

the

PRESENT
PAST FUTURE

Vol 4, No. 2, November 1977.

trident

THE COMMISSARIAT HOUSE OPENING

The official opening of the Commissariat House took place on July 16th, after 8 years of careful and detailed planning.

Federal, Indian and Northern Affairs Minister, Warren Allmand pulled the curtains unveiling a commemorative plaque, describing the history of the restored building. The Honourable T. V. Hickey, Minister of Tourism, turned the key, officially opening the Historic Site. The doors were finally opened. . . . A tour of the House, gardens and interpretation centre was next, followed by a reception at Cannon Wood Hall.

The History of the Commissariat House

Before 1946 a Commissariat was a branch or Division within the army providing troops with food and necessary supplies. From 1946 onwards, this same Division was renamed a Ministry, and the Commisar was the Minister.

Newfoundland's first introduction to soldiers began in 1662 with the landing of French troops in Placentia, from that time onwards fortifications were erected in the "prone to attack" areas of the Island as a safeguard to settlers. 50 years later, with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht, Britain placed the Island of Newfoundland under British control, but the landing of British troops and spasmodic attacks still continued.

In 1793, the appointment of a Commissar General first appeared and was followed in 1809 by a Commissariat Department. Within 20 years this Department employed 13 people.

The Commissariat House was built in 1818, on a piece of land then called the Barrens. It was to act partly as a residence for the Commissar, and partly as offices for the staff. This arrangement was to last for almost 50 years. In 1870 the British



The Hon. T.V. Hickey, Minister of Tourism; the Hon. Warren Allmand, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs; the Hon. T. Farrell, President of the Council.



The Dining Room

troops were withdrawn from North America and the Commissariat House was given to the Newfoundland Government.

St. Thomas's Church had been built next to the Commissariat House in 1936, and the Bishop of Newfoundland made overtures to the Government to lease the house and use it as a rectory for the church. This proposal was accepted and continued until 1917, when the Reverend Edgar Jones refused to live there, he said that the house was damp and cold, and unfit for human habitation. The building was inspected by the health authorities and condemned.

At the end of W.W.I an en-
(continued on page 3)

The trident

The Trident is a quarterly publication of The Newfoundland Historic Trust, P.O. Box 5542, St. John's.

Editor: Maria Bradshaw

Asst. Editor: Shannie Duff

Contributors to this issue: Bernard Agresti, Shannie Duff, Maria Bradshaw, Bev Miller, Shane O'Dea, Miss M. White, Mr. W. Dewey, Emelia Merkuratsuk, The Staff Western Regional Library.

Printed by Creative Printers.

Museums Around the Province. "What's New"

Durrell Museum. Still not open to the public, but they were successful in obtaining a grant from the National Museums of Canada. This will go towards their special exhibit depicting the history of their community. Lots of luck for next summer!

Trinity Museum. They look as though they have had a good year with lots of visitors. They received funding from the Young Canada Works Programme, for cataloguing their collections and Archival material.

Torbay Museum and Library. They seem to be doing well! They housed the Newfoundland museum travelling exhibit "Atlantic Cable" for three weeks during the summer.

Bonavista North Regional Museum. Alice Lacey certainly knows how to recruit volunteers! She has an excellent programme going, with almost 60 people giving up their spare time to assist with the museum in any possible way. Keep up the good work.

Placentia Area Historical Society. They also received funding from the Young Canada Works Programme for a museum project.

Twillingate Museum. A grant was received here to pay the salaries of students needed to look after the place and to assist with the cataloguing of artifacts.

Bonavista Museum. They are working on exhibits in general, and housed the Atlantic Cable exhibit for three weeks this summer.

Fishermen's Museum. A Young Canada Works Programme grant was received here for the cataloguing of artifacts and for work needed on exhibits.

Norma and Gladys Floating Museum. The Norma and Gladys had a very busy but successful summer, unfortunately for those who visited her last year, there were no surprises, her exhibit had not changed. Perhaps next year we can look forward to a new one!

On her tour of Newfoundland her first stop was Argentia, then onto Grand Bank where she stayed for 3 days and saw 4,500 visitors. Trepassey was next, then Valleyfield; from there on to Greenspond with a group of Architects of Historic Buildings. They were much impressed. Onto Trinity and back to St. John's, where she remained for the two weeks of the Summer Games. Morning tours took place on board for Summer Games Officials which were a great success. She then sailed to Halifax to attend the World Fishery Exhibition, which was held for the first time ever in Canada. On the opening day she sailed alongside the Bluenose II. On September 7th she sailed to Lunenburg for the Nova Scotia Fishery Exhibition and the Fishermen's reunion, once again with Bluenose II. She then sailed onto Prince Edward Isle and New Brunswick. Onto Corner Brook, Port

Aux Choix, L'Anse au Loop, St. Anthony, Carmenville and back home to St. John's. After her sojourn of the Atlantic Provinces, where she was so well received by one and all, she deserves her well earned rest over the winter months.

Finally, Good Luck to all concerned in the newly formed South West Coast Historical Society, in Port Aux Basques!

I would like to hear from any museum or Historical Society who have anything new or interesting to report, any projected new exhibits or plans for 1978, if they are in need of funding, etc. A photo of your museum building or of an exhibit would be appreciated. Please let me have them by the end of January for our next issue!

M. Bradshaw

Ancient Structure

Trade Review
May 28th, 1910

A house, that is being taken down half-way up Barnes Road, is amongst the oldest living structures in the city. Living memory cannot recall the date of its erection, but tradition says the house is nearly two hundred years old. The feature about the place that is most interesting, perhaps, is the fact that the timber in the building was cut and sawed on the ground on which the house stands. The original owner and builder of the dwelling was Mr. Patrick Gorman, a hardy Irishman, who built in the woods, as he thought when he erected his house so far North of the town waterfront. Mrs. Nellie Tappin, a sturdy lady, who lived fifty years ago, took a great interest in politics, and who was an unconscious suffragette, a century ahead of her time, was a granddaughter of old Mr. Gorman, and through her, the family traditions have been preserved and handed down.

(From the files of the Newfoundland Historical Society)

Apologies to Mr. Walter Peddle for omitting his name from the interesting article on "Outport Furniture" in our May Issue!

