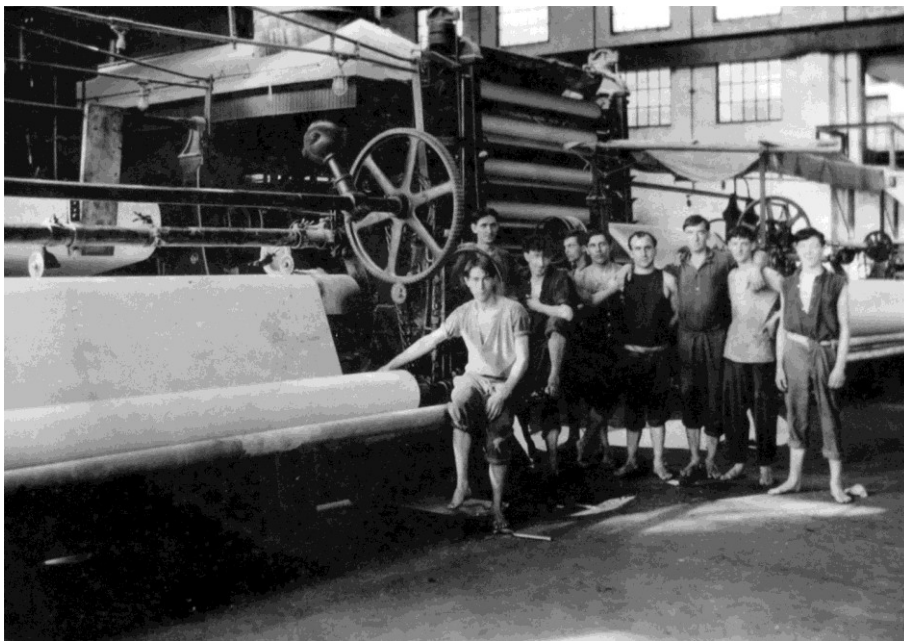


Fig. 3.22, Young men posing next to a paper machine, 1913. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

¹³¹ *Evening Telergam*, 11 January 1910: 4; *Western Star*, 12 January 1910: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 2 April 1910: 7.

¹³² *Evening Telegram*, 8 June 1911: 4.

¹³³ *Daily Star*, 4 August 1917: 2.

¹³⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 13 January 1917: 5.

¹³⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 28 May 1914: 9. The value of imported artificial limbs to Newfoundland grew by 60% after 1909. *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, 4th Session, 22nd Assembly (St. John's: Evening Chronicle, 1912), 37A.

Physical and imaginary ties to London were also easily severed. Colonial elites perceived industrial paternalism as a pathway to greater self-reliance and racial progress, yet Grand Falls revealed how this support was also easily revoked and its progressive influence reversed. Indeed, paternalism granted the Harmsworths considerable control over the lives of residents and workers in Grand Falls and, by extension, over the industry's symbolism as well. As Cooper and Stoler point out, efforts to civilize colonial subjects by turning them into disciplined labourers also ran the risk of creating politically mobilized resisters.¹³⁶ The Harmsworths were keenly aware of this risk, as well as how their paternalism could be used to check the political mobility of workers. Restrictions on homeownership, for example, meant that individuals who withheld their labour could be forcibly evicted from the paper city. The company also limited the number of shops in the city, reducing competition and driving up the price of goods. And although the company tolerated a certain amount of trade unionism in Grand Falls, during periods of economic upheaval they used their advantageous position to limit union influence and subdue labour unrest. These issues came to the fore when demand for paper fell during a sharp, deflationary global recession in the early 1920s.

During the First World War, union activity spread throughout Newfoundland. Industrial workers and public servants fought for wage increases to offset wartime inflation and profiteering which affected the price of coal and food.¹³⁷ In 1918, the Grand Falls chapter of the

¹³⁶ Cooper and Stoler, 7.

¹³⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 30 June 1917: 8; the Newfoundland Industrial Workers Association was founded in 1917 by Phillip Bennet, a machinist trained in Nova Scotia who was employed in the St. John's railway shops of the Reid-Newfoundland Co. NIWA protested the conditions inside factories and pressed the Reid-Newfoundland Co. for better wages on behalf of boiler makers, blacksmiths, car builders, cooks, stewards, and others. In 1917, NIWA consisted of just 35 members, but by 1918 membership in the union had swelled to over 3,500. That year, NIWA began publishing its own bi-weekly newspaper, the *Industrial Worker*. And in 1919, they formed an independent political party called the Workingmen's party. Local chapters were established throughout Newfoundland, including in Grand Falls, where a NIWA chapter was inaugurated in 1918. Peter S. McInnis, "Newfoundland Labour and World War I: The Emergence of the Newfoundland Industrial Worker's Association" (Master's Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1987).

Newfoundland Industrial Workers Association (NIWA) successfully lobbied the company to reduce the length of workers' shifts from eleven to eight hours.¹³⁸ However, this reduction was likely welcomed by the company since paper had begun accumulate in their warehouses on account of a lack of shipping tonnage. That same year, NIWA established a cooperative store in Grand Falls to help alleviate residents' high cost of living. Members of the Grand Falls chapter also stood in solidarity with their union when NIWA led a successful general strike against the Reid-Newfoundland Co.¹³⁹

In 1921, labour unrest affected Grand Falls directly. As demand for paper fell during a postwar recession, the company moved quickly to steady its declining profits by curtailing operations in Grand Falls. In March, the company reduced the length of the work week from six to five days. One month later, notice was given that wages were to be slashed by 33.5% for unskilled labourers and 20% for skilled labourers, a move affecting nearly 800 company employees.¹⁴⁰ An employee committee was quickly formed to negotiate with the company. The committee calculated that, together with a reduction in working hours and the high cost of living in Grand Falls, the new wage scale would leave workers with less than one dollar per day to feed and clothe their families and result in "semi-starvation for the great majority."¹⁴¹ Deputations

¹³⁸ *Daily Star*, 22 January 1918: 8.

¹³⁹ *Daily Star*, 2 April 1918: 8; during the spring of 1918, NIWA led a strike against the Reid-Newfoundland Co. when industrial workers employed at the St. John's railway shops walked off the job. The protest soon escalated into a general strike, allowing NIWA to broker a resolution that included modest wage increases and other gains. See Peter S. McInnis, "All Solid Along the Line: The Reid Newfoundland Strike of 1918," *Labour/Le Travail*, no. 26 (1990): 61-84. One of the arguments made by NIWA during the strike was that the Reid Co.'s rates of pay paled in comparison to those in Grand Falls, where specialized tradesmen, like boilermakers and electricians, earned almost twice as much. *Daily Star*, 6 April 1918: 1.

¹⁴⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 3 May 1921: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 18 May 1921: 6.

¹⁴¹ The crux of the committee's argument was that the company based its wages on conditions typical in Canada and the United States, without taking into account the high cost of living in Newfoundland, let alone in Grand Falls. They also blamed the company for these extraordinary conditions, arguing that the price of food and other goods was inflated owing to a lack of competition. Indeed, the company permitted only a handful of shops to operate in Grand Falls. *Evening Telegram*, 18 May 1921: 6.

from two local unions lobbied the company to reinstate normal wages while negotiations took place, but the company refused their request.¹⁴²

On May 7, paper makers demanded that their former rate of pay be reinstated or they would withdraw their labour. Two days later union members voted to strike, forcing the plant to close down.¹⁴³ Logging and shipping operations were also halted. In total, the strike affected over 2,000 men.¹⁴⁴ Employees who were not residents of Grand Falls had little choice but to return to the fishery.¹⁴⁵ Residents who remained claimed that the company was threatening to shut off light and water to the striking men's homes.¹⁴⁶ The company remained uncompromising and insisted that reductions in working hours and wages were unavoidable owing to a downturn in the paper markets. Nor were they sensitive to the plight of Grand Falls' residents. Asked by the committee to investigate the high cost of living in Newfoundland's interior, the company replied bluntly that "the spending of your money is entirely your own business, and does not concern us at all."¹⁴⁷ In the weeks that followed, union members wrote to the company directors

¹⁴² By 1921, Grand Falls workers were organized into two local unions: the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (Local 1097) and the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers (Local 63). A local of the International Brotherhood of Papermakers (Local 88) was formed in 1910 by skilled Canadian papermakers, but in 1913 Newfoundlander Alphonse Duggan helped form a local of the IBPSPMW in order to extend union membership to all industrial workers. Dufferin Sutherland, "A Social History of Pulpwood Logging in Newfoundland During the Great Depression" (Master's Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1988), 106.

¹⁴³ *Evening Telegram*, 18 May 1921: 6.

¹⁴⁴ A separate report claimed that men in Badger were continuing work at the reduced rate. *Evening Telegram*, 21 May 1921: 4; the *Daily Star* also reported that operations at Botwood and Badger were unaffected and that striking workers there and at Bishop's Falls had torn up their union constitution and had resumed work on the company's terms. *Daily Star*, 16 May 1921: 8; *Daily Star*, 28 May 1921: 10.

¹⁴⁵ At the height of the strike, the *Trade Review* published a notice that men were returning to the fishery in droves, observing that the "depression in employment on land may result in good in the long run and induce many young men to go back permanently to the time-honored occupation of the forefathers." Quoted in *Daily Star*, 27 June 1921: 4.

¹⁴⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 12 May 1921: 6.

¹⁴⁷ The company also claimed that a series of poor logging seasons had been detrimental to their operations. They were not able to get enough men during the 1918-19 season and suffered a poor harvest the following year owing to bad weather. The devaluation of currencies across Europe also meant that newspaper could be purchased in Finland and other European countries for less than it cost to manufacture in Newfoundland. *Evening Telegram*, 18 May 1921: 6.

in London and even appealed to Alfred Harmsworth directly, but neither was sympathetic to their cause.¹⁴⁸

The situation remained deadlocked through June and July. In the midst of the strike, employees publicized the fact that Alfred Harmsworth had hosted a dinner for 7,000 members of the Amalgamated Press in London, where over a mile of table was decorated with 18,000 tulips, and where 1,200 staff served and entertained guests. The cost of the dinner was a staggering £25,000.¹⁴⁹ However, support for the mill workers was not unanimous. As economic conditions grew steadily worse throughout Newfoundland, some workers criticized residents of the paper city for their seeming greed and lack of patriotism.¹⁵⁰ A settlement was reached early in August and it was announced that the paper mill would resume production.¹⁵¹ The strike was touted as a victory for unskilled workers who, in the end, received only a 22% reduction in wages instead of the 33.5% reduction imposed by the company. “If it was a victory it was a costly one,” observed the *Telegram*, “and it is a pity that the results could not have been achieved without the difficulties of a strike.”¹⁵²

¹⁴⁸ Instead, Alfred Harmsworth chastised his Newfoundland employees for not being “sensible” and trying “every method of negotiation” before striking. *Evening Telegram*, 21 May 1921: 8; the employee committee quickly seized on this invitation to re-open negotiations, which the company reluctantly did despite insisting that the wages offered were “rock bottom.” Four members from each of the local unions met with company officials who offered to reinstate a six day work week in exchange for accepting reduced wages. However, the committee insisted that their previous level of pay be restored. This counter-offer was flatly refused by the company, promptly ending negotiations. *Evening Telegram*, 25 May 1921: 9.

¹⁴⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 6 June 1921: 3.

¹⁵⁰ One rumour, for example, held that the Newfoundland strike was orchestrated by American union leaders as a way to harm British interests. Another writer defended the company, pointing out that they had paid out nearly \$130,000 a month in 1920 to employees at Grand Falls, Millertown, Badger and Botwood. “The trouble in Grand Falls,” they wrote, “is that pretty near everybody there has been living right up to the ‘hilt’ when times were flush, and now when depression has come they feel it keenly. Men here [in Botwood] are working on the 28 cents an hour basis and I have not heard many complain that they cannot live on that.” *Evening Telegram*, 17 June 1921: 3.

¹⁵¹ *Evening Telegram*, 6 August 1921: 4.

¹⁵² *Evening Telegram*, 16 August 1921: 7.

News that the strike was over came as a relief to many people across Newfoundland, including the government who saw it as “a sign of better things to come.”¹⁵³ But this enthusiasm was short lived. The company immediately began publishing warnings in local newspapers discouraging unemployed men from travelling inland in search of work.¹⁵⁴ Nonetheless, men flocked to Grand Falls, forcing the government to issue a statement of its own pointing out that it was “useless” to travel to Grand Falls without first having secured employment there.¹⁵⁵

1921 was a gruelling year for workers across Newfoundland. In addition to a poor fishery, storms wreaked havoc along the country’s coast in the lead up to winter.¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, the company made significant reductions to its logging operations since they now had a two year supply of logs on hand owing to the recession and strike.¹⁵⁷ The government began offering relief work in the form of road building and pit prop cutting, but was unable to keep up with the demand for work. In an effort to help revive the logging industry, they convinced the Harmsworths to increase their pulpwood harvest by allowing the company to cut wood from crown lands adjacent to the railway.¹⁵⁸ However, the company operated just 11 logging camps that year. In December, the *Telegram* reported dismally that, in view of the “cut in wages and the permanent boarding price, there is no longer anything in the moneymaking line at the Paper City.”¹⁵⁹ Relief work in the form of pulpwood cutting was resumed in the winter of 1922.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵³ *Evening Telegram*, 6 August 1921: 4.

¹⁵⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 8 August 1921: 4.

¹⁵⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 11 August 1921: 4.

¹⁵⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 15 November 1921: 4.

¹⁵⁷ Newspapers reported that 1,000 men instead of the usual 1,700 were needed in Grand Falls to support winter operations and that only 500 or 600 men were employed at Millertown and Badger instead of the usual 2,000. *Evening Telegram*, 22 August 1921: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 13 October 1921: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 19 October 1921: 7.

¹⁵⁸ Initially, the government considered contracting its own pulpwood harvest during the winter and marketing the wood themselves. *Evening Telegram*, 11 November 1921: 6; in the end, however, the Harmsworths agreed to cut an additional 30,000 cords of wood, taking 10,000 from their own land and 20,000 cords from crown lands along the railway. *Evening Telegram*, 30 November 1921: 4.

¹⁵⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 3 December 1921: 7; *Evening Telegram*, 12 May 1922: 4.

Although paternalism limited workers' ability to influence the company through labour action, the Grand Falls strike was nonetheless a defining moment for industrial workers in Newfoundland. Grand Falls became hub for union activity in the years that followed. In 1925, Joseph Smallwood founded the Newfoundland Federation of Labour in Grand Falls. From here, the future premier's influence radiated outwards as he established himself as a leading advocate for workers' rights in Newfoundland.¹⁶¹ Labour organization at Grand Falls also set an important precedent for future pulp and paper operations, including in Corner Brook on Newfoundland's west coast, where English industrialists established another paper mill and company town in 1925.¹⁶²

Building Self-reliance

An important adjunct to the paper industry was pulpwood logging. Supplying the Grand Falls mill was a massive endeavour involving hundreds of distributed and mobile labourers who traversed the island to cut, haul, and drive pulpwood. Logging operations began each winter, at which time pulpwood was cut and stacked in remote logging camps. The wood was then hauled by horse drawn sled to the shores of the Exploits River, where, once the ice cleared in the spring, rivermen steered the logs down the river towards the mill (Fig. 3.23 & Fig. 3.24).

¹⁶⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 15 July 1922: 4; the government also relied on Grand Falls to mitigate labour unrest elsewhere on the island. Following demonstrations by mobs of angry unemployed men in Carbonear and Harbour Grace in 1922, for example, the government arranged with the company to have 150 men sent to Grand Falls. *Evening Telegram*, 14 July 1922: 3.

¹⁶¹ Melvin Baker, "J. R. Smallwood: Labour and Socialist Leader," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (1999): 23-28.

¹⁶² Shortly after the mill opened in Corner Brook, the International Brotherhood of Papermakers protested the new company's decision to disallow men employed in Grand Falls from obtaining work in the west coast mill, and vice-versa. The two companies agreed to this proposal in order to prevent a competitive labour market. In a petition to the government, the union pressed lawmakers to enact collective bargaining laws to protect "workers in the right to organize and maintain trade unions or associations for the purpose of bettering labouring conditions" so that "no discrimination shall be made against men trying legitimately to better working conditions in this country." Petition by the International Brotherhood of Papermakers, Local 88, n.d., File 485.Q, Box 75, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.



Fig. 3.23, Hauling pulpwood with a horse-drawn sled in winter, ca. 1914. Item A 51-145, Water Edwards Davidson fonds, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Fig. 3.24, Log drive on the Exploits River, ca. 1910. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

Mobility was a defining feature of the logging industry. Indeed, seasonal variations necessitated a highly mobile workforce. The company even established a second townsite at

Millertown near Red Indian Lake to serve as a departure point for supplies and itinerant loggers travelling inland. Labour migrations were already a staple part of the inshore fishery. Sharemen, for example, often travelled outside their community to join a fishing-boat crew. And each year, thousands of fishermen travelled northward to join in the annual seal hunt.¹⁶³ Unlike labour migrations in the fishery, however, new mobilities in the paper industry were celebrated by social critics who believed that logging would discourage fisher's idleness by creating full-time employment on an ad hoc basis. Workers lucky enough to be employed cutting, hauling, and driving all in a single season could enjoy year-round employment by returning to the fishery in the spring. Wages paid by the company in Grand Falls were also comparatively high and—unlike in the fishery—loggers were paid in cash. In the spring of 1910, the first advertisements calling for experienced river drivers appeared in local newspapers, promising men \$1.75 to \$2.00 per day including board.¹⁶⁴ Loggers were expected to support their families back home and save their excess earnings, eliminating the need to provide winter relief to rural families, and building greater economic security in rural Newfoundland.¹⁶⁵

In ritual cycles, fishermen travelled to the interior in the late fall, returning to the coast each spring. Indeed, these migrations grew to such an extent that tensions soon emerged between the island's traditional economy and its landward industries, which now included lumbering, mining, and the on-going construction of branch railways. Logging operations commenced in 1908 and accelerated quickly after 1909. During the winter of 1910, 850 men were employed cutting pulpwood with the help of 220 horses. Rumours began to circulate that next year upwards

¹⁶³ Railway construction also employed a large number of domestic migratory workers, but this labour force was dispersed once construction of the railway ended in 1898. Other migrations occurred as a result of increased sawmilling towards the end of the nineteenth century and at Bell Island, where an iron ore mine was established during the 1890s.

¹⁶⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 31 May 1910: 1.

¹⁶⁵ Alfred Harmsworth emphasized this point in a speech in Grand Falls in 1908, declaring that the “very substantial earnings” of lumbermen would be a boon to their families back home. *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

of 2,000 men would be needed to supply the mill in Grand Falls.¹⁶⁶ In years when the conditions for cutting were good, a scarcity of fishermen was often feared; in years when the fishery was poor, coastal settlements were deserted by men in search of landward employment. At the height of these migrations, newspapers were quick to eulogize the demise of the fishery as men chose wage labour over taking up their nets and lines. By 1911, the *Evening Telegram* was already predicting that new sources of employment would be the downfall of Newfoundland's traditional economy and its way of life.¹⁶⁷

Another effective symbol of loggers' self-reliance was the logging camp. Indeed, log architecture appeared to embody the principle of self-sufficiency. Camp buildings were built in-situ from felled trees placed vertically in the ground or stacked horizontally with crossed-corners. Each camp had a bunkhouse, stable, filing shack, and a separate residence for the camp foreman. By 1908, the company had established 25 logging camps throughout the island's interior to house upwards of 1,000 migratory workers.¹⁶⁸ By 1913, the number of camps had grown to 67.¹⁶⁹

In her recent study of the American log cabin, Alison Hoagland argues that by "exhibiting qualities of self-reliance," log cabins formed part of a romantic national past pitting

¹⁶⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 14 January 1910: 4; initially, pulpwood loggers were outnumbered by men lumbering in the island's interior. For the 1910-11 season, the government inspector reported that 2,434 men were employed at 271 saw mills operating on crown land. These men, employed for nearly five months out of the year, earned \$25 per month on average. This balance soon shifted, however, after a second pulp mill was opened at Bishop's Falls by the Albert Reed Co. and as lumber grade wood became increasingly scarce. *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, 4th Session, 22nd General Assembly (St. John's: Evening Chronicle, 1912), 315A.

¹⁶⁷ The newspaper reported that: "[The cod-fishery] has from time to time immemorial been the central prop that supported the gross weight of our country's concerns, but this season more so than any in the past the attention that formerly was directed to its prosecution is shifted to fields anew [...]. We see thousands of dollars worth of fishing property lying idle, and we see the captains of these schooners and the owners of all this property compelled from want of help at their life vocation, and the life-long vocation of their father before them, to tarry along and build the branch railways, too." *Evening Telegram*, 18 May 1911: 2.

¹⁶⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 2 December 1908: 1.

¹⁶⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 14 March 1910: 4; B. Tulk, "Mr. B. Tulk Replies to 'Chopper'," *Evening Telegram*, 21 April 1913: 7.

pioneers against the unrelenting forces of wild nature.¹⁷⁰ Yet descriptions and memories of log cabins are also riddled with paradoxes. Log cabins were seen as a democratizing force by allowing almost anyone to create shelter, yet they were also associated with abject poverty. Log cabins were associated with a masculine pioneering spirit, even though women were more likely to occupy them throughout the day. And log cabins were often pictured as cozy and protective, even though many were leaky, cold, and overrun with pests on account of their rudimentary construction. Log architecture in turn-of-the-century Newfoundland exemplified these dualities. At times, log cabins were seen as impeding the upward trend of civilization: hovels, shacks, and lean-tos harbouring a degenerate underclass. Yet at other times, log architecture was seen as embryonic of working-class self-sufficiency. As Hoagland reminds us, the history of the log cabin is more about “values and perceptions than about the building itself.”¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Alison K. Hoagland, *The Log Cabin: An American Icon* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2018), 2. According to Hoagland, the metamorphosis of the log cabin into a romantic icon of American westward expansion occurred during the late nineteenth century, even though the log cabin itself was a transnational phenomenon used by societies all around the world.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 8.



Fig. 3.25, Tilt on Brigus Road, Conception Bay, Newfoundland, ca. 1885 (Photo: Simeon H. Parsons). Newfoundland and Labrador album of photographs by Simeon H. Parsons, Library and Archives Canada.



Fig. 3.26, Interior of a tilt, Fox Harbour, Newfoundland, 1893 (Photo: Eliot Curwen). Item IGA 5-10, International Grenfell Association photograph collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Log architecture was a quintessential expression of Newfoundland's fishing class. Log architecture in Newfoundland dates from at least the seventeenth century when structures known

locally as tilts were built by fishermen, woodsmen, and trappers who visited, but seldom inhabited, the island. These temporary, one room structures were made from un-sawn logs, chinked with moss, and roofed with bark or covered with sod (Fig. 3.25 & Fig. 3.26).¹⁷²

Log structures remained prevalent in outports after the establishment of a permanent population and throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Unlike the wood-framed dwellings and stone structures built by merchants and planters, log architecture remained an economic and environmental necessity for rural fishing families.¹⁷³ Log structures were convenient to build and replace. And remote tilts were used to hunt caribou, fish for salmon, and harvest wood. Some families even wintered overland to escape harsh winter conditions along the coast, living in tilts for four to seven months of the year. Occasionally, entire communities retreated inland, carrying cookware, provisions, and other supplies needed to last the winter.¹⁷⁴ According to one fisher, a tilt was a “poorly constructed log cabin with only one window, and a door, and a open fire place where the family meals were prepared. It was very smoky and dingy, but to me it was a home.”¹⁷⁵

In celebratory accounts, early log architecture represented fishermen’s triumph over the difficult financial and climatic conditions of the fishery. It also testified to fishers’ ingenuity and self-reliant attitudes. Tilts, as one journalist put it, were “the result of the need for making the

¹⁷² Widdowson, Story, and Kirwin, 567-68. The term tilt derives from the practice of setting a sail at an angle to provide shelter aboard a ship. Other variations included log structures built into the excavated side of a hill and covered over with sod to improve insulation and keep out the wind. Fishing rooms and stages which extended from the shoreline over the water were also typically made of small-diameter, unprocessed logs. See Shane O’Dea, “The Tilt: Vertical-Log Construction in Newfoundland,” *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, no. 1 (1982): 55-64; Mellin, *Tilting: House Launching, Slide Hauling, Potato Trenching, and Other Tales from a Newfoundland Fishing Village*, 155-82.

¹⁷³ Gerald Pocius writes that on Newfoundland’s south shore “two building traditions—those of merchants and fisherman—seemed to exist.” Pocius, “Architecture on Newfoundland’s Southern Shore: Diversity and the Emergence of New World Forms,” 220. After the beginning of the eighteenth century, coastal deforestation led an increasing number of homes to be built from imported building materials, including lumber, shingles, nails, and clapboard siding. *A Place to Belong: Community Order and Everyday Space in Calvert, Newfoundland*, 200.

¹⁷⁴ David Wegenast, “Special Section: The North Shore,” *Decks Awash* 9, no. 6 (1980): 5.

¹⁷⁵ Quoted in Samuel J. Ryan, “Eighty Years a Fisherman,” *Atlantic Guardian* 11, no. 3 (April-May 1954): 23.

best out of what was right at hand. The forest was there. Labor was cheap and any man (and many women too) who expected to make a living out of this land must be able to swing an axe.”¹⁷⁶ However, during the final decades of the nineteenth century, attitudes towards these rudimentary structures became embittered as Newfoundland’s leaders associated the fishery with national economic hardship, social backwardness, and a rapidly spreading public health crisis. Log architecture was also considered complicit according to this view. Tilts were associated with poor physical and moral health. “The following case will represent the conditions of thousands in Newfoundland,” wrote one newspaper, “here is a middle age or old woman living all alone in a one-room log cabin, with only a hole in the gable end for [a] window, receiving but thirty cents per day for washing and ironing [...]. Besides that, most of those people are affected with tuberculosis.”¹⁷⁷

In contrast, writers championed pulpwood logging for removing individuals from the fishery and counteracting its harmful economic and social practices. At the crux of this social project were loggers whose seeming self-reliance was equated with working-class improvement. In writing and photographs, migratory workers were transformed into a moral and healthy archetype for Newfoundland’s working class. In particular, loggers became a stereotype of the adaptable and resistant Newfoundlander – qualities instilled in them by modern industry and through their contact with nature. In 1909, Beach Thomas wrote:

¹⁷⁶ *Daily News*, 13 June 1956: 4.

¹⁷⁷ Delaney (Dr.), “Conditions of Fisher Folks: A Plan to Better Their Conditions,” *Western Star*, 22 May 1907: 3.

They disappear into the forest one autumn with axe and saw; they return in the spring with plank and beam [...]. By the sea or lake they themselves build the schooner, and later they themselves will sail her out into the northern seas, fight ice and wind and sea, and bring her home packed with fish. The thing is done in Newfoundland year after year, and no one so much as wonders [...]. The feat is not a rarity, a thing that the exceptional man does. It is the natural product of native wit left to the tutelage of woods and sea.¹⁷⁸

Nowhere was this initiative for self-help more evident than in logging camps, where camp life and camp architecture were valorized for their alleged modernity. Unlike tilts which were disparaged by reformers, log cabins built by loggers were treated as emblematic of workers' self-sufficiency and material progress. For one article, Beach Thomas provided a sketch of a logging camp, enlivened by the daily routines of loggers and complete with soft mosses underfoot and the sound of freshly fallen trees. No life, he surmised, "is more real but less crude than the logger's."¹⁷⁹ Among the buildings he inspected was a long bunkhouse for 20 or more men containing a kitchen and a store, as well as a stable, carpenter's shop, and a house built for the camp "skipper." The camp menu was also lavishly described by Beach Thomas who listed caribou meat, cranberry and blueberry jams, bread and cakes, and salted meats and fish. "It would be well if those who live in close rooms in the reek of towns or about the northern mines or even in country villages could see the home of the loggers and understand how much more the logger has even of the graces and comforts of life than hosts of the over-civilised."¹⁸⁰

Newfoundland-based writers also encouraged a romantic view of the forest industry. In particular, they argued that the industry had awakened fishers' innate, Anglo racial features, while helping transfer them to new and progressive occupations. In his highly polemical book *Newfoundland in 1911*, McGrath explained that the fishery had instilled Newfoundlanders with

¹⁷⁸ William Beach Thomas, "The River of Exploits," *Daily Mail*, 24 November 1909: 6 (reprinted in *Evening Telegram*, 14 December 1909: 3).

¹⁷⁹ William Beach Thomas, "The Loggers," *Daily Mail*, 23 November 1909: 6 (reprinted in *Evening Telegram*, 23 December 1909: 3).

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

the “energy, courage and self-reliance of the Saxon, coupled with the brilliancy and daring of the Celt.” He then lauded the “adaptability” of workers who migrated between the sea and the forest, writing that “they are equally at home in facing the hazards of the ocean’s surges, the risks and perils of the iron-ore mine, and in more recent times the log-drive.”¹⁸¹ To illustrate this point, he included a photograph of a “logger’s camp” taken by Robert Holloway, complete with rustic log cabin and gently smoking chimney.¹⁸² Several loggers appear resting near the cabin or are nestled into the surrounding forest (Fig. 3.27). They and their self-built cabin are testament to McGrath’s idealized vision of the self-made and self-reliant Newfoundlander – features which the island’s temperate interior had helped to restore.¹⁸³



Fig. 3.27, Logger’s camp, ca. 1910 (Photo: Robert E. Holloway). Patrick T. McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911*, facing p. 112.

¹⁸¹ McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century*, 205-06.

¹⁸² Neither of Holloway’s books identified this photograph as a view of a logging camp. Instead, the photograph appeared in a montage of images depicting camping scenes in Dildo Run and on the Humber River.

¹⁸³ McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century*, 205-06.

Romantic images and descriptions of logging camps soon were pervasive in Newfoundland, appearing in films, stamps, postcards, and books. In 1910, the *Daily Mail* produced a film entitled “Making a Newspaper” for screening in London that opened with a view of a typical Newfoundland logging camp.¹⁸⁴ At the same time, loggers and logging camps were popular subjects in North American and British literary productions that circulated in Newfoundland. An edition of the British *Royal Crown Readers* used in schools throughout Newfoundland even included a description of the wood “shanties” built by French Canadian lumbermen, informing children that “the shantyman leads a free, hearty, healthy life.”¹⁸⁵ Loggers were also popular characters, and logging camps popular settings, in Canadian and American films, many of which were screened in St. John’s at the Nickel and Majestic theatres.

Labour, Mobility, and Forestry

What these visualizations didn’t reveal, of course, was the actual experience of loggers or the conditions they encountered in Newfoundland’s interior. Mobility was liberating for some workers, but a hindrance to others. Fishermen were spread out across remote bays along the island’s shore. Some had to journey upwards of 50 kilometres to reach one of the railway’s branch lines before they could travel inland.¹⁸⁶ Accessing remote logging camps was not much easier as men travelled overland, usually on foot. Also unacknowledged by journalists, photographers, and other boosters were the physical dangers that accompanied forestry work. Deep snow and freezing temperatures made the work of cutting and hauling pulpwood difficult and dangerous. Newspapers were filled with reports of woodsmen being maimed by axes, drowned while traversing thin ice, or lost in the forest. Log piles were prone to collapse; sleds

¹⁸⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 9 August 1910: 7.

¹⁸⁵ *The Royal Crown Readers, Sixth Book* (London: T. Nelson, 1916), 40.

¹⁸⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 20 March 1912: 5.

piled high with logs could easily tip over; and trees accidentally felled in the wrong direction crushed men beneath them. River driving was especially precarious as men who attempted to steer logs downstream and dislodge jams could easily drown if they slipped into the water.

Employment opportunities in the logging industry were also inconsistent. And, like the fishery, the industry was vulnerable to macroeconomic factors. Men who travelled to the interior in search of work were often told that no such work was available. As early as 1909, the company began placing advertisement in local newspapers discouraging job seekers from travelling to the interior as groups of unemployed men were already idling around Grand Falls.¹⁸⁷ And despite the high wages paid to loggers, deductions for room and board and pervasive gambling meant that many men returned home with little or nothing to show for their efforts. Added to these problems was the fact that loggers were paid per cord, rather than a daily wage, so that their wages depended greatly on the quality of the woods they were assigned to cut. Typically, wood lots were cut in rotation to promote equal opportunity. However, some camp operators reserved the better woods for experienced cutters in an effort to maximize productivity. Many camps also contained company stores, where men could purchase goods against their future wages, much like the truck system that existed in the fishery.¹⁸⁸

Newfoundland's logging industry was hard hit during and after the First World War. A lack of shipping tonnage in wartime forced the company to curtail its papermaking and logging operations. In March of 1918, the company announced that it was closing down the greater part of their works in Grand Falls, a move affecting 700 workers in the city alone.¹⁸⁹ Fortunately, the price of fish rose as a result of wartime inflation. In 1917, high prices and a large catch even led

¹⁸⁷ *Western Star*, 9 June 1909: 2.

¹⁸⁸ Anonymous, "Logging Camps," in *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, ed. Joseph R. Smallwood, Cyril F. Poole, and Robert Cuff (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1991), 358-61.

¹⁸⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 30 September 1915: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 8 March 1918: 4, 10.

some writers to lament how a prosperous fishery might lead men to resume a pattern of idleness during the winter and result in future labour shortages in the logging industry.¹⁹⁰

Their fear proved to be unfounded, however, as did politicians' faith in the ability of the logging industry to absorb Newfoundland's excess labour. In the midst of a worldwide, postwar recession, thousands of men travelled to Newfoundland's interior in search of work at the same time as others, destitute as a result of their journey, were returning home. By 1920, the company's payroll for loggers had climbed to \$60,000. However, a poor fishery that year combined with inflated food prices caused widespread unemployment and poverty across the country.¹⁹¹ Men began arriving in droves in Grand Falls, where, as far as the company was concerned, the supply of labour "greatly exceeds demand."¹⁹² In an effort to ward off job seekers, the company publicized the fact that they had recently laid off some 300 men and that another 100 would be laid off by the end of the year. "Unnecessary misery, hardship and expense may be avoided if men seeking employment will make sure of a job before coming here," they warned, adding that "there is a large number of men walking around Grand Falls who cannot get work. Some of them are here for weeks."¹⁹³ One report estimated that as many as 10,000 men journeyed to the interior in search of work in 1920 alone.¹⁹⁴ Tales of misfortune soon began to appear in the local press. In Placentia, 30 men returned from Grand Falls in "destitute circumstances" after failing to find work there. Having lost all their money as a result of the journey, the men beseeched their local elected officials for a loan of supplies so that they could return to the fishery.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1917: 5.

¹⁹¹ *Evening Telegram*, 29 January 1920: 6.

¹⁹² W. J. Walsh, "No Employment at Grand Falls," *Evening Telegram*, 19 October 1920: 8.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 13 September 1920: 4.

¹⁹⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 12 May 1921: 6.



Fig. 3.28, Lumbermen's camp at Badger Brook, ca. 1910 (Photo: James P. Howley). Robert C. Hollett and William J. Kirwin, *An Album of James P. Howley's Photographs* (St. John's: Memorial University English Language Research Centre, 2010).

Conditions in camps were also considerably different from those described in promotions. Standing in contrast to these official views is a candid photograph of a logging camp near Badger Brook taken by James Howley around 1910. The whole scene appears decidedly ruinous. In lieu of men posing with axes and tools, a single figure (probably the camp cook) with a dog at his knees poses for the camera in a clearing in the woods studded with tree stumps. Beyond is an imposing bunkhouse with a few narrow slits in its walls for ventilation and light (Fig. 3.28). Indeed, camp buildings were built by contractors who sought to maximize their profits by minimizing quality. In 1913, one logger complained that neither the camp buildings nor horse sheds were “fit for man or beast to live in,” citing one example where a bunkhouse was so poorly built that water streamed into the men’s beds. “Then there is the demoralizing

influences that are carried on in the camps,” he wrote, “such as drinking, swearing, gambling and Sabath-breaking [*sic.*].”¹⁹⁶

Conditions were made worse by vermin and disease which spread easily in crowded bunkhouses, where only a bare minimum sanitation was provided.¹⁹⁷ Men often had to share bunks which they stacked with tree boughs in order to keep warm during the winter, rather than pay an additional fee to the company for blankets.¹⁹⁸ One labourer complained that he often awoke to find his clothes frozen to the side of the bunkhouse after lying on hard and knotty boughs all night. He testified that the company charged \$2.30 for a pair of blankets and an additional 30 to 40 cents per month for doctor’s services, not including medicine.¹⁹⁹ Shortages of food and medicine were another difficulty. All supplies had to be transported by rail to the interior before being transported overland to remote lumber camps. In an effort to minimize their operating costs, the Reid-Newfoundland Co. reduced the frequency of rail service in Newfoundland’s interior, making it increasingly difficult to supply logging camps.²⁰⁰ The “doctor’s box,” where medicine was stored, could remain empty for months at a time.²⁰¹ And logger’s diets were rumoured to consist of little more than “peas, pudding, a few beans and a few old and rotten potatoes.”²⁰²

¹⁹⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 1 March 1913: 3; in another editorial, one representative defended the company against these accusations, retorting that the plaintiff was a foreman employed by the company and that his observations were either false or not typical of other camps. B. Tulk, “Mr. B. Tulk Replies to ‘Chopper’,” *Evening Telegram*, 21 April 1913: 7.

¹⁹⁷ Beginning in 1909, the company refused to hire men who had not received their vaccinations. *Evening Telegram*, 23 February 1909: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 3 March 1909: 8; after numerous outbreaks of smallpox in 1920, the company instituted a voluntary and free vaccination program. Public notice re: voluntary vaccination, 15 & 17 April 1920, File GN 8.126, Box 12, Richard Anderson Squires sous fonds, OPMF-PANL; H. F. Fitzgerald to Richard A. Squires, 21 April 1920, File GN 8.126, Box 12, Richard Anderson Squires sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

¹⁹⁸ Edwards Connors reported that 42 men shared one bunkhouse near Bishop’s Falls in 1915. “Bad Conditions in Logging Camps,” (newspaper clipping, *Mail and Advocate*, 30 December 1915), GFHS.

¹⁹⁹ “Froze to Side of Camp,” (newspaper clipping, *Daily Mail*, 9 March 1914), GFHS.

²⁰⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 29 January 1920: 6.

²⁰¹ *Evening Telegram*, 1 March 1913: 3.

²⁰² “Complaint of Treatment in Lumber Camps,” (newspaper clipping, *Fishermen’s Advocate*, 10 May 1913), GFHS.

Industry boosters were not ignorant of these problems. Similar working conditions were reported in Canada's forest industry, from British Columbia to the Maritimes.²⁰³ "Shantymen" in the Ottawa River Valley, for example, performed equally dangerous work while living in appalling conditions for half the year. The plight of these labourers was even cause for concern among several Canadian churches.²⁰⁴ Not long after the Grand Falls mill opened, local game wardens also reported that large numbers of caribou were being destroyed during the winter by men at logging camps.²⁰⁵ Lumber contractors, they claimed, could obtain food more cheaply this way and thus increase their profits. They proposed a system of game licenses to check these "gross abuses."²⁰⁶

Amid a growing number of complaints by loggers over wages and the conditions in logging camps, union leader and political figure William Coaker proposed legislation to regulate the pay, food, and lodging of men in the logging industry. In its original form, Coaker's Act to Regulate the Employment of Men Engaged in Logging stipulated rates of pay for loggers and appointed government inspectors to monitor conditions in camps. The proposed act outlined fifteen specific requirements, including that the company supply loggers with a list of meals; provide them with axes free of charge; install at least one bath tub with warm water; and conduct mandatory weekly medical inspections at no additional cost. In particular, the legislation identified camp architecture as an area in need of reform. In addition to specifying that camp

²⁰³ Graeme Wynn, *Timber Colony: A Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1981); Ian Walter Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980* (Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1987); Ken Drushka, *Working in the Woods: A History of Logging on the West Coast* (Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 1992); Donald MacKay, *The Lumberjacks*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: Dundurn, 2007).

²⁰⁴ David Lee, *Lumber Kings and Shantymen: Logging, Lumber and Timber in the Ottawa Valley* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 2006), 157-96.

²⁰⁵ *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, 2nd Session, 22nd General Assembly (St. John's: Evening Chronicle, 1910), 393A.

²⁰⁶ *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, 3rd Session, 22nd General Assembly (St. John's: Evening Chronicle, 1911), 527A-528A; similar complaints were renewed in 1920 when a member of the House of Assembly accused the company of killing deer on the Howley Reserve in order to feed men in Millertown and Badger. The company vehemently denied these accusations. *Evening Telegram*, 18 November 1920: 12.

buildings should be covered with boards, sheathed in felt paper, and made water-tight, the bill required bunkhouses to be properly heated and that the company provide beds, blankets, and mattresses to their occupants free of charge.²⁰⁷

Coaker's efforts were frustrated by the government with the help of propagandists like McGrath who argued that the proposed bill was impossible to enforce since it did not account for the accommodation of inspectors. He also claimed that Coaker had not presented sufficient evidence in the form of testimony that his proposed reforms were even needed.²⁰⁸ After a second reading of the proposed legislation, the Premier—Edward P. Morris—expressed support for the bill, but cautioned that some revisions would be necessary.²⁰⁹ The bill was then sent to a select committee in the Upper House who found it entirely unworkable. This conclusion incensed Coaker. He launched a tirade against members of the Legislative Council (including McGrath), calling them enemies of Newfoundland's working class.²¹⁰ In the ensuing political turmoil, labourers accused the government of bending to the will of the company in Grand Falls who they suspected of privately lobbying the government to defeat the legislation.²¹¹

An amended version of Newfoundland's first Logging Act was passed in June 1915. But the revised bill did not include any of the minimum rates of pay stipulated by Coaker and provided insufficient inspectors. Many of the logging industry's worst practices persisted up until the 1930s when the legislation was revised.²¹² Still, a 1933 Royal Commission into the state

²⁰⁷ "Mr. Coaker's Logging Bill," (newspaper clipping, *Daily Mail*, 14 February 1914), GFHS.

²⁰⁸ McGrath was a staunch supporter of the government of Edward P. Morris, to whom Coaker was often a thorn. He was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1912 and voiced his opposition to Coaker's act in the *St. John's Evening Herald*, a newspaper for which he served as editor. "The Logging Bill," (newspaper clipping, *Evening Herald*, 7 March 1914), GFHS; "Their Justification," (newspaper clipping, *Evening Herald*, 10 March 1914), GFHS.

²⁰⁹ "Yesterday at the House," (newspaper clipping, *Evening Herald*, 24 February 1914), GFHS.

²¹⁰ "Coaker Roasts the Council For Killing the Logger's Bill," (newspaper clipping, *Daily Mail*, 7 March 1914), GFHS.

²¹¹ "Defeat of Logger's Bill!," (newspaper clipping, *Plaindealer*, 14 March 1914), GFHS.