Atlantic Regional Council Meeting And Seminar On Heritage Conservation Areas, To Be Held In St. John's On October 21st and 22nd.

On October 21st., the Atlantic Regional Council of Heritage Canada will meet in St. John's. Created to foster communication among Heritage groups in the Atlantic Provinces, the Council is composed of delegates from groups which are members of Heritage Canada.

In conjunction with the meeting, a one day Seminar on Heritage Conservation Areas will be held on Saturday, October 22nd, in the Foran room at City Hall. The Seminar, which is open to the public will deal with the fundamentals of identifying and establishing Heritage Conservation Areas and also bring all members of the Regional Council and the public up to date on the status of Heritage Conservation Areas in the Atlantic Region.

The programme will consist of a varied format of talks and Panel discussions covering such topics as "Government and Heritage Conservation Areas", "The Community and Heritage Conservation Areas", "Creating a Heritage Conservation Area-----first steps" and "Update on Conservation Areas in the Atlantic Provinces, 1977."

Coffee breaks and discussion sessions following the various presentations will permit a free exchange of ideas and information.

The meeting and Seminar will be hosted jointly by the Newfoundland Historic Trust and the St. John's Heritage Foundation. The Saturday Seminar will begin at 9 a.m. The public and all members of the Newfoundland Historic Trust are welcome to attend any or all of the Seminar sessions.

Bev Miller.

BULL BAITING — took place at Quidi Vidi August, 1831. Repitition of exhibition forbidden by official notice.

WALKING RACE — From King's Bridge to Torbay and return, March 20th, 1960. A.O. Hayward, Thomas Mabin (won).



The Kitchen



Drawing Room



Guest Bedroom



Main Office

(continued from page 1)

terprising lady, Sophia Dansen rented the building to use as a nursing home at a low rental, on the condition that she would install a type of central heating system, she soon found however that the house was beyond hope, she could not dry out the dampness, neither could she keep her invalids warm during the long winter months, she relinquished her lease. It was then taken over by Dr. N. Fraser, who used the house as a children's hospital until 1921.

Even though this building had been condemned through complaints issued by the Rev. Jones, in 1921 he was obliged to move back into the house as there was no other accommodation available to him, it reverted back to St. Thomas's

Rectory and remained so until 1969.

It was then, 8 years ago, that this Georgian-like structure took on a new lease in life, the Provincial and Federal Governments decided to get together and work out a restoration project of one of the finest buildings remaining in St. John's. It now stands completed, an excellent example of our Vanishing Heritage.

The plans for renovating and furnishing this beautiful house meant many extra hours of hard work for the staff of the Historic Resources Division and for those involved on the Federal side. The results are what you see today. The exterior has been changed back to its original facades and the interior has

been decorated and furnished to the tones of the late Regency period of 1830.

The furniture nostalgically takes one back to the Chippendale, Hepplewhite and Sheraton days when carpenters and cabinet makers were truly craftsmen. Many items within tell their own story of Newfoundland, such as the Sheraton sideboard which once belonged to the first speaker of the House of Assembly, Sir John Bingley Garland, of Trinity Bay. Many of the tables and chairs, mirrors, paintings, etc., were once owned, cherished and used by Newfoundlanders, what better use could have been made of them? A number of these items have been restored and are now committed

to posterity. They are carefully tended and admired by one and all, they will remain so for many years to come as a reminder of a Heritage saved. No details have been omitted in the selection of authentic furniture and fabrics used for the decoration of each room. From the Hepplewhite four poster bed, with its rich chintzy drapes, to the silver candlesticks gracing the dining table. The kitchen indicates a way of life few could live with today, but in the early 19th century was considered modern and luxurious.

This is one of many such houses in North America, but the first of its kind in Newfoundland. Let us hope it will not be the last!

Maria Bradshaw

Photo credits — Historic Resources Division

Mary March Regional Museum

All one has to do is glance at the visitor's count since this museum opened in April, to find that the idea of a museum in Grand Falls was a great one from the day of its conception. Those hardworking individuals, who have achieved so much since the early stages, beginning with a simple display, limited to the culture of the Beothuk Indians, are to be commended and can now look on with pride! The response to the new building, its displays, and travelling exhibits has been enormous; 12,000 visitors in just over three months. One of the travelling exhibits, circulated by the Newfoundland Museum, was the Conquest of the Atlantic, a History of Pioneer TransAtlantic Aviation, from 1919 to 1939.

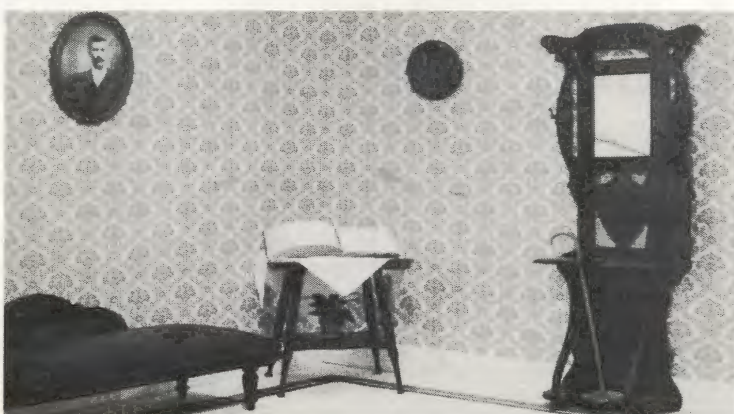
The museum received a Canada Works Programme grant, which paid the salaries of four students for the summer months. They helped assemble the Beothuk exhibit, catalogued artifacts and assisted with a new, locally produced exhibit: "Step into my Parlor." This exhibit portrays four rooms in a Newfoundland home at the turn of the century. All the furniture has been collected locally.

Some items have been loaned, some purchased and others donated by residents of the area. The exhibit opened on August 8th and is due to close on October 16th.

Programmes for the future include a temporary exhibition of an exquisite portrait of Mary March, painted by Lady Hamilton in 1820. It was be loaned for a short period of time by the Public Archives of Canada. Something to look forward to next summer will be an aural and visual exhibit, tracing the history of logging in Newfoundland. Thanks to a grant from the National Museums of Canada, someone has already been hired to interview many of the old-time loggers of the area, and highlights of their conversations will be recorded and used as part of the audio display. It is hoped that after a term at the Mary March Museum this exhibit will circulate throughout Newfoundland.

If time and finances permit, we can look forward to a newsletter from the museum next year.

Maria Bradshaw.



Letter Column

An abridged version of a letter from Mr. W. Dewey to Mr. Savage regarding "the little church by the side of the Road."

Dear Mr. Savage,

As one who spent sixteen years in Topsail after retirement from the Newfoundland Public Service in 1959, and actively connected with that Little Church, so familiarly known as "The Little Church by the Side of the Road," indeed with the help of the late Mr. Norman Butt, then Archivist of the United Church Conference, we prepared quite a Historic resume of the Wesleyan Methodist and the present building, from which such sources of information as Messrs. William Allen, George Fowler and Mrs. Matilda, who were convinced that the present building contains a token continuance part of the second, if not the first building, officially opened for Religious worship in 1837, the year Queen Victoria became Queen. The anniversary referred to here was the 125th of the founding of the Wesleyan Methodist congregation and indeed of any Religious edifice in Topsail.

According to the old records, the church services were frequently attended by people of other denominations, C of E, Methodists and Roman Catholics and there are persons of these denominations buried in the church cemetery, which too, was the first burial ground in the settlement. I assume you have appealed to your Federal M.P. James McGrath and district member John Nolan as well as the Newfoundland Historical and Heritage Society. Just a few days ago, Shane O'Dea, on C.B.C.'s "Summer Scene" stated that his committee was interested in historic buildings outside St. John's, certainly such a building as this little church should qualify for interest and as a local landmark of Provincial trust, and not only for its long religious and social service to the community of Topsail, but to many city folk who made Topsail a summer residential village but, as was told me by older people, the little church was where so many young couples made their marriage vows to begin a new life away from the clamour and noise of city life in a big almost empty church, also as the church was so near the main

highroad, which was yet unpaved. The church with its unlocked doors until the era of vandalism made the use of the key necessary, but even then it was to be found on a nearby windowsill for the tired traveller and his/her children wanting to rest awhile, especially if weather conditions made for discomforts.

The church, and more specifically its parent building of 1837 is a historic symbol to their willing labours and sacrifices to a worthy and richer heritage.

When one ponders the circumstances and disadvantages the small number, less than a score of families, most of them transplants from Portugal Cove, dared to undertake a voluntary project, not for monetary nor for personal and selfish benefits, indeed the results of their undertaking would mean continued and often greater sacrifices. One wonders and must admire determination and faith in their belief that "Man does not live by bread alone." The first building must have entailed great courage and strenuous toil, since there was no sawmill, all the framing had to be hand-hewn by axe and adze, and it is believed that some of the roof trusses in the present building are part of that hand-hewn posterity. The boards for the roofing, flooring, etc. had to be brought by hand along Trappers footpath, as there was no road and the glass for the windows was brought from Portugal Cove along the beach.

The foregoing items are the more important features which became impressed on my memory of the history of the first church in Topsail . . .

W. J. Dewey

Dear Mrs. Bradshaw

With reference to Mr. Henry Francis Shortis. . . .

Mr. Shortis held the position of Historiographer with the Newfoundland Museum from 1919 to 1931. From 1919 to 1927 the position of Curator per se was left vacant, but it is quite likely that during those years Mr. Shortis undertook some of the Curatorial responsibilities.

He was a journalist and Historian, and for many years was Secretary of the Newfoundland Historical Society, which was founded in 1905.

In 1928 Dr. H.A. Baker, a Government Geologist, filled the position of Curator, and from 1919 to 1928, the position of Assistant Curator and Stenographer was held by Miss Mary O'Mara.

I hope some of the above will be of interest to you.

Yours sincerely,

Mary M. White,
St. John's.



HENRY F. SHORTIS, 1912
Courtesy Newfoundland Museum



Grand Bank F.B. United Church?

P.D. St. John's

Dear Editor:

Re: your request on identification of pictures on page 12 of V. 4, No. 1 of the Trident. We can't help you on all four, but the picture on the bottom left hand of the page is, we feel sure, a long shot of Corner Brook House, situated on the Glynmill Inn Pond in Corner Brook. We can't give a date either, but it was obviously some time ago since the trees now surrounding the building are much fuller these days.

Hope this helps you.

Sincerely,

The Staff,
Western Regional Library.



Letter To Governor 1835

This is a copy of a letter from Wm. Buckle to Gov. Prescott of Nfld. The original letter is in the Archives in St. John's.

To His Excellency,
the Governor

Blanc Sablon
27th July 1835

Sir:

I beg you will excuse my taking the liberty of addressing you on the following subject. Having been a Planter on this Coast for these Forty years and being at the head of a large Family who almost all depend on my fishing Post in Middle Bay (Labrador) I laid out my seal Frame this Spring on the hopes of doing the fishery when on the 9th of June last an American Schooner Commanded by Captain Sampia entered my Frame altho' I entreated of him not to and at the same time weighed anchor when they hooked and broke our Nets and hawser whereby I lost my best anchor.

Two days afterwards the American Schooner the James Murrow Captain Bodie, and the Admiral Captain Templeton entered my frame although I told them not to as they kept me
(continued on page 9)

The Ferryland Historic Society

The Ferryland Historic Society was formed several years ago for the express purpose of protecting our Heritage and making known the rich and colourful history of Lord Baltimore's first Colony in the New World.

As one of the most Historic areas in all Canada — and indeed all the American Continent — the tourist potential of Ferryland is unlimited and virtually untapped. It is the aim of the Society to see that proper Governmental recognition is given to the area in order to develop this potential.

It is our hope to instill and encourage, within the local community, a justifiable pride in our noble heritage, while at the same time, providing the tourist with a rich and valuable experience.

In 1973, the Provincial Government made transfer to the Society, of the former cour-

thouse in Ferryland, to be used as a Museum.

This building was originally built as a bank in 1916, but served its longest period as a Court house, with the bank vault being converted into a jail.