²¹² The final act incorporated many of Coaker's recommendation, including minimum standards for camp buildings and the appointment of government inspectors to monitor conditions. Although the act attempted to protect workers

of the colony's economic affairs found that persistently low paper prices encouraged exploitation in the logging industry. The report concluded that, owing to high fees charged for lodging, medical services, and transportation, opportunities to earn a comfortable living in Newfoundland's logging industry were minimal at best.²¹³

Primitiveness and Culture

Working conditions in Newfoundland's forest industry were also obscured by the evocation of camp architecture in different cultural spheres. To elites, log architecture projected mobility as an emancipatory force and bespoke fishermen's innate self-reliance, which industrial labour had helped to restore. This view was corroborated by a series of highly visible projects that used log architecture to create lavish hotels, sumptuous residences, and other public monuments. Indeed, log architecture multiplied in private and public settings after the beginning of the twentieth century. However, unlike rudimentary camp buildings, gentrified log cabins combined the material and formal expression of log architecture with levels of comfort and privilege virtually unknown to working-class individuals.

By the late 1890s, log cabins built for visiting tourists and sportsmen had begun to appear throughout the island's interior, usually within reach of the newly completed railway. For American and European back-to-nature enthusiasts, these rudimentary accommodations were an

from exploitive wage practices, it did not go so far as to specify minimum rates of pay. *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1915), 87-91; during the 1930s, conditions in logging camps deteriorated further as a result of the Great Depression. Dufferin Sutherland, "'The Men Went to Work by the Stars and Returned by Them': The Experience of Work in the Newfoundland Woods During the 1930s," *Newfoundland Studies* 7, no. 2 (1991): 143-72. A 1931 Health and Public Welfare Act reiterated many of the requirements of the 1915 act, including that camp operators supply loggers with mattresses and blankets, meet minimum standards with respect to sanitation and bunk house construction, and provide access to physicians in camps. Camps were also subject to regular monthly inspections. An amendment to the Loggers Act passed that same year dictated minimum rates of pay for men hired to drive and cut logs. *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: David R. Thistle, 1931), 256-265, 444-447.

²¹³ *Newfoundland Royal Commission 1933: Report* (London: H.M.S.O., 1933), 144.

essential part of the virile portrait of masculinity at the heart of romantic tourism. Fishing and hunting in the woods while roughing-it in log cabins reaffirmed the self-reliance of wealthy men who normally sat at desks, were waited on by servants, or spent their time directing other people's labour. Romantic tourism's influence on architecture is epitomized by the extensive hotels and park amenities built in national parks throughout Canada and the United States which used log construction to stir pioneering emotions in park visitors.²¹⁴ Similarly, rustic log cabins featured prominently in Newfoundland's burgeoning touristic press. Advertisements for log cabin accommodations appeared in railway brochures, journal articles, and monographs which attempted to lure tourists to the island with the promise of unspoilt wilderness (Fig. 3.29).²¹⁵



Fig. 3.29, Sportsmen at a log cabin on the Salmonier River. Richard Hibbs, *Newfoundland for Business and Pleasure* (St. John's: s.n., 1925), 12.

²¹⁴ On the architecture of American national parks see Macy and Bonnemaïson, 71-135; Hoagland, 195-226. Canadian national parks were no exception. The Canadian National Railway operated several summer resorts, where tourists were accommodated in log cabins, including the immense and lavish Jasper Park Lodge.

²¹⁵ Gerald Pocius, "Tourists, Health Seekers and Sportsmen: Luring Americans to Newfoundland in the Early Twentieth Century," in *Twentieth-Century Newfoundland: Explorations*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (St. John's: Breakwater, 1994), 47-77.

One of the most advertised buildings in this press was the Log Cabin hotel established by four Englishmen on Newfoundland's west coast towards the end of the nineteenth century.²¹⁶ The hotel was an immediate success and attracted many tourists from England and the United States during the summer months. Constructed entirely from logs stripped of their bark, the hotel's architecture—one visitor noted—evoked a pleasant nostalgia for the now closed western frontier. "Designated by the expressive name of the Log Cabin," they wrote, the hotel reminded visitors "of dear old Uncle Tom and the days that are gone forever [...]. The walls are not decorated with paper, no carpets collect the dreadful germs, no costly furniture, upholstered in gaudy colors, offends the eye. All is in keeping with the name" (Fig. 3.30).²¹⁷ A Canadian writer described the hotel even more vividly:

Think of the prettiest country club you know, and this is prettier; breathe the purest, most balmy air you can and the air about the Log Cabin is better; go a-fishing elsewhere and then come here to do it more delightfully; smoke the pipe of peace anywhere on earth, and last of all come to [the] Log Cabin, curl up in a giant arm-chair that takes you in, feet and all, watch the little fragrant spruce logs flicker and smoulder in the cavernous brick fire-place, study the soft coloring of the great beams of the ceiling and the satin sheen of the stripped log walls, here and there good photos, engravings, bits of quaint pottery, furniture, mortised and bolted together, stiff settees or roomy rockers, neat little writing tables, a few choice books, primitiveness and culture.²¹⁸

The hotel's "primitiveness" belied its numerous, modern conveniences. These included a private railway platform and telegraph office, dining rooms, conservatories, tennis courts, and even a golf links.²¹⁹ After the original building was destroyed by fire early in 1910, the hotel was

²¹⁶ The hotel partnership was comprised of Charles Edmund Pawlett, Charles Edward Dodd, Frederick Hamilton Lane, and Charles Cecil Martyn. Pawlett retired from the company in 1904. The hotel's exact date of completion is unknown. A photograph of the Log Cabin appeared in a Christmas annual published in 1899. And one guide book later reported that 100 guests had visited the Log Cabin as early as 1900. Richard Hibbs, *Newfoundland for Business and Pleasure* (St. John's: s.n., 1925), 181.

²¹⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 19 July 1905: 3.

²¹⁸ *Western Star*, 5 October 1904: 3.

²¹⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 11 November 1905: 3.

replaced with a three-storey log structure.²²⁰ The new Log Cabin hotel featured modern plumbing and electric lighting and had 17 bedrooms, two sun parlours, a smoking and dance room, and bathrooms with hot and cold running water. Spacious living rooms on the ground floor contained open fireplaces and were flanked by covered verandas facing south and north (Fig. 3.31). By 1921, the hotel charged a rate of \$3.50 per night – more than half a week’s pay for most loggers.²²¹

Log architecture also highlighted the physically and socially regenerative effect of Newfoundland’s climate by creating recreational and economic opportunities within the island’s landscape. For \$6.00 a day, guests at the Log Cabin were supplied with a room, guide, and fishing and hunting provisions so that they could make excursions into the surrounding forests, where the hotel owners maintained a number of smaller log cabins at fishing pools along the nearby Harry’s River.²²² Likewise, guidebooks touted the healthy benefits of the resort, where exposure to a “bracing atmosphere” was said to cure nervous complaints, insomnia, and even malaria.²²³ The hotel owners even established a small farm on the property, where they imported

²²⁰ *Western Star*, 26 January 1910: 1; by the spring of 1910, a new hotel was being planned on a site opposite the previous hotel. The building was completed that summer but it, too, burnt to the ground just weeks later when a chimney overheated and set fire to the building. *Evening Telegram*, 13 May 1910: 4; *Western Star*, 6 September 1910: 2; *Evening Telegram*, 5 September 1910: 6; the new hotel was operated by Richard Whittington and his sister. In 1942, the Log Cabin hotel was destroyed by fire once again. And in 1944 the building and property were put up for sale. *Western Star*, 13 February 1942: 1; *Western Star*, 15 January 1944: 14.

²²¹ One logger claimed that wages ranged from \$22 to \$26 per month in 1915. “Bad Conditions in Logging Camps,” (newspaper clipping, *Mail and Advocate*, 30 December 1915), GFHS.

²²² *The Log Cabin and Bay St. George Hotels, Newfoundland*, (London: Waterlow & Sons Ltd., [1900]).

²²³ *Ibid.*, 11.

and raised livestock.²²⁴ To the delight of guests, they captured and domesticated several young caribou that remained on the hotel grounds and could be handled like pet dogs.²²⁵

Images and descriptions of private buildings constructed from logs helped authenticate the log cabin as a modern archetype for Newfoundland, especially among those who could afford their luxuries. Images of the Log Cabin hotel were pervasive. Postcards featuring the hotel were printed and sold in St. John's and photographs of the hotel were reproduced in Christmas annuals, travel books, newspapers, and railway folders, where the hotel was often a star attraction. Indeed, the hotel's success led politicians to imagine a series of similar hotels strung across the island; a prospect spurring road building efforts on Newfoundland's west coast during the 1920s.²²⁶ This was followed by a "modern, up-to-date and comfortable" club house designed in the log cabin style and completed for the Corner Brook Golf Club in 1929.²²⁷ An elitist obsession with rustic architecture was reflected in the design of private residences as well. Among the most famous log residences was that of Victor Campbell at Black Duck Brook, a popular destination for sport and recreation near St. George's Bay, and where Campbell took up life as a gentlemen farmer. He based the design of his home on sketches in the American architect William S. Wicks' book *Log Cabins and Cottages*.²²⁸

²²⁴ *Western Star*, 2 October 1900: 4; in 1905, Dodd imported a single Merino ram. By 1909, he was operating a small ranch with over 500 head of livestock imported from Scotland, as well as a number of shepherds and sheep dogs. *Evening Telegram*, 13 October 1905: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 3 September 1909: 7; *Western Star*, 20 January 1909: 4; the hotel owners also purchased incubators so that turkeys and chickens could be hatched on the property. *Western Star*, 28 May 1901: 4.

²²⁵ *Western Star*, 2 October 1900: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 22 May 1908: 3; Dood also exported several caribou to the United States in 1907 and 1908 for stocking purposes. *Evening Telegram*, 4 October 1907: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 22 May 1908: 3.

²²⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 13 March 1925: 8-9; the Newfoundland Board of Trade also promoted the construction of log cabins as way to further develop the tourist trade. *Western Star*, 13 February 1935: 1.

²²⁷ The building had running water and was surrounded by an open veranda. *Western Star*, 26 June 1929: 5; during the early 1940s, the owners of the pulp and paper mill in Corner Brook built Dhoon Lodge as a private company retreat. It, too, featured a large log cabin and was located on a small farm. The lodge began operating as a tourist resort in the late 1940s.

²²⁸ Pocius, "Tourists, Health Seekers and Sportsmen: Luring Americans to Newfoundland in the Early Twentieth Century," 64.



Fig. 3.30, The Log Cabin hotel, Spruce Brook, ca. 1900. *The Log Cabin and Bay St. George Hotels* (London: Waterlow & Sons Ltd., n.d.), 10.



Fig. 3.31, Interior view of the new Log Cabin hotel, Spruce Brook, ca. 1910. Simeon H. Parsons, *Newfoundland Views* (St. John's: S. H. Parsons & Sons, [1910]), n.p.

Other log structures shed romantic light on the logging industry by virtue of their proximity to it. In 1907, the company in Grand Falls erected a two-storey, 17-room Log House for its managing director, Mayson Beeton. The interior of the Log House was an idealized portrait of Newfoundland's interior, complete with undressed fir and spruce logs, hunting trophies, and furniture made from caribou antlers. These rustic adornments were then civilized through the addition of electric lighting, indoor plumbing, and a steam heating system (Fig. 3.32 & Fig. 3.33).²²⁹ "The log cabin they call it," one visitor observed, "but log castle would be more fitting."²³⁰ In addition to associating the logging industry as a whole with material progress for Newfoundland, images and descriptions of the Log House helped sanctify the company's logging practices by idealizing its spaces of labour. The house sat atop a hill and commanded a panoptic view of the townsite and mill below. At the base of the hill was a sporting ground, known as Log House field, where the company hosted its annual, anniversary sports, including events like log rolling that depicted the dangerous work of river driving as a form of popular entertainment. Parallels between log architecture, forestry labour, and the revitalization of Newfoundland's working class were echoed by contemporary writers. In 1924, for example, a collection of poems by British émigré Peter C. Mars contained a verse called "Log Cabin," to which he appended a photograph of a rustic log structure in the interior. In another poem, Mars glorified the self-reliant capabilities of the "all-round" Newfoundland labourer, drawing special attention to the dangerous work of river driving.²³¹

²²⁹ *Western Star*, 7 August 1907: 4.

²³⁰ J. M. Allan, "Progress at Grand Falls," *Western Star*, 20 June 1906: 4.

²³¹ Peter C. Mars, *The Call of Terra Nova* (London: Whitehead Morris Ltd., 1924), 28-30, 51-52.



Fig. 3.32, The Log House, Grand Falls, ca. 1907. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.



Fig. 3.33, Interior view of the Log House, Grand Falls, ca. 1907. Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society.

At the same time, log architecture became an exportable advertisement for the economic and social successes of Newfoundland's national policy. At both the Festival of Empire in 1911 and the British Empire Exhibition in 1924, organizers proposed erecting log cabins as part of Newfoundland's display. And in 1924, a log cabin was included in a memorial park designed to commemorate Newfoundland's participation in the Great War.

In 1919, Newfoundland's government appointed Lieutenant-Colonel T. Nangle to superintend the creation of a memorial park near Beaumont Hamel.²³² Nangle commissioned the Dutch landscape architect Rudolph Cochius to complete the design. Meant to commemorate the 324 members of the Newfoundland regiment lost during the 1916 Somme offensive, Cochius conceived the memorial as an exposition of the island's forested interior. He planted the site with 35,000 trees native to the island, including white spruce, birch, dog wood, and berry-bushes, and junipers – some 5,000 of which were even imported from Newfoundland.²³³ Crowning the 40 acre site was a bronze caribou (the symbol of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment) which Cochius placed at the top of a steeply sloping outcrop (Fig. 3.34). Also nestled in this forest was a two-storey log cabin designed as a resting place for visitors and surrounded by covered verandas on three sides (Fig. 3.35).

²³² Beaumont Hamel was the site of a disastrous attempt by British-led forces to break through German lines during the Somme offensive in June-July 1916. The Newfoundland Regiment was nearly wiped out as a result of the offensive. Out of a total of 801 men, 324 members were killed or declared missing and another 386 were wounded. Sean T. Cadigan, *Death on Two Fronts: National Tragedies and the Fate of Democracy in Newfoundland, 1914-34* (Toronto: Allen Lane, 2013), 123-52.

²³³ Anonymous, "Newfoundland's Fallen: Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel," *The Veteran* 3, no. 1 (1923): 17.



Fig. 3.34, Rudolph Cochius, Sketch of Newfoundland war memorial at Beaumont Hamel. Rudolph H. K. Cochius, "Marking the Trail of the Caribou," *The Veteran* 4, no. 1 (April, 1924), 18.

According to Robert Harding, planting trees in Beaumont Hamel reflected a desire on the part of authorities to inter missing soldiers in Newfoundland by claiming the site as an extension of their homeland.²³⁴ However, the wealth of references connecting the park to Newfoundland's interior suggests another reading of this act. By transforming the former battleground into an ersatz portrait of the island's forested interior—complete with log cabin—authorities equated the hardened determination exhibited by Newfoundlanders on the battlefield with the same self-reliant impulses that had helped modernize their country through the rise of pulpwood logging. Indeed, as British Field Marshal Douglas Haig remarked in 1926, the memorial was "curiously typical of those dogged and resolute qualities which the people of Newfoundland share in full measure with the other British peoples of the Empire," including "the manhood of the Home

²³⁴ Robert J. Harding, "Glorious Tragedy: Newfoundland's Cultural Memory of the Attack at Beaumont Hamel, 1916-1925," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 21, no. 1 (2006): 3-40.

Country and of each of the Dominions” which “combined to drive before them the enemies of the Empire.”²³⁵

The forested park and log cabin at Beaumont Hamel were a material manifestation of this belief. Made from logs imported from Newfoundland, the cabin’s interior was decorated with munitions and memorabilia which sat atop the mantle of a large, stone fireplace, as well as hunting trophies suspended from the walls (Fig. 3.36).²³⁶ These features linked the cabin to the surrounding park—where trenches, dug-outs, and even the wreckage of several airplanes were incorporated into the design—but also a British faith in the redeeming capabilities of landscape through an evocation of masculine leisure and labour.²³⁷ Indeed, Newfoundland loggers were integral to the war effort. Many loggers served overseas as members of the Newfoundland Forestry Corps and were employed cutting wood in Scotland, where camp life was ruled with military discipline.²³⁸ In recognition of loggers’ contributions, the National War Memorial unveiled in St. John’s in 1924 contained four figures at its base: two soldiers carrying arms; one fisherman donning oilskins; and one lumberman standing with an axe perched on his shoulder. Similarly, the memorial park was a plethora of symbols, signifying the self-reliant capabilities of Newfoundlanders, and adding to the belief that industrial progress and principled moral action were commensurate in Newfoundland. It was a portent of Newfoundland’s racial progress. This sentiment was echoed by General Haig who, in a message to the government, proclaimed that the courageous sacrifice by Newfoundlanders was evidence that they were indeed “worthy of the highest traditions of the British race.”²³⁹

²³⁵ Quoted in Thomas Nangle, "Newfoundland Memorial Park: Beaumont Hamel," *The Veteran* 5, no. 3 (1926): 9.

²³⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 27 June 1925: 7.

²³⁷ Rudolph H. K. Cochius, "Marking the Trail of the Caribou," *The Veteran* 4, no. 1 (1924): 16-24.

²³⁸ *Western Star*, 2 January 1918: 1

²³⁹ Quoted in *Daily Star*, 6 August 1917: 15.



Fig. 3.35, The log cabin at Beaumont Hamel, France, ca. 1925. Item B 3-32, MG 110, The Great War Photograph collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Fig. 3.36, Interior view of the log cabin at Beaumont Hamel, France, ca. 1926. Item A 59-59, GN 2.5.464, Imperial War Graves Commission, Office of the Colonial Secretary fonds – Special Files, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Forestry labour in early twentieth-century Newfoundland was a contested experience. Colonial elites associated the forestry industry with economic self-reliance since it appeared to liberate fishermen from their seasonal and financial dependencies. For working-class individuals, however, forestry also underscored the unequal and hazardous practices of early industrial labour. Recounting the experience of migratory workers reveals how networks of labour at once destabilized cultural traditions and reincorporated them in novel ways. Rather than deemphasizing the island's traditional economy, as lawmakers had hoped, logging heightened its experience by causing rural fishermen to embark on new seasonal and geographic migrations within the island's interior. It also reproduced many structural inequalities endemic to rural Newfoundland.

These developments were not apparent to elites who romanticized forestry workers and their spaces of labour. One effective symbol in this regard was the log cabin. Log cabins allowed the contradictory experience of labourers to be figuratively resolved through a series of images that established a homology between industrial labour and vernacular culture, obfuscating the reality of forestry workers. Similarly, log architecture was instrumental in theorizing and recouping Newfoundlander's intrinsic self-reliance – a virtue instilled in them by the demanding and frugal life of the fishery. By viewing self-built architecture as a locus for Newfoundland's progress, writers and image makers transmuted fishermen's self-reliance into wage paying industrial occupations and fishermen themselves into socially and economically progressive citizens of the empire.

Chapter 4 — Country and Estate: Designing Agriculture in Newfoundland

In addition to creating landscapes in Grand Falls in the form of open spaces, athletic grounds, and private gardens, the company established a model farm and dairy to supply the growing community with fresh produce and milk (Fig. 4.1).¹ Management of the farm was entrusted to Albert J. Bayly, an acquaintance of James Howley's and a former student at the Agricultural College in Truro, Nova Scotia.² In 1907, the first ten acres at the farm were ploughed and placed under cultivation. By 1909, the model farm was an exhibition of the latest scientific agricultural practices. The company solicited the advice of agriculturalists and other specialists, imported livestock and seeds from the Harmsworths' farm holdings in England, and submitted soil and vegetable samples to laboratories for testing. Alfred Harmsworth predicted that the company's agricultural "experiment" would soon supply all of Grand Falls' needs.³

¹ *Evening Telegram*, 18 September 1906: 5.

² *Western Star*, 7 August 1907: 4; Bayly began his agricultural career in Deer Lake, where he established Halcyon farm and successfully grew wheat. He was well versed in the latest agricultural practices which he often wrote about, making frequent references to the latest developments at Canadian experimental farms. Albert J. Bayly, "Mr. Bayley [*sic.*] Writes on Farming," *Evening Telegram*, 24 April 1906: 2.

³ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.



Fig. 4.1, Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company's dairy farm, Grand Falls, ca. 1940. Item PF-050.004, Phyllis Cameron Photograph collection, Maritime History Archive, Memorial University.

Agriculture was central feature of Newfoundland's national policy. Indeed, one of the arguments behind the country's railway was that it would give access to new territory in the island's interior, where a milder climate and fertile, deep soils were thought to be conducive to intensive farming. In particular, national policy advocates believed that cultivation would diversify Newfoundland's economy away from the fishery, while lessening its dependence on imported foodstuffs. Some believed that Newfoundland could even become self-sustaining agriculturally.

By hypothetically supplying the town's needs, the model farm in Grand Falls embodied the principle of agricultural self-sufficiency. But it also hinted at Newfoundland's ability to become self-reliant at a national scale by developing a commercial farming industry in the island's interior. Alfred Harmsworth also underlined this point, arguing that the model farm proved that Newfoundland could become self-supporting from an agricultural point of view.⁴ However, the model farm highlighted another need. The railway had opened the interior up for

⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 11 October 1909: 5.

development; what was needed now was a new class of capable farmers to cultivate its soil and bring civilizing science to bear on the country's landscape.

In this chapter I explore efforts to create a landed middle class in Newfoundland by encouraging agriculture on a commercial scale. In an effort to remove individuals from the fishery and spur their progress, colonial elites created model farms, country estates, and farming settlements that advertised the virtues of agricultural self-sufficiency and its moralizing capabilities. In particular, I examine how political leaders attempted to emulate English landed elites by creating new agricultural landscapes in Newfoundland. Model farms, country estates, and exhibitions were exceptional landscapes, I argue, allowing elites to transpose their private interests onto a new and theoretical farming class. Instructional landscapes proffered agriculture as a solution to Newfoundland's racial regression by promising to catalyze self-reliance at the individual and national scale, create a seat for British social and gender norms, and temper the appearance of the island's landscape.

The administration of agriculture by land-owning elites was a defining element of English social and political life since the seventeenth century. Throughout England, cultivated land was overseen by wealthy, learned, and politically influential "improvers" who provided tenant farmers with secure access to land. From the mid-seventeenth to the late nineteenth centuries, gentlemen improvers oversaw the transformation of the English countryside into neatly laid-out and irrigated fields divided by hedgerows. This development paralleled the enclosure of common land and the consolidation of private property rights. At the same time, a growing number of gentlemen farmers cultivated their own large estates. In turn, rural

landscapes became a symbol of the ingenuity, prosperity, and happiness of Britain's ruling class and access to the landscape an important indicator of upper-class membership.⁵

Improvement was a concept embracing the scientific management of resources and that privileged the contributions of educated elites. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, connections between science, progress, and improvement were promoted by Whig aristocrats whose "enthusiasm for the land," writes Richard Drayton, "was quickened by the basis of their own wealth in farming and husbandry."⁶ Aristocratic land owners encouraged new farming techniques, invested in agricultural equipment and buildings, and theorized best practices for farming, husbandry, and horticulture. Indeed, landed elites oversaw the improvement of everything: fields were drained, livestock was selectively bred, crops were hybridized, and exotic fruits and flowers were grown under glass. As Paul Slack observes, "improvement expressed and established national pride in England's enjoyment of comfort and material progress," while claiming to benefit the nation and every citizen.⁷

At the same time, farming acted as seat for economic and social normativity in Britain. Indeed, as Frieda Knobloch argues, agriculture "was an intensely social enterprise" used to structure social and political life around the world.⁸ Farming bespoke a familiar world of social relations based on rigid class distinctions and the sexual division of labour. British social

⁵ Mark Overton, *Agricultural Revolution in England: The Transformation of the Agrarian Economy, 1500-1850* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Peter Clapham, "Agriculture," in *Britain in the Hanoverian Age, 1714-1837: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Gerald G. Newman (New York: Garland, 1997), 10-11; John Broad, "Farmers and Improvement, 1780-1840," in *The Farmer in England, 1650-1980*, ed. Richard W. Hoyle (Farnham, U.K.: Ashgate, 2013), 165-92; Peter Dewey, "The Landowner as Scientific Farmer: James Mason and the Eynsham Hall Estate, 1866-1903," *ibid.*, 221-40.

⁶ Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 148.

⁷ Paul Slack, *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 228.

⁸ In the American West, for example, Knobloch argues that agriculture enforced systems of land ownership and social stratification, while acting as a portent of scientific and industrial modernity. Frieda Knobloch, *The Culture of Wilderness: Agriculture as Colonization in the American West* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 3.

reformers equated farming with intellectual improvement and the moral discipline of labour. They prescribed gardening as a remedy for poverty, low morality, and poor health.⁹ Many agricultural activities were also deemed suitable for women, including weeding, seeding, and picking.¹⁰ Above all, however, farming was a portent of self-reliance. As one member of the London Farmer's Club stated: "you must have self-reliance; and no man has so much as the *bonâ fide* cultivator of the land," a category that included everything from large estate owners who judiciously managed their estates, to small land-holders (yeoman), renters (husbandmen), and agricultural labourers.¹¹

During the nineteenth century, farming was increasingly a middle-class pursuit as membership in the landed class expanded throughout England. Francis Thompson, for example, asserts that agricultural landlords represented the "rural and more earthy end of the middle class" during the late nineteenth century.¹² However, the price of middle-class dignity remained high. According to John Tosh, only "substantial tenant farmers" were considered on par with bankers, factory owners, and merchants who formed the urban middle class.¹³ Distinctions between labourers, small land holders, and aristocratic landlords were acute. Nevertheless, the acquisition of land, together with a willingness to improve it, created a pathway to middle-class membership

⁹ S. Martin Gaskell, "Gardens for the Working Class: Victorian Practical Pleasures," *Victorian Studies* 23, no. 4 (1980): 479-501.

¹⁰ Nicola Verdon, *Rural Women Workers in Nineteenth-Century England: Gender, Work, and Wages* (Suffolk, U.K.: The Boydell Press, 2002).

¹¹ *British Farmer's Magazine* 2, new series (1847), 148.

¹² Francis M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society: A Social History of Victorian Britain 1830-1900* (London: Fontana, 1988), 100.

¹³ John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 12. Similarly, Thompson describes how farming included a "complete hierarchy of ranks stretching from the near-labourer near-peasant small family farmers up to the near-gentry farmers of the largest farms." Thompson, 100.

in Victorian England and was an important vector for “making citizens” – i.e. individuals whose advantageous social and political position allowed them to participate in civic affairs.¹⁴

Agriculture was also a feature of British cultural life that could be exported with relative ease to many parts of the empire. Imperialists believed that agriculture would spread to the colonies in the same way that modern industry had following a century-long industrial revolution. The agrarian basis of European expansion was pronounced during the late nineteenth century. British authorities promoted overseas improvement as a way to secure territorial claims against foreign aggression, integrate the colonies into a global economy, and create new overseas markets for British manufactures. Agriculture’s imperial importance is underscored by Joseph Chamberlain’s assertion that Britain was like the “landlord” of a great estate, and that “it is the duty of the landlord to develop his estate.”¹⁵ In an effort to improve the physical and social topography of the British Empire, colonial officials encouraged the modernization of agricultural practices and attempted to increase the flow of white, agricultural settlers from Britain to the colonies. The success of these policies in some parts of the empire was seen as proof that British civilization was flourishing overseas, as well as of the suitability of colonial geographies for further improvement.¹⁶

Newfoundland’s leaders were highly aware of agriculture’s role in structuring British society, as well as its imperial significance. Yet there were distinct differences between agricultural practices in Newfoundland and in England. Agriculture in Newfoundland was primarily in the form of subsistence gardening. Rural families sowed small gardens wherever

¹⁴ Drayton, 256.

¹⁵ Ibid., quoted p. 256.

¹⁶ Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness: Science, Health, and Racial Destiny in Australia* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2005); Roza El-Eini, *Mandated Landscape: British Imperial Rule in Palestine, 1929-1948* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006); Amar Wahab, *Colonial Inventions: Landscape, Power and Representation in Nineteenth-Century Trinidad* (Newcastle upon Tyne, U.K.: Cambridge Scholars, 2010).

pockets of soil interrupted the island's rocky coast. However, gardens were treated as supplementary to fishery-related work, not a commercial enterprise in their own right. Nor did rural farming practices embody the idea of progressive improvement. Rather than the latest scientific or technological advances, farming in rural Newfoundland incorporated traditional knowledge and reflected the availability of local resources.

To remedy these differences, colonial elites created a series of instructional landscapes meant to foster Newfoundland's agricultural progress and erase cultural and environmental differences between Newfoundland and Britain. Colonial elites believed that agriculture would simultaneously lessen fishers' dependence on imported goods and—by extension—merchant credit, create suitable vocations for women, and encourage the application of scientific knowledge to the land. In turn, increased farm productivity would reaffirm the temperate character of the island's climate and soils. Others hoped that agriculture would spur the growth of a new, educated and financially independent class of yeoman farmers within Newfoundland society. Unlike the fishery, agriculture would endow fishers with money, freedom from debt, and land, forming—as one politician stated—“a security for their families which cannot be taken from them.”¹⁷ And unlike fishing families, this new middle class would act as a seat for social normativity, while contributing to the progress of the nation through informed political participation. In 1906, the Reverend and farmer J. L. Slattery stated this plainly, arguing that “without a peasantry, without a farming class, there is no Nation, there is no people.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*

¹⁸ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 11 May 1906: 4.

A New Farming Class

Soil and climatic conditions in Newfoundland were not generally favourable to intensive farming. Exceptions included some areas on the west coast of the island, such as the Codroy Valley, where most settlers were farmers instead of fishermen.¹⁹ Similarly, although farming conditions were far from ideal on the Avalon Peninsula, many farms were created on the outskirts of St. John's to supply the city with produce, poultry, milk, eggs, and other perishables that were difficult to import on account of a lack of refrigeration. A large proportion of these farms were located in the Goulds district south west of the city, where Irish settlers established many substantial farms.²⁰ Harbour Grace was another important site for farming on the Avalon. However, small and large farms in these areas were an exception and not the rule.

Historically, fishing families in coastal areas practiced subsistence gardening, sowing crops of potatoes, turnips, and cabbages wherever soil was at hand. Fishing settlements were fringed with small garden plots and many families built root cellars to store their crops (Fig. 4.2 & Fig. 4.3). Kitchen gardens were usually small and were located either near the house or some distance from the harbour, depending on the availability of soil. Care of the kitchen garden was typically entrusted to women who oversaw all aspects of seeding, tending, and fertilizing.²¹ Some areas even permitted a modest amount of haying, allowing communities to keep horses for ploughing and winter work. Where oats and hay were not easily grown, dogs were used to haul firewood in lieu of horses.

¹⁹ MacKinnon, 13-16, 125-39.

²⁰ By the mid-1800s, some 400 families had established small farms on the outskirts of St. John's. The number of farms peaked at around 450 in the 1910s, representing nearly 10,000 acres under cultivation, before declining sharply over the next two decades. Robert MacKinnon, "Farming the Rock: The Evolution of Commercial Agriculture around St. John's, Newfoundland, to 1945," *Acadiensis* 20, no. 2 (1991): 32-61.

²¹ John Parker, *Newfoundland: 10th Province of Canada* (London: Lincolns-Prager, 1950), 93; Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855*, 75-80.



Fig. 4.2, Garden with capelin spread out as fertilizer, Badgers Quay, Newfoundland, 1939. Item VA 14-106, Newfoundland Tourist Development Board photograph collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Fig. 4.3, Garden and root cellar in Twillingate, Newfoundland, 1946. Item VA 15a-28.10, Newfoundland Tourist Development Board photograph collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Subsistence farming was effective at meeting the needs of fishing families. Many families produced enough staples to meet their own needs. And even modest gardens allowed fishing families to resist merchant oppression by lessening their dependence on purchasable

goods (and therefore on merchant credit as well).²² Nevertheless, subsistence practices appeared suspect to the eyes of British observers. Critics believed that a lack of intensive farming in Newfoundland was a sign that Newfoundlanders themselves were averse to labour, and thus predisposed to idleness and debt. British army officer Robert McCrea described the situation in the following terms:

The fishermen looks round, and sees in the ocean a great gambling-pool, from which he may, perhaps, in some very favourable season, without great trouble, draw a famous lottery-ticket. On the other side, he sees round his door abundance of land, which, with toil, will yield him sustenance, in turnips, potatoes, hay, barley, fodder, and garden-stuff. But is it in poor, ignorant, human nature to labour and sweat, when—oh! so easily—all its wants can be supplied without the toil?—when the simple credit at the merchant's enables all to eat to-day, and to pay when Providence is pleased to send the fish? So the patient earth is left, year after year, untouched.²³

McCrea's observation also underscores the central importance of agriculture with a British progress narrative. British intellectuals saw cultivation and a love of cultivated landscapes as hallmarks of progressive civilizations. Citizens of the empire who showed a proclivity for cultivation were elevated in the eyes of racial theorists; those who lacked these traits were branded as lazy, backwards, or racially inferior.²⁴ Indeed, theorists had argued since the enlightenment that agriculture constituted a distinct stage in the emergence of western modernity, antedating "savage" societies who hunted or fished, and preceding the development of advanced, commercial civilizations.²⁵ These views were echoed by Newfoundland writers,

²² *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855*, 51-63.

²³ McCrea, 96-97.

²⁴ This view was repeated by late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century racial theorists. In mapping the "Teutonic" races of Northern Europe, for example, William Ripley claimed that inhabitants in arable regions were physically superior to those who did cultivate the land. See Ripley.

²⁵ Roxann Wheeler, *Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 35.

including Howley who asserted that agriculture “marks the line between civilization and barbarism.”²⁶

The cultivation of the soils is one of the most noble occupations of our race. In every age, and in every country, it has justly occupied the foremost place amongst the civilized industries of mankind. No country without agriculture, at least where such is possible, can claim to be thoroughly civilized [...]. Today it is the agriculture which marks the onward march of progress, before which the less stable pursuits of the savage have retreated step by step, and the savage himself disappeared from the face of the earth.²⁷

In Howley’s estimation, Newfoundland’s inattention to agriculture was “a reproach to our civilization” and a “reproach to the British nation.”²⁸ Yet traditional farming practices in Newfoundland were deemed anachronistic by colonial elites. They believed that subsistence practices were incompatible with modern, scientific methods and even antithetical to agriculture’s civilizing influence. Knowledge passed down from generation to generation had made outport residents highly aware of the capabilities of the land. However, because Newfoundlanders lacked access to agricultural education, purebred livestock, commercial fertilizers and seeds, and the latest farm implements, their knowledge was not regarded as scientific. Other practices also marked subsistence farming as backwards. Because grassland was scarce in many outports, sheep, chickens and goats were allowed to roam free and forage for their food – a practice that made the feeding and breeding of livestock almost impossible to control. Likewise, because chemical fertilizers were unavailable, gardeners used fish offal and other organics to enrich the soil. In contrast, scientific farmers kept purebred stock, ploughed

²⁶ James P. Howley, *Newfoundland Soils: The Origin, Derivation and Composition of Soils, Considered from a Geological Point of View, with Particular Reference to the Soils of Newfoundland* (St. John's: Printed at the Daily Colonist Office, [1889]), 1.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 2.

their gardens with lime, sowed the latest seed varieties, and grew fruits and flowers out of season.

Nor were Newfoundlanders landed, in the strict sense of the word. The principle of the commons prevailed in rural Newfoundland, harking back to the traditions of the British and Irish planters. Unlike in England, where improvement was associated with ownership and political participation, development in rural Newfoundland often proceeded irrespective of the formalities of land ownership. To an outsider, outbuildings appeared haphazardly in the landscape. And although individual gardens were fenced and tended by their owners, resources like wild berries, edible plants, and wood fuel were shared.²⁹

Debates over the encouragement of agriculture in Newfoundland were pronounced during late nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1880s, colonial elites systematically encouraged intensive agriculture as on-going railway construction gave access to new inland territory. Railway promoters were convinced that the project would “awaken” Newfoundlanders to the agricultural potential of their island, lessening the country’s dependence on imports and lowering the price of food.³⁰ Around this time, support also grew for the establishment of a model, or experimental farm in Newfoundland.

The idea for a model farm was based on similar institutions in Canada. In an effort to expand the farming industry on a national scale, in 1886 the Canadian government created five experimental farms to serve as research centres. The centrepiece of this program was the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, but smaller experimental stations were also established across the

²⁹ As Robert Mellin points out, the placement of outport buildings reflected longstanding cultural patterns and community relationships. Mellin, "The Edible Landscape of a Newfoundland Outport," 96-106.

³⁰ Harvey, *Newfoundland in 1900: A Treatise of the Geography, Natural Resources and History of the Island*, 150.

country, including at Nappan in nearby Nova Scotia.³¹ Political leaders in Newfoundland were inspired by these Canadian examples. After visiting a model farm in Quebec in 1900, for example, William Coaker began championing the establishment of a similar institution in Newfoundland.³² At the same time, journalists and agricultural writers in Newfoundland highlighted Ottawa's role in distributing high-quality seeds and scientific literature to farmers. Writers stressed the need for agricultural education in Newfoundland, believing that the general population lacked adequate training and experience.³³ Bayly, for example, listed a "want of capital and knowledge" as the chief defects of Newfoundland farmers.³⁴ And Daniel Prowse proclaimed "ignorance" to be the biggest impediment to farming in Newfoundland.³⁵

Others believed that entrenched views about the value of farming discouraged fishers from pursuing agriculture as a full-time profession. Howley admitted that "the chief obstacle in this way of life is beyond question the inadaptability of our people to such life. They do not, and, I fear, never will take kindly to farming, and the very few who do, know too little about it, and have no opportunities to learn."³⁶ The essence of the problem, one writer explained, was not the island's climate or soil, but the cultural attitudes prevalent among its people.

³¹ Railway companies also played a role in promoting agriculture in Canada, largely in an effort to boost their own freight business. The Canadian Pacific Railway, for example, operated a special seed train that distributed information on scientific farming and conveyed lecturers across Canada. In 1902, the president of the railway, Thomas Shaughnessy, donated \$500 towards the establishment of an industrial school at Mount Cashel (a Catholic orphanage established in 1898 and located near St. John's), where about 100 acres of fields were kept under cultivation. Arguing that "if agriculture is to be developed, farmers must be trained and encouraged," Shaughnessy suggested to the director of the orphanage, Reverend John L. Slattery, that the government develop the new industrial school in conjunction with an experimental farm. *Evening Telegram*, 20 November 1902: 3.

³² *Evening Telegram*, 10 April 1900: 4.

³³ *Evening Telegram*, 30 April 1895: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 11 November 1906: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 12 November 1906: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 14 August 1906: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 20 September 1906: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 13 September 1906: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 11 June 1907: 4.

³⁴ These views were expressed in a series of agricultural interviews that appeared in the *Harbour Grace Standard* in 1906. See [*Agriculture in Newfoundland*], ([Harbour Grace]: s.n., [1907]), 25.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

³⁶ James P. Howley, "Mr. James P. Howley, F.G.S.," *Evening Telegram*, 31 March 1896: 4.

A farm-site in the interior is not their ambition. They look forward with greater pride to the brining home of a load of codfish from the farthest Labrador, or a bumper trip of seals from the front, than the proud farmer of other lands does to the reaping of the largest crop of wheat in the country in which he resides. Let it be said in plain words: They are fishermen, and always have been fishermen. This more than all things else leaves Newfoundland, the first land in the New World, Britain's Oldest Colony, to this day with thousands of miles of her surface untrodden or untouched by any White Man.³⁷

Proponents of the model farm argued that the institution was needed to overcome these educational and cultural barriers. By combining practical demonstration and scientific education, the model farm would prove—once and for all—that farming was a profitable enterprise in Newfoundland, while training a new class of expert farmers.³⁸ Opponents of the idea worried that the cost of establishing and maintaining a model farm would be exorbitant. They also opposed the creation of a model farm near St. John's, pointing out that the Avalon Peninsula contained some of the worst soils on the island.³⁹

In 1889, Newfoundland's government led by premier Robert Thorburn passed an Act for the Encouragement of Agriculture that created a seven member Board of Agriculture chaired by Howley. The Board was tasked with overseeing the formation of agricultural societies, organizing exhibitions, distributing seeds and information to farmers, and importing superior stock for breeding purposes.⁴⁰ The act also specified that the board oversee the creation of a "Stock or Model Farm," but provided a meagre grant of just \$5,000 for this purpose.⁴¹ By 1898—the year the railroad was completed—no model farm had been established and a new act

³⁷ Anonymous, *Newfoundland and Its Resources* (Harbour Grace: Harbor Grace Standard Print, 1906), 5.

³⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 10 April 1883: 2.

³⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 17 May 1890: 3.

⁴⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1889: 4.

⁴¹ *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1889), 67-72; an initial resolution was passed to construct a model farm at a cost of \$25,000, but this amount was revised downwards in the final legislation owing to a lack of funds. *Evening Telegram*, 28 March 1889: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 29 May 1889: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1889: 3.

was passed authorizing the government to raise a public loan for this purpose.⁴² Before a loan could be raised, however, Newfoundland's government was defeated and Robert Bond was installed as premier.



Fig. 4.4, Estate and gardens of Robert Bond known as The Grange, ca. 1927 (Photo: Holloway Studios). Item 12.04.001, Sir Robert Bond collection (Coll-237), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

Born to wealthy merchant family in St. John's, Bond was a staunch liberalist who was educated in England and who returned there frequently while serving as Newfoundland's Colonial Secretary from 1889 to 1897.⁴³ This experience also infused in him a deep love of the English landscape and the lifestyle of the English country gentlemen. During the 1890s, Bond established a country estate in Whitbourne, about 80 kilometres outside of St. John's, where he

⁴² The revised act also introduced a bounty of \$20 per acre for individuals who cleared land. *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1898), 352-354.

⁴³ Bond suffered from a lifelong illness which he regarded as his "death warrant," leading him to seek physical restoration in nature. See Ted Rowe, *Robert Bond: The Greatest Newfoundlander* (St. John's: Creative Publishers, 2017).

planned gardens, built an architectural retreat called The Grange, and pursued the pleasures and pastimes of a country gentlemen (Fig. 4.4).⁴⁴ He clipped and saved romantic pastoral poetry, read Wordsworth, and studied natural history. He was also an avid sportsman. To sustain his appetite for hunting in Whitbourne, Bond imported several Scottish grouse – a favourite game bird among English sportsmen like John Guille Millais.⁴⁵

The Grange was an architectural expression of Bond's social refinements.⁴⁶ The house was based on the Edwardian style—then fashionable in England—and featured a romantic battlement tower and conservatory. It stretched out over 3,000 square feet and had a large entrance hall on the main floor which gave access to a library, as well as the dining, drawing, and billiard rooms. A central staircase led to seven bedrooms upstairs. To decorate his home, Bond acquired an extensive art collection, purchased expensive tapestries, grew fresh flowers out of season, and had natural history specimens stuffed and installed in display cases (Fig. 4.5 & Fig. 4.6). Furnishings were imported from Maple & Co.'s in London, a furniture maker renowned for supplying furniture to the aristocracy throughout the United Kingdom. The Grange was also thoroughly modern. In addition to several fireplaces, the house was heated by hot-water radiators and had a glass-enclosed veranda that extended the length of one side of the building.