With the assistance of O.F.Y. grants, the Historic Society has been able to operate the Museum in a limited manner each year, providing summer employment for several students, and thereby contributing to the economy of the area.

This year, much needed renovation has been made possible through a Young Canada Works Programme, providing employment for adults and students, and it is hoped that with the larger staff and better facilities, the Museum can begin to operate in a truer sense of the word.

Bernard Agresti



Historic Ferryland Museum.

In 1620, shortly before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Sir George Calvert, later known as Lord Baltimore, purchased a Newfoundland claim belonging to his friend Sir William Vaughn. He named his Province "Avalon" after the famed birthplace of Christianity in England, perhaps with the hope that it would be a refuge in the new world for persecuted Catholics.

We know this colony as Ferryland, although this is by no means a new name, having been in use even during Lord Baltimore's time. Some say it is a derivation of an earlier French name, "Forillon" which was used by the French when the Harbour was a base for their summer fishery, as early as 1504.

The first twelve settlers arrived in Ferryland on Sept. 5th., 1621. Unable to accompany them personally, Lord Baltimore sent Captain Edward Wynne as Governor of the Colony. They carried with them supplies, equipment, seeds and tools. Their first task was to build a suitable shelter before winter.

The house, 44 feet long by 15 feet wide, was accomplished before Christmas, with several additions made later. Before spring they had completed a forge and salt work, dug a 16-foot well and built a 7-foot palisade to enclose the settlement. Land has been cleared on the hillside and grains and vegetables planted.

Captain Wynne wrote a glowing letter to Lord Baltimore telling him of these accomplishments and of his plans for more buildings, so that "the whole may be made into a prettie streete."

In 1622, Captain Daniel Powell arrived with 22 more inhabitants, seven of whom were women. Professions and Trades represented in this group were: surgeons, husbandman, smith, stonemason, carpenter, quarryman, boatmaster, fisherman and cooper. Captain Powell also wrote back a pleasing report, describing Capt. Wynne's house as strong and well built and standing at the foot of an easy ascending hill. Within the next few years, more buildings were erected, including a large stone house.

In 1626, Baltimore replaced Wynne with Sir Arthur Ashton. He had begun to suspect all was not well with his colony despite

the good reports. In 1627, after already having spent 60,000 pounds on the colony, he decided to take charge of it himself. He arrived in Ferryland on July 23rd., 1627 but stayed for only six weeks. He was nevertheless impressed and returned the following year with his wife and all but his eldest son, Cecil, intending to live there permanently.

The colony showed much promise under his first year of guidance. Most of the earlier colonists were Protestant, however about 40 Catholics and two priests had come over with Baltimore on the Ark of Avalon and at first there was a small disturbance between the two groups, but Lord Baltimore was able to settle the grievances of both sides.

Before long, the peaceful progress of the colony was interrupted by the appearance of French warships. In a letter to the Duke of Buckingham in 1628, Lord Baltimore told of how French warships under the command of De La Rode of Dieppe, had attacked and captured several of his fishing barks with their crews and supplies. Angered, he retaliated with a force of his own, and subdued the French in Trepassey, capturing six of their ships.

The severity of the following winter however, was his undoing. Disease broke out and food became scarce. Lady Baltimore was unable to endure the hardships and, along with the children sailed South to Jamaica, Virginia, leaving Lord Baltimore little choice but to follow.

He was coldly received and rudely treated in Virginia for refusing to sign an oath of supremacy, which he, as a Roman Catholic, could not do. He was recalled to England, but his wife and children following on a later ship are said to have been lost at sea.

In spite of his failure at colonization of Ferryland, Lord Baltimore appealed to the King and was given another charter similar to that of Ferryland. The new colony was called Maryland after Queen Henrietta Maria. Sir George Calvert, first Lord Baltimore, died April 15th., 1632, at the age of 53. The charter of Maryland was granted to his eldest son, Cecil.

After Sir George's death, Avalon was kept on as a fishing colony and was managed by Governors appointed by Cecil Calvert the second Lord Balti-

FERRYLAND

more. His interests however, turned mainly to the new colony in Maryland.

In 1638, Sir David Kirke, armed with a Royal Grant forcibly took possession of Ferryland, moving into the mansion house. The second Lord Baltimore complained bitterly of Kirke's takeover of Ferryland and had him arrested. Some say Kirke died in prison in 1654, while others claim he returned to Ferryland and is buried somewhere in the downs. In any case, Lady Kirke and her sons remained on in Ferryland.

In 1661, the King ordered re-

some of which were from his own ship "William and Mary". In the five-hour battle, Holman and his men were victorious. The French were so taken by surprise, they wasted no time hauling anchor, but cut the cables and fled.

In 1743, the people of Ferryland petitioned the Governor of Newfoundland, Captain Thomas Smith, for money to fortify the settlement. Smith felt their request was justified and gave 500 pounds, payable to John Benger, J/P and leader of the local militia. Captain Smith set about preparing Ferryland

Carter organized and led an attack upon the French in Bay Bulls. Meanwhile back in Ferryland, two French warships tried to get past the Isle Aux Bois, but the story goes that Mrs. Carter took the initiative and fired the first cannon which badly damaged one of the French ships, and went on to inspire the victory that followed.

The fortifications were then taken over by the Marines and sailors of H.M.S. Antelope and Syren, but these troops soon left after the crisis was over. In 1776, while the American Revolution raged, the fortifications were refitted once more, with nine more cannons added, and were maintained until 1784.

Again in 1812, during a period of unrest between the U.S. and Canada, the fortifications were repaired and refitted. Another battery was set up and maintained until 1815, after which they were abandoned to time and the elements.

Other less documented stories, passed down from one generation to another of happier times, when great parties and dances would be held by the gentry in the Downs or Mansion House.

At one period in our history, we almost entertained the King of England, when during the struggle between King and Parliament, Sir David Kirke offered King Charles refuge in Ferryland. Unfortunately for the King, he didn't live long enough to enjoy the shelters of our shores.

The notorious pirate, Peter Easton is said to have operated out of Ferryland in 1578, and legend has it that pirate treasure is buried near a river running to the sea and beneath a high hill. Easton is believed to have lived on Fox Hill.

Another dark period in Ferryland's history, was the reign of the masterless men, known as Kerrivan's Gang. This notorious band made their headquarters inside Fermeuse and Renew's and came out to plunder and terrorise the settlement. A more lenient view is taken today, however, that perhaps they were the freedom fighters of their day, who had the courage to resist being owned by some fishing master and had little choice but to live in hiding and plunder for survival. In any case they paid with their lives, for the people had petitioned England for protection, and the gang were eventu-

ally rounded up and four of them were hanged from the yardarms of the ship anchored off from the church. They were left hanging for days as a warning to others.

Though few seem to be aware of it, even today the Great Seal of Maryland gives evidence of that period in history when Ferryland and Maryland were sister colonies, governed by a single proprietorship. The obverse side bears the Latin inscription, translated "Cecilius Absolutus, Lord of Maryland and Avalon". The reverse side shows two figures, a farmer holding a hoe, representing the planter colony of Maryland, and a fisherman holding a fish, representing the fishing colony of Avalon. To honour this historical tie, the Governor of Maryland, Spiro T. Agnew (later Vice-President of the U.S.A.) proclaimed Sept. 20th., 1967 as Maryland-Ferryland day.

Today there is little left to tell us where even the Mansion House once stood, a house reputed to have then been the biggest North of Mexico. Its exact location has never been clearly established though popular opinion places it in the Pool, where undoubtedly Captain Wynne's first shelter was built. However we cannot overlook Captain FitzHugh's map of 1693, which shows the largest building in the settlement — and the only one flying a flag — to be in the vicinity of St. Joseph's school.

The tourist visiting Ferryland is immediately struck by a sense of time and place, as if some aura from its romantic past still hangs down over the quiet old Downs, stretching lazily into the sea. There is something here — you can feel it, even if you are not already aware that you have come indeed, to one of Canada's most historic settlements, whose ties with European civilization go back further than almost any other place on the American Continent.

This was the land of Lords and Ladies, Captains and Kings and stately mansions. This was Lord Baltimore's land, but unable to accept the "sadd face of Wynter" he left it to "Fishermen that are able to encounter storms and hard weather."

History has shown he has left it in good hands!

Bernard Agresti

Credits — Bernard Agresti



Ferryland with islands in foreground.

Photo Credit — Nfld. Museum

stitution of the Province to Baltimore's newly appointed Governor, Robert Swanley. The colony continued to prosper for a while, but then fell prey to raiding French and Dutch vessels. In 1673, the Dutch inflicted 2000 pounds of damage on the 13 or so plantations, among which were the plantations of Lady Kirke and her sons. After Lady Kirke's death her son David took over their plantation.

When the country was invaded and plundered by the French, David and his wife, with the other inhabitants of Ferryland were taken prisoners and carried away to Placentia. David died in prison and his widow who later married James Benger, petitioned to have the plantation restored to them, as rightful heir in 1708. Thus ended the Kirke era.

On August 31st, 1694, Captain William Holman, successfully defended Ferryland against the French. Hearing of the planned attack from prisoners who had escaped from Placentia, he hurriedly set up four small fortifications, manning them with about 30 guns,

to meet any enemy. He placed 8 of his ship's cannons on the Southern tip of Isle aux Bois, known as Smith's Battery, and four more on the Western side. He also built a powder magazine and barracks to house about 20 men.

In 1746 a third battery was constructed on the Island. Between 1746 and 1749 another barracks and officers' quarters were erected, also a carpenter's shop, a smith's shop and another powder magazine. With the help of the inhabitants a parapet was erected all around the South and part of the East and West side of the Island.

Island Aux Bois was garrisoned until 1760, when the Royal Artillery and 40th Regiment pulled out. Robert Carter, J.P., obtained the right to use the Island for curing fish.

In 1762, the French captured Bay Bulls, which caused great concern in Ferryland. Robert Carter took leadership upon himself and directed the people to move to the Island, where enough provisions has been brought to feed them until October 9th. of that year. Then

The Earle Premises At Fogo

On the North Side of Fogo Harbour stand a group of buildings that, more than any other in the country, represent the range and development of the Newfoundland fishery. These buildings, the headquarters and principle premises of Earle Sons and Company, include the family houses, a bookkeeper's house, office, retail store, cannery, cooperage and seal oil factory. However, the Earle operations were not restricted to Fogo. They also had branches in Barr'd Islands, Tilting, Joe Batt's Arm, Change Islands, Herring Neck and Twillingate, so that at the time they ceased operations in 1967, they were the most extensive fish merchants on the North Coast.

"Bleak House", the main re-



Bleak House — Fogo.
Back view of house showing "Summer Kitchen"



1910 store of Earle premises, Fogo

sidence, was probably constructed about 1816 by the Slades who acquired the business in that year. The Earles made fairly extensive alterations to the house after they took over the business in 1897. A large dwelling with a centre-hall plan, Bleak House has a room not usually found in Newfoundland — the Summer Kitchen. In New England houses, the summer kitchen is generally found at the back of the house and is set there to take advantage of cool breezes as well as to remove the heat of cooking fires from the principal part of the house.

There was an earlier house on the property, possibly built by Garland or Lester (the owners before Slade), which was demolished in 1973, so that its form and date of construction are unknown. Further down the road is Hillside, built in 1907 as a single family residence, but later converted into dual use for two of the family working in the

business. It is a fairly straightforward mercantile house but has on the Eastern side that curious corner bay that is found most commonly on the Western side of Twillingate houses. Its other notable feature is the two-storey porch with two entrances. To the rear of Hillside is another curiosity, a storey-and-half out house in three sections originally used as a wash house, cook house and hen house.

Below Bleak House is the 1913 hardware and retail store with its extraordinary facade. This facade appears to be the work of a carpenter whose joy was a jig-saw and is full of curious, though structurally incongruous detail. The interior of this building is still in a good state of preservation and indicative of the more elaborate type of outport retail store. It is comparable to the interior of the Ryan store in Trinity, which was built almost a century earlier.