Bond's fondness for the English countryside also manifest in the design of the Grange's landscape. He transplanted over 8,000 trees and shrubs to Whitbourne (including several English

⁴⁴ Whitbourne was originally known as Davenport Junction. Bond acquired the estate in the early 1880s, at which time he renamed the area and built a small hunting lodge on the property. K. J. E., "Grange, The," in *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, ed. Joseph R. Smallwood, et al. (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1984), 695-96.

⁴⁵ J. G. Millais, *Game Birds and Shooting-Sketches*, 2nd ed. (London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1894). Local residents who were unfamiliar with the large birds and unaware of their provenance accidentally exterminated the flock, "The Bond Years," *Decks Awash* 21, no. 1 (January-February 1992): 46-47.

⁴⁶ Other prominent Newfoundlanders also built country estates to express their love of the outdoors. Prowse, for example, was an avid outdoorsman who enjoyed fishing and hunting in the interior and who often indulged in these activities while traveling as a circuit court judge. He later built a house and gardens for himself on a large estate outside of St. John's so that he could be closer to nature.

oak) and planted his gardens with popular English flowers like primroses, lilacs, and roses, leading his brother to remark that Bond “succeeded in transplanting all that comprises the typical English countryside, except the skylark.”⁴⁷ This was not a benign cultural display. Similar country houses and gardens located throughout the English countryside played an ideological role by indicating that their owners were educated, well-bred, and fit to rule.⁴⁸ Bond’s home was no different, except that it made a statement about his country’s desired identification as well by exhibiting British social and environmental values in Newfoundland.



Fig. 4.5, Interior view of the The Grange. Item 12.03.075, Sir Robert Bond collection (Coll-237), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

⁴⁷ Quoted in E., 695-96.

⁴⁸ Mark Girouard, *Life in the English Country House: A Social and Architectural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 180.



Fig. 4.6, Interior view of the entrance hallway at The Grange, Newfoundland. Item 12.03.079, Sir Robert Bond collection (Coll-237), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

Bond was equally interested in using educational landscapes to stimulate agriculture on a national scale in Newfoundland. However, establishing a model farm remained an elusive task after his government came to power. During the early 1900s, the Board of Agriculture was placed in charge of a government stables, where a number of livestock were kept for breeding purposes.⁴⁹ The Board also managed a small farm (known as Devon Farm), where they grew a variety root vegetables, cabbages, hay, oats, and potatoes.⁵⁰ However, the Board was poorly funded and by 1904 little progress had been made towards establishing a model farm that was true to its name.⁵¹ In 1906, the stables and farm were relocated after the government purchased a

⁴⁹ Among the livestock at the government farm was a flock of 40 sheep. Upon visiting the stables in 1900, William Coaker complained that the poor beasts were “overrun with ticks and lice; many are run down beyond recall, others [...] are doomed to perish very soon, unless at once removed and very carefully cared for.” He reiterated the need for a model farm in Newfoundland and urged the government to make a renewed effort at encouraging agriculture. William F. Coaker, “Agricultural Stables,” *Evening Telegram*, 23 April 1900: 4.

⁵⁰ “Report of the Board of Agriculture, 1904,” *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, First Session of the Twentieth General Assembly (St. John’s: Evening Telegram Office, 1905), 36, 122-124.

⁵¹ From 1904 to 1908, the annual amount voted for the Board of Agriculture’s use was just \$4,000. “Report of the Board of Agriculture, 1905,” *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, Second Session of the Twentieth General Assembly (St. John’s: Evening Telegram Office, 1906), 93-95.

57 acre farm from Charles Hutchings. New stables were raised and the government began sowing seed varieties obtained from the experimental farm in Ottawa.⁵²

In contrast, more strenuous efforts in agricultural experimentation were unfolding at Whitbourne, where Bond established a working farm equipped “with the latest of everything in scientific agriculture.”⁵³ By 1898, Whitbourne was already being touted as a “model farm” and a “terrestrial paradise” by the St. John’s press.⁵⁴ Bond erected several farm buildings on his estate—including a foreman’s house and two large barns with poured concrete floors—laid some 16 kilometres of roads across his property, and enclosed the whole of his farm with wire fencing.⁵⁵ He also employed several gardeners and farm hands so that the bulk of his time was reserved for leisure and learning. He kept abreast of the latest farming practices and spent his evenings scanning the foreign press for agricultural news.

Bond’s goal at Whitbourne was to demonstrate that farming could be a profitable enterprise in Newfoundland. To this end, he personally oversaw the management of his estate, ordering seeds and livestock from suppliers in England, Canada, and the United States and cultivating an impressive array of crops. He stocked his dairy with purebred Canadian cattle and began supplying St. John’s with upwards of 10,000 litres of milk each year.⁵⁶ Account books show that from 1904 to 1908 the farm at Whitbourne suffered yearly losses. But in 1909 the farm became profitable and enjoyed growing and substantial profits in the years that followed.⁵⁷

⁵² “Report of the Board of Agriculture, 1906,” *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, Third Session of the Twentieth General Assembly (St. John’s: Evening Telegram Office, 1907), 93-95; “Report of the Board of Agriculture, 1906-7,” *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, Fourth Session of the Twentieth General Assembly (St. John’s: Evening Telegram Office, 1908), 93-96.

⁵³ *Daily Star*, 3 May 1920: 7.

⁵⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 5 July 1898: 4.

⁵⁵ One barn measuring 100 feet by 40 feet contained stalls for 30 head of cattle. The other measured 60 feet by 30 feet and had a concrete root cellar, grain storage, and a dairy and poultry house. A separate storage building was also built. “The Grange Album – Photographs by Holloway,” File 12.04, Sir Robert Bond Collection (Coll-237), MUN.

⁵⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 31 January 1896: 4; “The Bond Years,” 46.

⁵⁷ “Cash Book, 1903-1919,” File 2.05.002, Box 4, Sir Robert Bond collection (COLL-237), MUN.

Bond had criticized earlier efforts to establish a model farm in Newfoundland based on his belief that it would not serve the interest of distant rural communities, but his experience at Whitbourne quickly altered this view.⁵⁸ In 1908, his government announced that it would establish an experimental and teaching farm in Newfoundland to develop improved farming techniques and conduct original research into plant and animal physiology.⁵⁹ The farm would contain demonstration plots for testing and acclimatizing different species of wheat, hay, and vegetables, as well as barns and stables for keeping purebred livestock. Funding would be in the form of an annual grant of \$20,000 (five times the annual budget of the Board of Agriculture) and all revenue generated from the sale of produce would be returned to the farm and put towards operating expenses.⁶⁰ That year, Bond visited the Canadian experimental farm and agricultural college at Guelph, where he discussed the proposal with Canadian officials and arranged to have a soils expert visit Newfoundland and make recommendations on expanding the government farm.⁶¹

In a lengthy speech before the legislature, Bond detailed his intention to create “a class of husbandry as it existed in other countries” by inculcating youth in the scientific principles of agriculture and land management.⁶² He emphasized how a lack of scientific education in Newfoundland was directly responsible for wasteful farming practices and for causing the pursuit of agriculture to be “looked down upon as a menial employment unworthy of a gentleman, and unworthy of the attention of the youth who aspires towards wealth and happiness.”⁶³ To remedy this, the new model farm would act as a teaching institution, as well as

⁵⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 22 March 1889: 4.

⁵⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 9 January 1908: 4.

⁶⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 20 February 1908: 3.

⁶¹ *Evening Telegram*, 6 February 1908: 4.

⁶² *Speech Delivered by Right Hon. Sir Robert Bond, P.C., K.C.M.G., on the Model Farm Resolutions, House of Assembly, Wednesday, February 5, 1908*, ([St. John's]: s.n., [1908]), 1.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 5.

an experimental station. Two spaces at the farm would be reserved for students from each electoral district on an annual basis. Students would be admitted for free and receive room and board in exchange for obtaining scientific instruction in husbandry, horticulture, and in the chemical analysis of soils and fertilizers.⁶⁴

Bond's speech reveals the extent to which he projected his experience at Whitbourne onto a new and theoretical class of farmers in Newfoundland. In Bond's mind, the agriculturalist was a man of refined knowledge and taste who took pleasure in nature, while remaining aloof to labour through financial independence. In the same breath, he criticized fishermen-farmers for wasting their labour and capital by remaining ignorant of scientific principles, then praised English royals who practiced farming alongside the "humblest men in the land."⁶⁵ The embodiment of Bond's ideal farmer was the landed English gentleman, for whom nature and nature study were at once a source of physical, moral, and intellectual enlightenment.

A great Statesmen had said that he believed the noblest and best characteristics found in Englishmen are to be traced to their love of country life. There could be no doubt but that its moral aspect—its connection to the character and feelings of those who engage in it—give it its greatest value. The man who stands upon his own soil, who feels that by the laws of the land in which he lives, he is the rightful and exclusive owner of the land which he tills, is by the constitution of our nature under a wholesome influence not easily imbibed from any other source; he feels, other things being equal, more strongly than another the character of a man as lord of the inanimate world—that of his great and wonderful sphere, fashioned by the hand of God and upheld by this power in rolling through space. A portion is his—his from the centre to the sky. These are the feelings of the owner and tiller of the soil; words cannot paint them; gold cannot buy them; they flow out of the deepest founts of the heart they are the life springs of the fresh, healthy, glorious, life of the farmer.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Bond envisioned that the model farm would eventually be expanded into an agricultural college. *Evening Telegram*, 20 February 1908: 3.

⁶⁵ *Speech Delivered by Right Hon. Sir Robert Bond, P.C., K.C.M.G., on the Model Farm Resolutions, House of Assembly, Wednesday, February 5, 1908*, 5.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

By equating land ownership with self-reliance and a love of the outdoors with vigorous health and a virtuous life, Bond depicted agriculture as a pathway to racial progress in Newfoundland. To emphasize this point, he contrasted the life of the gentlemen farmer with the precarious and indeterminate fate of the Newfoundland fishermen who, despite his efforts year after year, was eternally deprived of the “rest of peace and plenty.”⁶⁷ In contrast, peace and plenty would be the hallmarks of a new and better class of agriculturalists in Newfoundland – a class whose membership was open to anyone willing to take up life on the land, and whose respectability and self-reliance would serve to mirror British virtues in Newfoundland.

Exhibiting Agriculture

Unfortunately for Bond, the Model Farm Act preceded an election year in which his government was defeated by Edward Morris, leader of the People’s Party. Unlike Bond who envisioned an agricultural class within Newfoundland society, Morris aimed to improve existing rural economies by encouraging home-based industries, such as wool manufacturing. Likewise, Morris believed that exhibitions should be the primary means of agricultural education, rather than a single teaching farm. He argued that a decentralized approach to agricultural education would be of greater benefit in a country where farm land was dispersed and since the cost of traveling to St. John’s was prohibitive for many rural inhabitants. A new act passed by his government in 1910 promoted the establishment of agricultural societies and created a new Agricultural Board consisting of three members selected from the House of Assembly.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John’s: J. W. Withers, 1910), 93; the agricultural commissioners were Joseph Downey (member for St. George), R. J. Devereaux (Placentia and St. Mary’s), and A. H. Seymour (Harbour Grace). Frank Simms, a local St. John’s farmer, was the Board’s secretary.

Morris believed that the cost of running a model farm was prohibitive and that it was easier to get scientific training and information from Canadian institutions, such as the Agricultural College in Truro. In 1909, agricultural board member A. H. Seymour visited a number of Canadian experimental farms.⁶⁹ His report, published the following year, cast doubt on the value of establishing a similar intuition in Newfoundland, recommending instead that a series of small experimental plots be developed under the guidance of experts in as many rural localities as possible. Yet Seymour was also favourably impressed with developments at Grand Falls, where by 1910 some 40 acres of land had been cleared under Bayly's supervision.⁷⁰

Indeed, Grand Falls was an important catalyst to Morris' agricultural programme. In an effort to spur Newfoundland's agricultural progress, Alfred Harmsworth spared no expense in promoting the company's farming experiment.⁷¹ Seeds for the Grand Falls farm were imported from England and samples of produce were submitted for examination by Canadian experts.⁷² The company also recruited farmers from Westmorland in the north of England and imported British cattle for use in their dairy.⁷³ At the same time, the Harmsworths consulted with leading experts in the fields of forestry and agriculture who they then hired to make recommendations about the country at large. Among these experts was William Beach Thomas, an agricultural writer connected with the *Daily Mail* in London. Born in England, Beach Thomas was a staunch conservative with a deep affinity for rural life, complaining once that "our civilization is the most urban, our inner mood the most rural."⁷⁴ He wrote pastoral narratives for the *Observer* and

⁶⁹ Seymour visited experimental farms and teaching centres in Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal, as well as in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

⁷⁰ A. H. Seymour, *Report on the Possibilities of Agricultural Development* (St. John's: Chronicle Print, 1910).

⁷¹ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 11 October 1909: 5.

⁷² Samples of oats and barley were sent to the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, where they were declared equal to those of Western Canada. Likewise, samples of grain from Grand Falls were pronounced excellent by staff at the Agricultural College in Truro. *Evening Telegram*, 23 February 1909: 7.

⁷³ *Evening Telegram*, 19 September 1913: 7.

⁷⁴ William Beach Thomas, *The Way of a Countryman* (London: Michael Joseph, 1944), 87.

Spectator and was a regular contributor to *Country Life* magazine. He was also a frequent guest at Sutton Place—Alfred Harmsworth’s country home—and had supported the Harmsworths in their bid to create a 14 acre, small holdings land settlement near Grantham, which he dubbed the “*Daily Mail* farm.”⁷⁵

At Alfred Harmsworth’s invitation, Beach Thomas travelled across Newfoundland in 1909, lecturing on the capabilities of the island’s soil. In St. John’s, 200 people crowded into the court house to hear him speak. Despite having spent just three weeks in Newfoundland, Beach Thomas declared that “social and psychological” reasons alone were responsible for suppressing the country’s agricultural industry. He claimed that the produce and kitchen gardens in Grand Falls were “ample proof of the capabilities of the soil” and emphasized the importance of science education to a modern agrarian society.⁷⁶ In particular, Beach Thomas advocated for the inclusion of practical nature study in the school curriculum as early as possible – as was the case in England, where students tended school gardens and learnt the basics of scientific agriculture, including methods of cultivating fruits trees and how to apply fertilizers to the soil.⁷⁷ This was music to politicians’ ears. After the lecture, Morris spoke about the importance of fostering agricultural autonomy in Newfoundland and the Governor reiterated the need for Newfoundlanders to “turn their attention to the cultivation of the land,” pointing to the success of Grand Falls.⁷⁸ In 1912, the government hired Bayly to work as a member Department of Agriculture.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 75-76.

⁷⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 21 October 1909: 6.

⁷⁷ Beach Thomas reiterated the need for educational reforms the following day at a meeting of the Council of Higher Education, stating that “the foundation of education should be the practical study of nature.” *Evening Telegram*, 22 October 1909: 4.

⁷⁸ Ibid; Grand Falls was often cast in an exemplary role. After visiting Grand Falls in 1909, Newfoundland’s Minister of Agriculture and Mines proposed distributing free land to farmers in the hopes of establishing a second colony nearby. *Evening Telegram*, 17 November 1909: 4; the Newfoundland Board of Trade also saw Grand Falls as evidence of the country’s agricultural potential. In 1910, for example, members of the Board cited Grand Falls in



Fig. 4.7, Log Cabin hotel with garden in foreground, 1935. Item VA 9-84, Alfred Cooper Sheldon photograph album, Newfoundland Tourist Development Board photograph collection, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Grand Falls was not alone in encouraging speculation about Newfoundland's agricultural potential. Areas with rich soils in the interior and along the Codroy Valley were also frequently cited as evidence of Newfoundland's suitability to farming, as were other entrepreneurial efforts, including at the Log Cabin in Spruce Brook, where the hotel's owners established a small farm and kept a variety of livestock (Fig. 4.7).⁷⁹ Foreign experts (many of whom visited the island at

arguing that two million dollars' worth of agricultural products imported the previous year could have been raised locally. *Evening Telegram*, 18 January 1910: 4.

⁷⁹ In 1911, Professor M. L. Fernald of the Gray Herbarium at Harvard University collected plant specimens in Newfoundland in the hopes of proving his theory that the island was once joined to New England. Surprised that "green and growing things" were prevalent "in a land that has been too often dismissed as sterile and barren," the professor noted how the soil and vegetation near Spruce Brook and St. George's Pond indicated that the area was as an ideal spot for farming – a conclusion, he observed, ably demonstrated by the owners of the Log Cabin. *Evening Telegram*, 24 July 1911: 5.

Morris' request) also repeated the belief that Newfoundland could become a farming country.⁸⁰

Seldom acknowledged, however, was the high cost of transporting food from isolated arable regions, or the fact that Grand Falls quickly exceeded the capacity of local farmers as it grew in size.⁸¹

Morris also believed that exhibitions should play a greater role in fostering agricultural education in Newfoundland. Agricultural exhibitions were popular attractions throughout Britain and Canada, where they were sponsored by various levels of government and used to promote agricultural education in rural areas. Increasingly, however, the educational value of exhibitions was being questioned by educators and legislators alike. Many believed that agricultural education should be professionalized at technical colleges and schools, rather than delivered in an informal manner. In Canada, for example, experimental teaching farms surpassed agricultural societies in terms of their educational importance during the final decades of the nineteenth century, emerging as centres for agricultural journalism and conduits for the exchange of transnational scientific and technical expertise.⁸² In Newfoundland, however, exhibitions remained an effective means of delivering agricultural instruction on account of low literacy rates and since most rural residents were not professional farmers.

⁸⁰ Among these experts was James W. Robertson (head of the agricultural college at St. Anne de Bellevue near Montreal) who came to Newfoundland in 1909. Likewise, in 1910 Newfoundland was visited by Andrew Macphail, a Canadian agricultural promoter who had experimented with growing potatoes and tobacco in Prince Edward Island. Edward P. Morris, *Newfoundland* (London: W. Collins, 1924), 16.; *Evening Telegram*, 24 October 1910: 7; Morris' policies were also supported by experts at home, including Wilfred T. Grenfell who believed that gardening and other home-based industries were needed to sustain the country's fishing population. Citing recent agricultural research, Grenfell was interested in how new species of alfalfa, grapes, and plums acclimatized to the coldest parts of the world could be adapted for use in Newfoundland. Wilfred Grenfell, "Value of Experiment in Developing Resources of a Country," *Evening Telegram*, 9 July 1910: 3.

⁸¹ By 1911, advertisements were posted calling on fishermen and farmers across the island to supply fresh fish, meat, vegetables, and bread to the inland city. The following year, food scarcities were reported when heavy snow halted rail traffic. *Evening Telegram*, 5 August 1911: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 8 March 1912: 4; food scarcities in Grand Falls were an acute problem during the First World War as well, leading the company to grant an eighth of an acre to residents who were willing to farm it, as well as provide free fencing and wood ash for use as fertilizer. *Evening Telegram*, 2 April 1917: 5.

⁸² Richard A. Jarrell, *Educating the Neglected Majority: The Struggle for Agricultural and Technical Education in Nineteenth-Century Ontario and Quebec* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

In 1910, a new agricultural act passed by Morris' government included a provision allowing the Minister of Agriculture and Mines to fund exhibitions directly by paying for prizes and shipping costs. This led to an increase in the number of agricultural exhibitions in Newfoundland. In 1910 and 1911, two exhibitions were held in St. John's and Harbour Grace, showcasing the country's agricultural and industrial products (Fig. 4.8).⁸³ To encourage competition, vegetables and livestock were grouped by district. Manufacturers also competed to build the most alluring display, including the Harmsworths who submitted a model of the recently completed paper mill in Grand Falls which they surrounded with miniature conifers. The 1912 exhibition seasons was cancelled on account of a poor growing season, but the following year district exhibitions were held in Bonavista, Trinity, Harbour Main, Brigus, and Placentia.⁸⁴



Fig. 4.8, Harbour Grace agricultural exhibition, 1910. *Pictorial Harbor Grace: Agricultural and Industrial Newfoundland* ([Harbour Grace]: Printed at the Harbor Grace Standard Office, [1910]), n.p.

⁸³ *Pictorial Harbor Grace: Agricultural and Industrial Newfoundland*, ([Harbour Grace]: s.n., [1910]).

⁸⁴ S. D. Blandford to Robert Watson, 26 August 1912, File 53, Part 3, Box 16, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; Albert J. Bayly to John R. Bennett, 20 September 1913, File 53, Part 4, Box 16, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

Exhibitions communicated specific ideas about class and gender in Newfoundland. Special displays and prizes were reserved for crafts, such as needle work and rug hooking, and kitchen garden vegetables were exhibited separately. This feature of exhibitions extended the project of self-reliance to women, delineating their space of work within rural homes and the surrounding landscape. In particular, Morris was eager to develop sheep-raising and wool manufacturing into a commercial enterprise in Newfoundland.⁸⁵ In campaign speeches, he promised to paint the country's hills white with sheep. His government later lifted duties on looms and spinning wheels, offered bounties on wool, and led an unsuccessful campaign to eradicate "useless dogs" from outports to protect local sheep flocks.⁸⁶ Women were the intended target of these reforms. Wool manufacture and knitting were associated with women's work throughout rural Newfoundland. Wool from sheep sheared in the spring was dried, cleaned, and carded by women and girls. And virtually all women in rural Newfoundland were skilled at knitting sweaters, hats, mittens, face warmers, and underwear.⁸⁷

Gardening and horticulture were also deemed appropriate pastimes for rural women. British social critics had long approved of gardening for allowing women to embrace nature study and science education, while avoiding indelicacies of a sexual or masculine nature.⁸⁸ In Grand Falls, the Harmsworths encouraged stay-at-home women to keep gardens by inaugurating

⁸⁵ Grenfell Mission workers in Labrador also sought to establish a woollen handcraft industry by encouraging women to produce hooked mats and knitted goods for resale. Ronald Rompkey, *Grenfell of Labrador: A Biography* (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 179-81.

⁸⁶ *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1910), 95-96; Edward P. Morris to John Sullivan, 1 December 1909, File GN 8.2, Box 1, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

⁸⁷ See Theresa Heath Rodgers, "Work, Household Economy, and Social Welfare: The Transition from Traditional to Modern Lifestyles in Bonavista, 1930-1960" (Master's Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2000).

⁸⁸ Botanizing, in particular, was seen as an appropriate pastime for women from the eighteenth century onwards. The nineteenth century also saw the rise of middle-class women gardeners and professional women gardeners, both of whom made important contributions to the theory and practice of gardening in Britain. Ann B. Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science: Flora's Daughters and Botany in England, 1760 to 1860* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Sarah Bilston, "Queens of the Garden: Victorian Women Gardeners and the Rise of the Gardening Advice Text," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 36, no. 1 (2008): 1-19.

an annual agricultural, flower, and ladies' work show.⁸⁹ Distinguished foreign experts were invited to jury the exhibition and prizes were issued for potted flowers, vegetables, preserved fruits, and gardens under cultivation, as well as textiles and clothing.⁹⁰ Women's participation in commercial agriculture was even tolerated to an extent. Indeed, the sexual division of farm labour was well established in nineteenth-century England, where women were often hired to perform labour-intensive tasks, like weeding, stone-picking, hoeing, and planting.⁹¹ And virtually all agricultural work was considered uplifting compared to the fishery, where women and girls were surrounded by fish offal.

Indeed, colonial elites were highly sensitive to sexual improprieties in the fishery. In 1880, one writer for *The Patriot* charged that the employment of women in the fishery was "an evil and should if possible be got rid of," calling the work "unfeminine and distasteful."⁹² The Labrador fishery, in particular, was a source of disgust to many observers since women were often hired aboard sailing vessels, where they shared crowded cabins with men. In 1885, Reverend Henry Lewis complained that the Labrador fishery was a "ruthless destroyer of female virtues," charging that "women should be at home attending to domestic duties."⁹³ The issue of finding "suitable employment for our females" was also raised in the House of Assembly in 1887, forcing lawmakers to admit that the only choices for women at present were to join the fishery or work as domestic servants.⁹⁴ Bond even chastised his own niece, Roberta, for "dissecting worms, grubs, and even larger animals" as part of her course on anatomy at

⁸⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 2 November 1909: 7.

⁹⁰ For the 1917 contest, Professor P. J. Shaw of the Truro Agricultural College was invited to judge the displays. *Evening Telegram*, 5 October 1917: 3.

⁹¹ Verdon.

⁹² *The Patriot and Terra-Nova Herald*, 13 November 1880: 1.

⁹³ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 21 November 1885: 2; see also Korneski, "Race, Gender, Class, and Colonial Nationalism: Railway Development in Newfoundland, 1881-1898," 88.

⁹⁴ *The Colonist*, 15 April 1887: 1.

Dalhousie college in Halifax.⁹⁵ Her decision to enrol in medical school prompted another rebuke from her uncle: “I always felt that the medical profession is too indelicate for the female sex to dabble in, that those fine feelings which we like to associate with the ladies are liable to be destroyed by the use of the knife, and the handling of *deceased paupers*.”⁹⁶ He implored his niece to return to the Grange, where she had spent her youth gardening and cultivating a love of “those sweet children born of sunshine and showers.”⁹⁷

Promotional imagery also reinforced connections between agriculture and femininity. One commemorative album produced in 1911, for example, featured a photograph of a young woman surrounded by agricultural goods (Fig. 4.9). Clasp ing a turnip and a beet in her hands, she blends seamlessly into the surrounding agricultural display. Yet her poise, dress, and gaze indicate that she is self-assured, well educated, and resolutely middle class – qualities that give specific meaning to the photograph’s caption: “Young Harbor Grace Well-Rooted and Grounded.” The portrait communicated a distinctly class-based vision of agriculture in Newfoundland, equating farming with erudite learning, financial independence, and upwards social mobility. But it also feminized agricultural practices, creating spaces for female labour in rural Newfoundland, and linking farming with women’s contribution to national progress.

⁹⁵ Robert Bond to Roberta Bond, 4 July 1921, File 1.02.026, Box 1, Sir Robert Bond Collection (Coll-237), MUN.

⁹⁶ Emphasis in original. Robert Bond to Roberta Bond, 10 January 1923, File 1.02.031, Box 1, Sir Robert Bond Collection (Coll-237), MUN.

⁹⁷ Robert Bond to Roberta Bond, 23 November 1924, File 1.02.037, Box 1, Sir Robert Bond Collection (Coll-237), MUN.



Fig. 4.9, Young Harbor Grace Well-Rooted and Grounded. *Pictorial Harbor Grace: Agricultural and Industrial Newfoundland* ([Harbour Grace]: Printed at the Harbor Grace Standard Office, [1910]), n.p.

At the same time, writers highlighted agriculture's role in advancing Newfoundland's cultural and racial progress. In particular, they encouraged the belief that by returning to the soil

fisherman's superior, Anglo-Saxon heritage would be transmuted into modern forms. In 1911, the ardent Morris supporter Patrick Thomas McGrath argued that the physical and cultural isolation forced upon Newfoundland fishing families had made them skilled improvisers and that unlike other "subject races" in the empire, fishermen's innate self-reliance and ingenuity bespoke their Saxon and Celtic origins.⁹⁸ He explained:

Living as they do, in isolated settlements around wide-stretching seaboard, and obliged by this condition to rely upon themselves almost wholly, they become proficient in any kind of handicraft, with a minimum of instruction. They are fishers, farmers, miners, railroaders and factory hands in turn, and, as each new enterprise arises, men are speedily and easily trained to the tasks necessary for its maintenance.⁹⁹

Individuals who turned their attention to farming were thus proof that racial progress was not only possible in Newfoundland, but that farming would reinvigorate Anglo-Saxon virtues made latent by economic hardships in the fishery; for as Howley observed, Celts were among the first to attain "considerable progress in agriculture and domestic pursuits," at a time when "agriculture and civilization were so closely allied that the one was a natural outcome of the other."¹⁰⁰

Morris' policies resulted in a substantial increase in the number of agricultural societies in Newfoundland. By the spring of 1910, nearly 70 societies had been formed across the island. And by 1913, the number of societies was approaching 90.¹⁰¹ The government imported seeds (primarily oats), potatoes, and fertilizer for distribution to the societies, as well as farm

⁹⁸ McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century*, 205-06.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁰⁰ Howley, *Newfoundland Soils: The Origin, Derivation and Composition of Soils, Considered from a Geological Point of View, with Particular Reference to the Soils of Newfoundland*, 1.

¹⁰¹ Frank H. Simms to S. D. Blandford, 30 May 1910, File 53, Part 2, Box 16, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL; *Evening Telegram*, 1 March 1913: 4.

implements and livestock.¹⁰² However, political opponents were quick to criticize the government's efforts. Although Morris complained about the wasteful spending of the previous administration, his own agricultural programme was considerably more expensive than Bond's, costing upwards of \$50,000 in its first year alone. Critics also belittled his Board of Agriculture, pointing out that its members were highly remunerated politicians and not trained agriculturalists.¹⁰³ In 1909, the work of the board was also complicated by the rapid spread of the soil born fungus known as the potato canker. Canada and the United States imposed quarantine on the island the following year. This development provided additional fodder to critics who argued that an experimental farm was needed to stem the disease and teach people to identify and eradicate blighted crops.¹⁰⁴

By No Means a Model

Agricultural efforts were curtailed during the war years.¹⁰⁵ Morris retired from politics late in 1917 and a series of short-lived administrations led by John Crosbie, William F. Lloyd, and Michael Cashin did not pursue agricultural reform on a large scale.

In 1919, efforts to re-establish a model farm were renewed when Richard Squires was elected premier of Newfoundland. A native of Harbour Grace and the son of a successful farmer and grocer, Squires immediately increased the farm grant and began purchasing new breeding stock.¹⁰⁶ His agricultural program revived many of the ideas espoused by former governments;

¹⁰² *Evening Telegram*, 23 November 1911: 4.

¹⁰³ *Evening Telegram*, 24 April 1911: 5, 7; *Evening Telegram*, 19 October 1912: 4.

¹⁰⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 30 September 1913: 5.

¹⁰⁵ In 1915, the agricultural grant was reduced from \$40,000 to \$20,000. The practice of giving cash grants to societies was also stopped. Instead, the Board of Agriculture allowed societies to make purchases on credit so that their expenditures could be closely monitored. Albert J. Bayly to W. W. Halfyard, 23 February 1918, File 53.J, Box 16, GN 2/5, OCSF-SF-PANL.

¹⁰⁶ The farm grant was increased to \$55,000 and an annual grant in the amount of \$30,000 was allocated for the purchase of animals. *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1920), 70; the

namely, that increased farming would lessen Newfoundland's dependence on imports and that agricultural education would expand middle-class membership. Critics quickly pointed out that all prior attempts to spur agriculture with public spending had been ineffectual.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, Squires set out to establish a new model farm in Newfoundland with the help of his Minister of Agriculture and Mines, Dr. Alexander Campbell.¹⁰⁸ In 1920, Campbell visited Canada to procure stock for the model farm, returning with four railcars' worth of purebred sheep, bulls, cows, pigs, and horses.¹⁰⁹ Supervision of the new government farm was entrusted to Bayly.¹¹⁰

Like Bond's, Squires' interest in landscape was shaped at his country estate. Located in a low-lying sheltered valley west of St. John's, Squires' 35 acre estate (known as Midstream) was developed into a summer retreat by the Dutch landscape artist Rudolph Cochius. Cochius had come to Newfoundland in 1912 to supervise construction of Bowring Park, a 50 acre English-styled landscape located in the same valley as Squires' estate and a favourite driving spot among St. John's elites.¹¹¹

government also offered to send ex-servicemen to a Canadian agricultural college in exchange for their agreeing to work as farmers. The government promised these men loans for use in securing a small farm and equipment, as well to support their families while they received their training. *Evening Telegram*, 8 April 1920: 7.

¹⁰⁷ For example, critics pointing out that over the past ten years 371 bulls were imported by the government, of which "63 have been bogged, 48 killed, 6 returned to the department and 100 are missing." *Daily Star*, 12 June 1920: 12; Squires dismissed this concern on the basis that previous administrations had distributed animals as gifts to secure political patronage, leading an unusually large number of animals to be reported as "lost in bogs." *Daily Star*, 21 August 1920: 9; opponents also questioned whether a model farm would be of benefit to rural regions or alleviate high prices and food shortages, both pressing issues in the aftermath of the First World War. *Daily Star*, 13 November 1920: 14; *Daily Star*, 16 November 1920: 9.

¹⁰⁸ Campbell was a physician by training and owned a fox farm in addition to his medical practice. He was a native of Prince Edward Island and was appointed by Squires to his cabinet post after failing to win a seat in the House of Assembly. Campbell was convinced that a model farm in Newfoundland would have the same transformative effect as that which had made "P.E.I. blossom like the rose." *Western Star*, 14 March 1917: 3.

¹⁰⁹ Campbell attended exhibitions in Charlottetown, Toronto, Guelph, and in Quebec. *Daily Star*, 13 October 1920: 10; *Evening Telegram*, 27 September 1920: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 27 September 1920: 6.

¹¹⁰ *Daily Star*, 13 October 1920: 10.

¹¹¹ Bowring Park opened in 1914, but Cochius returned to Montreal in 1917 to re-join the landscape architecture firm of Frederick Gage Todd. Dustin Valen, "Citizens, Protect Your Property: Perspectives on Public Health, Nationalism, and Class in St. John's Bowring Park, 1911-1930," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada* 40, no. 2 (2015): 43-56.

Midstream permitted Squires to imitate the standards and tastes of elite society in St. John's – a group to whom he was an outsider.¹¹² Beginning in 1916, Squires laid out the extensive grounds at Midstream in accordance with popular trends in English landscape design, reflecting the design of the nearby park. He imported many species of trees, shrubs, and flowers and, at one point, even enquired if English Oak could be grown in Newfoundland.¹¹³ Cochius encouraged these cultural exchanges, explaining to Squires that Midstream would serve an “instructive” purpose by showing the variety of plants that could be grown in Newfoundland. Cochius conceived the garden as an arboretum, planting many imported and native species of trees and using a combination of hardy shrubs and perennials to create the borders so that the garden's artificial landscape appeared to blend seamlessly into the surrounding valley. Exotics were clustered near the residence which Cochius placed at the end of a long, winding driveway, and where it commanded a spectacular view of the valley beyond. A report submitted by Cochius in 1916 indicated the placement of these features, as well as a gated entrance with stone walls, walkways, a kitchen garden, tennis court, tea house, and garage (Fig. 4.10).¹¹⁴

¹¹² James K. Hiller, “Squires, Sir Richard Anderson,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 16, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/squires_richard_anderson_16E.html.

¹¹³ Richard A. Squires to Rudolph H. K. Cochius, 23 January 1917, File 12.04.003, Sir Richard Squires Collection (Coll-250), MUN.

¹¹⁴ The planting plan called for a mixture of native and non-native trees, including mountain ash, weeping elm, Colorado spruce, and Carolina poplars, as well as local cherry trees and spruces. Borders were planted with a mixture of local and hardy imported plants, including common plants like snowberry, meadowsweet, and wild pear, in addition to varieties that were popular in England and Canada like rhododendrons, hydrangeas, and lilacs. Rudolph H. K. Cochius to Richard A. Squires, 8 November 1916, File 12.04.003, Sir Richard Squires Collection (Coll-250), MUN.

permanent employees (Fig. 4.11).¹¹⁵ However, as costs spiralled out of control political opponents seized on the project as evidence of government waste.¹¹⁶ Squires was later forced to admit that the new institution was principally a stock farm. And in 1923, scandal broke when a series of highly unusual charges were discovered buried in the model farm budget, including Sunday cab hires and motor car repairs (the model farm did not own an automobile).¹¹⁷

The model farm was soon swept up in a probe of government finances headed by the British barrister Thomas Hollis Walker.¹¹⁸ Several other discrepancies in the accounts of the model farm came to light as a result of the enquiry, including a sum for electric lighting in the pig sties, magazine subscriptions, and an order for 2,000 Christmas cards.¹¹⁹ Bayly was at a loss to explain these irregularities during his testimony, admitting that most of the expenses in question were made at Campbell's request, something Campbell adamantly denied. Testimony also revealed that the government had resorted to placing extra labourers on the farm as a form of relief work.¹²⁰ In the midst of the scandal, one local writer observed snidely that the model farm was perhaps ill-named, "being by no manner or means a model for others to follow."¹²¹

The enquiry revealed varying degrees of misappropriation and political patronage in the government accounts for roads, pensions, and relief work. Published in March 1924, Hollis Walker's report condemned the practices of the Squires government and accused Squires and Campbell of misappropriating public funds for their own personal gain. It even recommended

¹¹⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 9 August 1923: 5.

¹¹⁶ Farm expenditures for the period 1921 to 1923 ranged from approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000 per annum. *Evening Telegram*, 11 July 1923: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 16 July 1923: 6.

¹¹⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 16 July 1923: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 17 July 1923: 4.

¹¹⁸ On the momentous importance of the Hollis Walker Enquiry for Newfoundland, see R. M. Elliott, "Newfoundland Politics in the 1920s: The Genesis and Significance of the Hollis Walker Enquiry," in *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 181-204.

¹¹⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 3 March 1924: 4.

¹²⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 4 March 1924: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 6 March 1924: 6.

¹²¹ *Evening Telegram*, 6 March 1924: 3.

that criminal charges be brought against them.¹²² Squires' government collapsed in the wake of the enquiry, leading the model farm grant to be abruptly cancelled and the farm's stock, machinery, and implements to be sold at auction.¹²³

In a strange twist, Squires was returned as premier in 1928. However, the onset of the Great Depression prevented him from pursuing agricultural reform. He focused on his estate instead, constructing a romantic, rustic bungalow to serve as his permanent residence and establishing his own private, model farm (Fig. 4.12).



Fig. 4.12, Richard Squires' house and farm at Midstream, ca. 1960. Photo 05-07-062, City of St. John's Archives.

Squires' second term as premier ended in scandal as well, but this time the fate of his country was tied to his own. Facing an insurmountable public debt, members of the house voted to dissolve Newfoundland's government in 1933, forfeiting responsible government in exchange for British loans needed to avoid bankruptcy. The following year, Britain re-assumed control of

¹²² *Evening Telegram*, 22 March 1924: 4.

¹²³ *Evening Telegram*, 7 August 1923: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 9 August 1923: 5; *Evening Telegram*, 10 September 1923: 1.

the colony's affairs which it placed in the hands of a small group of appointed commissioners, three of whom were chosen from Newfoundland and three of whom were chosen from the United Kingdom. The Commission of Government effectively reinstated direct rule over Newfoundland. Despite the appearance of equal representation, the Commission was presided over by British officials and acted in their interest.

Chief among these interests was encouraging agriculture on a commercial scale. Commissioners were deeply troubled by the social and economic conditions they observed in Newfoundland. By 1934, the depression was severe. Fish prices collapsed amidst the Great Depression, forcing nearly a third of Newfoundlanders to draw on public relief in the form of the dole. Land-based industries did not fare much better. In the forest industry, deplorable working conditions and wage reductions led commissioners to surmise that workmen had been reduced to a "condition of slavery."¹²⁴ Illiteracy remained high and most rural communities lacked hospitals and other basic public services. Poverty and malnutrition were rampant. In light of these circumstances, commissioners made a renewed effort to stimulate agriculture by implementing educational programs, founding a new model farm, and initiating a land settlement program.

The encouragement of agriculture was a cornerstone of British colonial policy since 1929. However, a royal commission report in 1933 cast doubt on the feasibility of this policy in Newfoundland. The report noted how the country's difficult climate, lack of soil, and coastal settlement pattern were not conducive to intensive farming. Nor did its people possess the tools or knowledge to undertake agriculture on a large scale. Yet the report also provided an inroad for reformist thought. In describing fishermen's use of subsistence gardens, the report noted favourably how "it has been proved, indeed, by the more provident and energetic member of the

¹²⁴ David Murray Anderson to J. H. Thomas, 4 April 1934, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

community, that much can be done with the garden and small farm to supplement returns from the fishery.”¹²⁵

At the same time, British members of the new government were led to believe by their Newfoundland counterparts that the island possessed sufficient arable land to become self-sustaining, but that limited access and a lack of development had impeded its cultivation thus far.¹²⁶ Commissioners were unanimous in their belief that agricultural practices in Newfoundland were backwards and that in order for any progress to occur farming needed to be reorganized on a scientific basis. British commissioners favoured establishing a model farm to help realize this goal. To this end, they enlisted the Canadian agricultural expert A. B. Banks to provide input on the government’s agricultural policy and invited W. W. Baird, superintendent of the experimental farm at Nappan, Nova Scotia, to visit Newfoundland and report on the island’s agricultural potential.¹²⁷

In 1934, the Commission adopted an official, agricultural policy that was designed to encourage subsistence farming among fishermen and forestry workers, while improving the productivity of existing professional farmers. Baird was hired to lead a new agricultural division and three agriculturalists were hired to work as field experts. The department set about ordering stock animals (including ewes and rams for mutton and wool raising). And in 1935, the

¹²⁵ *Newfoundland Royal Commission Report 1933*, (London: H.M.S.O., 1933), 164-69, quote p. 66.

¹²⁶ At a meeting at the Dominions Office in 1934, former Prime Minister and future commissioner Frederick Charles Alderdice extolled the fact that Newfoundland possessed underutilized agricultural and forest resources. He reiterated the long held belief that the island could become self-sustaining through agricultural and industrial diversification. Minutes of a meeting held at the Dominion Office, 9 January 1934, DO 35/492/4, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹²⁷ *Western Star*, 17 October 1934: 6; Baird was opposed to the idea of a model farm owing to its high investment cost. Instead, he suggested that agricultural experts be retained to provide instruction in remote communities. He was, however, in favour of a land settlement program, both as a way to lessen unemployment and to speed the process of putting additional land under cultivation. “Newfoundland Commission of Government: Summary of Work Since April, 1934,” [20 September 1934], DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

government purchased Glendinning farm at Mount Pearl near St. John's for use as a model farm and school (Fig. 4.13 & Fig. 4.14).¹²⁸



Fig. 4.13, Main barn and garage at the model farm, ca. 1950. E. S. Hopkins and J. C. Moynan, "Report on the Proposed Transfer of Newfoundland Demonstration Farm to Dominion Experimental Farms Service," p. 22, File 4903-11, Volume 3451, RG 17, Department of Agriculture fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

¹²⁸ Initially, the Commission contemplated using the late Robert Bond's estate at Whitbourne as a model farm and school. Claude Fraser, *Department of Natural Resources, 1934-1935, Annual Report* (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1935), 22-24.



Fig. 4.14, Machine shop, piggery, and greenhouse at the model farm, ca. 1950. E. S. Hopkins and J. C. Moynan, "Report on the Proposed Transfer of Newfoundland Demonstration Farm to Dominion Experimental Farms Service," p. 23, File 4903-11, Volume 3451, RG 17, Department of Agriculture fonds, Library and Archives Canada.