Next to the store is a gambel-



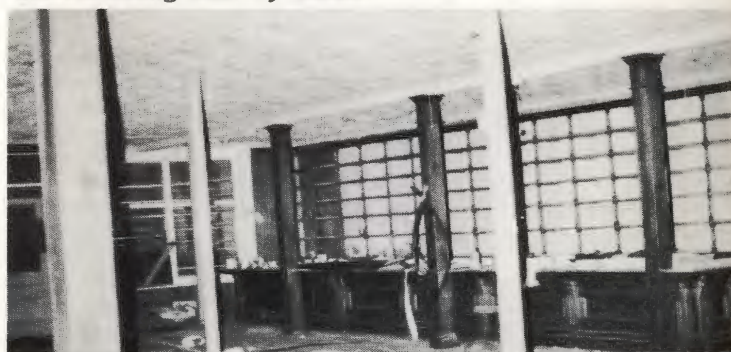
Front view of "Bleak House"

roofed office, put up by the Slades and likely of the same age as Bleak House. It is entered through a hip-roofed porch with a fanlight in the Western wall. The use of the gambel roof here is a common feature of mercantile buildings of about 1850.

Of the existing buildings on the property, almost half of them were built by Slades with the remaining built by Earles

about the time of the first war. It is a matter of concern that this collection of structures which represent so much of Newfoundland's social, economic and architectural history are presently unoccupied and in great danger of being lost as so many examples of our cultural heritage.

Shane O'Dea



Interior view of Store — Today

Photo Credits — Historic Resources Division

H.M.S. SAPHIRE

How many ships have been wrecked off the Newfoundland and Labrador coast? They are too numerous to count, but must number well into the thousands. Many have been found, some are yet to be found, but the majority of them will remain unaccessible beneath the treacherous waters of our coastline.

The main dangers to marine vessels on our seas have always been rocks, ice, icebergs, fog and inadequate navigational equipment, to name but a few. One ship, however, which did not succumb to the usual fears of every captain while navigating these strange waters — H.M.S. Sapphire — a 5th rate frigate. She was built in 1675 by Deane of Harwich as a patrol and escort vessel.

The League of Augusburg, known in North America as the King William and Mary War, raged from 1689 to 1698. This War necessitated a convoy of ships to accompany vessels of the British fleet while travelling to and from the Colonies. This was the function of the Sapphire. She had been accompanying a British Fleet of fishing vessels from Britain to Newfoundland, together with Soldadoes; and Bay Bulls was then the arrival and departure point for convoys to and from Britain.

The Sapphire, having completed her voyage to Bay Bulls, remained there to await another fleet of ships she was to escort to England. However, she was never to reach Britain. The French Squadron soon appeared ready for battle. Captain Cleasby realized that he could not win the forthcoming attack, or even escape unharmed, he felt that the only honourable thing to do was to set fire to the ship, this was the only alternative to the French capturing the vessel and making use of her for their own gain.

Some say that she was "scuttled" (the boring of holes into the hull of a ship to sink it), however, the Court Martial Report from the Public Records Office Library in London England states that she was "sett on fire by Capitaine Cleasby, Commander of her. . ."

It seems unlikely that we shall ever really know the truth, but on 11th September 1696, after 21 years of loyal service, she was sunk to the bottom of the harbour at Bay Bulls....

Almost to the day, 281 years

later, Bay Bulls is the scene of great activity, once again in connection with the Sapphire. The Historic Resources Division and the Archaeology Branch of the National Parks and Sites Service, Parks Canada, have come to a binding agreement to conduct a survey to determine what exactly lies beneath the surface of the wreck 50 feet down in terms of artifacts, parts of the vessel, etc. All this will hopefully be achieved and the report on their findings will determine when and if there will be a major excavation.

Even though the Federal Government have put the largest amount of dollars into this survey, the Provincial Government have also done its share. They have employed two experienced divers from the Newfoundland Marine Archaeology Society to work with Robert Grenier, Chief Project Office, from the Federal Archaeology Branch, National Historic Sites Service. The two Provincial divers report back to the Historic Resources Division.

One bone of contention seems to be the distribution of the artifacts when they have been recovered. Obviously, as Newfoundland has no Conservation facilities to speak of, we cannot keep the artifacts here and allow them to deteriorate even more so, the binding agreement between the two Governments states that the artifacts will go to Ottawa, where they will undergo professional conservation treatment. Half of them will be returned to the Newfoundland Government and the other half will remain the property of the Federal Government. However, they have agreed to disply, where possible, their half of the artifacts in National Historic Sites within the Province. We seem to have had a fair part of the deal! We can only hope that if a major excavation is carried out in the future, the artifacts recovered will be as fairly distributed.

Perhaps a new Government goal in the future should be to set up a conservation laboratory here in the Province so that our artifacts, which rightly belong to the people of Newfoundland and their heritage, could remain here.

Mr. Fred Vallis, Assistant Director of the Historic Resources Division, some time ago made overtures to his counterparts in

the Maritime Provinces to attempt at forming a joint Conservation Centre. Their response unfortunately was negative due primarily to the excessively high cost of setting up such a facility and the difficulties associated with obtaining the necessary professional staff,

with expertise in the Conservation of underwater objects.

Obviously a pooling of Maritime resources is necessary if we are to succeed in other ventures of this kind without the help of the Federal Government.

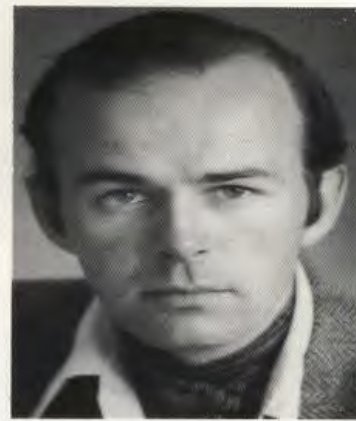
Maria Bradshaw

Society of Architectural Historians' Tour. Newfoundland

The Society of Architectural Historians' Medal of Honour, an award given for distinguished service to the Society, has been awarded to Shane O'Dea, Assistant Professor with the English Department at Memorial University. He received the award for organizing and conducting a tour of Newfoundland Architecture for members of the above Society.