Instructional landscapes were also created on a smaller scale at schools and in rural communities. The government distributed seeds to students and encouraged the formation of garden clubs. And field experts established eighteen experimental plots to demonstrate practical farming techniques in rural communities across the island. At the same time, the government promoted the creation of agricultural societies, swine clubs, sheep clubs, and poultry clubs. Literature was produced detailing best practices in the breeding of livestock and different farming techniques. The Commission also subsidized the cost of lime fertilizer and awarded bounties for land clearing, believing that a lack of arable land was the biggest impediment to agriculture in Newfoundland. Agricultural exhibitions were also reinstated. In 1936 the All-

Newfoundland Exhibition was inaugurated in St. John's and the following year 17 general exhibitions were held across the island.¹²⁹

Visions of agricultural progress quickly materialized amongst the ranks of Newfoundland's small government. By 1937, the government farm possessed 42 bulls, 27 boars, 436 rams, and 7 stallions.¹³⁰ That year, 97 demonstration plots were established under the supervision of departmental agriculturalists, leading the British commissioner for finance, J. H. Penson, to declare that Newfoundlanders were "becoming definitely land-minded."¹³¹

The centrepiece of the Commission of Government's agricultural policy was a land settlement program. The program was spearheaded in 1934 by British civil servants John Hope Simpson and Thomas Lodge who, taken together, represented a full third of Newfoundland's constitutional government. Both men were appalled at the degraded condition of society in rural Newfoundland. Likewise, both men believed that resettling rural families on the land was necessary in order to lessen Newfoundland's reliance on the fishing industry and create economic alternatives to the fishery. Lodge, for instance, believed that the Newfoundland fishery was fundamentally uneconomic and incapable of supporting its current workforce.¹³² He argued that a continuous infusion of commercial credit and public money into the industry had blinded individuals to the fact that fishery was not profitable, while impoverishing fishermen, merchants, and the government alike, albeit to different degrees.¹³³ The only alternative to the sea was the land. Lodge found support for this view among his fellow commissioners, although few were as

¹²⁹ A. B. Banks, *Progress Report of the Agricultural Division in Newfoundland, 1934-1937* (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1937).

¹³⁰ These animals were loaned to communities for breeding purposes. The government also offered bonuses to individuals who wished to purchase their own purebred stock.

¹³¹ J. H. Penson, *Budget Speech Delivered by J. H. Penson* (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1938), 3, 8.

¹³² Commissioners pointed to higher standards of living in Newfoundland's four industrial centres—Grand Falls, Corner Brook, St. John's, and Wabana on Bell Island—as evidence of the need to develop land-based industries. In 1934, they hired a geologist to prepare survey notes on the possible expansion of mining in Newfoundland.

¹³³ Thomas Lodge, *Dictatorship in Newfoundland* (London: Cassell and Co., 1939), 49-64.

militant as he. Most commissioners believed that reform efforts should also be directed towards the fishery so that it could support a smaller segment of Newfoundland's population.¹³⁴

However, commissioners were unanimous in their belief that the truck system was responsible for perpetuating a vicious cycle of indebtedness and poverty in rural Newfoundland and that greater economic cooperation would allow fishermen to wrest control of production and supply away from merchants. Lodge's view became official policy in 1935 when the Commission reported to the Dominions Office that the fishing industry "does not and could not provide an adequate living for all who are at present employed in fishing and curing." In an effort to make Newfoundland self-supporting, commissioners declared their intention to embark on a "vigorous policy of land settlement."¹³⁵

Authorities in London were equally embarrassed at having to rule over a country of whites. Britishers believed they were bred to rule, yet the royal commission in 1933 had declared Newfoundlanders unfit to govern, even though the country was populated by an almost uniformly white population of Northern European descent. Moreover, the collapse of responsible government in Newfoundland was the first time a member state of the British Empire had regressed from Dominion status to something resembling a crown colony. The Commission of Government effectively imposed colonial administration on a group of people who identified as British.¹³⁶ The prospect of Europeans ruling over fellow Europeans did not sit well with British

¹³⁴ John Hope Simpson and Humphrey Walwyn, for example, were both in favour of reforming the fishery by expanding into new markets, centralizing control of marketing, and encouraging cooperation among merchants to fetch better prices. John Hope Simpson to Edward J. Harding, 16 March 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK; Humphrey T. Walwyn to John Hope Simpson, 6 February 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹³⁵ "Newfoundland Commission of Government: Summary of Work Since April, 1934," [20 September 1934], DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹³⁶ Although Newfoundland's new constitution preserved elements of local representation and did not go so far as to give executive powers to the Governor—as was the case in crown colonies—it was nonetheless a source of embarrassment to British authorities. The Commission was presided over by the Governor, but the Governor

authorities. Lodge, for instance, was deeply troubled by the “anomaly of a Government of a purely white population with no element of popular representation.”¹³⁷

These tensions soon manifest within the new government as well. British commissioners accused their Newfoundland counterparts of being mentally weak, prone to drunkenness, and lacking in sophistication and class. “Even my ingrained modesty,” wrote Lodge, “will not allow me to ignore the fact that our Newfoundland colleagues are not in our class!”¹³⁸ Initially, authorities in London hoped that the appointment of an equal number of Newfoundland and British commissioners would make the Commission a cooperative mechanism. In practice, however, British commissioners held the balance of power since they controlled the treasury and other significant portfolios.¹³⁹ Most of the Commission’s policies originated from Lodge and Hope Simpson, two experienced civil servants who presided over the portfolios of Public Utilities and Natural Resources, respectively.¹⁴⁰ In public, commissioners expressed their

possessed no real executive powers since he was required to act on the Commission’s recommendation. Commissioners were appointed for three year terms, but these terms were often extended or reduced by the Dominions Office who was in charge of appointing commissioners. This constitutional arrangement was seen as a middle-course since it allowed Newfoundland to be represented within the government, while placing strict limitations on their power. In 1934, The Newfoundland commissioners were Frederick Charles Alderdice (the former Prime Minister), William Richard Howley (a lawyer), and Charles Puddester (the former secretary of state for Newfoundland). Thomas Lodge, Everard Noel Rye Trentham, and John Hope Simpson represented the United Kingdom.

¹³⁷ “Mr. Lodge’s Notes for his Address to the Labour Group of the Empire Parliamentary Association at the House of Commons,” 4 May 1936, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹³⁸ Thomas Lodge to [Unknown], 28 January 1935, DO 35/490/1, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK; the Governor reported that the U.K. commissioners often treated their Newfoundland counterparts “as being of lower mental calibre.” Confronted with this fact, Lodge retorted that the Newfoundland commissioners were so “easy-going and unbusiness-like that the Commission would never get anywhere at all, if its pace had to be accommodated to that of the Newfoundland members.” Newfoundland commissioners were in the dark, Lodge claimed, because they did not read the memorandums circulated ahead of the meetings. Similar sentiments were echoed by Hope Simpson. “Note on the Main Points Raised by Mr. Howley in his Conversation with the [Secretary of State],” January 1936, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹³⁹ Newfoundland commissioners were placed in charge of three portfolios: Home Affairs and Education, Justice, and Public Health and Welfare, while British commissioners presided over Natural Resources, Finance, and Public Utilities.

¹⁴⁰ All of the British commissioners were experienced civil servants. The Commissioner of Finance was Everard Trentham, a treasury official with prior experience in Newfoundland. Likewise, John Hope Simpson had spent 27 years as a member of the Indian Civil Service and served as a Member of Parliament from 1922-24. He also worked

“profound dislike for modern dictatorships.”¹⁴¹ In private, they complained that even professional politicians in Newfoundland failed to come up their own high standards of civil service. In 1936, Lodge proposed re-writing the country’s constitution in order to strip Newfoundland members of their executive powers.¹⁴² And in selecting a title for his subsequent memoir he settled on the apt title: *Dictatorship in Newfoundland*.

Lodge was universally disliked in Newfoundland.¹⁴³ He angered religious leaders by stating publicly that education should be wrested away from the churches and attracted the ire of fishermen and merchants by spreading the opinion that “Newfoundland produces a poor article of food which is consumed by poor people in poor countries.”¹⁴⁴ Nor was he popular among his colleagues. Commissioners could only cringe at Lodge’s frequent, public outbursts. And in private, they suffered his arrogant demeanour and grating personality. In a conversation with the Governor, Lodge once boasted that all the other commissioners were “in his pocket because he had all the brains.”¹⁴⁵

on refugee settlement in Greece and flood relief in China on behalf of the League of Nations. Born in Liverpool, Lodge had served briefly in the Ministry of Shipping before acting as a financial adviser to Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian humanitarian and High Commissioner for Refugees with the League of Nations from 1921-30.

¹⁴¹ “Mr. Lodge’s Notes for his Address to the Labour Group of the Empire Parliamentary Association at the House of Commons,” 4 May 1936, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁴² Humphrey T. Walwyn to Edward J. Harding, 9 March 1936, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁴³ In 1936, Newfoundland’s newly appointed Governor, Humphrey Walwyn, observed that “Lodge openly says that Fish is unimportant; he is intensely unpopular and prides himself on that.” Humphrey T. Walwyn to Edward J. Harding, 22 February 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK; for their part, the Dominions Office urged for more cooperation within the Commission of Government so that the role of Newfoundland members would not be diminished in the eyes of the public. They were also concerned that a lack of cooperation would make it difficult to find suitable future candidates for the position of Newfoundland Commissioner, frustrating an eventual return to self-rule.

¹⁴⁴ Lodge made this statement in a speech to the Labour Group of the Empire Parliamentary Association at the House of Commons. “Mr. Lodge’s Notes for his Address to the Labour Group of the Empire Parliamentary Association at the House of Commons,” 4 May 1936, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK; Edward J. Harding to David Murray Anderson, 13 June 1935, DO 35/490/1, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁴⁵ Humphrey T. Walwyn to John Hope Simpson, 6 February 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

In Walwyn's opinion, Lodge's low esteem in Newfoundland was on account of his refusal to "understand, or attempt to appreciate the people. He fails to adapt himself to their level, possibly not a high one."¹⁴⁶ This was an accusation befitting the Commission in general. Instead of renting homes in St. John's, for example, British commissioners elected to stay at the Newfoundland Hotel – the only modern facility of its kind in the city. From this base of operations, they made regular forays around the island, travelling by rail and boat to see first-hand the conditions in rural Newfoundland, which they then recorded with obvious displeasure in their communiqués.¹⁴⁷ This did little to improve their countenance in the eyes of Newfoundlanders. Commissioners appeared aloof to reality in rural Newfoundland. Moreover, the appointment of commissioners for a limited time made them appear interested in the country's problems only on a passing basis. Nevertheless, authorities in London believed that Newfoundlanders were of a good enough ilk that with the right amount of cultural authority they could be redeemed and responsible government restored. Indeed, in 1935 the Earl of Winterton reminded Britons that Newfoundlanders "embodied the best characteristics of the Channel Islanders, Irish, and English from the South and West, from whom they are descended."¹⁴⁸

The land resettlement program was one such cultural authority. In particular, commissioners believed that the program was needed in order to create a financially independent and educated class of land owners in Newfoundland. This need was underscored by the 1933 royal commission, which concluded that "the great majority of the people are quite unfitted to play a part in public life" and recommended the country take a break from responsible

¹⁴⁶ Humphrey T. Walwyn to Edward J. Harding, 9 March 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁴⁷ Peter Neary, *White Tie and Decorations : Sir John and Lady Hope Simpson in Newfoundland, 1934-1936* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

¹⁴⁸ Earl Winterton, "Newfoundland's Revival" (newspaper clipping, *Telegraph*, 13 September 1935), DO 35/490/1, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

government. In lieu of a “leisured class,” the report stated, career-politicians had propagated abuses of power and spread corruption, leading Newfoundland politics to be viewed as an “unclean thing which no self-respecting man should touch.”¹⁴⁹ Commissioners were also critical of the fact that Newfoundland did not possess a leisured class of wealthy landowners suited for public service.¹⁵⁰ Land settlements were designed to rectify this. Although financed with public money, land settlements were to be transferred into private hands as soon as possible, giving rise to a new class of small and large holdings land-owners capable of impartial political representation, and hastening Newfoundland’s return to self-government.

Back to the Land?

In 1936, Newfoundland’s Governor, Humphrey Walwyn, warned the Dominions Office that commissioners’ “back to the land’ crusade” was a lengthy and costly path to reform.¹⁵¹ He was right in one sense: the cost of the land settlement program was enormous. In two years over \$700,000 (about \$12 million today) was spent to resettle some 170 families in five new agricultural communities across the island. In contrast, the total value of crops raised that year was a meagre \$3,200.¹⁵² Settlers depended on the government for financial support. However, Walwyn was wrong to characterize the scheme as a back-to-the-land movement. Newfoundland was, and always had been a country of fishermen; not many of its members were interested in agriculture beyond their own kitchen gardens.

¹⁴⁹ *Newfoundland Royal Commission Report 1933*, 86.

¹⁵⁰ Lodge, for example, complained that “during the first three years of Government by Commission, there was not a single Newfoundlander under the age of retirement, resident in the island, with anything remotely approaching the minimum qualifications necessary for a Commissionership, who was not actively engaged in either commerce or law or clerical duties or in professional or quasi-professional work.” Lodge, 29-30.

¹⁵¹ Humphrey T. Walwyn to Edward J. Harding, 9 March 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁵² *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1937* (St. John’s: Newfoundland Government, 1937), 42, 109.

Similarly, by emphasizing the economic aspects of land settlement, Walwyn downplayed the program's social objectives. In reality, the land settlement program was a crusade against the economic and social standards commissioners witnessed in rural Newfoundland. In addition to reducing the amount of money spent on poor relief by turning fishing families into self-reliant homesteaders, commissioners believed that land settlements would teach fishers individual responsibility, improve educational standards, and promote the sexual division of labour. Let loose in a country that was not their own, commissioners attempted to instil Anglo-Saxon virtues in its members by transferring features of British landscape and its attendant social relations to Newfoundland. The experimental farm at Mount Pearl even became a favourite picnicking spot for British commissioners and their families.¹⁵³ Similarly, by 1937 the land settlement program had evolved into a vast mechanism for promoting self-reliance and middle-class values in Newfoundland. Commercial farming, education, economic cooperation, and self-built housing were all keynote features of the five agricultural settlements established in Newfoundland between 1934 and 1936.

Land settlement had been a tool of British domestic and foreign policy since before the First World War. New agricultural settlements were often proposed as a solution to reducing the number of poor in English cities. Likewise, lawmakers believed that farming would aid in the preservation of Anglo-Saxon virtues by reconnecting working-class individuals with nature. In 1911, English politician Christopher Turnor—a leading advocate for small holdings farms—even warned that inattention to the land as a result of rural-to-urban migration and state sponsored poor-relief would lead directly to the degeneration of the British race by encouraging pauperism

¹⁵³ John Hope Simpson to Greta, 31 July 1936, reprinted in Neary, *White Tie and Decorations : Sir John and Lady Hope Simpson in Newfoundland, 1934-1936* 333-34.

and spreading social evils.¹⁵⁴ Conversely, land settlement was seen as a tool for stanching and even reversing white racial degeneracy by combating unemployment, preventing rural depopulation, and instilling conservative values in new rural citizens.

The promotion of land settlements peaked during the Great Depression. The English and Welsh Land Settlement Associations were established in 1933 and 1936, respectively. At the height of the depression, land settlement associations oversaw the relocation of some 5,000 men, women, and children from declining industrial districts onto 37 government-subsidized farms and homesteads throughout southern England.¹⁵⁵ A back-to-the-land movement was encouraged by wealthy and reform-minded individuals as well, out of concern for economic efficiency. During the 1930s, for example, the American industrialist Henry Ford established Fordson Estate, a farming settlement located near Essex, where he attempted to harmonize mechanical farming techniques with traditional ways of life. Working in cooperation with the conservative English politician Percival Perry, Ford supplied settlers with tractors and cultivators and introduced incentives, such as profit sharing and generous wages, to encourage workers' productivity and social integration.¹⁵⁶

Efforts to encourage cultivation throughout the empire also redoubled after the onset of the Great Depression. Rising geopolitical anxieties in Europe cast agriculture as a matter of national security during the 1930s. In addition to alleviating poverty and securing Britain's food supply, farming was associated with producing patriotic citizens who were willing and able to

¹⁵⁴ Christopher Turnor, *Land Problems and National Welfare* (London: John Lane, 1911), 301. William Beach Thomas called Turnor "one of the most enterprising—and theoretic—landowners in England." At Beach Thomas' suggestion, Turnor offered the Harmsworths a 14 acre parcel of land to establish small holdings farm settlement, which became known as the *Daily Mail* farm. Thomas, 75-76.

¹⁵⁵ Denis Linehan and Pyrs Gruffudd, "Unruly Topographies: Unemployment, Citizenship and Land Settlement in Inter-War Wales," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 29, no. 1 (2004): 46-63.

¹⁵⁶ Kit Kowol, "An Experiment in Conservative Modernity: Interwar Conservatism and Henry Ford's English Farms," *Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 4 (2016): 781-805.

defend England's overseas holdings.¹⁵⁷ In 1929, the Colonial Development Act created a loan fund for use by colonial administrators in recognition of widespread poverty in certain parts of the empire. Lawmakers believed the fund would simultaneously benefit the United Kingdom by stimulating commerce and improving economic security throughout the empire. Subsequently, the fund was used to subsidize various land settlement schemes and other agricultural improvement programs in the colonies, including throughout the West Indies and in British Palestine.¹⁵⁸ In 1940, the Colonial Development fund was renewed and expanded, with a particular emphasis on using agriculture and land settlement as forms of economic relief.¹⁵⁹

The first land settlement in Newfoundland was established by a group of unemployed, ex-servicemen in St. John's. They approached the government with a proposal to create a new farming community in exchange for financial assistance. Known as Markland, the new community was located 100 kilometres from St. John's and near Whitbourne, the site of the late Robert Bond's estate.¹⁶⁰ At the outset, Markland contained just ten families and was governed by a private board of trustees. But the apparent success of the community led commissioners to assume control of all planning and managerial decisions in June 1934. Initially, Hope Simpson chaired meetings of the Markland board of trustees, but Lodge later took his place.¹⁶¹ The

¹⁵⁷ See, for instance, H. Vincent, "Production," in *Rural Development and Small Holdings: Report of the Proceedings of the National Congress Held at the Crystal Palace on 18th, 19th, & 20th October, 1911 in Connection with the Small Holdings and Country Life Section of the Festival of Empire* (London: P.S. King & Son, 1912), 122-30.

¹⁵⁸ Marleen A. Bartley, "Land Settlement in Jamaica, 1923-1949," in *Jamaica in Slavery and Freedom: History, Heritage and Culture*, ed. Kathleen E. A. Monteith and Glen Richards (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2002), 324-39; Robert Home, "Scientific Survey and Land Settlement in British Colonialism, with Particular Reference to Land Tenure Reform in the Middle East 1920-50," *Planning Perspectives* 21, no. 1 (2006): 1-22.

¹⁵⁹ Michael A. Havinden and David Meredith, eds., *Colonialism and Development: Britain and Its Tropical Colonies, 1850-1960* (London: Routledge, 2002), 160, 218-20.

¹⁶⁰ The community drew its name from Norse legend. Markland, meaning "forest land," was one of three unknown regions visited by the Icelandic explorer Leif Erickson around 1000 A.D. Markland was thought to refer to the coast of Labrador, but others claimed it was the name given by Erickson to Nova Scotia.

¹⁶¹ As Commissioner of Natural Resources, Hope Simpson's portfolio included agriculture. However, Lodge oversaw the land settlement program. "Newfoundland Commission of Government: Summary of Work Since April,

Commission immediately set about expanding the settlement and, soon afterwards, submitted a proposal to the Dominions Office outlining an official policy of land settlement with Markland serving as a prototype for several additional planned communities.¹⁶²

Between 1934 and 1936, the Commission created four new agricultural settlements with loans from the Colonial Development Fund.¹⁶³ New roads were built giving access to arable land and experts were hired to assist in the construction of houses and provide agricultural advice. In exchange for participating in the program, settlers were given an allowance of goods in the expectation that they would become self-supporting after a short period of time. In 1935, Hope Simpson reported optimistically that some 300 families would soon be relocated to new inland settlements, with as many more expected the following year.¹⁶⁴



Fig. 4.15, Schoolteacher Clare Cochius standing in front of a log cabin in Markland, ca. 1935. Private Collection.

1934," [20 September 1934], DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁶² For a detailed history of the origins and development of Markland, see Gordon Handcock, "The Commission of Government's Land Settlement Scheme in Newfoundland," in *Twentieth-Century Newfoundland: Explorations*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (St. John's: Breakwater, 1994), 123-51.

¹⁶³ Lourdes was founded in 1934, followed by Haricot in 1935, and Midland and Brown's Arm in 1936.

¹⁶⁴ John Hope Simpson to Edward J. Harding, 11 July 1935, DO 35/490/1, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.



Fig. 4.16, Markland school children attending a summer camp, ca. 1935. Private Collection.

Of the five original land settlements, Markland was the largest. The community was meant to be a model for other settlements to emulate and a training ground for future settlement managers and other experts. The design of the community was directed by Cochius whose portfolio in 1934 included Bowring Park, Squires' Midstream estate, and the Newfoundland memorial in Beaumont Hamel.¹⁶⁵ Under Cochius' direction, the first Markland settlers erected five rustic log cabins, recalling both the English picturesque (Cochius' preferred style), and logging camps in Newfoundland's interior that were emblematic of workers' self-sufficiency (Fig. 4.15). At the same time, Cochius supervised the layout of roads, the placement of buildings, and the design of the surrounding landscape. Markland began to appear like an English garden. Meandering paths and roads resembled those in Bowring Park and Cochius placed cottages on ridges to improve views throughout the community. He even planted several oak trees that were imported from Windsor Castle Park to commemorate the settlement's founding. Indeed, Cochius' concern for beauty often overrode more practical considerations. Residents complained

¹⁶⁵ Cochius also served as a member of the High Roads Commission beginning in 1925, laying out scenic roadways for visiting motorists. He resigned from the Markland board in 1936 and quit Newfoundland for Holland; see Bert Riggs, "Designer of Bowring Park," *Telegram* (St. John's), 2 January 2001: 9.

that their ridge top houses were exposed to the weather and did not allow easy access to arable land.¹⁶⁶

Markland expanded quickly in the years that followed. To accommodate the influx of new settlers, Cochius designed a series of wood framed cottages and hired carpenters to complete them.¹⁶⁷ By 1936, Markland contained over 100 houses, as well as a store, barns and a dairy, garages, workshops, two school buildings, and a cottage hospital. Members of the community shared logging and farming equipment. And some 150 acres of land were in various states of being cleared.¹⁶⁸ Two sawmills supplied the community with building materials and a small furniture factory was opened under the direction of the American-born industrial designer Max Jules Gottschalk.¹⁶⁹

Farm production in Markland remained low, however, and settlers continued to depend on the government for support. Vacancy rates also climbed as difficult farming conditions led some settlers to abandon their efforts and return to the fishery. In 1937, the practice of giving settlers food and supplies in lieu of cash was abandoned in favour of regular wages. Yet by 1938, only 78 of the community's 109 houses were occupied.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, Lodge believed the community was proof that "people whose morale has been sapped by unemployment, and under-

¹⁶⁶ Hancock, 131.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 138.

¹⁶⁸ *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1936* (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1936), 110-111.

¹⁶⁹ Max Jules Gottschalk eschewed local traditions in Newfoundland and believed that his own modernist furniture would eventually constitute a new "national style." Commissioners hoped that the Markland furniture making studio would provide a source of revenue for the community and that craft skills assimilated by its workers would be transferred elsewhere in Newfoundland. Jeff A. Webb, "Max Jules Gottschalk and Godes Design: A Modernist Furniture Manifesto in Newfoundland," *Material Culture Review* 66 (2007): 68-74.

¹⁷⁰ *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1938* (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1938), 113-115.

nourishment” could be turned into “self-respecting” and “self-supporting” citizens in a just short amount of time.¹⁷¹

Lodge’s comments underscore the extent to which Markland was a social experiment, as well as an economic one. Indeed, he believed that the land settlement was program “an attempt at complete social reconstruction.”¹⁷² Accordingly, social conditions in Markland were closely monitored and controlled. Cochius, for example, discouraged socializing and even refused to allow settlers’ extended families to visit the community out of fear that they would consume government resources. He also required residents to obtain his permission before travelling outside the community.¹⁷³ Laws were passed to prevent any unauthorized settlement. And acts of “insubordination” were grounds for eviction.¹⁷⁴ One family was evicted from Markland following a heated argument with a local school teacher after their child was caught brandishing her tongue in class. Two more were evicted after staging a protest in support of a colleague who had been ejected from the settlement, defying the settlement manager’s orders.¹⁷⁵

Education was a central feature of social life Markland and integral to its reform agenda. Modelled on Scandinavian folk schools, the school’s curriculum reflected the Commission’s desire to secularize education and foster self-sufficiency in rural Newfoundland by teaching practical skills to all its members. Classes in Markland were attended by men and women, as well as children in the community. Reading and writing were taught alongside hygiene, singing, and nature study. And school buildings were equipped with kitchens for teaching home economics. Children were organized into troupes nicknamed “Beothics” and attended weekly

¹⁷¹ Lodge admitted, however, that economic standards in Markland were considerably lower than among organized labour in the United Kingdom. “Mr. Lodge’s Notes for his Address to the Labour Group of the Empire Parliamentary Association at the House of Commons,” 4 May 1936, DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁷² Lodge, 177.

¹⁷³ Handcock, 131.

¹⁷⁴ *Western Star*, 8 July 1936: 1.

¹⁷⁵ *Western Star*, 13 May 1936: 1.

hikes and an annual summer camp (Fig. 4.16). Women were trained in household management, cooking, and dressmaking. And in the evening, men received lessons in reading, writing, history, and political science.¹⁷⁶

Indeed, one of the explicit goals of the land settlement program was the domestic education of women. In 1935, Lady (Quita) Hope Simpson was shocked at the “degraded” state of women’s society in Newfoundland. She accused its members of being “ignorant” mothers and bad housekeepers; admonished them for not washing properly; and chastised them for engaging in “unladylike” games. She was also alarmed by the number of marriages that were hastily arranged on account of pregnancies, surmising that rural Newfoundland was “far worse, I think, than many savage tribal states.”¹⁷⁷ In contrast, rural reconstruction cast women in the role of homemakers and family administrators, while defining women’s economic space through the promotion of home-based industries like weaving and knitting.

In 1935, the Commission collaborated with a group of reform-minded citizens to create the Jubilee Guilds. Dedicated to bettering outport life, the guilds were supported by educational, religious, and political leaders in St. John’s. The ranks of its two executives (one male and one female) were drawn from elite St. John’s families and included many society women. Most of the educational programs administered by the guilds focused on promoting suitable women’s work. Guild members taught women self-reliance in the form of weaving and dyeing, handicrafts, nursing, and infant care. Care and beautification of the home was another educational theme. As Linda Cullum notes, “a middle-class standard of living was inherent in

¹⁷⁶ Clare Cochius—the daughter of Rudolph Cochius—was the head school teacher in Markland. John Hope Simpson to Ian and Sheila, 31 October 1934, reprinted in Neary, *White Tie and Decorations : Sir John and Lady Hope Simpson in Newfoundland, 1934-1936* 133-34.

¹⁷⁷ Quita Hope Simpson to Ian and Sheila, 16 May 1935, reprinted in *ibid.*, 151-52.

[the guilds'] early educational programs, one that did not take account of the actual circumstances in rural communities.”¹⁷⁸

The Jubilee Guilds also promoted agricultural self-reliance to women. They encouraged poultry keeping, fruit growing, and flower gardening.¹⁷⁹ Indeed, Baird (whose report was read out at the founding meeting of the Jubilee Guilds) singled out the role of women in facilitating Newfoundland’s agricultural revolution, stating that “there is no industry in which the assistance, co-operation and intelligent knowledge of the women—especially the wives—is of such vital importance.”¹⁸⁰ He called for the establishment of Women’s Institutes in Newfoundland, similar to those in Canada and Britain which aimed to improve homemaking and childcare skills. By 1936, guilds were established at two land settlements—including Markland—where field workers taught spinning and weaving to local women. And in 1938, the Commission began funding the Jubilee Guilds directly in the form of an annual grant.¹⁸¹

Markland was not immune to criticism, however. The exorbitant cost of the land settlement program caused it to become deeply unpopular in Newfoundland. In 1936, Hope Simpson had declared that public relief was not “compatible with self-respect” or “consistent with morality.”¹⁸² Yet by 1937, the cost of the land settlement scheme exceeded half a million dollars and settlers were nowhere near self-supporting. Critics argued that Markland was just another form of relief spending and a substantial one at that. Others pointed out that it normally took years to turn wooded land into productive agricultural soil. And many were sceptical that Newfoundlanders, who they portrayed as highly individualistic, could be taught to work in a

¹⁷⁸ Linda Cullum, "'It's up to the Women': Gender, Class, and Nation Building in Newfoundland, 1935-1945," in *Creating This Place: Women, Family, and Class in St John's, 1900-1950*, ed. Linda Cullum and Marilyn Porter (Montreal; Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 188.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 179-201.

¹⁸⁰ *Western Star*, 24 October 1934: 4, 5.

¹⁸¹ Cullum, 196.

¹⁸² *Western Star*, 2 September 1936: 3.

cooperative manner.¹⁸³ Among these critics was the Reverend E. A. Butler who charged that fishermen were not farmers and who mocked Cochius' role in laying out Markland with "an eye to the beauty of the natural features" without knowing "how to even keep a cow."¹⁸⁴

Commissioners were quick to dismiss these views, arguing that they originated within a small group of former politicians, lawyers, and merchants who stood to lose power and money as a result of the government's innovative policies.¹⁸⁵ By 1939, however, the programme's failures were becoming all too evident. The practice of cultivating community land was abandoned in favour of increasing the size of personal lots and several unoccupied houses in Markland were salvaged for their building materials.¹⁸⁶

Cooperating for Rural Reconstruction

The priority of agricultural development was reflected in the selection of future commissioners as well. In 1936, Hope Simpson was replaced as Commissioner of Natural Resources by Robert Benson Ewbank. Ewbank was a former member of the Agriculture, Education, Health and Lands Department in India, where he specialized in matters of cooperative agricultural marketing. Similarly, when time came to choose a successor for Lodge, the Governor pressed the Dominions Office to select a person with expertise in land settlement. In this instance, however, colonial officials opted for someone with a strong administrative record instead, nominating the

¹⁸³ *Western Star*, 10 February 1937: 1, 3.

¹⁸⁴ E. A. Butler, "Newfoundland Under Commission of Government," *Western Star*, 10 March 1937: 3.

¹⁸⁵ Walwyn was among these critics. In 1936, he complained that commissioners "talk airily about keeping stock, cattle sheep etc. but such commodities have to be stall fed here from November till May because of the frost and the snow. If they are grazed on the restricted land available in the summer, there is necessarily no hay crop for winter feed, and consequently hay or cake has to be bought at exorbitant prices [...]. Let them go on with land settlement in conjunction with improving the fish industry, by all means; but they must work hand in hand and not as opposing interests." Humphrey T. Walwyn to Edward J. Harding, 9 March 1936, DO 35/490/2, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁸⁶ By 1939, the number of families at Markland had shrunk to 75. *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1939* (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1939), 126-129.

public servant Wilfrid Wentworth Woods who had recently retired from his post of Financial Secretary in Ceylon.¹⁸⁷

In 1937, a recently retired Lodge was angry that the new commissioners were not implementing his land settlement scheme to its fullest potential.¹⁸⁸ Despite having installed Ewbank as head of natural resources, the Commission turned its attention away from the issue of land settlement. Moreover, since neither Ewbank nor Woods were interested in having the land settlement program in their ministerial portfolios, the task of administering the land settlement program fell to the Commissioner of Finance, J. H. Penson.¹⁸⁹ Expansion of the land settlement program thus proceeded slowly until 1938 when John H. Gorvin of the U.K. Department of Agriculture and Inland Fisheries was asked to survey progress in rural Newfoundland and make a series of policy recommendations.

Like the commissioners before him, Gorvin was dismayed by the low level of formal education and high rate of poverty he witnessed in rural Newfoundland. His report, published in 1939, supported expansion of the land settlement program but was highly critical of the cost of the program to date. He outlined a long-term program for rural reconstruction with the dual aim of lowering the program's cost and encouraging economic cooperation among fishermen in order to break the cycle of merchant dependence. In particular, Gorvin singled out an area on Newfoundland's south coast along Placentia Bay as an ideal region to pilot his reconstruction program. He proposed establishing a special economic zone comprising 50 kilometres of coastline, 24 fishing villages, and roughly 4,500 people. Within this special area, he called for

¹⁸⁷ Woods became the Commissioner of Public Utilities (a portfolio that included land settlement) in February 1937. Paraphrase telegram to the Governor of Newfoundland, 17 November 1936, DO 35/490/4, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁸⁸ Lodge accused the new commissioners of treating Markland as if it were an extravagant enterprise. He also argued that the cost of the resettlement program in Newfoundland compared favourably to similar programs initiated by the English Land Settlement Association. Memorandum by Thomas Lodge, [27 September 1937], DO 35/723/3, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁸⁹ The commissioners from Newfoundland in 1937 were John Puddester, L. E. Emerson, and J. A. Winter.

the creation of 600, five acre agricultural lots located near the coast for use by fishermen and an additional 400, 50 acre lots located on inland farming settlements. As with earlier land settlements, the government would provide roads, expertise, and financial assistance to settlers. However, Gorvin's plan differed in that it also called for a more comprehensive approach to economic reform. His reconstruction scheme encompassed the fishery, as well as other industries, such as agriculture, ship building, and textiles.¹⁹⁰ Gorvin's proposal received the support of the Commission and the Dominions Office. And in June of 1939, he replaced Ewbank as Commissioner of Natural Resources.

Gorvin was also prone to controversy. Like Lodge, he was uncompromising in his beliefs and placed blame for Newfoundland's economic woes squarely on the shoulders of merchants who perpetuated exploitative practices in the fishery. Gorvin wanted nothing less than to seize control of production and supply in the fishery and to redistribute its proceeds in a more equitable manner using public spending. But his desire to "break the merchants" made him unpopular among the St. John's commercial elite who used their control of the press to stoke public opinion against him.¹⁹¹

Commissioners were also irritated by Gorvin's doggedness. They complained that he was arrogant and confrontational and that Commission meetings had become "controversial and inharmonious" on account of his "deplorable" tone and manner.¹⁹² Gorvin was especially indignant with critics of his reconstruction scheme. One commissioner attested that:

¹⁹⁰ John H. Gorvin, *Papers Relating to a Long Range Reconstruction Policy in Newfoundland*, vol. 1 (St. John's: Newfoundland Government, 1938). See also Minutes of a meeting at the Dominions Office, 4 April 1939, DO 35/723/3, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁹¹ Humphrey T. Walwyn to Eric Machtig, 8 October 1940, DO 35/723/4, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

¹⁹² Memorandum by John Puddester, J. A. Winter, Wilfrid Woods, and L. E. Emerson, 7 October 1940, DO 35/723/4, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

A reply which we have heard Mr. Gorvin give to independent critics of his Special Areas Scheme who were in no way interested in trade is that their criticisms are the result of unfamiliarity with what he likes to call the 'modern' methods of his own department of Agriculture in England. He is, in fact, firmly convinced that his medicine must be administered to the people of Newfoundland whether they are willing to take it or not.¹⁹³

Economic cooperation was among these modern methods. It was also a core feature of Gorvin's reconstruction scheme. Within the special area on Placentia Bay, fishermen were to be formed into cooperative organizations so that they could catch, cure, and market fish independent of merchants. Marketing societies would give direct access to purchasers; buying clubs and stores would lower the price of imported goods; and credit societies seeded with government money would allow fishermen to obtain supplies without recourse to merchant credit. At the same time, the creation of small and large land holdings settlements would improve self-sufficiency by encouraging subsistence farming among fishing families, while permitting others to pursue commercial agriculture on a full time basis. Administration of the new program was entrusted to the Department of Rural Reconstruction, which was overseen Gorvin.

British authorities had expressed an interest in economic cooperation in Newfoundland since 1934. That summer, they hired a cooperative expert to tour the island and make recommendations on economic cooperation.¹⁹⁴ In particular, authorities believed that credit banks would allow fishermen to escape the abuses of the truck system and its revolving debt.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ The cooperative expert, Margaret Digby, was a member of the Horace Plunkett Foundation in Ireland. She was hired on the advice of William Grenfell. "Newfoundland Commission of Government: Summary of Work Since April, 1934," [20 September 1934], DO 35/490/5, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK; see also William J. Browne, *Eighty-Four Years a Newfoundlander* (St. John's: W. J. Browne, 1981), 234-35. Following Digby's advice, the Commission asked the Dominions Office for permission to send a Newfoundland candidate to be trained in cooperative methods in Nova Scotia. *Western Star*, 24 October 1934: 1; William (Bill) Trucksis, an American organizer of cooperative stores and credit unions, also toured the island in 1934 at the Commission's request and made recommendations on the drafting of a legal framework for cooperative societies. Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 17 June 1940, Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

¹⁹⁵ Minutes of a meeting held at the Dominion Office, 9 January 1934, DO 35/492/4, Dominions Office and Commonwealth Relations Office: Original Correspondence, NAUK.

Commissioners were also inspired by a cooperative and adult education movement founded in Cape Breton by a group of Roman Catholic priests and that centered on the Extension Department at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish.¹⁹⁶ In 1936, the Commission hired Gerald Richardson, an American cooperative expert and graduate of the program in Antigonish, naming him director of the Cooperative Division of the Newfoundland government.¹⁹⁷ Richardson immediately recruited four men from Cape Breton to work as field experts and to preach the benefits of cooperation throughout rural Newfoundland.¹⁹⁸ And in October 1937, he organized a cooperative conference in Port au Port on Newfoundland's west coast, featuring several speakers and delegates from the Extension Department at St. Francis Xavier.¹⁹⁹

By 1939, Newfoundland's nascent cooperative movement included an extensive educational and propaganda campaign.²⁰⁰ Study clubs were established in about 300 communities for men and women to discuss recent literature on cooperation. And the Cooperative Division broadcast a radio program and published a monthly newspaper: *The*

¹⁹⁶ Among the priests who helped found the Antigonish Movement were Father James (Jimmy) Tompkins, Moses Coady, Hugh MacPherson, and A. B. MacDonald. Their goal was to allow rural Nova Scotians hard-hit by the depression to achieve social and spiritual self-fulfilment, as well as to mitigate the exploitive practices of industry by spreading economic education among the working class, see Moses M. Coady, *Masters of Their Own Destiny: The Story of the Antigonish Movement of Adult Education through Economic Cooperation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1939).

¹⁹⁷ Minutes of the Honourable Commission of Government, 15 June 1936, DO 41/20, Newfoundland: Sessional Papers, NAUK; see also Gerald Richardson, *Abc of Cooperatives: A Handbook for Consumers and Producers* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1940).

¹⁹⁸ The four men were Joseph McIsaac, D. J. McEachern, Angus (Gussie) MacDonald, and Neil McNeil. All the men were involved in the cooperative movement founded in Antigonish which had grown out of the Extension Department at St. Francis Xavier University. Chief field worker Gus MacDonald, for example, had been associate director of the University Extension Department and studied at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. Browne, 236-40.

¹⁹⁹ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "1937 Cooperative Conference on the West Coast" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), File 14, Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁰⁰ Commissioners' promotional efforts were also formalized with the passage of the Cooperative Societies Act of 1939, which outlined a regulatory system for registering and operating cooperative societies on a constitutional basis. "An Act Relating to Co-Operative Societies," *Acts of the Honourable Commission of Government of Newfoundland 1939* (St. John's: David R. Thistle, 1939), 78-112.

Newfoundland Cooperative News.²⁰¹ Credit unions were also on the rise in Newfoundland, especially on the west coast, where an agricultural economy was well-established. In 1939, some 2,800 individuals were organized into 30 credit societies across the island. Several buying clubs were also established and local stores in Markland and other land settlements were reorganized following cooperative principles.²⁰²

Mary in Marystown

Also in attendance at the cooperative conference was Mary Ellicott Arnold. Born in New York, Arnold was an experienced cooperative organizer with university training in agriculture and economics.²⁰³ Together with her romantic and professional partner, Mabel Reed, she had organized several cafeterias and an apartment building in New York City along cooperative lines. In 1937, she and Reed travelled to Nova Scotia to study adult education and to work as members of the Extension Department in Antigonish, preaching self-reliance and economic cooperation throughout the region. At Richardson's invitation, Arnold traveled to Newfoundland to give an address at the conference.²⁰⁴

Whilst in Nova Scotia, Arnold supervised the design and construction of a cooperative housing project at Reserve Mines. The new community was located near the coal mining district

²⁰¹ Jeff A. Webb, *The Voice of Newfoundland: A Social History of the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland, 1939-1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 58-63.

²⁰² "Newfoundland: Annual Report by the Commission of Government on the Work of the Commission during 1939," p. 43-51, DO 41/24, Newfoundland: Sessional Papers, Honourable Commission of Government Minutes, NAUK; it was Arnold who helped reorganize the Markland store according to cooperative principles, with each settler buying stock and becoming a part owner. "Cooperative Store at Markland" (unpublished manuscript, [16 July 1940]), Volume 3 (File 5 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁰³ During their twenties, Arnold and Reed enrolled in a short course on agriculture at Cornell University so that they could farm 55 acres belonging to the Reed family. However, after five years they became broke, leading Arnold to take a job in New York City. Arnold later studied economics and the University of California in 1915. She and Reed are better known for their work as field matrons to the Karuk tribe in Northern California from 1908 to 1909 on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, see Mary Ellicott Arnold and Mabel Reed, *In the Land of the Grasshopper Song* (New York: Vantage Press, [1957]).

²⁰⁴ Mabel Reed to Margaret Reed, 29 October 1937, File 12, Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

of Glace Bay, where the Catholic parish priest James Tompkins was spearheading several cooperative ventures.²⁰⁵ Arnold later recounted this experience in *The Story of Tompkinsville*, a promotional book published by the Cooperative League of New York in 1940. The book reveals her to be an astute organizer of people and finances, as well as a person of seemingly boundless energy and resolve. It also speaks to her skill as an amateur architect. Without any formal training, Arnold was able to negotiate complex problems of design and construction in a straightforward and pragmatic manner. The ten houses built in Reserve Mines (renamed Tompkinsville in honour of its parish priest) were designed and planned by the miners in accordance with Arnold's guidelines and following a brief educational program. Miners were instructed to build scale models of their proposed homes out of cardboard. Arnold then guided the design process by acting as a critic during meetings of the local study club. She emphasized surface, form, and colour as a means of expression and prioritized hygiene in the planning and decorating of homes. She commanded respect, but she was also extremely well-liked and quickly became close friends with many of the miners and their families. After just three months of study, she proclaimed the miners to be expert planners. The completed, wood-framed houses were two storeys each and had poured concrete basements. Tradesmen were called in to demonstrate technical building principles, but most of the construction was done by the miners themselves, with Arnold keeping a strict eye on costs.²⁰⁶

Arnold believed that cooperation entailed the extension of democratic principles to everyday economics since, in a cooperative scheme, every producer and consumer was also an

²⁰⁵ James Tompkins was a former vice-president of St. Francis Xavier University and a promoter of adult education. As a parish priest, he spent time in Canso, Nova Scotia, where he encountered desperate economic conditions among the local fishermen. This experience led him to become a leader in the cooperative movement in Nova Scotia. Mary Ellicott Arnold, *Father Jimmy of Nova Scotia* (Chicago: Cooperative League of the U.S.A., n.d.), File 3, Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁰⁶ Mary Ellicott Arnold, *The Story of Tompkinsville* (New York: The Cooperative League of New York, 1940); see also Richard MacKinnon, "Tompkinsville, Cape Breton Island: Co-Operativism and Vernacular Architecture," *Material History Review* 44 (1996): 45-63.

equal rights owner.²⁰⁷ Economic cooperation was designed to improve the purchasing power of individuals and give them greater access to goods and credit. Promoters also believed that cooperation would combat the exploitive practices of industry and return a greater portion of the profits to producers by omitting unnecessary middle-men. In particular, Arnold thought agriculture should play a vital role in the economic improvement of underdeveloped regions and that farming was ideally suited to cooperative methods because of the immediacy that existed between production and consumption. In 1939, Richardson travelled to Nova Scotia and invited Arnold and Reed to oversee the creation of a new, small holdings land settlement near Marystown, a community located within the special economic zone on Newfoundland's southeast coast.

Arnold was aware of the fact that Newfoundland's constitutional arrangement was not entirely in keeping with her democratic ideal. Like Lodge, she was frank in referring to Newfoundland's Commission of Government as a dictatorship. Yet she was also impressed with the government's "able and dedicated leadership" and intrigued by the possibility that "under that dictatorship, you can move fast."²⁰⁸ Her experience in Nova Scotia had taught her to dread the delays caused by fickle and slow moving public officials. Although morally questionable, authoritarianism appealed to Arnold because of its seeming efficiency and expediency – two pillars of her trade.

Arnold's and Reed's mandate in Marystown was all encompassing. The new settlement incorporated agricultural instruction, self-built housing, and other cooperative mechanisms. In

²⁰⁷ In one pamphlet, for example, Arnold wrote that: "we tend to think of American democracy as applicable only to the political field. If we are to meet the problems of the world today we shall need an application of these same democratic methods to the economic field." Mary Ellicott Arnold, *Consumer's Cooperation* ([1951]), File 2, Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁰⁸ "Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Main: Comment by Mary Arnold" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), File 6, Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

addition to developing floor plans and helping settlers build their new homes, Arnold and Reed would direct the purchasing of all supplies, oversee study clubs, and instruct young women in domestic science.²⁰⁹ At the same time, the Commission would undertake to modernize the fishery within the special economic zone by building deep sea vessels and cold storage facilities for processing fresh fish, rather than the cheaper salted variety. In Marystown, a new shipyard and cooperative store were established, along with an experimental smokehouse for processing herring into kippers and bloaters – both popular breakfast items in the U.K.²¹⁰ In Arnold's estimation, the Marystown rehabilitation project was "a brave adventure in social and economic reconstruction."²¹¹

²⁰⁹ Gerald Richardson to Mary Ellicott Arnold, 4 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Arnold and Reed were assisted by a settlement manager (Ross Burry), a chief carpenter (Jim Hodder), and a cooperative organizer (William Trucksis). Burry later became manager of the nearby farming settlement at Winterland, leading Wilfred Badcock to take over as settlement manager in Marystown. Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, 13 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²¹⁰ Commissioners also contemplated establishing a sawmill and wood-working factory (based on the Markland example) in Marystown to create a market for timber during the winter. A fish processing plant was also contemplated but never realized. "Newfoundland: Annual Report by the Commission of Government on the Work of the Commission during 1939," p. 61-63, 66-67, DO 41/24, Newfoundland: Sessional Papers, Honourable Commission of Government Minutes, NAUK.

²¹¹ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Adolph Hold, 21 January 1940, Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.



Fig. 4.17, Marystown, Newfoundland, 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

The two women arrived in St. John's on August 12, 1939 and Arnold was promptly named Housing Expert to the Department of Rural Reconstruction.²¹² In preparation for their voyage to Marystown, she and Reed read government reports and toured the nearby land settlement at Markland. They were immediately taken aback by the country's incredible isolation. Other than the railway linking the island's east and west coasts, Newfoundland possessed virtually no roads and communication with many outports was exclusively by boat. Marystown was reached by steamers that sailed unpredictably every one or two weeks. Arnold loathed the idea of eating nothing but salt fish.²¹³

Arnold and Reed arrived on Newfoundland's south coast three days later. Marystown was a fishing village with a population numbering less than a thousand. Fish flakes and wharves dotted both sides of the bay and beyond the water lay wooden buildings perched on rocks set

²¹² J. G. Howell to Mary Ellicott Arnold, 15 January 1940, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²¹³ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, 13 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

against a backdrop of scrubby, rolling hills (Fig. 4.17). After “22 hours on an unlovely boat,” Arnold was dismayed to find that her accommodations in Marystown were “most primitive.”²¹⁴ She was also struck by the desperate poverty she observed there. Living standards in Newfoundland were unlike anything she had seen before and many people—she claimed—were on the brink of starvation.²¹⁵

After a brief survey expedition, Arnold selected a ridge top site for the new settlement located three kilometres from Marystown.²¹⁶ McCarthy’s Ridge—as it was known—commanded a picturesque view of the bay, but the site was problematic for a variety of reasons.²¹⁷ The ridge was bisected by a large bog and contained roughly 125 acres of land – enough for about 25 families, but not nearly enough for the 100 families contemplated by Gorvin. Nor was there any timber available for use as building materials or firewood. Instead, settlers would have to travel back into town and across the arm to fetch supplies. Upon learning about these conditions, several men withdrew their applications to settle on the land.²¹⁸ Nevertheless, with Gorvin pressing Arnold to establish the new settlers before winter set in, the pace of events demanded that planning proceed.

Back in St. John’s, Arnold set about preparing drawings and estimates so that commissioners could hastily review and approve the scheme.²¹⁹ She complained about the

²¹⁴ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 19 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Werner & Hannah], 13 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²¹⁵ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Esther & Bob], 26 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²¹⁶ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 19 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²¹⁷ The Marystown settlement is identified as Creston in all government reports. However, Arnold continued to refer to the settlement as Marystown.

²¹⁸ “Land Settlement, Suggested Location at Creston” (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²¹⁹ The number of tasks assigned to Arnold also continued to grow. Gorvin asked her to publish pictures of the plans and write a story for the local newspaper. She was also invited to make recommendations on a series of housing

“meteroic” pace of events in letters to friends and family, noting how her meetings with Richardson and the commissioners often carried well into the night as the men drank whiskey and she sipped liqueur.²²⁰ Arnold and Reed remained in St. John’s for the next three weeks, meeting with members of the government, and finalizing plans for the Marystown settlement. Arnold was pleased at how eagerly commissioners accepted her ideas, but she worried about their viability in light of the dire economic circumstances in rural Newfoundland.²²¹

A building program consisting of drawings and estimates was completed before the end of the month.²²² Even the outbreak of war just days later did not deter Arnold’s work. On September 1, Hitler invaded Poland and two days later France and Britain declared war on Germany. In Newfoundland, however, rural reconstruction pressed on. Orders were placed for lumber and Arnold and Reed hastily equipped themselves with beds, blankets, raincoats, rubber boots, and a large supply of canned goods in preparation for their return to Marystown.²²³

Although Gorvin had endorsed the principle of self-built housing and even singled out the success of Tompkinsville in his 1939 report, he was also determined to minimize the cost of the land settlement program in Newfoundland.²²⁴ Built with loans from the Nova Scotia government, houses in Tompkinsville were large (over 1,100 square feet) and had cost

bylaws for St. John’s. Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 19 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²⁰ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Ruthie], 19 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²¹ “All day I draw plans,” she wrote, “I cannot think of a more heavenly life. And people like them and have them blueprinted and maybe will build houses according to them. Instead of deploring my ideas their attitude is give us another. It goes to my head.” Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, 26 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Esther & Bob], 26 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²² Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 27 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; in addition to housing for settlers, Arnold’s proposal called for a separate manager’s residence, additional houses for cooperative and agricultural workers, and a demonstration house for use by her and Reed, with attached guest rooms for visiting officials.

²²³ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, [2 September 1939], Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 3 September 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²⁴ Gorvin, 1, 52.

approximately \$1,500 each. Likewise, the cost of furnished housing in Markland and other land settlements ranged from \$700 to \$800 per family.²²⁵ In contrast, Gorvin fixed the cost of housing in Marystown at just \$275, although this number would later climb to \$400 with an allowance for furnishings.²²⁶ Commissioners were also eager to complete the project as quickly as possible so that settlers could clear land and sow crops the following spring. They pressured Arnold to meet Gorvin's budget and time frame.²²⁷ When a question came up about an appropriation for stoves, for example, Gorvin snapped back that Arnold had built stoves in Nova Scotia so why shouldn't she do the same in Newfoundland?²²⁸ Initial plans called for the construction of 100 houses, but this number was quickly revised down to 50, 20, 12, and then eight.²²⁹

Settlers' houses were a modest 600 square feet and were designed to accommodate upwards of six people, since Newfoundland families tended to be large. One smaller prototype measuring less than 450 square feet was also built. Only this last model was featured in Arnold's summary report (Fig. 4.18 & Fig. 4.19). Houses were comfortable but deliberately sparse. The smaller type contained two bedrooms, a parlour, and a large central kitchen. This latter feature suggests Arnold was aware of the fact that kitchens doubled as important social spaces in rural Newfoundland. Painted clapboard was installed on the exterior with wall board inside. Seven windows provided ample light (six in the smaller version) and a small stove was used for heating.

²²⁵ Hancock, 139.

²²⁶ In a further effort to reduce costs, Gorvin suggested that land clearing bonuses be substituted for wages. He believed this would have the added effect of brining land under cultivation sooner. Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Land Settlement in Newfoundland: An Informal Report" (unpublished manuscript n.d.), Volume 3 (File 5 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²⁷ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, 13 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²⁸ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 19 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²²⁹ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Bob and Esther], 15 September 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

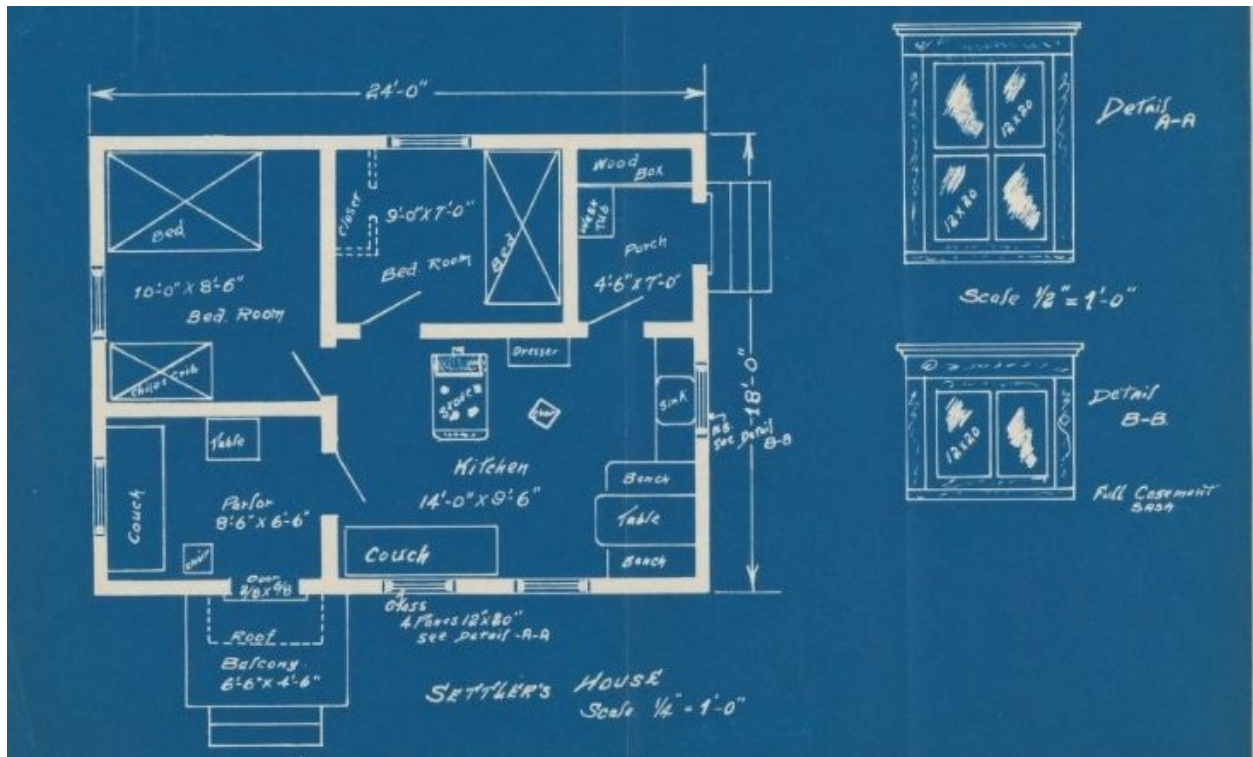


Fig. 4.18, Mary Ellicott Arnold, Plan of settler's house (smaller type), January 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

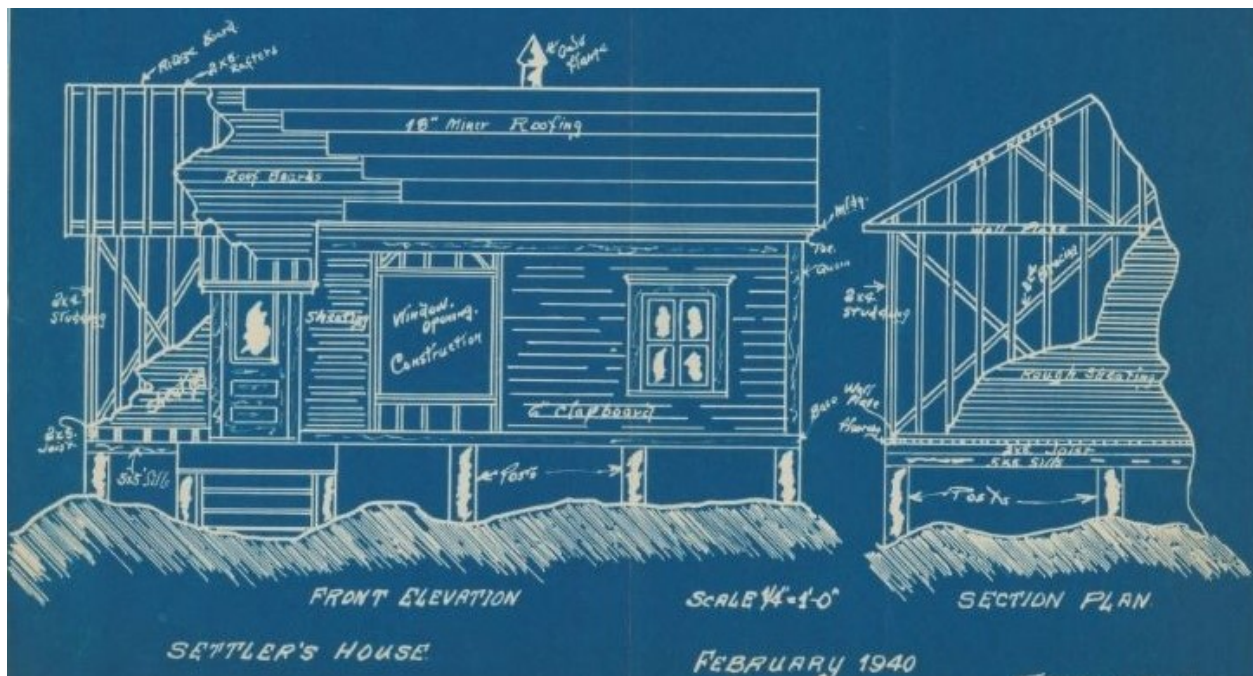


Fig. 4.19, Mary Ellicott Arnold, Elevation and section of settler's house (smaller type), February 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

Work began in early September as the summer weather was drawing to a close. In addition to settlers' homes, Arnold's plan called for a staff—or "demonstration"—house to be built for use by her and Reed, as well a bunkhouse to accommodate settlers during the course of construction. A separate warehouse was also created to store supplies. By mid-September settlers had begun to dig post holes and wells. Despite on-going shortages of timber, work proceeded quickly so that in less than a month the bunkhouse and storehouse were built and Arnold's and Reed's own residence was nearing completion.²³⁰

This progress refreshed Arnold's view of Newfoundland. In private letters she described Marystown as an "enchanted place with heavenly weather and wonderful air."²³¹ She was also impressed with the skill of the fishermen who—she claimed—had never handled a saw or hammer. This was an exaggeration, of course, since Newfoundland fishers typically built their own boats, furniture, fishing stages, and tilts.

²³⁰ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Ruthie], 26 September 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²³¹ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, 15 September 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to Wallace Campbell, 26 September 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.



Fig. 4.20, The Marystown settlers, 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

In reality, Arnold's narrative was a ploy to highlight the redemptive power of self-help landscapes. The eight settlers were all fishermen from the nearby community of Rock Harbour (Fig. 4.20).²³² Initially, Arnold feared that the settlers lacked the "ability or intelligence" of the Nova Scotia miners and were not inclined towards cooperation.²³³ She described them as dejected; their faith in progress and morale ruined by poverty. Settlers were also uncertain if they could build houses. In Arnold's mind, this uncertainty stemmed from their dire, material circumstances. She noted with pity how settlers' "suppers" on the job site often consisted of "a few soda crackers."²³⁴ As the houses began to take shape, however, material progress became spiritual progress as well – a transformation that Arnold saw herself as fulfilling. She captured

²³² The eight original Marystown settlers were Levi Scott, Walter Hodder, Roland Dodge, Jim G. Hodder, Jim Rosier Hodder, George Hooper, Charlie Hooper, and John Hooper. All were members of the Church of England. Albert Brennan (the son of Captain Brennan who often rowed Arnold and Reed across the arm) was employed as a servant in Arnold and Reid's home. Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Settlers – Maryland" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²³³ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Bob], 3 January 1940, Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²³⁴ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Land Settlement at Maryland: Fishermen from Rock Harbor" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

this feeling in a series of short reminiscences. One story, for example, describes the day a carpenter arrived in Marystown to install roofs on the houses. Arnold takes him aside and explains that she would rather he showed the men how to install the roofs themselves. But the carpenter (who is a former ship captain) is hesitant; he needs the money.

‘The men on your sloop did whatever you told them to do, didn’t they,’ we asked.
‘Yes,’ said the boss carpenter.
‘That is the right way to do, isn’t it?’ we asked the boss carpenter.
‘You tell the men what to do and they do it.’
‘Yes,’ said the boss carpenter.
‘And we tell you what to do, and you do it. Is that right?’ we asked the boss carpenter.
The boss carpenter said nothing.
‘Maybe you don’t like that,’ we told the boss carpenter. ‘Maybe you don’t want to work here.’
The boss carpenter said nothing.

The next day the carpenter climbed up onto a house and each settler was given a turn at performing the work. Arnold later reflected: “What with no fish in their harbors, and the dole, and starvation for their themselves and their families, the men who came from Rock Harbour had been licked [...]. But the men who had put on that roof were not licked. Not by a long shot [...]. They had pride and self respect. They held their heads high.”²³⁵

²³⁵ Mary Ellicott Arnold, “The Settler’s Houses – Maryland: Putting on the First Roof” (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.



Fig. 4.21, Marystown settlers building their houses, 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

Arnold was also impressed with the settlers' judicious spending and their ability to keep careful accounts. Each man was given \$360 and told to observe a strict budget. In the end, Arnold was pleased that not a single home was missing beds or a stove.²³⁶ She was also surprised at the strong spirit of cooperation that existed among Newfoundland fishermen (she even proposed dressing the settlers in uniforms), notwithstanding their seeming independence.²³⁷ Arnold was struck by the affinity between Newfoundlanders and their concern for the welfare of others, stoking her confidence in their ability to embrace cooperative economic principles.²³⁸

Work proceeded slowly but steadily as the weather began to turn and as the houses began to take shape (Fig. 4.21). Progress was essential. When schooners from St. John's were laid up, Arnold borrowed a car and went off in search of "little hidden sawmills" up and down the coast,

²³⁶ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "The Budget" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), File 12, Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²³⁷ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Gerald Richardson, 11 September 1939, Volume 4 (File 2 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²³⁸ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Summary" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 2 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

picking up anything she could find in the way of building materials so that work could resume.²³⁹

The first settlers moved in to their homes early in December. And by Christmas, all the houses were complete.²⁴⁰

This House was Built by Newfoundlanders

For Arnold, the Marystown settlement was evidence that material and moral progress were commensurate, but also of the instrumentality of good design in effecting this change. One of Arnold's first priorities was to build a staff house for use by her and Reed. This "demonstration" house—as Arnold often called it—acted as a training ground for settlers, but it was also designed to give object lessons in good taste and domestic management. Arnold decorated the house with furniture shipped from Nova Scotia and encouraged settlers to furnish their homes in a similar manner, using her furniture as a template for building their own.²⁴¹ She was also adamant that the staff house reflect the austerity of the Marystown project so that settlers could appropriate its lessons. For example, when Jules Gottschalk suggested that she incorporate a custom dining room set with sliding table and integrated lighting, Arnold responded that she was having local carpenters make furniture instead: "Very Plain. Cost Minimum."²⁴² She waxed and painted the furniture herself and insisted on low cost materials throughout. But good taste was also

²³⁹ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Maryland, September-December 1939" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴⁰ Mary Ellicott Arnold to J. G. Howell, 2 December 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴¹ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 19 August 1939, Volume 3 (File 1 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴² Jules Gottschalk to Mary Ellicott Arnold, 8 November 1939, Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to Jules Gottschalk, 3 December 1939, Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

paramount. Arnold decorated the house with rugs and curtains and gave it a carefully considered colour scheme.²⁴³

The demonstration house was also a site for domestic education. The walls of the house were hung with pastels done by children enrolled at the progressive schools. Arnold and Reed also employed a servant in their home and instructed local women to cook with whole wheat flour as a precaution against weak lungs.²⁴⁴ At Christmas, they entertained the settlers with a Christmas tree, turkey, and Santa Claus, for which the settlers reciprocated by learning several Christmas carols.²⁴⁵

The epitome of commissioners' efforts to smooth over differences between Newfoundland and Britain came in the form a guest house designed by Arnold in 1940. Meant to accommodate visiting commissioners, technical staff, and other VIP's, the house had three bedrooms, separate dining and living rooms, and a bathroom with modern plumbing (Fig. 4.22). It cost \$3,200 to build (nearly ten times the cost of settlers' homes). The furnishings alone were worth over \$650.²⁴⁶ Designed to be "'uptown' and impressive," the guest house attempted to "sell" foreign dignitaries on the success of the land settlement program by carving out a space for them in rural Newfoundland from which to observe its society in comfort and modernity.²⁴⁷ The house's front windows framed a picturesque view of Mortier Bay. And instead of a kitchen, the

²⁴³ Mary Ellicott Arnold to J. G. Howell, 2 December 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴⁴ Mary Ellicott Arnold to J. G. Howell, 21 December 1939, Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴⁵ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Ruthie], 21 December 1939, Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Ruthie], 30 December 1939, Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴⁶ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "So called 'Guest House': Costs Summary," n.d., Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴⁷ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Commissioner's House, 'Demonstration House'" (unpublished manuscript, June 1940), Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Requirement's for Commissioner's House," n.d., Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

central feature of the house was a living room fitted with expensive modernist furniture designed by Gottschalk (Fig. 4.23).

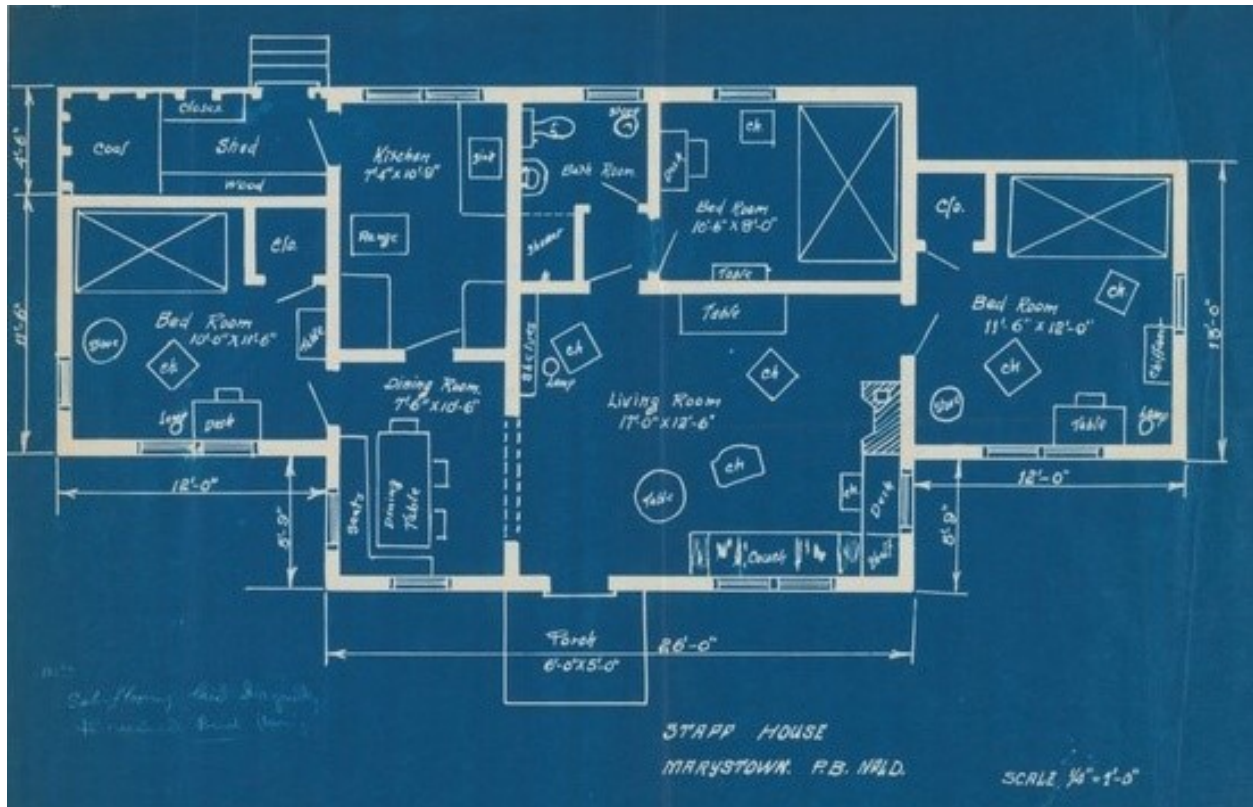


Fig. 4.22, Mary Ellicott Arnold, Plan of commissioner's house, April 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.



Fig. 4.23, Interior of the Marystown guest house with furniture by Max Jules Gottschalk, ca. 1940. Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, Harvard University.

The house was deliberately alien to Marystown and Arnold seemed well aware of this fact, dubbing it the “so-called Guest House,” or, “Mr. Gorvin’s house” for entertaining “big shots” from St. John’s.²⁴⁸ Unlike commissioners who remained holed up in the Newfoundland Hotel and who made only brief forays into rural Newfoundland, Arnold immersed herself in rural culture and cherished moments of inclusion.²⁴⁹ Shortly after her arrival, she wrote to friends that “we already know gangs of people [in Marystown]. We speak to everyone we meet on the street and most of them call us by name.”²⁵⁰ In Marystown, she and Reed attended a “time” (a kitchen party with dancing, storytelling, and food) and became close friends with the settlers,

²⁴⁸ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, 5 May 1940, Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL; Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Eric], 11 May 1940, Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁴⁹ Arnold recorded these moments in her reminiscences. She even transcribed a song taught to her by one of the Marystown settlers. Mary Ellicott Arnold, “Cod Fishermen on the South Coast, December, 1939” (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵⁰ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Margaret Reed, 21 September 1939, Volume 3 (File 2 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

even making a special trip to Rock Harbour to visit their extended families.²⁵¹ Likewise, in February the two women travelled to the west coast, where they donned wool from head to toe and wore rubber boots up to their knees, while bouncing through snow drifts on an improvised sled.²⁵²

Nevertheless, Arnold spun the guest house as another moral enterprise. She believed that the project was an affirmation of settlers' newfound independence (it was they who built it, after all), as well as a tangible model of modernity for settlers to aspire to. In her mind, the guest house was a harbinger of rural self-reliance that showed "Newfoundlanders what could be done by Newfoundlanders."²⁵³ Once finished, the guest house was opened to the public who came in droves from the surrounding communities. Signs were posted on the walls reading: "This house was built by Newfoundlanders." And every item of the house made in Newfoundland was labelled, including the roof shingles, furniture, and woollen bedspreads and curtains that were spun and dyed by local women under the direction of the Jubilee Guild.²⁵⁴

The Marystown guest house was also bookend to a social and economic experiment that was fast coming to a close. In January 1940, Arnold and Reed left Marystown for St. John's, where Arnold was made cost administrator for the land settlement program. She spent the next several weeks travelling across Newfoundland, helping settlement managers set up their

²⁵¹ On the way back from this party, Reed fell and broke her arm while climbing into a dory in the dark. Because of her accident, Mabel was unable to write letters during her time in Newfoundland. Mary Ellicott Arnold, "Mabel Reed and Mary Arnold: Purely Personal" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 2 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵² Mary Ellicott Arnold, "The Trip to Port au Port and Father Kirwan" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵³ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "The Commissioner's House at Marystown" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵⁴ Mary Ellicott Arnold, "This House" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

books.²⁵⁵ She then outlined a proposal for future land settlements in Newfoundland, based on her experience in Marystown. According to her figures, the maximum government expenditure per settler would not exceed \$1,300 – a drastic reduction considering that by 1938 the government had spent in excess of \$6,000 on each Markland settler.²⁵⁶ As Arnold was putting the final touches on her report, settlers in Marystown were sowing their first crops with the help of a tractor and plough horse.²⁵⁷ In the spring of 1940, Gorvin tabled a Special Area Bill outlining his plans for rural reconstruction in Newfoundland, but the bill was unpopular among Newfoundland merchants and, in light of the ongoing war effort, deemed untenable by British authorities. Amid worsening war news, Arnold wrote that “here in St. John’s nobody pretends that the bottom hasn’t dropped out from under. Any constructive program is pretty much of a dream.”²⁵⁸ By August, she was back in New York and the Special Area Bill was withdrawn. The Colonial Development grant was allowed to expire and Gorvin was recalled to England the following spring.²⁵⁹

By 1941, the government had given up on the Placentia Bay development scheme. The smokehouse in Marystown was abandoned, the community store was sold, and ship building

²⁵⁵ Mary Ellicott Arnold to Leslie E. Woodcock, n.d., Volume 3 (File 4 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵⁶ She recommended that eight acres of land be allocated to each family and that settlers receive government support in the form of wages for land clearing, loans to cover the cost of their houses, and bonuses for tools and livestock. After 20 months, settlers were expected to be entirely self-sufficient, at which time allowances could be reduced. Any excess wages were to be put towards stocking the local cooperative store. Mary Ellicott Arnold, “Land Settlement in Newfoundland: An Informal Report” (unpublished manuscript n.d.), Volume 3 (File 5 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵⁷ Mary Ellicott Arnold, “Maryland – May and June” (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 3 (File 3 of 5), Box 1, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵⁸ Mary Ellicott Arnold to [Ruthie], 13 June 1940, Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁵⁹ Gorvin left Newfoundland on July 6, 1941 to take up a post in the Ministry of Food in London. John H. Gorvin to Mary Ellicott Arnold, 24 July 1941, File 12, Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

operations were halted.²⁶⁰ Support for the Marystown settlers was also withdrawn. Government expenditures at the Marystown settlement fell from a peak of \$11,524 in 1939-40, to \$5,356 in 1940-41, and just \$1,078 in 1941-42. That year, the value of goods sold by the Marystown settlers was a little over \$124.²⁶¹

Owing to its strategic location in the North Atlantic, Newfoundland experienced full employment in 1942, lifting the country out of the depression. However, agriculture did not play a significant role in this economic reversal. Conditions in Marystown were not favourable to agriculture. Moreover, families had been selected for resettlement based on their need, not for their expertise in farming.²⁶² Had they any expertise, they might have noticed that the picturesque ridge-top site selected by Arnold was surrounded by marshland and not especially fertile. The self-built housing that remained was now devoid of substance and the guest house symbolized a degree of social mobility unattainable in rural Newfoundland. As American and Canadian military personnel flooded into Newfoundland during the 1940s, agricultural settlers abandoned their farms to take up high paying jobs on air and naval bases. Many cooperative societies were also abandoned as a result of war work, but some survived as women stepped into the administrative roles vacated by men.²⁶³

For Arnold, the spell of rural reconstruction was broken earlier in 1940. “At times,” she wrote, “there seemed to be a very warm feeling of friendship between ourselves and the

²⁶⁰ The four trawlers built in Marystown were later sold to the Admiralty and joined the war effort. *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1940* (St. John’s: Newfoundland Government, 1941), xxix-xxx.

²⁶¹ *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1940* (St. John’s: Newfoundland Government, 1941), 144; *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1941* (St. John’s: Newfoundland Government, 1942), 143; *Account of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and Appropriation Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June, 1942* (St. John’s: Newfoundland Government, 1943), 125.

²⁶² Parker, 96.

²⁶³ Neil McNeil to Mary Ellicott Arnold, 13 August 1941, File 12, Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

Newfoundlanders with whom we worked. And then we would feel the undercurrent.”²⁶⁴ In another anecdote, she relates a rare, candid moment during a conversation with Jimmy Johnston, an agricultural expert and Newfoundland native who was also a close friend. They were debating how the war would affect Gorvin’s plan and in the course of this conversation Jimmy discovered that Arnold and Reed had been asked to stay in Newfoundland and continue their work. They asked for his advice. Should they stay or should they go? Jimmy replied:

Do you want my honest opinion? [...] for God’s sake go back to your own country [...] and let us Newfoundlanders handle our own country our own way [...]. Maybe our standards are not up to yours in England or in America. But that is our affair [...]. I don’t mean this unkindly [...] but you people from England and from the United States get under our skins. This is our country, not yours.²⁶⁵

Comments like these came as a shock to Arnold. Unlike commissioners who seized the moral high-ground by blaming Newfoundlanders for the sordid state of their own social and economic affairs, Arnold recognized that rural residents were victims of forces beyond their control. She was deeply sympathetic to the plight of Newfoundland and believed that her task was to instil feelings of self-worth in its people. She eventually came to see the Commission as an impediment to this task. Shortly after their exchange with Jimmy, Arnold and Reed told Gorvin of their decision to return to New York.

As Richard Harris reminds us, self-help landscapes are also “a medium for reasserting political control.”²⁶⁶ In Newfoundland, however, the politics of self-help landscapes were ambiguous and sometimes even paradoxical. Commissioners believed that the land settlement

²⁶⁴ Mary Ellicott Arnold, “The Newfoundlanders-Undercurrent” (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), Volume 4 (File 1 of 2), Box 2, Papers of Mary Ellicott Arnold [A-122], AESL.

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

²⁶⁶ Richard Harris, “Slipping through the Cracks: The Origins of Aided Self-Help Housing, 1918-53,” *Housing Studies* 14, no. 3 (1999): 284.

program would empower individuals and nurture their self-reliance, but this was achieved by intervening in the lives of families and at an enormous cost to the state. In reality, cooperation and self-help were convenient mastheads for the Commission of Government whose work stemmed from deeper racial anxieties. Instead of empowering individuals, self-help landscapes assimilated parts of rural Newfoundland to the social and economic standards of British authorities by removing individuals from the fishery and installing them in new landscapes, away from the island's shore. Commissioners believed that climate and soil were a solution to increasing middle-class membership and political participation in Newfoundland. Indeed, in 1936 Lady Hope Simpson proclaimed that "I can find no fault with the climate [and] the weather here. It is just the people themselves, I think – a curiously shiftless, improvident people, ignorant, ruined by nearly 100 years of self-government for which they were entirely unfit, lacking the necessary education and lacking also any class of educated & leisured people who could act as leaders."²⁶⁷ Moreover, commissioners believed this imposition was reasonable and natural since Newfoundland possessed a white population with Northern European ancestry and since all white members of the empire were meant to aspire to British economic and social standards. Some would even argue that it was necessary in order to reverse the effects of racial regression in Newfoundland, accelerating the country's return to self-government, and thereby alleviating authorities' embarrassment at having to rule over a country of whites.

²⁶⁷ Quita Hope Simpson to Greta, 30 July 1936. Reprinted in Neary, *White Tie and Decorations : Sir John and Lady Hope Simpson in Newfoundland, 1934-1936* 331.

Chapter 5 — The Landscape of Empire: Exhibiting Newfoundland's Interior Abroad

In 1924, Newfoundland correspondent to *The Times*, Patrick Thomas McGrath, published an incredulous statement in the London newspaper. Observing that “land-faring employment” was on the rise in Newfoundland, McGrath remarked how “there are some amongst us whose hope is to see the day when fishing may be abandoned largely by our people, and they turn their attention to mining, paper-making, and similar industries.”¹ This was at a time when over half of working-age men in Newfoundland were engaged in fishing, to say nothing of their wives, children, and other family members.

The timing of this statement was critical. In 1924, Newfoundland was being laid bare before London audiences at the British Empire Exhibition (Fig. 5.1). The exhibition was an enormous and complex spectacle. Stretching out over 200 acres in Wembley—a suburb northwest of London—the exhibition contained hundreds of purpose built halls, pavilions, and kiosks, as well as a stadium, scenic waterway, and railway. Over 2,000 labourers were employed preparing the exhibition site and nearly 8,250 tons of cement and half million bricks were consumed to create the buildings and grounds.² The exhibition proved so popular among Londoners and tourists that it was even extended for a second season in 1925. In total, over 27 million people visited the British Empire Exhibition.³

¹ Patrick T. McGrath, “Newfoundland,” *The Times* (London), 24 May 1924: xix.

² *Evening Telegram*, 4 April 1923: 3.

³ John M. Mackenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 101.



Fig. 5.1, Newfoundland pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition, ca. 1925 (Photo: Campbell McPherson). Item 9.01.003, Campbell McPherson collection (Coll-375), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

Newfoundland's organizers were equally laborious in preparing their country's display. The country's representation was overseen by two general committees, with individual exhibits entrusted to sub-committees and industry leaders. More than 175 boxes containing exhibits were shipped from Newfoundland to Liverpool in 1924, before making their way to the exhibition site in Wembley.⁴

Other dominions also made an impressive showing in Wembley. However, the exhibition was doubly important for Newfoundland. Newfoundland's exhibits testified to the country's recent modernity. They also located the source of this modernity in a definite manner. By focusing on "land-faring" opportunities—as McGrath put it—Newfoundland's exhibits steered the attention of visitors away from the country's rural fishery and towards temperate landscapes in the island's interior. This message was recapitulated by British authorities. Colonial gardens, orderly waterways, and gleaming white buildings at the British Empire Exhibition framed distant

⁴ Minutes of the Proceedings of the Eleventh Meeting of the London Advisory Committee, 19 March 1924, File 11, Box 17, MG 73, NBTF-PANL.

geographies in a manner sympathetic with British environmental expectations, revealing how distant colonies were suited to the expansion of British capital and Anglo-Saxon culture.

This chapter examines Newfoundland's representation at a series of London-based internationals. In particular, I examine how exhibitions fuelled nationalist beliefs in Newfoundland by crystalizing an imperial order in which progress, race, and landscape appeared intertwined. By subjecting participants to an imperial vision in which landscape played a unifying role, exhibitions acted back—I argue—influencing the representation of colonial nationalism, as well as its underlying racial concerns.

By visualizing dichotomies between non-civilized and civilized communities, exhibitions embodied a belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority. According to Anne McClintock, exhibitions were the “architectural embodiment” of the idea of progress and anachronistic space.⁵ Internationals were sites of entertainment and consumption that simultaneously qualified notions of progress by contrasting past and present, dependent subjects and independent Britishers, and productive and non-productive landscapes.⁶ Whereas displays of industrial, agricultural, and manufactured goods were associated with progressive white societies, displays featuring handmade crafts, female labour, and other exotic items were associated with dependent colonies and their racially inferior inhabitants. Exhibitions reaffirmed the ingenuity of Britishers, while stigmatizing colonial subjects by making their progress appear backwards or arrested.

At the same time, British exhibitions conveyed the belief that expediting progress was urgent. Industrial competition and global conflict fuelled geopolitical fears around the turn-of-

⁵ McClintock, 56-57.

⁶ In discussing the Indian and Australian displays at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in 1886, for example, Peter Hoffenberg notes how a “racial opposition between the two countries was also expressed in historical terms. India was a ‘traditional’ society, and Australia a ‘new’ country. Commissioners resurrected the past of the former and invented a history for the latter.” Peter H. Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display: English, Indian, and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 131.

the-century. Likewise, by encouraging globalization and free-trade, exhibitions simultaneously highlighted the diminishing pre-eminence of Victorians, leading some conservative viewers to attack “unwelcome foreign influences.”⁷ To combat these fears, organizers urged cooperation among member states as a way to improve British economic self-sufficiency and strengthen solidarity among Britishers – a desire reflected in the uniformly white exterior of exhibition buildings (a common feature at colonial exhibitions since 1867).⁸ At the British Empire Exhibition, for example, the *The Times* boasted that “the resources of the Empire alone proved sufficient for the organization and staging of an Exhibition infinitely greater and more varied than the world had yet seen.”⁹ In particular, exhibitions promoted the belief that white settlement would expedite progress at home and abroad by lessening English unemployment and increasing trade. Exhibitions presented whiteness as the basis for British autonomy. In 1924, an article in the *Weekly Bulletin of Empire Study*—a journal created by exhibition organizers for use in British schools—sorted the races of the empire into three categories: whites, yellows, and blacks, characterizing the first as the most civilized and industrious. Moreover, and as David Stephen observes, by categorizing Indians as “Indo-Aryan,” the *Weekly* could claim that upwards of 45 percent of the empire was inhabited by whites.¹⁰

Landscape was a recurrent motif at exhibitions that reflected authorities’ desire to whitewash the empire by spreading Anglo virtues and redistributing Britain’s population

⁷ Paul Young describes how, beginning in 1851, internationals led conservatives to worry “that the increasingly open way in which Britain was conceiving its position in the world would damage both the nation’s global standing and its sense of identity.” Paul Young, *Globalization and the Great Exhibition: The Victorian New World Order* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 149-50.