On the first day of the five-day tour, a series of lectures were given by Dr. G. Story, Dr. John Manion and Shane O'Dea. This was followed by a bus tour of St. John's and its vicinity. The afternoon comprised of a three-hour walking tour, which included many historic buildings in St. John's, ending with the Colonial Building, the Commasariat House and Government House, where the participants of the tour were received by Mrs. G.A. Winter.

July 26th., 27th. and 28th., members of the tour experienced first-hand, the Architectural beauties of our Province, with all day tours of the North and South of St. John's, the East and West sides of Conception Bay, Clarenville and Bonavista.



The climax of the tour was at Valleyfield, where thanks to the Honourable T.V. Hickey, Minister of Tourism, the Newfoundland Banking Schooner, Norma and Gladys, was used to take participants of the tour from Valleyfield to Greenspond.

The members of the Society were very much impressed by the good Newfoundland fare served to them throughout the tour, and of the scenery and architecture of NFLD. They expressed their appreciation, by donating \$300 for the Newfoundland Historic Trust to aid in the continuation of its good work.

(continued from page 5)
from taking any seals. Still they stopt in many days which caused me a great lost.

I have therefore humbly to request you would take this in consideration and be kind enough to let me know whether those vessels had a right to do so and if not what I can do to recover the lost I have sustained.

I remain,
(signed)
William Buckle

Commander I. Hope of the Royal Navy investigated William Buckle's complaint, and reported to H.B.M. Ambassador Extraordinary at Washington.

His report gives in some detail the damage caused by the American vessels (apparently

these were not the only incidents along the coast), and the harassment of the local people. When William Buckle's sons went to complain to the captain, some of the crew threatened to throw them overboard.

In his letter to the Ambassador, Commander Hope has this to say, "... William Buckle ... has been a settler on the coast 51 years, 41 of which he has resided at Forteau; he has brought up a large family of six sons and four daughters and been a most excellent character." He concludes, "These people complain that justice is so distant that it is beyond their means to seek it, and beg that something may be done for their protection."

Credit — "Them Days"

It was the year 1918. The month, October. The place Okak, my home and birthplace. The Moravian Mission freight boat, Harmony, just arrived after a long journey across the Atlantic and up the coast to deliver food and supplies to small Eskimo communities for the winter. There was great joy at the sight of the small freight boat. Hundreds of people were on the shore shouting, singing and even shooting to salute the arriving of the boat. I have never heard so many voices as that day in my life.

After all the unloading has finished, when everything is done, we would then leave for our hunting grounds for the fall. We would remain there until the ice is strong enough for us to travel on dogteam. Then we would return to Okak. That fall the Harmony would take more families to their hunting rounds for each family would have a house of their own. The last family to be brought was Jerry Sillitt.

The doctor there in Okak warned people and predicted there was going to be a flu. The sign was the Northern Lights were bright red. Even the snow was pink from the reflection. Then we know there was going to be something happening which we never thought would be anything so bad as epidemic flu.

Jerry Sillitt, father of Gustav Sillitt (who is now still living here in Nain) was the first person to

SPANISH INFLUENZA 1918

Emelia Merkuratsuk • Nain



die. He was already not too well when they arrive on the Harmony. Not long after his death we found that everyone was sick with flu. Hardly any person was able to stay up. Finally, my husband and two children died and few more members of the house. There was only myself and another woman left. We moved to my house and left the other house for there were bodies lying on the floor and on the beds. There was fewer bodies in my house which we share night and day. During towards the night after we go to bed we would look at the unusually large star moving westward. We would wonder what it is.

The other family living pretty close to us came over when

they finally gained more strength from their sickness. There was only two women and two young men left from their family. All the rest died from the flu. One of the young men was Gustav Sillitt. One woman was Maria, Gustav's sister. Her child died soon after they moved to us. Gustav sang a hymn and placed the child next to the other bodies.

Nobody was strong enough to do anything, even to chop wood for firewood. There was plenty enough food for those people saved enough fish, meat and berries from the Fall. We would not have any light in the house even when it was dark.

Those people who got sick did not suffer any pain, except they would have a very bad

cold in their chest and they'll be very sleepy. Some don't even wake up and die sleeping.

There were many dogs. None of the dogs got sick and were roaming all over.

As the flu went on, we did not even know what day it was or even what date. Then we realize through the full moon that it must be near Christmas. By that time, everyone who was left was well enough. We started out for Okak. When we got there, only a few people were left. There was not one grown up man left, only young men. There were few women and children. The only men left was the minister, doctor and store manager. The manager's wife died in the flu. Those men dig a huge hole in the ground and placed in it three or four hundred bodies altogether.

When the hoses were cleared up, there were many belongings and clothing lying around outdoors. Even now I don't like to see clothing lying around outdoors. Also I don't like to see people sleeping on the floor. Those things are reminders of the horrible sickness that once happened when I was still in my young life. I still don't know how much courage we had to face all that terrible sickness. I still often look for this unusual star we used to watch and never seen again.

A person will never die unless the day has come his end.

My name is Emelia Merkuratsuk. I am now 79 years old.

Chronicles of a Bayman

— VICTOR BUTLER —
THE CONSTRUCTION OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH,
HARBOUR BUFFETT,
BUILT 1884.

In 1820-1825 the first settlers began to establish homes in the island communities of Placentia Bay. I find it interesting to note that these new settlers preferred to inhabit communities where people were of their own religious beliefs. Examples of this are: Red Island, Merasheen, and Bar Haven were ninety-five percent Roman Catholic; Harbour Buffett, Kingwell, Hays-tack, Spencers Cove, were Anglican; and Sound Island and Woody Island were Methodist, or United Church.

In all these communities, as soon as the population increased every effort was made to construct a place of worship. The first church built at Harbour

Buffett was very small, although it was intended to accommodate the residents of Kingwell as well. As the populations of both these communities rapidly increased, the small church was inadequate so it was decided in 1884 to build a larger one.

A Frenchman, Peter Roach, who was a skilled architect in the design, supervision and building of many places of worship, was hired. The church was 100 feet long and 60 feet wide, with a gabled roof. The tower was on the south west peak of the roof; the lower part was the belfry, and a spire extended from the belfry twenty five feet upward, surmounted by a ball at the top. In later years this ball was replaced with a cross.

The two entrance doors were situated in the south west end of the building. The interior was an elaborate work of art. Inside the entrance was a vestibule with



Peaceful Scene at Harbour Buffett

Photo Credit — Historic Resources Division

doors leading to the body of the church. The baptistry was situated on a raised platform. A spiral staircase led from the vestibule to the belfry. A centre aisle ran from the vestibule to the pulpit, with pews on either side.

The pulpit was decorated with hand-carved scroll work, as was common in churches around 1870-1880. The chan-

cel contained seats for visiting clergy and lay readers, plus the choir, and a reading desk, communion rail, and altar.

The roof trusses were constructed of heavy timber, and the spans in the trusses were curved, forming a distinctive pattern where the pitch of the roof joined the side walls. Elaborate scroll work extended
(continued on page 12)

Guess Where?

If you recognize any of these buildings, please let us know.

Photos, Courtesy of Newfoundland Museum



NOTICE TO MEMBERSHIP

The sale of tickets on the print by David Blackwood is going very well. Please ensure that those of you who have not yet returned your sold or unsold tickets that you do so in time for the drawing on December 1, 1977.

If further tickets are required, please call Chris O'Dea at 579-0589 or 722-1301.

The Bard of Prescott Street Johnny Burke

A few weeks ago an exciting show took place at the L.S.P.U. Hall, performed by the "Mummers Troupe". The title was none other than "The Bard of Prescott Street". It was a performance geared to bring memories flooding back, of this truly great public entertainer. He was born in St. John's in 1851, and lived in a small house at the top of Prescott Street. During his early life he took on a number of occupations, but it seemed that his only real love in life, was to make other people happy. He started at an early age by reciting jokes to all who would listen, the customers who frequented his store at the front of the house, the ladies he called on while selling articles door-to-door, the young children in the streets, who later sold his pamphlets. He had become loved and accepted by the people as a writer of plays, producer of operas and singer of his own ballads. He had copies of a number of his ballads printed, young boys sold these pamphlets on the streets at a penny a time and people eagerly bought them. They were a sample of living history of the time.

Few people know that he was the author of many a ballad, which has been sung or played in all our homes for a number of years; The Kelligrew's Soiree, Trinity Cake, Since Murphy Broke the Pledge, The July Fire and Anna Liaz Jones, to name but a few. One of his famous light opera scores was the "Topsail Geisha". A great part of our Newfoundland history lives on in his songs, jokes and plays. They all tell of a way of life, of mentality that existed amongst the people of the "Johnny Burke Era"; of Newfoundlanders who could laugh at themselves with dignity. He died after a successful long life, at the age of 79. He had achieved his great ambition of bringing gaiety into the lives and homes of his friends, his people. When he died citizens mourned the passing of a great man who had brought such fun and laughter into their lives. He had achieved a place of honour in the esteem of the older generation.

Our history will live on in the ballads and memories of "The Bard of Prescott Street."

Maria Bradshaw

(continued from page 10)

the length of the building. Large pillars extended from the cross section of the roof trusses to the floor on either side of the centre aisle.

For many years the church was lit by kerosene lamps, with reflectors, which were attached to the pillars and side walls. In later years the church was wired for electricity, and an electric generator was installed. My aunt, Mrs. Moses Dicks, donated an elaborate chandelier in memory of her brother, James Butler.

A large coloured glass window was erected in the eastern end of the church, above the altar, and after World War II it was replaced by a more elaborate stained glass window, donated by the firm of W.W. Wareham and Sons, in memory of a son, who was killed in the war. When Buffett was resettled, and before the church was sold and sacrilegiously destroyed, this window was taken out and now adorns the end of the new church at Arnolds Cove. This is a reminder to the former residents of Buffett now living at Arnolds Cove of the beautiful church they left behind.

The large spruce tree growing by the corner of the church was planted in 1860 by W.M. Meek, Anglican Clergyman at Harbour Buffett.

SPORTS IN NFLD. HISTORY.

RECORD WALK — James Locke, John Cahill walked, Gambo to St. John's in eight days, 320 miles — (is mileage correct?).

MARATHON — 50 miles walking match in Parade Rink — "Do as you please" — R. Stephenson, J. Stapleton, R.H. Collier" (won); Sept. 11th., 1885.

FIRST BICYCLE RACE — At Mount Pearl April 12-13, 1845, under patronage of Sir John Harvey, Governor, attended by Prince Henry of the Netherlands.

Harbour Grace held horse race, Sept. 22, 1846.



Fther Gordon Walsh Corpus Christi Parish Kilbride

A LASTING GIFT

A beautiful 10-inch Pottery Plate of the Basilica of St. John the Baptist. Decorated in multicolours and trimmed with 22 carat gold, the plate is also individually numbered on the back to increase its value in years to come. Plate comes with a hanger ready for hanging on the wall. A gift to treasure — for self or friends and relatives. To order send \$10.95 (includes postage) to Plate Offer, P.O. Box 986 St. John's, Nfld., or phone 722-7700.

Please send me _____ plate (s) at \$10.95 each I enclose

Name: _____

Address: _____

INDEX FOR 1977

Vol. 4 No. 1 May

Barbour House — Newtown	p. 10
Bridge House — Bonavista	p. 5
Buying and restoring an older home	p. 2
Carver Chairs	p. 5
Heritage Conservation Area Study	p. 11
Heritage Day 1977	p. 9
Heritage Lost . . . Saved	p. 6
Labrador Crafts	p. 3
Mac Lee	p. 10
Mortgage for Older Homes	p. 12
Museums around the Province	p. 4
Newfoundland Museum — A History	p. 1
Outport Furniture	p. 8
Them Days. Labrador.	p. 2

INDEX FOR

Vol. 4 No. 2 September

Ancient Structure	p. 2
Atlantic Regional Council Meeting	p. 2
Commissariat House — A History	p. 1
Earle Premises Fogo	p. 8
Ferryland	p. 7
Labrador — Spanish Influenza	p. 10
Letter Column	p. 5
Mary March Regional Museum	p. 4
Museums around the Province	p. 2
The Bard of Prescott Street	p. 12
Sapphire — H.M.S.	p. 9
Tour — Newfoundland	p. 9