⁸ The first time multiple pavilions were built on an exhibition site was for the Paris International of 1867, leading—as John Mackenzie observes—“the Dominions and colonies to become the prime exhibitors.” Mackenzie, 100.

⁹ Quoted in Alexander C. T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities: Imperial Expositions in Fin-De-Siècle Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 155.

¹⁰ Daniel notes how the statistical whitewashing of India was despite the fact that the Indian pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition was replete with “polarities of time, space, and gender” that distinguished Indian culture from that of the West. Daniel Stephen, *The Empire of Progress: West Africans, Indians, and Britons at the British Empire Exhibition 1924-25* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 126-27.

overseas. Indeed, temperate landscapes played a unifying role at exhibitions. Vast gardens, water features, horticultural and agricultural displays, and miniature cities of gleaming white buildings were standard features at exhibitions that showed how distant parts of the empire were suited to British expansionary interests. Landscapes revealed how the colonies were fit for British bodies and British culture, creating climatic continuities within the empire, and encouraging the movement of white settlers from its centre to the periphery. To encourage white settlement, authorities depicted the empire as one large garden of economic opportunity and pleasure, reflecting features of the British landscape around the globe.

As Peter Hoffenberg observes, “exhibitions were not mere mirrors of the political and social order but agents of change, creating by participation and not coercion a sense of natural order, consensus, and hierarchy.”¹¹ Likewise, exhibitions compelled colonials to create landscapes in London that appeared physically and perceptually compatible with a British worldview. In an effort stimulate the development of underutilized resources by luring British capital and settlers overseas, organizers and participants alike created landscapes that added to the visibility of Anglo-Saxon identities on the margins of empire. Colonies whose exhibits embodied a temperate ideal were praised for their Englishness; those that did not were criticized and disparaged. Indeed, deterministic beliefs influenced British interpretations of colonial landscapes since the world’s first international was staged in a spectacular greenhouse in London’s Hyde Park. In *The Great Exhibition of 1851* (1850), for example, the English writer James Ward wrote that:

¹¹ Hoffenberg, 27.

We are – with our great national advantages, our unbounded supply of coals and of all the useful metals, the energetic and never-tiring industry of our population, the enterprising spirit of our Anglo-Saxon blood, our peculiar climate which renders bodily and mental activity a condition of healthy existence, and our insular position, so pre-eminently favourable to commerce – we are, by these and other great national advantages, and for an indefinite term continue to be, the great manufacturing and mercantile nation of the world.¹²

Newfoundland's participation at internationals grew in scale and complexity from the late nineteenth century onwards. Internationals were an opportunity to demonstrate the colony's theoretical progress. Organizers depicted Newfoundland not as a country of backwards fishermen, but as a dominion of self-assured Britishers. Indeed, the central importance of landscape at exhibitions suited Newfoundland's organizers perfectly. At the same time as British authorities promoted landscape as a basis for imperial order and expansion, Newfoundland's organizers promoted the island's interior as locus for their own country's modernity and racial superiority. Organizers recreated features of the island's landscape in myriad displays in London, highlighting temperate qualities in the island's interior, while ensuring that the fishery was visibly reduced. By establishing landscape as a central feature of colonial life, Newfoundland's displays were designed to have a racially regenerative effect. They summoned evidence of industrial and intellectual advancement and linked this progress to specific features of the island's natural environment.

Yet exhibitions also elicited crises within the discourse of colonial nationalism by exacerbating differences in the island's geography and society. Exhibitions encouraged participants to compete for the attention of visitors, the press, and authorities. Countries that made impressive displays out of their natural resources, arts, and manufactures received accolades. Those who made a poor showing (or chose not to participate) were disparaged and

¹² Quoted in Young, 148.

criticized. For this reasons, writes Hoffenberg, “exhibitions also offer historians the contested ground where the official and unofficial ideas of ‘Englishness’ and colonial national identities converged, were actively created, interpreted, consumed, and mediated.”¹³ At times, exhibitions appeared to be a credit to Newfoundland by remediating ideas about the country’s arrested progress. Yet, at other times, they cast doubt on Newfoundland’s synchronicity with the modern world by formalizing imperial hierarchies in which the country’s capacity for progress appeared questionable. Likewise, by evoking self-conscious comparisons with the resource landscapes of other dominions, exhibitions made the claims of nationalists appear suspect in the eyes of Britishers and countrymen alike.

Displaying and Educating at the Newfoundland Museum

Collecting and displaying were ideological activities during the nineteenth century. According to Tony Bennett, nineteenth-century museums and exhibitions inverted the principle of the panopticon, as discussed by Michel Foucault. Exhibitions used omnipresent surveillance to encourage mass consumption and knowledge creation, while maintaining the illusion of an open, democratic society. Unlike asylums, clinics, and prisons in which subjects are confined, Bennett writes, institutions comprising the “exhibitionary complex” transferred “objects and bodies from the enclosed and private domains in which they had previously been displayed (but to a restricted public) into progressively more open and public arenas.”¹⁴ Like in the panopticon, however, visitors and contributors at exhibitions were subjected to constant surveillance through their willing participation in a large, public spectacle. Museums and exhibitions were thus also disciplinary mechanisms—concludes Bennett—which, through their increasing openness to the

¹³ Hoffenberg, 27.

¹⁴ Tony Bennett, “The Exhibitionary Complex,” *New Formations*, no. 4 (1988): 74.

public, “formed vehicles for inscribing and broadcasting the messages of power” throughout society.¹⁵

By highlighting commercial and cultural features of the natural world, museums and exhibitions communicated the benefits of colonial expansion, industrial progress, and science to members of the public. This was especially true of natural history museums. By mid-century, natural history museums were a common sight in Britain. Unlike earlier, private museums that exhibited mostly unnatural curiosities and other monstrous phenomena, natural history museums sought to describe the common natural world in a systematic and orderly fashion, while rendering this knowledge transparent to a wide range of visitors. To this end, museums adopted display techniques allowing visitors to scrutinize individual specimens and intuit their place in the taxonomies governing the natural world. In Carla Yanni’s words, nineteenth-century museums were the “primary places of interaction between natural science and its diverse publics.”¹⁶ Indeed, nineteenth-century natural history museums were exhibitionary institutions *par excellence*. Museums expressed the ideas of political and scientific elites in an accessible format and in a public forum. They were also disciplinary spaces that aimed to educate and improve the lower classes by instilling in them a love of science and governing their appearance and behaviour.¹⁷

A fascination with natural history and its commercial applications led to the establishment of natural history museums throughout the empire. The Newfoundland Museum is

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Carla Yanni, *Nature's Museums: Victorian Science and the Architecture of Display* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005), 1.

¹⁷ See Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London; New York: Routledge, 1995).

a case in point. In 1861, Newfoundland's first natural history museum was created when several learned societies joined to create the Athenaeum in St. John's.¹⁸

From its inception, the Newfoundland Museum was an adjunct of the geological survey. Initially, the museum was located in a room attached to Alexander Murray's residence. In 1861, James Howley moved his office and the museum into a suite of rooms at the recently completed Athenaeum, which contained a library and auditorium in addition to the new museum. However, this arrangement lasted only a short while. Not long after the Athenaeum was built, Howley relocated the museum again to the second floor of the post office so that it could be opened to the public.¹⁹ Howley was named museum curator following Murray's retirement in 1883. He oversaw all aspects of the museum with the help of two assistants, drawing on a small annual grant to improve the museum's displays and steadily grow its collection.²⁰ At the same time, Howley gathered specimens for the museum through his work with the geological survey.²¹ Under his direction, the museum's collection quickly grew to include samples of timber, coal,

¹⁸ The museum collection was founded ten years earlier when members of the Athenaeum inherited a collection of natural history specimens, artefacts, and curios assembled by members of the Mechanics Institute (one of the Athenaeums' founding societies). However, since the new society did not possess a building, the government purchased the museum collection and entrusted it to Alexander Murray. Murray petitioned the government to establish a permanent museum to exhibit these artefacts, as well as his own growing collection of geological specimens. John E. Maunder, "The Newfoundland Museum: Origins and Development," in *Museum Notes* 2 (St. John's: Newfoundland Museum, Historic Resources Division, 1991), n.p.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ One of Howley's assistants was none other than Albert J. Bayly, future agriculturalist and operator of the Harmsworths' experimental farm in Grand Falls. In 1887, John Albert Bayly was refused an agricultural clearing bonus. It was probably around this time that he took up work at the museum. *Sessional Papers of the Journal of the House of Assembly*, 23rd Session, 15th Assembly (St. John's: Bowden & Sons, 1888), 557; Bayly's position at the museum was terminated in 1894. He embarked as a pioneer to Deer Lake, where he established Halcyon farm and worked as a surveyor for the government. Bayly's success at farming would eventually lead him to take charge of the Harmsworths' model farm in Grand Falls. In 1898, Bayly was named Agricultural Surveyor for the Humber River and Howley region, a position he continued to hold after relocating to Grand Falls.

²¹ Prior to 1894, the museum was funded with an annual grant of \$800, but this was later reduced to \$200 after the bank crash. In 1897, Howley's curator position was also abolished, obliging him to care for the museum collection as part of his regular duties as director of the geological survey. James P. Howley to E. M. Jackman, 4 June 1901, File MG 105.35, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

petroleum, copper, iron, gold, and silver, as well as asbestos and building stones, such as marble and granite.²²



Fig. 5.2, The Newfoundland Museum on the second floor of the post office building, ca. 1890. Item PA-165473, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir John O'Brien collection, Library and Archives Canada.

Howley believed that museum should spur Newfoundland's material and intellectual progress by substantiating the survey's claims. Mineral samples were displayed under glass with labels indicating their provenance. And iron ore was displayed alongside pieces of steel donated by the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company.²³ Samples of timber and pulpwood were also exhibited. And the museum was crowded with native wildlife, including taxidermy fish, birds, seals, and mammals.²⁴ In 1900, Howley even painted the museum's ceiling green, recalling the forest canopy of the interior.²⁵

²² *Evening Telegram*, 25 July 1895: 4; Philip Tocque, "Mineralogy," *Evening Telegram*, 27 August 1898: 3; *Western Star*, 4 September 1900: 4.

²³ The Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company was based in Cape Breton and owned and operated the Wabana mines on Bell Island. B. Symons to James P. Howley, 29 August 1910, File MG 105.32, Box 1, JPHF-PANL; A. R. C. to James P. Howley, 12 November 1912, File MG 105.32, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

²⁴ R. G. Reid to James P. Howley, 17 May 1897, File MG 105.32, Box 1, JPHF-PANL; *Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1887: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 19 November 1891: 4.

²⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 6 August 1900: 3.

By the early 1900s, the museum collection included thousands of items of scientific and antiquarian interest, as well as art pieces, industrial manufactures, models of fishing and sealing vessels, and a “great number of miscellaneous articles too numerous to mention.”²⁶ Howley estimated that, on average, 150 new items were added to the museum collection each year. As curator, he was responsible for receiving these items, evaluating their significance, labelling and classifying them, and arranging their display.

As the museum collection grew so, too, did Howley’s dissatisfaction with the rooms above the post office. In 1907, he called the museum “but a store room, and a very poor one at that,” charging that it “reflects little credit upon us as a people of intelligence and advanced ideas.”²⁷ In 1911, the government heeded his advice and erected a dedicated building in St. John’s to house the museum. Designed by the preeminent, English architect Sir Aston Webb, the new museum had electric lighting and featured a large skylight at its centre. But it, too, failed to satisfy Howley. The skylight leaked on rainy days and produced an unbearable heat inside the museum on warm days.²⁸ Moreover, Howley complained that the admission of too much light was damaging the collections.²⁹

By corroborating the survey’s findings, Howley’s museum simultaneously embodied the belief that the island’s interior was a key to Newfoundland’s progress. It also transformed the museum into an armature of British imperial policy. Mining, lumbering, and agricultural displays were designed to appeal to foreign investors and settlers, revealing to them a range of commercial opportunities in the island’s interior, and saving them (in theory) the time and

²⁶ James P. Howley to J. A. Clift, 8 January 1907, File MG 105.34, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 21 September 1908: 3; James P. Howley to James Harris, 14 March 1911, File MG 105.34, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

²⁹ James P. Howley to William Woodford, 10 September 1910, File MG 105.34, Box 1, JPHF-PANL; James P. Howley to James Harris, 26 March 1914, File MG 105.34, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

trouble of prospecting these resources on their own. In turn, foreign investment would strengthen imperial ties and stimulate British progress by fostering industrial growth and national self-sufficiency. This message was incorporated into an architectural frieze in the new museum, which showed loggers and miners standing astride a fisherman presenting a codfish to Britannia.³⁰

Howley's museum was also a social enterprise. He was deeply interested in how economic opportunities outside the fishery could improve the material and moral circumstances of Newfoundland's working class. To this end, he encouraged Newfoundlanders to view the island's natural environment in a new light. In 1910, the museum distributed seeds and potatoes to visitors as part of the government's agricultural reform efforts.³¹ It also encouraged nature study as a scientific and social pursuit. Much of the museum's wildlife was provided by Howley who hunted and skinned animals during his surveying trips to the island's interior. In 1888, he installed a family of caribou in the museum (Fig. 5.2).³² And in 1899, six large display cases were added to protect the museum's growing collection of stuffed animals.³³ Howley also contributed a number of Beothuck artefacts over the years, reflecting his life-long interest in documenting Newfoundland's original, inland inhabitants.³⁴

Indeed, the museum presented science education as a pathway to individual fulfilment and economic success. Exhibits covered scientific subjects ranging from geology and mineralogy, to palaeontology, ethnology, zoology, botany, ornithology, and ichthyology. Likewise, in organizing the exhibits, Howley strove to impress upon rural residents the benefits

³⁰ James Hiller, "Robert Bond and the Pink, White and Green: Newfoundland Nationalism in Perspective," *Acadiensis* 36, no. 2 (2007): 124, n30.

³¹ *Evening Telegram*, 25 May 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 26 May 1910: 6.

³² *Evening Telegram*, 22 December 1888: 4 James P. Howley to C. Emerson Brown, 14 November 1913, File MG 105.36, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

³³ *Evening Telegram*, 2 May 1899: 3.

³⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 16 May 1895: 4; H. F. Shortis, "Mr. Shortis Replies," *Evening Telegram*, 1 April 1902: 3.

of science and science education. “A well equipped and well arranged museum has no equal, especially for children or illiterate people,” he argued, adding that the museum “will undoubtedly give our own people a better appreciation of their country and what its capabilities really are.”³⁵

It was also an exhibitionary institution: the museum inculcated viewers in an elite scientific worldview, while simultaneously democratizing its construction. Howley observed that:

Most of the fisherman [and] their friends who semi-annually visit St. John’s find their way to the Museum. They are very keen at observing anything new, and take the deepest interest in it, very frequently bringing specimens of some sort with them. The Museum has become a great educational institution to these people, hence they are now so keen in observing minerals, and bringing to light new deposits of such.³⁶

To encourage this education, Howley opened the museum to the public six days a week during the summer and three days a week during the winter. Newfoundland’s first public museum soon became a popular attraction among city dwellers and outport residents alike.³⁷ In 1907, for example, Howley noted that the museum did not even bother to keep a visitor book since “by far the greater number [of visitors] could not write their names.”³⁸

Exhibiting Progress

There were a number of reasons for Newfoundland’s government to take an active interest in the museum. In addition to advertising Newfoundland’s national policy to locals and visitors, the museum acted as a repository of display material for use at exhibitions abroad and offered

³⁵ James Howley to Edward P. Morris, 28 December 1909, File 2.04.008, Box 6, Howley Family Papers (Coll-262), MUN.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 2 December 1890: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 21 July 1891: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1887: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 19 November 1891: 4.

³⁸ James P. Howley to J. A. Clift, 8 January 1907, File MG 105.34, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

lessons in how to create alluring displays. Indeed, the museum's development paralleled Newfoundland's growing participation at exhibitions overseas.

Whereas commercial fairs had existed since ancient times, international exhibitions were an invention of the nineteenth century.³⁹ Internationals were born of the imperial desire to promote global economic and cultural exchanges and combined popular entertainment, education, and commerce at an enormous scale. As imperial expansion fuelled industrial growth throughout Britain, new markets were needed to purchase mass produced goods. Alluring displays of commercial goods and natural resources at internationals were designed to stimulate two-way trade between Britain and her colonies, while fostering the development of consumer societies at home and abroad. Exhibitions encouraged the flow of colonial products from the hinterland of empire to its centre and the flow of manufactured goods from English cities to the colonies. They were part of the "commodity culture" of Victorian England, advertising consumer capitalism as an economic ideal, and feeding its globalizing impulse.⁴⁰

Newfoundland's introduction to the modern international exhibition was an underwhelming experience. The world's first international, held in London in 1851, was conceived as a celebration of modern industry and design. The Great Exhibition featured European, American and colonial exhibits of industrial arts which were displayed in a glass and iron building, erected in Hyde Park and nicknamed the Crystal Palace. Courts inside the palace brimmed with manufactured goods, including everything from furniture and luxury items to machinery, time pieces, textiles, musical instruments, and armaments, as well as colonial resources in the form of fruits, grains, furs, and industrially valuable minerals and plants. In

³⁹ Fernand Braudel identified commercial fairs as one of the oldest "wheels of commerce." Fernand Braudel, *The Wheels of Commerce*, trans. Siân Reynolds, Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 82-94.

⁴⁰ Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990); see also Young.

contrast, Newfoundland's contribution to Great Exhibition consisted of a single bottle of cod liver oil. The country's meagre contribution was located in a small court containing products from the British West Indies and nearby a large table of fruits from Barbados that commanded visitors' attention. Newfoundland's display paled in comparison to that of other British colonies, including Canada's and India's whose lavishly appointed courts were located next to Newfoundland's.⁴¹ It was an embarrassment not soon forgotten.

A more concerted effort to represent the colony was made on the occasion of the New York World's Fair in 1853. The timing of the World's Fair was important. Political leaders were debating whether Newfoundland should become party to a free trade agreement between the United States and the British North American colonies. Many believed that free trade would benefit the fishery by allowing merchants greater access to the American market. However, others feared that Newfoundland's interests were not foremost in the minds of British negotiators. Indeed, the colony was not even consulted about a preliminary trade deal that would have given American fishermen full access to its fishery.⁴² Anticipating that an Anglo-American free trade deal would soon be ratified, colonial leaders saw the World's Fair as an opportunity to advertise their exports to American buyers.

In 1853, Newfoundland's government was approached by an agent for the exhibition. Soon afterwards, a committee of politicians and businessmen was appointed to oversee Newfoundland's representation at the World's Fair.⁴³ The committee was chaired by the English-born physician John Winter, a member of the Mechanics Institute in St. John's and overseer of

⁴¹ *Great Exhibition of the Works of All Nations, 1851: Official Descriptive and Catalogue*, (London: Spicer Brothers, 1851), 2: 971.

⁴² Newfoundland became a signatory to the free trade deal in 1855. O'Flaherty, *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933*, 49-50.

⁴³ The government allocated a sum of £300 to prepare Newfoundland's court and exhibits. *The Morning Courier*, 1 January 1852: 2.

the Institute's small collection of museum artefacts (the same collection that was later incorporated into the Athenaeum). The committee placed advertisements in local newspapers soliciting natural history specimens and local manufactures which they then organized into a series of thematic displays. The completed exhibition was displayed in a factory in St. John's before being shipped to New York.⁴⁴

Modelled after the London exhibition held just two years' prior, the World's Fair also featured a glass and iron building (dubbed the New York Crystal Palace) in which participating countries leased courts and displayed their manufactures and natural resources. Unlike in London, however, Newfoundland's organizers leased a small court of their own at the 1853 exhibition.⁴⁵ The court featured a wide variety of natural resources, including minerals and timber, barley and oats, and a large quantity of stuffed game animals. However, the fishery dominated these other displays. In addition to specimens of cod, herring, and caplin, organizers exhibited fish and seal oils, seal skin clothing, fish hooks, and a model of a ship's hull designed in St. John's.⁴⁶ The centrepiece of the Newfoundland court was a large model depicting the seal hunt. The model occupied a full seven square feet and featured a sealing ship *mise en scène* using plaster of Paris ice floes covered in miniature men and seals. Stuffed seals and seal products surrounded the model on all sides.⁴⁷ Newfoundland's display received favourable reviews in the press and the colony was awarded three medals for fishery-related exhibits.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *The Morning Courier*, 11 June 1853: 2.

⁴⁵ *The Morning Courier*, 30 April 1853: 1-2.

⁴⁶ A small number of cultural artefacts were also sent to the New York World's Fair, including a collection of poems written in St. John's. *Official Catalogue of the New York Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations*, 1st rev. ed. (New York: George P. Putnam, 1853), 219-21.

⁴⁷ *The Morning Courier*, 25 May 1853: 2.

⁴⁸ *The Morning Courier*, 12 November 1853: 2; Newfoundland received three of the 27 medals reserved for British North America, including one for a display of preserved salmon and grain, one for the sealing model, and one for the model ship's hull. *The Morning Courier*, 18 March 1854: 2; the sealing model attracted considerable attention in New York since the industry was unique to the country. George T. Brooking, *The Morning Courier*, 13 August 1853: 2.

In 1862, Newfoundland attended its second, London-based exhibition. The London International was the first in a series of exhibitions where organizers showcased Newfoundland's national policy. It was also the first time that members of the country's newly established representational government (inaugurated in 1855) participated in such an event. In particular, members of the government saw the exhibition as an opportunity to attract the interest of British capitalists by promoting resources in the interior. To preserve this intent, the government appointed a local exhibition committee comprised entirely of elected officials, including the future railway promoters William Whiteway and Ambrose Shea.⁴⁹

The selection of exhibits reflected colonial elites' interest in creating progressive alternatives to the fishing industry, as well as their increasing dissatisfaction towards Newfoundland's traditional economy and culture. Organizers submitted an extensive set of mineral specimens, furs, and agricultural products to the 1862 international. They also appointed Frederick Gisbourne to serve as Newfoundland's ambassador in London. Gisbourne was an English-born telegraph promoter who had assayed parts of the island's interior in 1851. The government hoped that he would steer the attention of "scientific men" towards the county's mineral displays.⁵⁰ The fishery was scarcely represented. Only a small selection of oils was sent

⁴⁹ Two members of the executive council (Laurence O'Brien and Nicholas Stabb) and four members of parliament (William Whiteway, Ambrose Shea, Edmund Hanrahan, and Robert Carter) sat on the exhibition committee. *Harbor Grace Standard*, 29 January 1862: 3.

⁵⁰ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 5 February 1862: 2; Frederick Newton Gisbourne was born in England, where he received training in the natural sciences. An avid promoter of the electric telegraph, Gisbourne championed a number of proposals to lay new telegraph lines in eastern Canada and Newfoundland. His knowledge of Newfoundland's interior stemmed from his proposal to build a telegraph line across the country, which he set out to accomplish with the support of the Newfoundland government in 1851. That year, he surveyed a route across the island, traversing the 480 kilometres between St. John's and Cape Ray with a party of six men. A third of the way into this arduous journey, Gisbourne's party abandoned him and he was forced to enlist Mi'kmaq guides to complete the expedition. Gwynneth C. D. Jones, "Gisbourne, Frederic Newton," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gisborne_frederic_newton_12E.html.

to London, along with some preserved salmon, lobster, and curlew. And the country's economic staple—cod—was not displayed at all.⁵¹

Similar exhibits were sent to the Paris International Exhibition in 1867. More attention was accorded to the fishery in Paris. However, with Murray installed as head of the Newfoundland Geological Survey just three years prior, the interior of the island remained a focus. Murray, who oversaw Newfoundland's geological display, submitted an impressive variety of mineral specimens, including samples of peat and building stones. A large retinue of stuffed game birds and other fur bearing animals was also sent to Paris, to which Murray added a caribou trophy of his very own. Photographs featuring inland landscapes and an exhibit of cereals, berries, and wild flowers drew further attention to temperate features of the island's climate and geography.⁵²

Sixteen years elapsed before Newfoundland attended another international exhibition. In the interval between, the attention of the colony was consumed by the railway question. In 1878, Whiteway won the premiership after campaigning on an inland railway stretching from coast to coast. The first tracks were laid in 1881. Newfoundland's representation at international exhibitions would be forever changed as a result of this development. In the eyes of colonial elites, the railway had brought the civilizing influence of science and industry to bear on Newfoundland, while making Newfoundlanders appear united in their desire for advancement. It also asserted the role of the interior as a frontier for future development.

⁵¹ A model screw propeller designed in St. John's was also exhibited. *International Exhibition 1862. Official Catalogue of the Industrial Department*, (London: Truscott, Son, & Simons, [1862]), 127.

⁵² Stuffed seals and fishery products of all kinds were displayed in Paris, along with nets, lines, and hooks. Several models were commissioned for the exhibition, including one of a fishing stage that formed part of a large display illustrating the preparation and marketing of cod fish. *Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867. Catalogue of the British Section*, (London: Spottiswoode and Co., 1867), 227-330. Murray asked for permission to visit Paris that summer to help promote the island's resources. Kirwin, O'Flaherty, and Hollett, xli; Murray and Howley, 72.

Ironically, the earliest occasion to advertise this development was at an exhibition whose sole focus was the global fishing industry. The International Fisheries Exhibition held in London in 1883 marked a new high in terms of Newfoundland's enthusiasm for internationals, but also a sharply declining interest in exhibiting the fishery overseas.

In 1881, news of the upcoming fisheries exhibition reached St. John's, stirring the interest of politicians and merchants. Both groups were afraid of losing market share to other European fishing nations. The London exhibition came on the heels of two similar events held in Norwich and Edinburgh, neither of which was attended by Newfoundland.⁵³ Likewise, many people felt that the fisheries exhibition was an opportunity to make amends for Newfoundland's poor record of attendance and lackluster effort at earlier exhibitions. In 1882, one author charged that "miserable" and "shabby appearances" at previous exhibitions had contributed to the idea that Newfoundlanders were "a semi-barbarous people, and the country a contemptible corner of creation not worth a thought."⁵⁴ The government agreed to participate in the upcoming exhibition and, the following year, formed a committee of politicians and merchants to oversee the design of Newfoundland's court and organize a local exhibition.⁵⁵

The International Fisheries Exhibition was held on a 20 acre site in South Kensington maintained by the Royal Horticultural Society. An immense hall was erected to house the exhibits in which the British gallery alone occupied an arcade 50 feet wide and 750 feet long. The entire building was lit with electric lamps so that it could remain open several nights during the week. The exhibition featured a series of lectures on the preparation and cooking of fish. Live

⁵³ *Evening Telegram*, 8 September 1881: 2.

⁵⁴ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 19 August 1882: 2.

⁵⁵ The general committee was comprised of A. W. Harvey (deputy-chairman), W. Wheatly (secretary), H. J. Stabb (corresponding secretary), Hon. J. Fox, Hon. J. J. Rogerson, and W. Grieve. Eight sub-committees were also created to oversee displays of cod; herring, caplin, squid, and mackerel; freshwater fish; lobster and shellfish; fish oils; seal and whale products; literature and statistics pertaining to the fishery; and natural history items. A ninth sub-committee was tasked with overseeing a local exhibition. *Harbor Grace Standard*, 19 August 1882: 2.

salt and fresh water fish were displayed in 20 large aquariums and a fish market and dining rooms were also on hand. All of these features were detailed in the St. John's press along with news of the local committee's progress.⁵⁶



Fig. 5.3, Newfoundland court at the International Fisheries Exhibition, 1883. Item B17-90, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Newfoundland's court occupied a full 5,000 square feet inside the exhibition hall. The court's sides were covered with felt and banners and flags representing the electoral districts and merchant houses were hung from the girders overhead. At one end of the court was a 40 foot high arch draped with fishing nets. At the other end, paintings of fish and seals covered the wall (Fig. 5.3).⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Another series of exhibits focused on the scientific management of fisheries. These included fishery-related machinery and naval technologies, as well as methods of hatching and breeding fish and preserving fish habitat. *Evening Telegram*, 2 May 1883: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 5 April 1883: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 16 July 1883: 2.

⁵⁷ W. H. Whiteley, "Newfoundland at the Fisheries Exhibition," *Evening Telegram*, 7 January 1910: 7.

Newfoundland's exhibits were extensive. Shipped in 80 separate boxes, every conceivable product relating to the fishery was exhibited in London. Newfoundland even hosted a special luncheon at the exhibition, where 50 distinguished guests dined on lobster soup, grilled trout, salmon, turbot, and codfish prepared five different ways.

Notwithstanding the exhibition's maritime theme, Newfoundland's national policy was a recurring subject in London. Although Whiteway was not a member of the exhibition committee, the Premier frequented its meetings and urged the committee to use the event to promote the railway.⁵⁸ Likewise, care of Newfoundland's court was entrusted to Ambrose Shea who remained in London for the duration of the exhibition. Together with Whiteway, Shea was among the first voices inside the government to push for the railway solution.⁵⁹ He believed that industrial progress would lead to social progress and—like Moses Harvey—looked forward to the “new men” which Newfoundland's industrial age would create. Initially, Whiteway suggested that Harvey deliver a talk as part of the exhibition's course of lectures. In London, however, it was Shea who steered the attention of visitors towards Newfoundland's industrial progress, as well as Harvey's recent writings.

Newfoundland's exhibits hinted at this impending transformation, without detracting from the fishery's pre-eminence in London. Organizers sent mineral samples to the fisheries exhibition. And Shea added several finishing touches to Newfoundland's court, including spruce trees which he placed at either end of the court and surrounded with plants and flowers.⁶⁰ In conversations with visitors, he emphasized how a “new era” was dawning in Newfoundland, drawing their attention to mining and agricultural opportunities, and highlighting the country's

⁵⁸ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 9 December 1882: 3.

⁵⁹ Hiller, "The Railway and Local Politics in Newfoundland, 1870-1901," 126.

⁶⁰ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 15 December 1883: 2.

decision to enter the railway age.⁶¹ Likewise, during a conference at the exhibition Shea set out to dispel certain “confused ideas” about the country’s “climate, social condition, and general characteristics.”⁶² After speaking at length about the fishery, he turned his attention to the railway and to the country’s future. He explained that Newfoundland’s lack of progress was on account of its chief industry, where dependency and seasonal idleness were commensurate with evil.⁶³ However, these evils did not reflect the character of Newfoundlanders whom Shea characterized as a “hardy and enterprising community” of English, Irish, and Scottish descendants. The railway would bring these quintessential traits to light, he argued, reversing the fishery’s regressive influence, and delivering civilization to Newfoundland.



Fig. 5.4, View of the sealing model on display in the Newfoundland court at the International Fisheries Exhibition, 1883. *Illustrated London News*, 25 August 1883: 195.

⁶¹ *The Morning Post* (London), 7 June 1883: 3.

⁶² Ambrose Shea, *Newfoundland Its Fisheries and General Resources* (London: Wiliam Clowes and Sons, 1883), 3.

⁶³ To emphasize this point, Shea borrowed a phrase attributed to Edmund Burke, cautioning his listeners about the “laborious lassitude of having nothing to do.” See George T. Hayden, *An Essay on the Wear and Tear of Human Life* (Dublin: Fannin & Co., 1846), 46.

Exhibits also countered notions of racial regression by highlighting the virtuous character of working-class individuals. One model, for example, highlighted the self-reliant capabilities of fishing families by describing a “fisherman’s house,” complete with potato garden, hay field, root cellar, fishing stages, and fish flakes. Another model testified to fishers’ masculinity. It featured two sealing ships surrounded by mountainous ice drifts covered with miniature men and seals engaged in the hunt. Several stuffed seals were arranged around the model, along with tanned skins, seal oils, harpoons, and guns. The display garnered considerable attention in the foreign press, including the *Illustrated London News* which gave a detailed account of the seal fishery and published an engraving based on the model (Fig. 5.4).

This message was not lost on viewers. An official report noted how, “the Newfoundland fisherman is not merely a fisherman, but also a manufacturer,” since the curing of fish which would normally support a separate industry was “performed in Newfoundland to a great extent by the fishermen themselves.”⁶⁴ Likewise, in reflecting on the hazards of the sealing voyage, the *Illustrated News* reported that “as a body of men,” Newfoundlanders “are not to be matched for bodily strength, daring, and endurance.”⁶⁵ An article in the *Morning Post* even compared Newfoundland sealers to “an army going out to do battle,” where the enemies are the “icebergs, the tempest, and blinding [snowstorm].” “The people and hardships to be encountered are full of [romance],” its author stated, concluding that the people of Newfoundland were singularly fit, moral, “handsome, and law abiding.”⁶⁶ Newfoundland’s exhibits presented a redeeming portrait

⁶⁴ Spencer Walpole, “Official Report on the International Fisheries Exhibition,” in *The Fisheries Exhibition Literature* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1884), 50.

⁶⁵ *Illustrated London News*, 25 August 1883: 195.

⁶⁶ *The Morning Post* (London), 7 June 1883: 3.

of rural inhabitants, proving—as Shea argued—that Newfoundlanders were possessed with the “qualities of their progenitors.”⁶⁷

Women were conspicuously absent in several displays, reinforcing a masculine image of Newfoundland’s rural fishers and avoiding the stigma of gender confusion. Models illustrated in minutia the process of heading, splitting, and salting cod fish.⁶⁸ And a series of sepia toned images by John W. Hayward described the methods of sealing and fishing.⁶⁹ Neither showed women at work in the fishery. Hayward’s sketches were later published in *Harper’s Weekly*. In one spread, images of rustic log architecture and men adrift on rough seas contrasted with a comfortable, domestic scene – the only instance in which women and children appear (Fig. 5.5). Similarly, Shea was of the opinion that the fishery was degrading to women and that industrialization would disentangle female labour from the fishing industry. During the course of the exhibition, for example, he drew attention to the Colonial Cordage Company’s role in providing “suitable employment for women and girls as well as men.”⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Shea, 15.

⁶⁸ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 30 June 1883: 2; *Evening Telegram*, 2 June 1883: 4.

⁶⁹ Born in Harbour Grace, Hayward was an accomplished water-colourist who lived and worked in St. John’s. Shane O’Dea, “Strangers and Livyers: Perspectives on Newfoundland Seen through Prints and Engravings from the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *Newfoundland Studies* 1, no. 1 (1985): 11, 15, n5.

⁷⁰ Quoted in *Harbor Grace Standard*, 15 December 1883: 2.

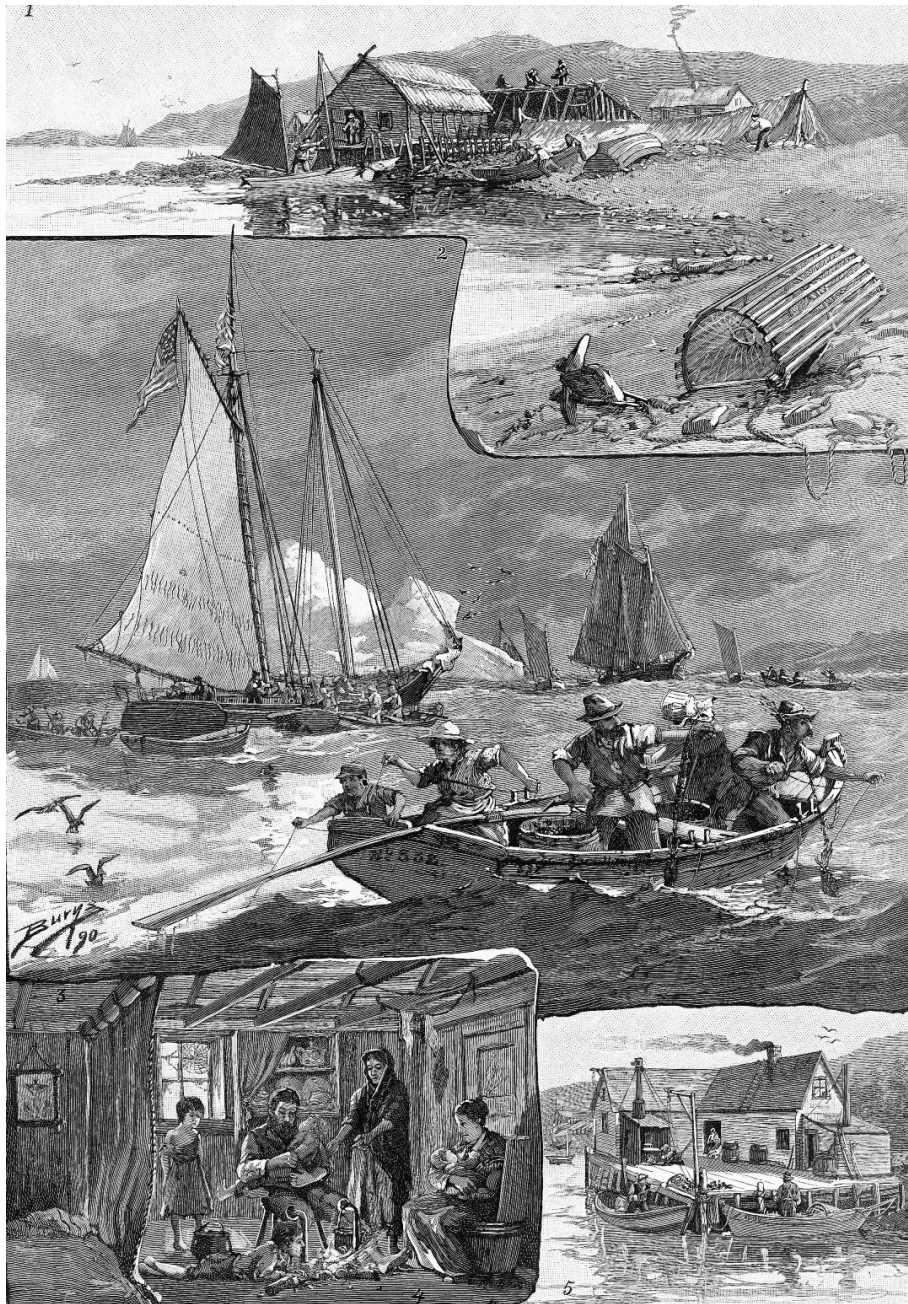


Fig. 5.5, Newfoundland and its Fisheries—From Sketches by J. W. Hayward, St. John's. *Harper's Weekly*, 19 July 1890: 553.

Civilizing Displays

Members of the government declared the International Fisheries Exhibition a success for Newfoundland. Photographs of the country's coast were printed and sold in St. John's.

Newfoundland also received a number of medals in London, including for samples of codfish, salmon, and herring.⁷¹ Likewise, Shea received accolades for his role in promoting the country's exhibits.⁷² Still, others found fault with the government's efforts. Critics charged that Newfoundland's exhibits paled in comparison to those of other nations, including Canada's and the United States' whose courts flanked that of Newfoundland.⁷³

Shea was unperturbed by this negative commentary. To mark his return from London, he delivered a rousing speech in St. John's, where he claimed that Newfoundland's display at the fisheries exhibition was a credit to the colony by materializing its progressive spirit. He pointed out that, despite four centuries of occupation, the majority of Newfoundlanders remained "fringed round the coast" and relied on the precarious fishery to earn their livelihood. The interior of the island remained virtually unknown. "From such a condition of things," he charged, "there can be no possibility of real progress." Conversely, Shea argued that the railway was a means of "advancing civilization" in Newfoundland.⁷⁴

Shea's comments underscore the importance of exhibitionary institutions in structuring imperial hierarchies of race and culture. Natural resources and manufactures were not just goods to be bought and sold at museums and exhibitions. Carefully arranged displays of goods and raw materials reinforced notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority by furnishing signs of western industrial and intellectual advancement that contrasted with the dichotomous barbarism of non-western people. Visitors to museums and exhibitions scrutinized colonial displays, searching for evidence

⁷¹ *Evening Telegram*, 9 November 1883: 1; *Harbor Grace Standard*, 2 June 1883: 2; *Harbor Grace Standard*, 10 November 1883: 2.

⁷² *Harbor Grace Standard*, 15 December 1883: 2.

⁷³ Canada's exhibits alone were said to weigh upwards of 600 tons. *Evening Telegram*, 5 May 1883: 4; critics also accused the government of ignoring the advice of the exhibition committee after Whiteway won the general election in November 1883. Others were annoyed to learn that a number of Newfoundland's exhibits had arrived late in London. *Evening Telegram*, 27 February 1884: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 9 June 1883: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 2 June 1883: 1; *Evening Telegram*, 4 June 1883: 4.

⁷⁴ Quoted in *Harbor Grace Standard*, 15 December 1883: 2.

of technological, economic, and social progress, which they then interpreted as a sign of the moral and physical character of colonials themselves. Indeed, as Bennett points out, anthropology was critical in the context of late nineteenth-century imperial displays, “for it played the crucial role of connecting the histories of Western nations and civilizations to those of other peoples and races – one in which ‘primitive peoples’ dropped out of history altogether.”⁷⁵ He argues that exhibitions extended anthropology into the “entertainment zone,” amplifying the rhetoric of progress by arranging humanity on a sliding-scale from the barbaric to the civilized, then inviting the public to absorb this information.⁷⁶

Colonial elites were keenly aware of the importance of museum displays and exhibits in structuring imperial hierarchies. On visiting the Imperial Institute in 1896, for example Edward Jackman was horrified to discover that “even the semi-civilized tribes of Africa” were exhibited there, while Newfoundland was not. A prominent St. John’s businessman and publisher, Jackman conveyed his horror in an open letter to public officials, evoking the stigma of racial inferiority.

Is it not a great satire on our boasted progress to know that the chiefs and medicine men, who a few years ago roamed the wilds of Africa with a piece of Manchester cotton around their waists, have their tribes represented in the Imperial Institute to-day, while we who are preparing to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the Island, are the only colonists who have not taken advantage of one of the greatest institutions of modern times?⁷⁷

A poor display—or a lack thereof in this case—was tantamount to an admission that Newfoundlanders were either disinterested or incapable of social and economic progress, and

⁷⁵ Bennett, “The Exhibitionary Complex,” 90.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 96.

⁷⁷ Edward M. Jackman, “Practical Letter,” *Evening Telegram*, 27 August 1896: 4.

therefore of questionable racial stock. A well-equipped display, on the other hand, would have a civilizing effect, revealing the country's capacity for advancement.

Other elites also grasped the importance of exhibiting Newfoundland's progress to imperial observers. Howley, for example, highlighted the country's potential for industrial progress by showcasing its land-based resources at his museum. He also commuted this desire into a proposal for an unrealized museum project in St. John's. In an editorial to the *Evening Telegram*, Howley explained how the new museum would contain a complete inventory of Newfoundland's natural resources, while focusing on those whose economic and social benefits were widely recognized. The museum would be divided into four sections and contain exhibits of geology and mineralogy; botany; zoology and ornithology; and ichthyology. Fishery exhibits were limited to this last section, which—according to Howley—would feature “a thoroughly representative exhibition of our great staple industry.”⁷⁸

In her study of British natural history museums, Carla Yanni describes how museum buildings participated in the construction of local natural knowledge. Display techniques, lighting, and circulation strategies allowed architects and their patrons to communicate specific ideas about the natural world and its commercial value.⁷⁹ Howley's new museum intended to serve a similar purpose. Indeed, the division of space in Howley's museum embodied a desire for transformative change, ascribing increased value to economic and recreational opportunities in the island's interior. This desire was reflected in the design of individual displays as well. The centrepiece of Howley's museum was to be a distillation of his nationalist vision: a single, magnificent sculpture rising from the floor to the ceiling. In a flourish of creativity, Howley sketched a monstrous display:

⁷⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 27 December 1888: 4.

⁷⁹ Yanni.

For instance, a pedestal composed of blocks of marble or other ornamental stones and minerals, surmounted by an obelisk of the different timbers, draped round with furs, dressed skins, stuffed birds, seals, deer-heads, &c., and surrounded at the base with preserved fish in glass cases or jars, would, I imagine, present a most attractive and pleasing object.⁸⁰

The building's exterior aspired to a similar performance. Howley proposed making the building entirely of local stone and locating the museum in Bannerman Park, so that park itself would act as a reminder of the economic and educational value of the island's landscape. "The aim of the entire design," he explained, "is nothing more or less than to render Bannerman Park, with all its surroundings, a complete and beautiful exposition of all that is valuable and interesting in the island."⁸¹ Surrounded by well-kept lawns, clipped hedges, and trees, and located next to the colony's legislative apparatus—the Colonial Building and Government House—the museum was designed to affirm and reproduce the civilizing character of the country's landscape and the progressive spirit of its leaders. By supplying the "pleasure and enlightenment so necessary in any civilized community," Howley assured readers, the museum and its landscape would remove "the stigma of semi-barbarism from our common country's name."⁸² His monstrous sculpture evoked a similar, regenerative shift. It showed that Newfoundland's landscape was a cornucopia of minerals, game, and timber, but also that the fishery—fit snugly around the base of the upwards moving monument—was the rear guard of Newfoundland's modernity.

Despite Howley's efforts at the museum, Newfoundland's participation at internationals declined towards the end of the century. In 1885, Robert Thorburn replaced Whiteway as

⁸⁰ The new museum building would also house government offices and new a town hall. The museum was to occupy the entire second floor. *Evening Telegram*, 27 December 1888: 4.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

premier. In a reversal of Whiteway's pro-railway policies, Thorburn promised to create economic opportunities within the fishery. Newfoundland skipped the Colonial and Indian Exhibition held in London the following year.

In 1888, Thorburn accepted an invitation to attend the Barcelona Universal Exhibition. Newfoundland's exhibits were conceived as an advertisement for the fishery. Spain was a large importer of fish and political leaders were afraid of losing market share to Norwegian and French fishers who were able to deliver their product to Spanish markets faster.⁸³ However, a series of delays sowed confusion among local organizers. As a result, Newfoundland's exhibits did not arrive in Barcelona until four months after the exhibition was opened.⁸⁴ To make matters worse, many of the most prestigious prizes for fish products were awarded to their Norwegian competitors.⁸⁵

By 1897, Whiteway was back in power. That year, he asked Howley to prepare exhibits for the Imperial Institute in London, a hybrid commercial-colonial museum founded ten years earlier. The idea to create a permanent museum dedicated to the colonies originated in 1886 at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition. In 1893, Whiteway attended the official opening of the Imperial Institute's new building in South Kensington. However, four years later Newfoundland was still not represented there. Despite having participated in two London exhibitions, Whiteway's enthusiasm for internationals had faded. He declined to participate in the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago in 1893.⁸⁶ Visitors to the Imperial Institute also witnessed

⁸³ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 10 March 1888: 5.

⁸⁴ C. F. Ancell, "The Barcelona Exhibition," *Evening Telegram*, 7 July 1888: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 8 September 1888: 4.

⁸⁵ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 20 February 1889: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 1 March 1889: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 23 August 1889: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 18 September 1889: 4.

⁸⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 14 April 1893: 3.

his apathy firsthand. In 1894, an area of the building reserved for Newfoundland's exhibits remained conspicuously empty.⁸⁷

The Imperial Institute was also an instrument of Joseph Chamberlain's constructive imperialism. As Secretary of State for the Colonies, Chamberlain championed colonial development as a way to halt Britain's relative decline as German and American industrialization increased. Beginning in 1895, he made imperial development projects and science central features of British colonial policy.⁸⁸ The Imperial Institute embodied this dual interest, operationalizing—as Mary Carroll and Sue Reynolds write—“the idea of a self-sufficient ‘Greater Britain’.”⁸⁹ In an effort to educate Britons about the commercial and technological benefits of colonization, institute members gathered industrial and scientific information throughout the colonies. The Institute contained laboratories for analyzing mineral samples. And a commercial and industrial development department reported on labour conditions and transportation arrangements in the colonies. Colonial leaders were also invited to lease courts at the Institute and create displays of arts, manufactures, and other commercial products. Officials then speculated on the commercial significance of these and other products, publishing their findings in the Imperial Institute's own bulletin and journal.⁹⁰

Whiteway's decision to send exhibits to the Imperial Institute came amid mounting criticism over the colony's marked absence there. Howley was among these critics. He aired his displeasure in full view of the public, arguing in the St. John's press that a Newfoundland

⁸⁷ Arthur Murray, “Letter from Mr. Arthur Murray,” *Evening Telegram*, 12 March 1894: 4.

⁸⁸ Brett M. Bennett and Joseph M. Hodge, eds., *Science and Empire: Knowledge and Networks of Science across the British Empire, 1800-1970* (Basingstoke, U.K.; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 14.

⁸⁹ Mary Carroll and Sue Reynolds, “From Display to Data: The Commercial Museum and the Beginnings of Business Information, 1870-1914,” in *Information Beyond Borders: International Cultural and Intellectual Exchange in the Belle Époque*, ed. W. Boyd Rayward (Surrey, U.K.; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), 268.

⁹⁰ Mackenzie, 122-29; Michael Worboys, “The Imperial Institute: The State and the Development of the Natural Resources of the Colonial Empire, 1887-1923,” in *Imperialism and the Natural World*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 164-86.

exhibition at the Institute would steer interest and capital towards the country's underutilized resources.⁹¹ Late in 1897, the government asked Howley to assemble exhibits for submission to the Imperial Institute and the Philadelphia Commercial Museum. He immediately set about gathering natural history specimens, mineral and timber samples, and agricultural products from across the island, supplementing these with items from the museum collection.

Howley was mindful of the need to carefully prepare and arrange Newfoundland's display on account of the Institute's scientific mandate. He also pressed the government to include scientific documents as part of the country's submission, including his own geological reports and maps.⁹² Whiteway, however, was consumed with more pressing issues in London, such as the Colonial Conference and the Queen's diamond jubilee celebrations. Meanwhile, fish prices were at their lowest in almost 50 years. Whiteway lost in a general election later that year. His successor, James Winter, hurriedly sent the half-finished exhibits to London and abandoned the Philadelphia project altogether. An exasperated Howley expressed his frustration with the government in a letter to the president of the Imperial Institute, apologizing for the poor quality of the specimens in Newfoundland's court, and lamenting their disorganization.⁹³

Newfoundland's participation at internationals was also unassuming during the first decade of the twentieth century. Apparently, Robert Bond's enthusiasm for making facsimiles of his country in Whitbourne did not extend to overseas. In 1905, Newfoundland attended the Naval Shipping and Fisheries exhibition held at Earl's Court in London. However, the government treated the exhibition as a minor affair.⁹⁴ A small committee oversaw the design of

⁹¹ James P. Howley, "Mr. James P. Howley, F.G.S.," *Evening Telegram*, 31 March 1896: 4.

⁹² James P. Howley to H. Woods, January 1897, File MG 105.40, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

⁹³ James P. Howley to Frederick Abel, 8 July 1898, File MG 105.40, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

⁹⁴ The government expended a mere \$3,200 on the 1905 Earle's Court exhibition. *Acts of the General Assembly of Newfoundland* (St. John's: J. W. Withers, 1907), 116.

Newfoundland's exhibits which Howley prepared for display and shipped to London.⁹⁵ The display received scant attention in the exhibition programme, although Bond later claimed to have received several awards as a result of Newfoundland's participation.⁹⁶ Bond's lack of interest in internationals is also revealed by his decision to skip the Franco-British Exhibition in 1908. The exhibition was largest, London-based international of its kind to date and was attended by every other British dominion, many of whom erected pavilions on a 40 acre site known as the White City.⁹⁷

The Festival of Empire

In 1909, Bond's government was defeated and replaced by that of Edward Morris. Not long after Morris took office, Newfoundland was invited to participate in the Festival of Empire. A public meeting was convened in St. John's to discuss the invitation, with members of the government, religious leaders, lawyers, businessmen, and several ladies philanthropic organizations all in attendance.⁹⁸ Morris, who was strongly in favour of Newfoundland's participation, impressed upon the crowd the need for greater publicity if Newfoundland hoped to "take her part in the van of progress."⁹⁹ As if to underscore his point, it soon came to light that Newfoundland had been inadvertently left out of the preliminary festival plans drawn up in London. The oversight was an embarrassment, but it also transmitted a clear message to the gathered crowd: fail to attend in

⁹⁵ Notwithstanding the exhibition's maritime theme, Howley made sure that Newfoundland's mineral resources were also displayed. In 1907, he remarked that 21 boxes and cases containing exhibits were returned to the museum from Earl's Court. James P. Howley to J. A. Clift, 8 January 1907, File MG 105.34, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

⁹⁶ *Proceedings of the House of Assembly and Legislative Council*, 2nd Session, 22nd General Assembly, 1910 (St. John's: Evening Herald, 1913), 30.

⁹⁷ Although Newfoundland did not participate in the Franco-British Exhibition, a sample of hematite extracted from the mine on Bell Island was displayed in the Canadian section. *Evening Telegram*, 15 September 1908: 3.

⁹⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1909: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 29 December 1909: 7.

⁹⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 6 January 1910: 4.

London and risk further isolation within the empire. Newfoundland's participation at the festival was endorsed by businessmen, journalists, and religious leaders who all spoke in turn.

Support for the Festival of Empire stemmed from the belief that Newfoundland should play a larger role in the economic, political, and cultural life of the British Empire. The festival coincided with a period of resurgent nationalism in Newfoundland. The bank crash of 1894 was a national embarrassment. However, a series of redeeming developments in the aftermath of this event had restored an air of confidence in Newfoundland. A coast to coast railway was completed in 1898. And in 1904, France ceded its exclusive development rights on Newfoundland's west coast, an area containing some of the country's most fertile land and valuable timber. At the same time, the extraction of iron ore accelerated at Bell Island when the Nova Scotia Steel Company expanded into submarine mining. The first decade of the twentieth century culminated in the opening of two new pulp and paper mills, first at Grand Falls and at then at Bishop's Falls, where the Alfred E. Reed Company established operations in 1909. Newfoundland's failure to develop beyond the means of a fishing society had resulted in its political and economic marginalization within the empire. Yet there was now ample evidence that Newfoundland was on the cusp of a new industrial era, placing Newfoundland on equal footing with the other self-governing colonies. In 1907, this suspicion was confirmed at an Imperial Conference in London, where dominion status was conferred upon all self-governing colonies in recognition of their increasing autonomy.¹⁰⁰

Public figures all came out in favour of Newfoundland's participation at the festival. The *Telegram* summed up the belief that "the part Newfoundland hopes to play in the future [of the Empire] by an expansion of her resources calls her there."¹⁰¹ Likewise, in a speech marking the

¹⁰⁰ Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 154-75.

¹⁰¹ *Evening Telegram*, 29 December 1909: 4.

opening of the legislature, Newfoundland's Governor declared that the festival would supply "evidence of [Newfoundland's] marked progress and advancement" to Britons.¹⁰² Members of the house agreed. Even Bond agreed, despite sitting in opposition to the government.¹⁰³ He revealed his newfound interest in exhibiting overseas in a zealous speech, furnishing a heroic sketch of Newfoundland's role in founding Britain's colonial empire, then pressing the government to make an impressive display out of the country's undervalued resources. In case there was any doubt as to the nature of these resources, Bond supplied the following addendum:

Whatever is done, whoever does it, I hope that the fishery exhibits will be kept in the background. The whole civilized world knows that we are a fishing country, but the worst of it is they do not regard the country in any other light. We should show the world by large and choice exhibits of minerals, soil, building stones, timber and agricultural products, that we have something more than fish awaiting enterprise and capital.¹⁰⁴

Bond's comments cut to the heart of the matter. The Festival of Empire was an opportunity to advertise Newfoundland, but not the country as it existed. Rather, exhibits featuring minerals, timber, and agricultural products would announce Newfoundland's entry into the modern world, while consigning the fishery to the past.

Advertising this historical reversal was important in light of recent, damaging opinions expressed in London. British observers feared that fishing families were incapable of advancement on account of their generational entrenchment. In 1898, for example, the mineralogist Joseph Henry Collins complained to an audience gathered at the Imperial Institute

¹⁰² *Proceedings of the House of Assembly and Legislative Council*, 2nd Session, 22nd General Assembly, 1910 (St. John's: Evening Herald, 1913), 7.

¹⁰³ *Proceedings of the House of Assembly and Legislative Council*, 2nd Session, 22nd General Assembly, 1910 (St. John's: Evening Herald, 1913), 29.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

that Newfoundland was beset by the “inertia” of its own people.¹⁰⁵ Poverty in Newfoundland was in spite of the country’s abundant mineral and timber resources, he claimed, for which the only possible explanation was that Newfoundlanders were either unwilling or unable to adapt to occupations other than seafaring. The consequences of this opinion came to light in 1908 when shareholders in the Harmsworth firm expressed doubts over whether fishermen could be taught to make paper on an industrial scale.

Newfoundland’s display at the Festival of Empire would counteract this view by showing that individual progress and national progress were concomitant. Displays highlighting industrial and scientific progress in the island’s interior would demarcate the country’s future, while offering these developments as evidence of Newfoundlanders’ Anglo superiority. To help communicate this message, the government arranged to have Alfred Harmsworth serve as Newfoundland’s representative on the London festival committee. The Prime Minister and Governor agreed that Alfred Harmsworth was an ideal candidate for this post on account of his personal and “very real interest in the progress and development of the country.”¹⁰⁶ Indeed, Alfred Harmsworth was known for his praise of Newfoundland labourers and factory workers in Grand Falls.¹⁰⁷ Others hoped that he would use his newspapers to convey a favourable impression of the forest industry.¹⁰⁸

The commercial thrust of earlier British exhibitions had shifted by the end of the nineteenth century. Britain’s volume of overseas trade and investment decreased as manufacturing rose throughout Europe and in parts of North America. To compensate for this geopolitical shift and ward off imperial aggression, imperialists turned their attention inwards.

¹⁰⁵ J. H. Collins, *Newfoundland, Its Mineral and Other Resources* ([London]: s.n., 1898).

¹⁰⁶ Ralph Williams to Edward P. Morris, 10 December 1909, File GN 8.19, Box 2, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

¹⁰⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 11 December 1908: 6.

¹⁰⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 19 April 1910: 4.

Authorities searched the empire for new economic opportunities to offset declining overseas trade and forge the empire into a self-reliant economic unit. Exhibitions were an opportunity to propagandize this imperialist ideology.¹⁰⁹ They were also frequent events by the close of the nineteenth century, occurring almost yearly in London during the first decade of the twentieth century.

The Festival of Empire recapitulated these imperial desires. Conceived as a celebration of England's historical progress and rise to power, the festival allowed the British public to behold the totality of the empire in a single, all-encompassing view, reinforcing notions of British solidarity, and highlighting development opportunities within the empire. Spectacular architecture, exhibits, and pageantry at the festival bolstered feelings of British economic and cultural unity, past and present. At the same time, extensive landscaping at the festival encouraged economic growth within the empire by framing the colonies in a favourable light.

Initially, colonial exhibits were planned inside the shimmering glass and iron Crystal Palace at Sydenham (a recreation of the Crystal Palace erected for the Great Exhibition of 1851). Festival organizers allocated each colony a court, then instructed colonial leaders to prepare displays highlighting their contribution to the growth and development of the empire. Exhibits would focus on important men, buildings, cities, industries, and other recognizable scenes. Films depicting scenery and daily life in each colony would also be screened in a special theatre inside the Crystal Palace. Crown colony exhibits, including those of South Africa and India, were

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Mackenzie, 96-120; Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: A History of the Expositions Universelles, the Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); Hoffenberg.

overseen by British officials. But Newfoundland and the other independent dominions took charge of their own displays.¹¹⁰

After the sudden death of King Edward VII caused the festival to be postponed by a year, the decision was made to relocate colonial exhibits onto the expansive grounds in front of the Crystal Palace. The 200 acre park was fitted-out with an elaborate waterworks and planted with two million flowers and shrubs, an English orchard, and myriad small gardens. The *Telegram* reported that “every type of English garden will be represented” within the palace grounds, adding that “special attention is being paid to illustrate how even small plots may be enchanting with the aid of the rock garden, the pergola of roses, the logia of climbing roses, and the water garden.”¹¹¹ Also occupying the grounds were some 300 pavilions, kiosks, and stands. The entire site was lit by electricity and gas at night.¹¹² As Deborah Ryan notes, the Crystal Palace’s suburban setting was itself a significant feature of the exhibition. By locating the festival at the “juncture between country and city,” she writes, spectators were “reminded not just of London’s administrative role but also of the countryside of the south-east, which stood for an idealized rural England.”¹¹³

In February 1910, a meeting was held at the Board of Trade rooms in St. John’s to nominate a local organizing committee. Committee members drawn from the ranks of government were joined by merchants, influential writers, and other promoters.¹¹⁴ Sub-committees were then formed to oversee individual exhibits, including displays of minerals,

¹¹⁰ Newfoundland was allocated a court inside the Crystal Palace measuring nearly 5,000 square feet. The cost of furnishing the court was estimated to be \$15,000, for which the government provided a grant of \$10,000. The remainder was raised through public subscription. *Evening Telegram*, 15 January 1910: 4.

¹¹¹ *Evening Telegram*, 8 April 1911: 3.

¹¹² *Evening Telegram*, 20 March 1911: 3; *Evening Telegram*, 27 March 1911: 7.

¹¹³ Deborah Ryan, “Staging the Imperial City: The Pageant of London, 1911,” in *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Space and Identity*, ed. Felix Driver and David Gilbert (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 120.

¹¹⁴ The festival committee was chaired by the merchant and philanthropist Joseph J. Outerbridge. George Turner was nominated general secretary and William G. Gosling (secretary of the Newfoundland board of Trade) was made honorary secretary.

books, music, photographs, sporting attractions, and pictures, as well as products relating to sealing, whaling, and the fishing industry.¹¹⁵ General charge of the Newfoundland court was entrusted to Howley who remained in London for the duration of the festival.¹¹⁶

Committee members were generally of the same mind as Bond. Displays featuring land-based resources, touristic scenery, and industrial manufactures were prioritized. Exhibits containing images that were culturally or environmentally problematic were conspicuously avoided. Morris even cautioned against showing film footage of the seal hunt for fear of “identifying ourselves too much with ice.”¹¹⁷ Likewise, exhibits featuring sealing, whaling, and fishing products were grouped together and overseen by one of eight sub-committees. A lack of rural representation on the festival committee also ensured that the island’s interior would be a focus in London. Other than A. H. Seymour (the elected official for Harbour Grace and a member of Morris’ agricultural board) all of the committee members were St. John’s men, leading the *Harbor Grace Standard* to complain that “it would serve to remind the world, inside and outside, that Newfoundland means a little more than St. John’s.”¹¹⁸ Financial support for the festival also originated from St. John’s. In a short time, the committee solicited subscriptions from prominent businessmen, merchants, and industrialists, including the owners of the railway and paper companies.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Members of the sub-committees included: James P. Howley (minerals); M. W. Furlong, W. G. Gosling, and W. S. Dunphy (books); George Shea and Charles Huton (music); C. O’N. Conroy, W. G. Gosling, H. Fraser, W. N. Gray, H. F. Bradshaw, and C. P. Ayre (photographs); Hon. J. B. Ayre, H. F. Bradshaw, M. J. Summers, and D. W. Prowse (pictures); Hon. W. C. Job, W. B. Grieve, J. S. Munn, W. H. Franklin, and J. H. Monroe (sealing, whaling, and fishery goods); R. G. Rendell, W. H. Rennie, Dr. Keegan, W. H. Bartlett, R. White, and A. H. Seymour (sporting); and W. W. Blackhall, A. A. Parsons, E. P. Morris, and W. G. Gosling (lectures). *Evening Telegram*, 23 February 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 28 February 1910: 6.

¹¹⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 19 April 1910: 4.

¹¹⁷ Edward P. Morris to Alfred Harmsworth, 4 January 1910, File GN 8.19, Box 2, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

¹¹⁸ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 25 February 1910: 4.

¹¹⁹ *Evening Telegram*, 28 February 1910: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 10 March 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 1 April 1910: 6.

The Landscape of Empire

The importance of back-to-the-land migration was a persistent message at the Festival of Empire. Authorities believed that the expansion of agriculture would achieve two goals by improving Britain's economic security and alleviating urban unemployment. Social reformers had long argued that the redistribution of England's population was necessary in order to improve the country's moral and physical topography. In 1878, William Booth co-founded the Home Colonization Society. Three years later, he laid out an argument for domestic colonization in his book *Darkest England, and the Way Out*. Booth proposed creating cooperative societies and farm colonies, where colonists would receive free training in cooperative methods and access to credit in exchange for their participation. "Take a man or a woman out into the fresh air," he wrote, "supply them with a comfortable home, cheerful companions, and a fair prospect of reaching a position of independence in this or some other land, and a complete renewal of health and careful increase of vigour will, we expect, be one of the first great benefits that will ensue."¹²⁰

Festival exhibits highlighted the importance of these migrations, as well as their positive social and economic effects. The British government, for example, erected an extensive country life exhibit stretching out over ten acres on the festival grounds.¹²¹ Designed to promote the "re-colonization of Great Britain," the exhibit encouraged unemployed men to become cooperative landholders, while glorifying the virtues of a self-reliant, country life. The exhibit featured a small land holdings colony, complete with a working farm and allotments under cultivation. There were model workers' cottages, communal barns, greenhouses, and a village square. Milk and butter were produced on site and visitors were instructed on how to tend livestock, keep

¹²⁰ Booth, *In Darkest England, and the Way Out*, 264.

¹²¹ *Festival of Empire, Imperial Exhibition, and Pageant of London, 1911: Official Guide & Catalogue*, (London: Bemrose & Sons, [1911]), 41.

bees, and in other agricultural best practices. Indeed, education was a keynote throughout the country life exhibit. Information on credit societies, housing, and sanitation could all be found at the village library. Women were also offered instruction in canning and preserving food. The official guide even compared the small holdings exhibit to an “agricultural university.”¹²² In October, a national congress on rural development was held in conjunction with the Festival of Empire. Speakers emphasized the importance of farming in alleviating urban unemployment and proposed cooperative methods and rural education as a way to encourage land settlement.¹²³

Agricultural promotions at the Festival of Empire spoke to the importance of certain landscapes in combatting British racial regression, as well as the colonies’ potential role in spreading Anglo-Saxon culture around the world through an expansion of the empire’s agrarian basis. Writers like Booth had already underscored the need to lure settlers overseas by tailoring colonial advertisements to British audiences, as well as the suitability of the colonies as sites for new agricultural settlements founded on strict moral and religious principles. The ideal locations for these settlements, Booth felt, was in colonies, where regular communication with Europe ensured access to markets and commodities, but also where the “character of the land” reflected British colonists’ innate love of landscape.¹²⁴ Similarly, exhibits and other features at the festival testified to the attractiveness of distant colonies to English settlers by highlighting how their institutions, social life, and physical geography resembled Britain’s own. This message was echoed in a series of lectures detailing the growth of the overseas colonies and their role in making British world history, including Patrick McGrath’s *Newfoundland in 1911* – a book

¹²² *Festival of Empire, Imperial Exhibition, Pageant of London*, 6th ed. (London: s.n., [1911]), 12-15; *Festival of Empire, Imperial Exhibition, and Pageant of London, 1911: Official Guide & Catalogue*, 41-42.

¹²³ *Rural Development and Small Holdings: Report of the Proceedings of the National Congress Held at the Crystal Palace on 18th, 19th, & 20th October, 1911 in Connection with the Small Holdings and Country Life Section of the Festival of Empire*, (London: P.S. King & Son, 1912).

¹²⁴ *In Darkest England, and the Way Out*, 143.

elucidating connections between Newfoundland and Britain—including the “salubrity and mildness” of their climates—and that was originally prepared as a suite of lectures to be given at the Festival of Empire.¹²⁵

The assimilation of the colonies to a British landscape ideal is illustrated by the All Red Route – a one and half mile long electric railway that described a winding, circular route across the fair grounds. The idea for an All Red Route materialized late in 1910. That year, festival officials visited the site of the Brussels International, where Canada had erected a copy of its parliament building on the fair grounds. They asked the Canadian Prime Minister, Wilfrid Laurier, if he would be willing to erect a similar pavilion on the grounds of the Crystal Palace, intimating that the other dominions would follow Canada’s lead and erect copies of their own parliaments.¹²⁶ The Canadian Prime Minister agreed and an immense plan of the fairgrounds was drawn up by the director of the festival pageant, Frank Lascelles. His plan showed a series of pavilions representing the dominions and crown colonies laid out in front of the Crystal Palace and connected by a perambulating, miniature railway nicknamed the All Red Route. Railway stops were placed near each pavilion and scenery flanking the railway depicted daily life in the colonies (Fig. 5.6 & Fig. 5.7).

¹²⁵ McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century*, 179. A suite of lectures was included in the Festival of Empire program in 1910. In St. John’s, W. W. Blackhall, A. A. Parsons, E. P. Morris, and W. G. Gosling were appointed members of the lecture sub-committee. The government also commissioned McGrath to prepare a pamphlet for the festival. *Journal of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland*, 4th Session, 22nd Assembly (St. John’s: Evening Chronicle, 1912) 40; *Evening Telegram*, 6 November 1911: 4; one writer later suggested that McGrath’s *Newfoundland in 1911* was conceived as a suite of lectures. Arthur English, “The Limit,” *Evening Telegram*, 16 March 1912: 6.

¹²⁶ Minutes of a Joint Meeting of the Finance and Executive Committee, 8 June 1910, Volume 1: Minutes of the Festival of Empire Committee 1909-1910, Festival of Empire collection (MISC 0459), Archives and Special Collections, LSE.



Fig. 5.6, Proposed plan of the festival grounds showing the dominion buildings arranged in front of the Crystal Palace and connected by an All Red Route, ca. 1911. Item CO 1047/1068, Maps and Plan (Series II), Records of the Colonial Office, National Archives (U.K.).



Fig. 5.7, (detail) Proposed plan of the festival grounds showing the dominion buildings arranged in front of the Crystal Palace and connected by an All Red Route, ca. 1911. Item CO 1047/1068, Maps and Plan (Series II), Records of the Colonial Office, National Archives (U.K.).

By emphasizing how the empire was connected through a continuous flow of goods, people, and money, the All Red Route encouraged visitors to view the colonies as extension of Britain's economic and cultural interests, and even the British landscape itself. Indeed, the railway was named after the Royal Mail steamship route, itself an evocation of the tendency to indicate British territories on maps using only the colour red.¹²⁷ Similarly, the All Red Route dramatized uniformity while accommodating diversity. Curiously, whereas Lascelles meticulously reproduced the dominion parliaments of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (as well as a fifth pavilion representing India) in his plan, Newfoundland is

¹²⁷ Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Executive and Finance Committee, 22 June 1910, Volume 1: Minutes of the Festival of Empire Committee 1909-1910, Festival of Empire collection (MISC 0459), Archives and Special Collections, LSE.

represented by name only. Either festival organizers did not have a photograph of the Colonial Building in St. John's, or they hesitated to assume that this building was also the country's parliament. Officials in St. John's were (mercifully) unaware of this oversight. However, Lascelles' drawing is distinguished less by its differentiation of the colonial parliaments than by its uniform treatment of the natural environment surrounding them. Other than a flourish of colour near the pavilions of the crown colonies (indicating an Indian bazaar), his plan was awash with green. He depicted the dominions set amidst a naturalistic landscape consisting of forested groves, mountainous peaks, shimmering lakes, and colourful meadows. In particular, Lascelles' plan illustrated how colonial geographies would be subsumed to an imperial vision at the festival. Using artificial landscapes, the festival reinforced colonial conformity with the economic and environmental topography of Northern Europe, encouraging the flow of people and goods from Britain to distant parts of the empire. A working model of the All Red Route based on Lascelles' plan was exhibited in London ahead of the festival.

In 1911, riders along the All Red Route experienced a tour around the empire in just 20 minutes, during which time they were treated to a kaleidoscope of productive and pleasurable landscapes. Alongside the train's route, organizers recreated economic landscapes in the form of wheat fields, sugar and tea plantations, ranches, orchards and vineyards, as well as goldfields and diamond mines. Scenic landscapes included snow clad mountains, picturesque harbours, lush jungles (complete with mechanical tigers and crocodiles), waterfalls, and grassland. Elements that were incongruous with this palette were singled out as being distinctly "un-English," including the Maori village filled with "weird totem poles" and the "curious huts" of Malay villagers.¹²⁸ Newfoundland's landscape evoked a similar ambiguity. The country was represented by a pair of vignettes placed on opposite sides of the All Red Route and nearby the country's

¹²⁸ *Festival of Empire, Imperial Exhibition, and Pageant of London, 1911: Official Guide & Catalogue*, 18, 20.

pavilion. One was a view of St. John's, seen from the South Side hills; the other was a view of Collins' Cove near Burin, with split cod drying on fish flakes and men at work harvesting whale oil and blubber – an activity judged “unsavoury but invaluable” by the official guide (Fig. 5.8).¹²⁹



Fig. 5.8, Scene on the All Red Route showing a Newfoundland whaling station and split cod drying on the flakes, 1911. Private Collection.

Newfoundland's court, however, appeared as a continuation of the festival's larger landscape. Indeed, the British landscape flowed seamlessly into Newfoundland's pavilion as organizers set out to advertise the island as a destination for British tourism and investment. Newfoundland's court was the first stop on the railway and was located inside a miniature version of the Colonial Building. The pavilion was a modest 600 square feet and cost \$14,000 to build.¹³⁰ Its decoration was overseen by Lady Northcliffe (i.e. Mary Harmsworth), with the

¹²⁹ Ibid., 17-18.

¹³⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 22 November 1910: 5.

assistance of James Howley and Joseph Outerbridge.¹³¹ Awnings formed a ceiling inside the court and the entire display space was framed by three enormous paintings placed on opposite sides of the court and mounted in gilt frames measuring 22 feet long and 15 feet high. The paintings described views of the industrial works at Grand Falls, St. John's harbour, and the Codroy River – a favourite fishing spot near the railway's terminus on the west coast.¹³² Other maps, paintings, and photographs also decorated the walls, including 24 enlarged prints showing scenes in the island's interior and wildlife paintings by the famed British naturalist John Guille Millais.¹³³ Stereoscopic images were also on hand, along with several viewing machines. And seats and tables inside the pavilion were strewn with copies of Prowse's *Guidebook* and other promotional material.¹³⁴

Exhibits also situated landscape at the heart of industrial and cultural life in the colony. Geological samples were arranged in a double row of flat cases, with larger specimens of coal, granite, and gypsum placed between.¹³⁵ To this was added an exhibit by the Nova Scotia Steel Co. consisting of a 14 foot high core sample extracted from the submarine mine at Wabana. The enormous specimen was placed in an obelisk shaped case and flanked by samples of pig iron, steel bar, and illustrated geological sections of the mine.¹³⁶ Timber samples were arranged around one of the pavilion's columns. And all manner of agricultural goods, wild birds, and fur bearing animals were displayed in cases that extended around the building's perimeter. Many of

¹³¹ Joseph Outerbridge travelled to London in the spring of 1911 to oversee the preparation of Newfoundland's court. He was joined by Howley who left for London in April and remained there for the next eight months to promote Newfoundland's display. *Evening Telegram*, 5 January 1912: 4.

¹³² The paintings were commissioned and prepared in Paris. "Festival of Empire. Newfoundland Court" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), File MG 105.66, Box 2, JPHF-PANL.

¹³³ Also among these artworks were several coastal landscapes by H. Bradshaw, as well as paintings by the Newfoundland-born and Montreal-based painter Maurice Cullen. *Evening Telegram*, 22 April 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 28 April 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1911: 6; *Evening Telegram*, 25 November 1910: 4.

¹³⁴ 5,000 copies of Prowse's *Guidebook* were printed for distribution at the festival. W. G. Gosling, "Estimate of Expenses," n.d., File GN 8.19, Box 2, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

¹³⁵ The mineral display was curated by Howley. *Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1911: 6.

¹³⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 5 May 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 5 May 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 11 June 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 5 January 1912: 4.

the display items were taken from the Newfoundland Museum, where Howley assembled and prepared the exhibits for shipping.¹³⁷

The most popular exhibit was that of the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Co. In addition to the immense painting of Grand Falls, the company submitted a scale model of the town and created a working model of a paper machine that was operated at set times throughout the day.¹³⁸ These models were displayed alongside photographs, samples of pulpwood, rolls of finished paper, and even a replica logging camp installed against the court's southernmost wall.¹³⁹

Newfoundland's interior also figured prominently in a series of displays designed to lure sportsmen and tourists to the island. To advertise the country's railway, the Reid Newfoundland Co. erected a kiosk inside the pavilion which they decorated with caribou heads.¹⁴⁰ More stags' heads were hung from the walls and columns inside the building and a family of caribou (with heads attached) was installed in a large mahogany case. Other cases brimmed with stuffed trout and salmon. And a diorama showed a typical Newfoundland sporting camp, complete with little rods and baskets of fish, located on the edge of a placid lake and surrounded by sylvan forest scenery.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ From the museum, Howley sent minerals, metals, pictures and paintings, seal skin products, and a collection of Beothuck artefacts. "Inventory of Specimens Packed for the Festival of Empire Exhibit, London," File MG 105.67, Box 2, JPHF-PANL; "Festival of Empire 1911, List of Things Sent from the Museum," File MG 105.67, Box 2, JPHF-PANL.

¹³⁸ *Evening Telegram*, 5 January 1912: 4.

¹³⁹ In 1910, the Anglo-Newfoundland Company sent a "logging outfit" to London to erect a camp on the grounds of the Crystal Palace. But this scheme was abandoned after the festival was postponed. *Evening Telegram*, 13 April 1910: 5.

¹⁴⁰ A. H. Seymour was commissioned by the Reid Newfoundland Co. to oversee the company's exhibit and establish a permanent, Information Bureau in London to attract sportsmen, immigrants, and tourists to Newfoundland. *Harbor Grace Standard*, 31 March 1911: 1.

¹⁴¹ *Evening Telegram*, 19 March 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 20 April 1910: 6.

Fishery products were carefully relegated to the background.¹⁴² A model of a fishing village was produced for the festival and a small retinue of model ships, fish oils, tinned goods, and seal skins were sent to London.¹⁴³ Several stuffed seals were also displayed atop stands draped in white fabric. However, these exhibits paled in comparison to the rest. Even Howley admitted that “where we were really behind was in our natural history exhibits, especially in our staple, the fisheries. Whether it was lack of energy on the part of those who had this section in hand or not, it certainly did not reflect much credit upon us, and as an exhibit of our great fishing industries it was a most discreditable one.”¹⁴⁴

Organizers were thrilled when Newfoundland’s pavilion was among the only ones ready in time for the festival opening on May 12. However, feelings of superiority soon gave way to anxious worrying over whether the country’s exhibits would receive their share of the international limelight in London.¹⁴⁵ Indeed, fear of comparison weighed heavily on the minds of colonial elites. Local newspapers, for example, voiced concerns early on over whether Newfoundland would be able to “stand the light of comparison with the courts of more opulent Dominions of the Empire.”¹⁴⁶ These fears were renewed as the festival’s opening drew nearer. After previewing the New Zealand and Canadian exhibits, Morris sent a hurried dispatch to St. John’s calling for the display of more food and industrial products, prompting several last minute additions to Newfoundland’s court.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Organizers also considered erecting a Newfoundland-themed restaurant at the festival to help advertise the fishery, but this scheme was quickly abandoned. *Evening Telegram*, 11 May 1910: 4.

¹⁴³ William Job to J. Outerbridge, 12 January 1912, File MG 105.38, Box 1, JPHF-PANL; Job Brothers to J. Outerbridge, 19 April 1911, File MG 105.38, Box 1, JPHF-PANL; *Evening Telegram*, 19 April 1910: 4; *Evening Telegram*, 4 April 1911: 5.

¹⁴⁴ James P. Howley to Arthur Mews, Jan 1913, File MG 105.41, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

¹⁴⁵ *Evening Telegram*, 10 May 1911: 5.

¹⁴⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 19 April 1910: 4.

¹⁴⁷ *Evening Telegram*, 10 May 1910: 4.

The Festival of Empire was a financial failure. However, Morris declared Newfoundland's participation to be a glowing success owing to its advertisement value to the colony. Having visited Newfoundland's court on several occasions, Morris alone claimed to have spoken to over a thousand people about the capabilities and resources of the island whilst in London.¹⁴⁸ Newfoundland's exhibits also received a modest amount of attention in the press and the country earned a grand prix for a display of slate, granite, and marble.¹⁴⁹ At the conclusion of the festival, Newfoundland's exhibits were transferred to the Imperial Institute for permanent display in a large court leased by the government.¹⁵⁰

Encountering the Interior in Wembley

If the Festival of Empire provoked unease about Newfoundland's ability to stand the light of comparison at internationals, the British Empire Exhibition brought these feelings to an unpleasant zenith. In 1922, a British delegation led by Major Ernest Belcher embarked on a world tour to enlist the cooperation of governments in staging a colonial exhibition. However, the campaign caused a stir when the Major produced a series of reports criticizing the political and economic organization of several member states. Colonial elites reacted swiftly to this unwanted adjudication. In St. John's, the Major's report was denounced as "grotesquely absurd" and the Major accused of acting the part of "an untutored and indiscreet spy."¹⁵¹ But the damage

¹⁴⁸ *Western Star*, 22 May 1912: 4.

¹⁴⁹ *Harbor Grace Standard*, 6 October 1911: 4.

¹⁵⁰ Wyndham Dunstan to James P. Howley, 22 November 1911, File MG 105.41, Box 1, JPHF-PANL.

¹⁵¹ Richard A. Squires to Victor Gordon, 17 February 1923, File GN 8.108, Richard Anderson Squires sous fonds, OMPF-PANL.

was done. Ironically, the ensuing scandal proved doubly effective at galvanizing support for the exhibition. Many saw it as an opportunity to restore the dominion's tarnished reputation.¹⁵²

The British Empire Exhibition embodied a yearning for prewar stability. According to Daniel Stephen, exhibition organizers attempted to “revive memories of imperial self-confidence and collaboration by looking past more recent history to memories of mid-Victorian times.”¹⁵³ The British Empire Exhibition was the first London-based exhibition to be held since the First World War. It also came on the heels of a sharp, deflationary recession in 1920-21. In the aftermath of a bloody, global conflict and amid worsening economic news, exhibition organizers encouraged a return to imperial values, promoting trade and cooperation among British states, and reinforcing notions of Anglo superiority.

Imperial values were clearly expressed in the design of the exhibition grounds which highlighted the importance of cultural and racial hierarchies in ordering the empire. Stretching out over 200 acres, the exhibition site was bisected by a grand boulevard that led from the north entrance to the Empire Stadium. This boulevard was flanked the fair's most impressive structures: the British Palace of Engineering and Palace of Industry, as well as the pavilions of the two largest dominions, Canada and Australia. A transverse park and meandering lake cut across the boulevard at its midpoint, creating a cruciform plan. At the ends of this secondary axis sat the pavilions of India and New Zealand. Crown colonies and dependencies were relegated to the exhibition's periphery, along with other novelties and attractions (Fig. 5.9).

The materialization of imperial values in the exhibition layout also complicated Newfoundland's redemption. Newfoundland was the only self-governing dominion relegated to

¹⁵² Newfoundland was not alone in attracting the Major's ire. In his report on New Zealand, for example, Belcher criticized the dominion's ill-equipped hotels, the large debt burden of its farmers, and the relation of capital to labour in the country. “New Zealand Criticised” (newspaper clipping, *The Financier*, n.d.), File GN 8.108, Richard Anderson Squires sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

¹⁵³ Stephen, 57.

a site on the eastern edge of the fairgrounds, next to the amusement park, and where it sat among the ranks of Fiji, British Guiana, and the West Indies.¹⁵⁴ Newfoundland's placement within the fairgrounds appeared to consign the country to the margins of the empire. Nevertheless, Newfoundland's organizers felt that the site would have a positive effect on their country's visibility and reception in London. Despite the lack of symbolic capital in their site, organizers pointed happily to the nearby railway station, bandstand, several restaurants, and horticultural display. Also neighbouring Newfoundland's pavilion was the British government building, an imposing stone structure that loomed over the eastern fair grounds.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ In 1924, a list of dominions included Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Newfoundland, South Africa, and the Irish Free State. The granting of dominion status to these former colonies reflected a trend towards greater self-government within the empire. The war had stimulated nationalist sentiment throughout the colonies. And many member states earned international recognition by attending the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and, later, by serving as members of the League of Nations. At the same time, British-led efforts to encourage diplomatic unity among member states were seriously challenged during the early 1920s. This led to the Balfour Declaration of 1926 which recognized the Dominions as "autonomous Communities within the British Empire." See Robert MacGregor Dawson, *The Development of Dominion Status, 1900-1936* (London: F. Cass, 1965).

¹⁵⁵ Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 18 January 1924, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

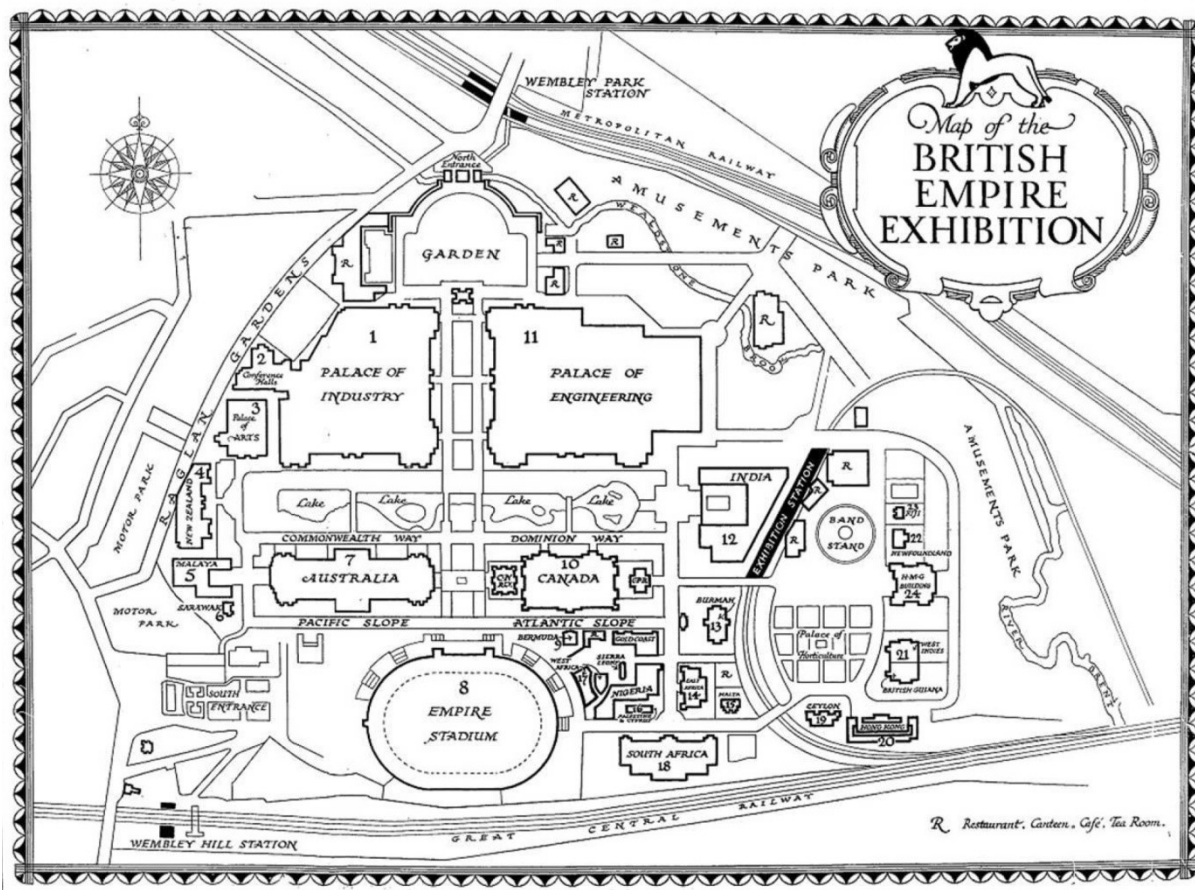


Fig. 5.9, Map of the British Empire Exhibition, 1924. *The British Empire Exhibition 1924: Official Guide* (London: Fleetway Press, 1924), n.p.

Not surprisingly, architectural classicism was a recurrent motif at an exhibition designed to usher a return to prewar solidarity. Newfoundland's pavilion was a chaste classical building designed by the exhibition's official architect, John William Simpson. Committee members were pleased with the design of the pavilion, arguing that it bore a loose resemblance to Government House in St. John's. The pavilion's neo-classical design also unified it with those of the other self-governing dominions, as well as British buildings at the exhibition. Unlike crown colonies whose pavilions affirmed their racial otherness—including a carved teak pavilion with seven spires representing Burma and an ersatz Indian bazaar—Newfoundland's pavilion attested to the country's British pedigree.

Settlement literature at the British Empire Exhibition also reinforced imperial hierarchies, while drawing attention to the environmental basis of the empire's order. Faced with soaring unemployment, a stagnant national economy, and government retrenchment during the early 1920s, British authorities looked to emigration as a way to lift their country out of recession. Likewise, the war had underscored the importance of forging the empire into a self-reliant, economic unit as a matter of national security.¹⁵⁶ In the aftermath of this major conflict, British authorities sought to increase production and trade throughout the empire by redistributing Britain's domestic population overseas.¹⁵⁷ One of the exhibition's stated objectives was to "encourage overseas settlement within the frontier of the Empire," with a view to improving its "unlimited but not yet developed resources."¹⁵⁸

In particular, settlement literature highlighted how the natural environment was a key to attracting (or repelling) trade, emigration, and investment to the colonies. At the Oversea Settlement Gallery, for example, instructional pamphlets presented visitors with the following argument:

Whilst the British Empire contains vast territories which are well suited for permanent settlement by the British race, much of these territories is not effectively peopled and developed. Its white population is still mainly concentrated in [the British Isles]. The reason for this inequality in the distribution of the white population is not that the Dominions are not suitable for white settlement. On the contrary, both in climate and in natural resources, they offer attractions to the settler from Great Britain.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Anne Orde, *British Policy and European Reconstruction after the First World War* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 7-8.

¹⁵⁷ Keith Williams, "'A Way out of Our Troubles': The Politics of Empire Settlement, 1900-1922," in *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions between the Wars*, ed. Stephen Constantine (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 22-44. Emigration was not a novel solution in dealing with British domestic crises. Sixteenth-century writers, for example, promoted agricultural settlement in Ireland as way to absorb England's excess population, including the belief that tillage would prevent colonists' barbarous regression. David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 49-50.

¹⁵⁸ Quoted in Mackenzie, 111.

¹⁵⁹ *The British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, 1924, Oversea Settlement Gallery*, (London: Oversea Settlement Department of the Colonial Office, [1924]), 4.

The gallery guide made two points clear. Firstly, that white Britishers—and white Britishers alone—were the most capable improvers. Authorities believed that relocating Britain’s white population would bring undeveloped resources under production, create new markets for British manufactures, and deliver civilization and progress to the far reaches of the world. Indeed, appeals for Anglo settlement were a constant din at the settlement gallery. Population statistics highlighted the agency of white settlers and labourers. In measuring the value of British exports to the colonies, for example, only purchases by whites were tabulated. Statistics for South Africa were even withheld on the basis that it was impossible to distinguish between white and native purchases in that country.

Secondly, in citing climate and natural resources as evidence that the dominions were suited to white settlement, the gallery guide promoted the belief that certain landscapes were more useful than others in advancing British economic and cultural interest. Consequently, settlement promotions were rarely a credit to Newfoundland. One pamphlet, for example, listed livestock, sugar, fruit, wheat, cotton, tobacco, wood, and “every commodity that comes from the soil” as expandable resources within the empire.¹⁶⁰ The only mention of fish was in a section on “foodstuffs in cans and bottles.”¹⁶¹ Trade statistics also showed that Newfoundland contributed the least economic activity “per head of white population,” compared to Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.¹⁶²

Similar messages were embedded in an architectural frieze lining the settlement gallery’s walls. One segment of the frieze, for example, used three figures on horseback to illustrate how an imbalance existed between agricultural productivity and the distribution of the empire’s

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 9.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁶² Ibid., 30.

population (Fig. 5.10). It compared Britain's present situation to an oversized rider perched upon a tiny steed, asking rhetorically: "is this a wise distribution of population within our empire?" Agricultural landscapes were thus among those poised to contribute to the spread of British civilization and its whitening influence. Other parts of the frieze emphasized the urgency of white settlement by pointing out that the empire possessed enough arable land to become entirely self-supporting if Britain's population were redistributed. Statistics showed that France alone possessed nearly twice as many white agricultural workers as Britain and her dominions combined. They also revealed that the density of whites throughout the empire was only a third of that in the United States, on a per square mile basis.¹⁶³

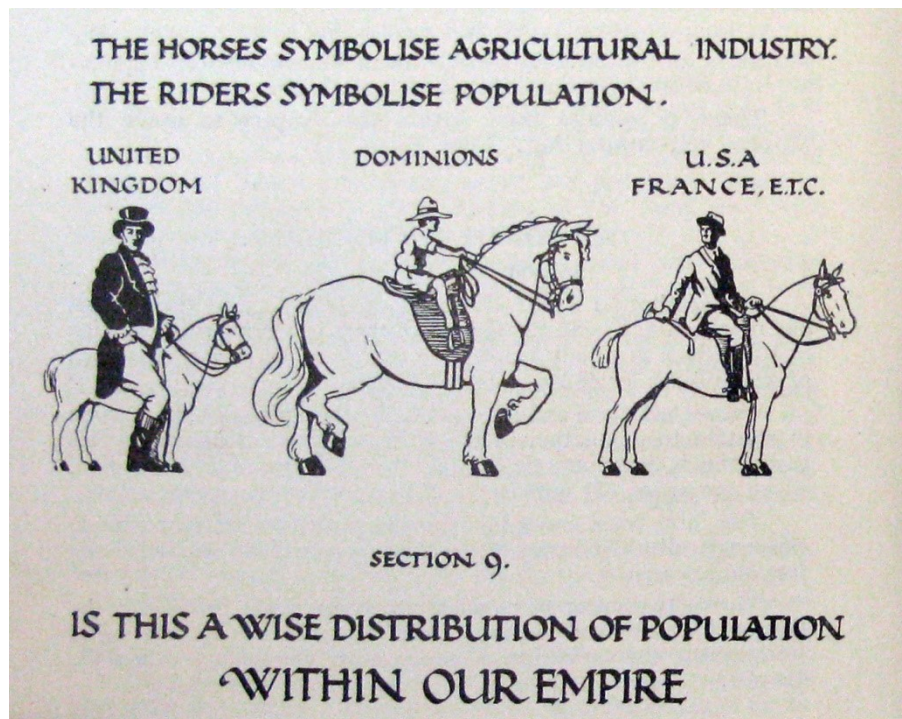


Fig. 5.10, Agricultural Industry and Population Contrasted. *The British Empire Exhibition, Wembley, 1924, Oversea Settlement Gallery* (London: Oversea Settlement Department of the Colonial Office, [1924]), 8.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 5.

The exhibition grounds also encouraged the movement of white settlers from Britain to the colonies. Exhibition authorities promoted economic development and white settlement by picturing the empire as a vast extension of the temperate landscape of Northern Europe. Built upon the “hilly, well-wooded ground” of Wembley Park, gardens, waterways, and horticultural displays cohered the colonies into an imperial landscape, unified through its appeal to British viewers, and out of which the resources and manufactures of the empire appeared to blossom. A litany of gardeners oversaw the arrangement of the exhibition grounds. The site was dotted with trees and contained an artificial river and lake, as well as some 30 acres of gardens and flower beds. Dominions and colonies also created landscapes as part of their displays. Many colonial gardens featured tropical and sub-tropical plants, but others—like Canada’s—were planted with trees and shrubs representative of the country’s “wide range of climate.”¹⁶⁴ Botanical displays were also incorporated in the horticultural section of the exhibition, where “leading British nurserymen” assembled clipped hedges, trees, lawns, and flowering borders into a prototypical English landscape, complete with miniature orchard and kitchen garden.¹⁶⁵

Similarly, Newfoundland’s exhibits testified to their country’s environmental fitness by focusing attention on the island’s interior. Newfoundland’s representation was overseen by two committees, one in St. John’s and one in London. Despite the Premier’s insistence that the exhibition was not a government affair, the ranks of both committees soon swelled to include a number of political figures and influential business leaders.¹⁶⁶ In London, for example, committee meetings were attended by former public servants, including Edward Morris and

¹⁶⁴ *The British Empire Exhibition, 1924, Official Guide*, (London: Fleetway Press, 1924), 103.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

¹⁶⁶ In 1923, the St. John’s committee was comprised of Leonard Outerbridge, Robert B. Job, William G. Gosling, Tasker Cook, Eric A. Bowring, Charles O’Neil Conroy, and Marmaduke G. Winter, among others. Newfoundland Board of Trade to William Warren. 31 August 1923, File GN 2.24.1, OCSF-PANL; Minutes of a special meeting of the Newfoundland Board of Trade, 11 September 1923, File GN 2.24.1, OCSF-PANL.

Patrick McGrath, as well as the heads of several English firms with economic interests in Newfoundland.¹⁶⁷ Committee members were unanimous in their belief that by making “special features” out of the island’s forest, mineral, and water resources, Newfoundland’s display would appeal to British capitalists and cause money to flow towards the island’s interior.¹⁶⁸ One of their first requests was that only British timber be used to construct Newfoundland’s pavilion, in the secret hope that by supplying some of their own they could render the pavilion more of a credit to the colony.¹⁶⁹ They also discouraged exhibits that reflected poorly on the country’s culture and climate. In discussing a display of woollens and crafts made by patients of the Grenfell Mission hospitals in Labrador, for example, the London committee remarked plainly that “it would not be beneficial to the Colony to lay too much stress on Esquimaux and icebergs.”¹⁷⁰

At the same time, Newfoundland’s organizers attempted to mirror the exhibition’s landscape by extending their display onto the surrounding site.¹⁷¹ They believed that by making the pavilion’s grounds into a feature, the artificial landscape would reflect positively on the island’s own. The pavilion’s grounds were soon transformed into an imaginary portrait of the island’s interior, complete with a salmon pool and sportsman’s camp, a display of heavy timber, and a logging camp with rustic log cabin.¹⁷² One final suggestion was made to erect a copy of the

¹⁶⁷ Also in attendance at the first meeting of the London committee were: Walter Warren (the current Prime Minister), Marmaduke G. Winter, F. C. Bowring, Brian Dunfield, E. A. Sursham, W. McGuinness, and J. Scott. Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 10 October 1923, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL. The committee was later joined by Harry D. Reid and Edgar R. Bowring, among others.

¹⁶⁸ Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 18 January 1924, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

¹⁶⁹ Victor Gordon to William Warren, 30 August 1923, File GN 2.24.6, OCSF-PANL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 31 October 1923, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

¹⁷⁰ Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 4 January 1924, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

¹⁷¹ Demand for display space inside the country’s pavilion was overwhelming. By November 1923, a preliminary list of displays totalled more than 7,000 square feet, more than twice the amount of available floor space. It was partly on account of this demand that organizers proposed extending Newfoundland’s display into the surrounding site. Victor Gordon to Walter F. Rendell, 16 November 1923, File GN 2.24.9, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁷² Victor Gordon to Walter F. Rendell, 16 November 1923, File GN 2.24.9, OCSF-PANL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 10 October 1923, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 30 November 1923, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

recently cast bronze caribou in Beaumont Hamel and to decorate the grounds with live ferns and evergreens imported from Newfoundland.¹⁷³ The committee invited Rudolf Cochiuș to make recommendations on the layout of the pavilion's grounds.¹⁷⁴ In a two page report, Cochiuș advised the committee on the placement of the caribou statue and on how to create a suitable setting for the log cabin by planting evergreens interspersed with a few stumps, "to give the effect of the Cabin having been built in the Camp itself."¹⁷⁵ Forestry experts, however, quickly pointed out the folly of transplanting live trees to London. And faced with staggering cost of £2,000 to construct the salmon pool alone (Newfoundland's pavilion had cost just £5,000) in the end the grounds were simply turfed and planted with vegetation "typical of Newfoundland."¹⁷⁶

Presided over by a large, bronze caribou perched atop an earthen mound and surrounded by miniature evergreens, Newfoundland's landscape at Wembley was a miserable substitute for the real thing (Fig. 5.11). Nevertheless, organizers boasted in *The Times* that the pavilion's grounds "call to mind the splendid forests of Newfoundland."¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Walter F. Rendell to Victor Gordon, 24 November 1923, File GN 2.24.6, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁷⁴ Cochiuș was in France at the time overseeing completion of the Beaumont Hamel memorial. Victor Gordon to Walter F. Rendell, 27 November 1923, File GN 2.24.9, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁷⁵ Rudolph H. Cochiuș, "Report on the Newfoundland Site at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley,," n.d., File GN 2.24.13, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁷⁶ Victor Gordon to Walter F. Rendell, 22 February 1924, File GN 2.24.6, OCSF-PANL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 30 November 1923, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

¹⁷⁷ *The Times* (London), 23 April 1924: xv.



Fig. 5.11, View of caribou statue and landscaping outside Newfoundland pavilion, ca. 1925 (Photo: Campbell McPherson). Item 9.01.004, Campbell McPherson collection (Coll-375), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

The theme of reconstructed nature was repeated inside Newfoundland's pavilion, where organizers attempted to evoke an authentic encounter with the island's interior. The pavilion's floor was covered in green and buff linoleum, calling to mind a forest floor. Display cases were draped with dark brown velvet to conceal the overhead lighting. And in 1925, blue silk was hung from beneath the pavilion's skylights to simulate the sky above (Fig. 5.12).¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁸ The green linoleum was replaced in 1925 with an earthy-looking, buff colour owing to concerns about its cleanliness. Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 4 March 1924, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL; Walter F. Rendell to Victor Gordon, April 1924, File GN 2.24.6, OCSF-PANL; initially, organizers had hoped to cover the entire ceiling in blue valerium but, in the end, beaver board panels were installed between the skylights. Draft Minutes of the London Advisory Committee, 15 July 1925, File GN 2.24.1, OCSF-PANL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 26 March 1925, File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL; the number of electric fixtures in the pavilion was also doubled and the walls painted rose in preparation for the 1925 exhibition season. Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, n.d., File 11, Box 17, NBTF-PANL.

Exhibits also steered visitors' attention towards economic and recreational opportunities in the island's interior. Newfoundland's pavilion was a profusion of wildlife, minerals, timber, and scenery. Over 130 stuffed animals were installed in display cases or suspended from the pavilion's walls, including caribou and moose, bobcats, beavers, seals, and some 40 different varieties of birds. Specimens ranged from trophies to life-size creatures whose gaze met visitors head on.¹⁷⁹ Photographs and paintings featuring inland scenery also decorated the walls. Among these were several photographs borrowed from the museum, featuring views on the Humber River, salmon fishing in the interior, and the Log Cabin at Spruce Brook.¹⁸⁰ To this were added a series of display cases enumerating the island's mineral resources. Logs cut from different species of tree were labelled and bedded in moss; souvenir boxes of wood pulp were laid out for visitors to take home; and preserved fruits and vegetables were stacked into an imposing pyramidal display. These and other thematic displays were overseen by one of four sub-committees.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Many of these specimens were drawn from the museum collection in St. John. List of Specimens Selected from Museum, n.d., File GN 2.24.7, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸⁰ List of Pictures Taken from Museum for British Empire Exhibition, n.d., File GN 2.24.7, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸¹ Four sub-committees oversaw the design of displays pertaining to agriculture and wild fruits; game and inland fisheries; photographs and pictures; and books, maps, and stamps. A fifth committee oversaw exhibits pertaining to the fishing industry. The design of industry-specific displays was entrusted to business leaders.



Fig. 5.12, Interior of Newfoundland pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition, ca. 1925 (Photo: Campbell McPherson). Item 9.01.032, Campbell McPherson collection (Coll-375), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.



Fig. 5.13, Mineral display and Newfoundland Power and Paper Company exhibit, ca. 1925 (Photo: Campbell McPherson). Item 9.01.019, Campbell McPherson collection (Coll-375), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

Newfoundland's traditional economy also commanded a visible presence in Wembley. Nearly all of the fishery's products were advertised. Stuffed seals were perched on fake icebergs and an artificial aquarium was built to display stuffed fish. A series of models also captured scenes of daily life in a traditional Newfoundland fishing village, on the Grand Banks, and at the annual seal hunt. Many of these displays were paid for by St. John's fish merchants. The Bowring Brothers display alone occupied a full 30 square feet, while Munn's famous cod liver oil was displayed alongside a machine used to extract the nutritious tonic.¹⁸² Other manufacturing capabilities were showcased in the form of rope, fishing nets and lines, woollens, paints, and oils.¹⁸³

Still, land-based industries dominated Newfoundland's display. Although more than half of Newfoundlanders were engaged in fishing, fishery-related exhibits occupied a mere sixth of the pavilion's floor space.¹⁸⁴ The rest was dedicated to tourism, agriculture, mining, and two commanding displays submitted by the paper companies in Grand Falls and Corner Brook (Fig. 5.13). In reality, just three per cent of Newfoundlanders were engaged in lumbering and one per cent in mining. Four per cent of Newfoundlanders identified as agriculturalists and a mere two per cent worked in factories.¹⁸⁵

In their zeal to promote the island's landscape, organizers' imagination was prone to run amok. In November 1923, members of the Newfoundland agricultural board were surprised to receive a request for several quarts of oats, wheat, and barley for display in Wembley. They

¹⁸² Eric A. Bowring to Walter F. Rendell, 19 January 1925, File GN 2.24.5, OCSF-PANL; Walter F. Rendell to Bowring Brothers Ltd., 13 February 1925, File GN 2.24.5, OCSF-PANL; "A Million Visitors" (newspaper clipping, *The Times*, 22 May 1924), File GN 2.24.3, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸³ Victor Gordon, "Newfoundland" (newspaper clipping, *Field*, 24 April 1924), scrapbook, "Dominion of Newfoundland, Wembley," 1924-25, File GN 2.24.15, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸⁴ Out of a total of 3,600 square feet of floor space, fishery exhibits occupied just 600 square feet (with an additional 300 square feet reserved for the Grenfell Association's mission work in Labrador).

¹⁸⁵ These figures are for the year 1921. Alexander, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," 28.

reminded organizers that the season for produce in Newfoundland was long over and of the island's "unfavourableness to general agricultural" owing to its cold climate and short growing season.¹⁸⁶ Likewise, when the King enquired with amazement how such a large quantity of trees cut for pulp and paper were ever "made up," an overzealous attendant explained to him that reforestation was unnecessary in Newfoundland owing to the "continuous self-propagation of the trees."¹⁸⁷ McGrath's statement in *The Times* was the apogee of these delusions.

Newfoundland's traditional economy was overshadowed in promotional media and the press as well. Authors reserved their highest praise for Newfoundland's burgeoning new industries, not to mention its star attraction: a prize-winning Newfoundland dog that capered across the pavilion's front lawn to the delight of visitors.¹⁸⁸ Of the 54 dominions and colonies to participate at Wembley, Newfoundland would have little qualm with the amount of media interest in their display. *The Times* thought the country's exhibit offered "as good an idea of the region and its people as could be given in a single building."¹⁸⁹ And one writer for the *Graphic* chastised Britons for whom "the word 'Newfoundland' calls to the mind a fog-bound iron-coasted island," calling attention to the country's picturesque scenery, green fields, and paper mills, "set in the heart of a well-wooded, well-watered countryside."¹⁹⁰ Attendance at

¹⁸⁶ Newfoundland Agricultural Board to Walter F. Rendell, 16 November 1923, File GN 2.24.12, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸⁷ "2,000 Guests at the State Ball, Wonderful Scene, Two Kings and Two Queen's at Wembley" (newspaper clipping, *Daily Mail*, 15 May 1924), File GN 2.24.15, OCSF-PANL; D. James Davies to Leonard Outerbridge, 15 May 1924, File GN 2.24.2, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸⁸ "Newfoundland's Dog" (newspaper clipping, *The Morning Post*, 22 April 1924), scrapbook, "Dominion of Newfoundland, Wembley," 1924-25, File GN 2.24.15, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁸⁹ "Newfoundland's Display" (newspaper clipping, *The Times* [weekly edition], 22 May 1924), Scrapbook, "Dominion of Newfoundland, Wembley, 1924-1925," File GN 2.24.15, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁹⁰ "North: Newfoundland and New Zealand: South" (newspaper clipping, *Graphic*, 24 May 1924), Scrapbook, "Dominion of Newfoundland, Wembley, 1924-1925," File GN 2.24.15, OCSF-PANL.

Newfoundland's pavilion seemed equally promising, with reports suggesting that every fortnight a population equal to that of the entire island passed through the country's court.¹⁹¹

It was not all roses for Newfoundland. In a five page letter to the Colonial Secretary, Reverend Gordon Elliot complained that he was indignant after seeing the country's dirty and moth eaten displays. Elliott's letter struck a nerve in St. John's. In particular, organizers were alarmed by Elliott's claim that his comments were inspired by "a comparison with what other Colonies situated similarly to [Newfoundland] were doing."¹⁹² By way of response, organizers sent a nine page letter to the Prime Minister defending their efforts in Wembley. In the same breath, they charged that critics were simply picking holes in a larger project whose overall effect was indisputably positive, then urged him to recall the limited sum of money which his government had placed at the committee's disposal.¹⁹³

In particular, Elliott's letter highlights how exhibitions influenced participants' representation by encouraging their comparison, both against each other, and against a universalizing British progress narrative. By focusing on their country's record of land-based development, Newfoundland's organizers invited comparison between their display and those of the other dominions. However, the light of comparison was unkind to Newfoundland, drawing attention to the illusory nature of its national policy. This sensitive question was broached in 1924 when an attendant at Newfoundland's pavilion observed how "some of our own people visit Canada, which is magnificent, and where millions have been spent, and then come to our pavilion to criticize."¹⁹⁴ Both countries attempted to woo British audiences in Wembley by highlighting the economic and cultural value of their landscapes. Yet Canada's showing was

¹⁹¹ "Newfoundland" (newspaper clipping, *Manchester Guardian Commercial*, 16 October 1924), Scrapbook, "Dominion of Newfoundland, Wembley, 1924-1925," File GN 2.24.15, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁹² Gordon Elliott to Colonial Secretary, 8 November 1924, File GN 2.24.2, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁹³ Leonard Outerbridge to W. S. Monroe, 18 November 1924, File GN 2.24.3, OCSF-PANL.

¹⁹⁴ D. James Davies to Leonard Outerbridge, 7 May 1924, File GN 2.24.2, OCSF-PANL.

more spectacular. Whereas Newfoundland's participation had cost just \$50,000, Canada had spent close a million dollars to create an exhibit that was nearly 30 times larger than Newfoundland's. The Canadian pavilion featured dramatic rocky mountain scenery, a working model of Niagara Falls, and a silver nugget weighing over 4,400 pounds. And unlike Newfoundland's railway which was nationalized in 1923 to avert bankruptcy, Canada's leading railway companies—the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National—built separate pavilions flanking Canada's own. The Canadian government even sent mounted police to regale school children with tales of cattle rustling and criminals.¹⁹⁵ Newfoundland's mascot was a dog.

Pageantry and Progress

Exhibitions were also an opportunity to convey a triumphalist reading of the colony's historical development, as theorized by contemporary writers. Prowse's *History of Newfoundland* is typical of this genre. In 1895, he published the first comprehensive history of Newfoundland since the Reverend Charles Pedley's 1863 book of the same name. Covering the period from 1497 to the modern day, Prowse's *History* depicted Newfoundland's development as a struggle between beleaguered settlers and a slew of oppressive West Country merchants and ignorant law-makers in London who saw the island as a "mere fishing station."¹⁹⁶ Prowse faulted English lawmakers and merchants for Newfoundland's chronic underdevelopment, arguing that legal barriers to settlement had stifled the colony's progress by discouraging investment and causing the "wealth of the sea" to obscure the importance of "other resources" in Newfoundland.¹⁹⁷ According to his

¹⁹⁵ Anne Clendinning, "Exhibiting a Nation: Canada at the British Empire Exhibition, 1924-1925," *Social History* 39, no. 77 (2006): 79-108.

¹⁹⁶ Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records*, 383.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 629. In 1895, Prowse was primarily interested in how the railway and steamship services would benefit the fishery by allowing merchants to deliver their product to market faster and supply higher priced frozen fish in lieu of the salted variety.

History, Newfoundland's underdevelopment was the result of mercantilist policy and not—as others claimed—the island's climate and geography.

To prove his point, Prowse showed how Newfoundland had prospered and flourished once legal obstacles to settlement were lifted and responsible government granted. He depicted the advent of steam shipping, the expansion of mining, and other developments as a capstone to Newfoundland's longer colonial history, the importance of which he also underlined by detailing trade between Newfoundland, Britain, and other British colonies in the Americas. "With her vast resources, her temperate climate, and her unique position," he wrote, "the future of this ill-used and down-trodden Colony should be brighter than it has been of yore."¹⁹⁸ He even portrayed the collapse of the banking system in 1894 as a cathartic event for Newfoundland. In Prowse's mind, the bank crash was symptomatic of poor lending practices in the fishery, including the truck system which he considered "a dishonest and degrading method of conducting trade" that encouraged "idleness and fraud on the part of the fishermen."¹⁹⁹ By forcing the government to wrest control of the banks away from the merchants and secure the colony's credit (a feat achieved through the hasty raising of several loans), the bank crash was depicted by Prowse as another rejuvenating episode in Newfoundland's modern history.

Prowse was not alone in promoting a conflict theory of development in Newfoundland. His book incorporated the views of many earlier writers, including Phillip Tocque and Harvey. However, the publication of Prowse's *History* in 1895 was a landmark event that brought nationalist narratives into the public mainstream. The granting of responsible government became a moment of historical sea change in the eyes of lawmakers, quashing—once and for

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., xxi.

¹⁹⁹ *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial, and Foreign Records*, 539.

all—the repressive effects of ill-advised British mercantilist policy, and making Newfoundland’s progress appear inevitable.

Prowse’s argument was repeated and updated by many subsequent writers, including McGrath. In arguing for greater economic and cultural ties between Newfoundland and Britain, McGrath highlighted the two countries’ historical co-dependence, while reiterating the belief that colonial laws were singularly responsible for Newfoundland’s arrested progress. Moreover, evidence of this specious apology now appeared in the form of a railway, paper mills, and settlements in the island’s interior. Newfoundland even appeared physically connected to Britain thanks to recent developments in transportation and communication. In addition to a regular steam ship service between Liverpool and St. John’s, the first trans-Atlantic cable was laid between western Ireland and Heart’s Content. Likewise, in 1901 the first transatlantic wireless message (the letter “s” in Morse Code) was received by Guglielmo Marconi at Signal Hill in St. John’s. In McGrath’s mind, these developments were evidence that Newfoundland was catching up to the industrial world, but also of Newfoundlanders growing affinity for British culture. In 1911, he reminded readers that the people of Newfoundland were “entirely of British stock” and argued that the “culture of the Mother country” was a fixture among colonial learned elites.²⁰⁰

Nationalist narratives were central to Newfoundland’s representation at international exhibitions. Both Prowse and McGrath helped shape Newfoundland’s representation at the Festival of Empire in 1911. And although Prowse died in 1914, McGrath was re-enlisted to oversee the production of literature and publicity at the British Empire Exhibition. In particular, pageants presented organizers with an opportunity to (literally) dramatize nationalist narratives, while artfully highlighting British bonds in Newfoundland. Pageant organizers recreated the

²⁰⁰ McGrath, *Newfoundland in 1911, Being the Coronation Year of King George V. And the Opening of the Second Decade of the Twentieth Century*, 205, 41.

teleology of progress sketched by modern writers, emphasizing Newfoundland's Anglo racial heritage, and using landscape to reinforce contemporary cultural and environmental ties to Northern Europe.

Newfoundland's introduction to pageantry was at the Festival of Empire in 1911. To mark the coronation of George V, a pageant was held in conjunction with the festival and was conceived as a celebration of Britain's historical progress. The Pageant of London was an immense public spectacle, re-enacting British history in spectacular form, from ancient time to the present. Scripted by a committee of London historians and directed by Frank Lascelles, the pageant was performed on a 50 acre portion of the Crystal Palace grounds, where several grandstands and scenic backdrops were built.²⁰¹ Blacksmiths created 20,000 pieces of armour to costume performers and seamstresses sewed a continuous, 600 foot long curtain for use as a backdrop for one scene. In total, the pageant involved nearly 15,000 performers and 1,000 cattle and horses.²⁰² The entire pageant took three days to perform, with different scenes acted out on a daily basis for three months during the summer of 1911.²⁰³

Newfoundland's role in the Pageant of London was a limited one. Other than the finale, the country's only appearance was during a re-enactment of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's 1583 voyage, during which he took possession of Newfoundland. Nevertheless, organizers spared no effort in preparing for the event. Lady Northcliffe served as chairman of the Newfoundland pageant committee and the Harmsworths' Daily Mail lent 35 members of their staff to serve as performers, since not enough Newfoundlanders were available in London. Music for the scene

²⁰¹ Pageant Offices Circular, 18 November 1909, File GN 8.19, Box 2, Edward Patrick Morris sous fonds, OPMF-PANL.

²⁰² *Evening Telegram*, 7 April 1910: 3.

²⁰³ *Evening Telegram*, 19 April 1911: 3.

was written in St. John's and arranged to the choral ode "Newfoundland" with words by Sir Cavendish Boyle.²⁰⁴

Scene I, Part IV, opened with a view of a solitary tent guarded by a herald and four men at arms. Upon the sounding of the herald, 40 sea-captains, masters, gentlemen, and soldiers entered the stage, surrounding the tent from which Sir Humphrey—attired in lace and velvet—eventually emerged. To this substantial gathering was added a large crowd of sailors and fishermen bearing the flags of different nationalities and, finally, a group of 20 Beothuck. At the conclusion of the scene, Gilbert ratified England's claim by reading a royal proclamation in front of the crowd, while a huge Royal Standard was unfurled and a Royal Arms set upon a stake driven into the ground.²⁰⁵ The Harmsworths' influence was more marked in the pageant's closing scene. In the grand finale, representatives from each colony gathered on the front lawn "to be welcomed in the Mother Country" and bestow gifts upon her, including wheat and fruit from Canada and gold and diamonds from Africa. Newfoundland came bearing two gifts: fishing nets and pulpwood – one a sign of the past, and one a sign of the future.²⁰⁶

Newfoundland played an unobtrusive role in the Pageant of London. However, the British Empire Exhibition presented the country with a different opportunity altogether. During the summer of 1924, twelve colonial pageants were held over a six week period at the Empire Stadium. Exhibition organizers invited each colony to write, design, and conduct their own pageant. The Pageant of Newfoundland was scripted and supervised by a ladies committee who acted on the advice of Newfoundland's London advisory committee and Frank Lascelles, the

²⁰⁴ *Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1911: 6.

²⁰⁵ Sophie C. Lomas, ed. *Festival of Empire: Book of the Pageant* (London: Bemrose & Sons, 1911), xviii, 132-33.

²⁰⁶ *Evening Telegram*, 28 February 1910: 3.

pageant master.²⁰⁷ It alone consisted of five acts and featured upwards of 2,000 elaborately costumed and choreographed performers.

Newfoundland's pageant opened with the discovery of the island by John Cabot in 1497. It then sketched the colony's development from its first permanent settlement to the granting of responsible government in 1855. At this point the pageant took a radical turn. A grandiose, final scene announced Newfoundland's industrial awakening and reaffirmed her close ties to Britain. With the first transatlantic cable in tow, performers made their way "ashore" at the center of the stadium, where a telegraph message was shortly received, causing onlookers to roar with delight. This was followed by a procession led by Marconi and his men who paraded around the arena with technical instruments held aloft. The attention of spectators was then drawn skywards as a powerful searchlight revealed a plane overhead. The plane circled, then dived and swooped over the stadium, marking the first successful trans-Atlantic flight from Trepassey to Plymouth.²⁰⁸ Organizers highlighted this historical turn of events in a final Thanksgiving show as well. The show marked the end of the colonial pageants and featured performers from the different colonies who toured round the stadium in their own specially decorated motor cars. Newfoundland's car was a crowded tableau. The car was decorated with fishing rods, baskets of fish, fir trees, and a full-size caribou. In the midst of this display stood Lady Newfoundland, dressed in blue and silver and beneath a coat of arms (Fig. 5.14).

²⁰⁷ Victor Gordon to Leonard Outerbridge, 6 September 1924, File GN 2.24.13, OCSF-PANL; Minutes of the Proceedings of the London Advisory Committee, 20 February 1924, File 11, Box 17, NBTF- PANL.

²⁰⁸ Sarah Knox, "The Pageant of Newfoundland" (unpublished manuscript, n.d.), File GN 2.24.13, OCSF-PANL.



Fig. 5.14, Scene from the Thanksgiving pageant showing Lady Newfoundland standing atop a car decorated with a caribou, fir trees, and baskets of fish, ca. 1924 (Photo: Campbell McPherson). Item 9.01.010, Campbell McPherson collection (Coll-375), Archives and Special Collections, Memorial University.

Internationals were clearly a two-way affair for Newfoundland. In an effort to spur their country's racial progress, colonial elites recreated specific features of the island's natural environment at exhibitions, revealing how colonial life was conducive to British economic interests and social norms. Indeed, exhibitions allowed colonial elites to transform their country with considerably greater ease than could be achieved within its own borders. However, exhibitions also encouraged this transformation by drawing the empire's self-governing dominions into a British narrative of upwards progress that accorded temperate landscapes a leading role. Exhibitions materialized the principle of a self-sufficient Greater Britain, multiplying and extending the natural environment of Northern Europe around the world. British authorities sustained a hegemonic vision of empire at exhibitions by compressing the empire's geography into a single, proximate representation of its landscape. In doing so, exhibitions simultaneously encouraged Newfoundland's leaders to conform their country to an imaginary landscape of empire.

Chapter 6 — Conclusion

Colonial elites described, pictured, and remade their country's landscape in order to create a society in Newfoundland that appeared culturally and environmentally similar to Britain. This was despite fundamental differences in their country's development and geography. Elites climatized Newfoundland in order to make their country fit within a British narrative of linear progress – a narrative in which western civilization appeared to have stemmed from the landscape of Northern Europe, and in which all other landscapes were theorized as inhibiting British economic, social, and sexual standards.

At the same time, Newfoundland's national policy highlights the dialectical nature of imperial environmental knowledge. In asserting the importance of European landscapes as a locus for Anglo-Saxon identities, British theorists reconfigured the relationship between metropolitan society and that of the colonies. Deterministic environmental beliefs spurred contempt towards regions of the empire whose divergent geographies were seen as causing regression among white settlers. Yet in Britain's oldest overseas colony, this derision cut both ways. Newfoundland revealed to observers how deterministic forces were unfolding in real time, as well as their greater risk to the political and economic security of the empire, and even to Britishers at home. Although Newfoundland was populated by Britishers for centuries, its society now appeared anachronistic in the light of western progress. Newfoundland showed how Anglo-Saxon identities were contingent on features of the natural world, as well as how Europeans could easily fall from their position of superiority if their environmental needs were ignored. This was a pressing realization as rising international competition undermined imperial strength abroad and as industrialization and commercialization transformed the British landscape at home.

This dissertation has explored some of the ways that this dialectic unfolded. My emphasis, however, has been on the colonial context. More work is needed to understand how colonial anxieties influenced metropolitan culture and its mentalities. Indeed, the vicissitudes of the North Atlantic granted Newfoundland special authority in shaping British debates over racial and cultural regression. By allowing theorists to visualize the slow but continual effects of regression over time, Newfoundland underlined the precarious nature of the colonial project and its environmental challenges. In particular, Newfoundland highlighted the need to preserve British Anglo identities by either replenishing the colonies at regular intervals with white settlers, or by developing and transforming colonial geographies themselves. Newfoundland drew attention to the fact that, like a botanical specimen or zoo animal lifted from its home, the British race needed regular upkeep in order to thrive in unfamiliar surroundings.

Climatizing was one such form of maintenance. But it was also an instrument for nation building in turn-of-the-century Newfoundland. Colonial elites believed that by creating environmental similarities between their island and Britain new landscapes would simultaneously create new, British citizens in Newfoundland. Physical and representational landscapes were designed to have a racially regenerative effect in Newfoundland, reviving fishing families' Anglo-Saxon characteristics. Elites believed that colonizing new temperate landscapes in the island's interior would improve Newfoundlanders material circumstances, banish their idleness, and instil them with moral virtues. Moreover, they believed that new landscapes would reinvigorate workers' masculinity and self-reliance by encouraging their contact with nature, while creating pathways to financial independence and political participation.

Re-theorizing Newfoundland's climate and geography also allowed colonial elites to recoup aspects of the island's racial heritage. Colonial elites credited the island's iron-bound coast and bracing climate with having created the stereotypical, resistant Newfoundlander. Likewise, despite the demoralizing effects of the fishery and its prejudicial economics, rural life was credited with preserving deep seated Anglo-Saxon virtues in its members, including a disciplined work ethic, the ability to make-do with the resources at hand, and an appreciation for frugal simplicity. Colonial elites believed that colonizing in the direction of the island's interior would preserve these Anglo racial characteristic, while transmuting them into new industrial occupations and progressive social settings. This was true of logging camps and their antecedent tilts, but also of agricultural landscapes, where self-help and cooperation were reinvented in the guise of modern economics. Indeed, the ability to blur history into modernity was a distinguishing feature of Newfoundland's national policy, recalling the central importance of time and linearity to Victorian conceptions of racial progress.

Underlying Newfoundland's national policy was a fundamental tension between the ambitions of elite leaders and the reality of everyday life in rural Newfoundland. Colonial elites were often alone in their belief that foreign capital and expertise would commute Newfoundland's British heritage into national economic and social wellbeing. And they rarely took into account the economic, social, or environmental circumstances of rural residents, not to mention their desires and concerns. Foremost in the minds of rural residents was the desire to earn a comfortable living, while strengthening their existing communities and enriching traditional ways of life. For the vast majority of families, this desire was linked to a successful fishery – an industry whose responsible management and modernization languished as lawmakers obsessed over industrial progress and landward migration. Indeed, Newfoundland's

national policy was an illusory project. Elite planning efforts were distinguished more by their failures than their successes. And unlike everyday life which was tangible and real, elitist ideas remained mostly political and abstract.

By relying on textual material, this study has highlighted the pervasiveness of British liberal ideology among elite circles in Newfoundland. A different approach would necessarily highlight the persistence of vernacular culture. However, in focusing on textual sources my intention is not to deemphasize the fleeting nature of Newfoundland's national policy or its untimely failure. Rather, this study has shown that traditional ways of life flourished within new landscapes. Activities like paper making replaced the merchant credit system with new industrial dependencies; mobilities in the forest industry heightened the seasonal insecurity of rural workers; and patterns of sustenance and self-reliance persisted—albeit in new forms—in lumber camps and in agricultural settlements. Likewise, despite lawmakers' efforts fishing remained an economic staple and a hub for social life throughout rural Newfoundland. Indeed, and as Mary Arnold discovered, the desires of fishing families remained an impervious undercurrent to reformist efforts during Newfoundland's independent period.

Newfoundland nationalism was enacted and contested at multiple scales. Traditional ways of life were a constant and destabilizing force within Newfoundland nationalism, counteracting the imposition of top down power. Even among colonial elites there was considerable disagreement over how best to bring about progress in Newfoundland. Politicians disagreed on how to balance public intervention with laissez-faire economics; on the extent to which the fishery could (or should) be modernized; and on the degree to which progressive policy should be equitably beneficial to all members of Newfoundland society.

At the same time, nested scales of governance and agency reveal how Newfoundland's national policy was haunted by anti-national and anti-imperial sentiment, detectable in the use, appropriation, and misrepresentation of its spaces. New landscapes were located squarely at the intersection of elite and working-class culture. They were sites of brooding class conflict and labour unrest. Although prefigured by a desire for progress and change, the island's landscape quickly became a complex matrix, where elite and working-class values intersected, and where ideas about modernity, progress, and nationhood were openly contested and reconfigured.

At base, *Climatizing Empire* adds to our understanding of how colonial racism was produced not simply through contact, but through interpretations of the natural world. Landscapes, physical and mental, represented and effected racial categories. Moreover, these racial categories were mutable owing to the mutability of the surrounding world. Deterministic theories impelled colonial elites to ameliorate their country's racial features by effecting environmental change. Physical and representational landscapes were an armature of constructive imperialism and its imperative of progress, aiding in the spread of Victorian virtues, and making the landscape of Northern Europe a locus for the reconstruction of geographies throughout the world.

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| | |
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| Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society | GFHS |
| Library and Archives Canada | LAC |
| London School of Economics, Archives and Special Collections | LSE |
| Memorial University, Archives and Special Collections | MUN |
| National Archives (U.K.) | NAUK |
| Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador | PANL |
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