



4.108 "Wash day on the Coast," Labrador, c. 1929-34
 Photographer Fred Coleman Sears added the additional information: "These little streams, from springs, snow-banks, or glaciers, are often used in this way and except for the temperature of the water make pretty satisfactory laundries."

4.109 A glimpse of life in Makkovik, 1900
 From a set of stereoviews made in Makkovik by a member of the Moravians around 1900. Handwriting on the back of the picture indicated that this was a "Cabin of the farmhand."



4.110 Nain, 1884

TOPIC 4.8

Labrador

How does life in Labrador differ from life in Newfoundland today?

Why might Labrador have a smaller population than the island?

Introduction

Although Labrador was under Newfoundland's jurisdiction after 1809, life in Labrador in the late 1800s and early 1900s differed in many ways from life on the island.

Life in Labrador

Until early in the twentieth century, Labrador's population was small and mostly confined to the coast, with Innu and

Inuit practising a migratory lifestyle between the coast and the interior. Where there was permanent settlement, it was sparse. For instance, the 1874 Census enumerated 1275 people in 23 communities spread out from Blanc Sablon to Cape Harrison (see fig. 4.111)

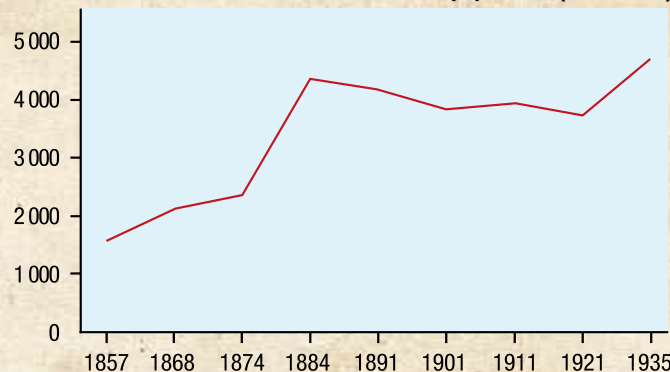
Although the Labrador fishery was the main economic activity of Labrador for much of the 1800s, few residents

engaged in it. Instead it was largely conducted by fishers from Conception Bay who came for the summer to fish in Labrador before returning home in the fall. The main economic activities conducted by the European and Metis resident population of Labrador were fur-trapping, sealing, and hunting – although, in some areas, fishing was also an important subsistence activity. Most trading of furs was done through the Moravian missions in northern Labrador and the Hudson's Bay Company in the southern portion of Labrador.

Despite being under Newfoundland's control, Labrador's population had no political representation in St. John's until 1946. Likewise, they received few services from the Newfoundland government until the 1940s. The few exceptions were the courts in Labrador that operated periodically after 1813 and the Labrador coastal boat and postal service that started during the 1880s. Before

Confederation, most "social services" in Labrador were provided by non-governmental organizations such as the Moravian missions along the northern coast and the Grenfell Mission, which began in 1893 and operated along the southern coast of Labrador and the Northern Peninsula of the island.

4.112 Labrador's population (1857-1935)



No.	NAMES OF SETTLEMENTS.	No. of INHABITANTS.	No. of Males under 10 years
1	Blanc Sablon	58	7
2	Ile au Bois	17	1
3	L'Ance St. Clair & L'Godard ...	55	1
4	Forteau	60	1
5	L'Ance au Loup	71	1
6	L'Ance au Diable	25	1
7	Capestan Island	21	1
8	West St. Modeste	85	1
9	Pinware	43	1
10	East St. Modeste	37	4
11	Carroll's Cove... ..	32	1
12	Red Bay	120	1
13	L'Ance au Loup	39	1
14	Hanley Harbor	72	1
15	Chimney Tickle	9	1
16	Camps	30	1
17	Cape Charles	58	1
18	Assizes	13	1
19	Indian Harbor	80	1
20	Carabou Cove... ..	9	1
21	Matthew's Cove	110	1
22	Trap Cove	75	1
23	Battle Harbor... ..	110	1

4.111 Excerpt from the 1874 Census showing population distribution from Blanc Sablon to Cape Harrison in Labrador

F. H. DOWAN,
Managing Director,
St. John's, N.F.

GEORGE BELLEF,
Manager of Store,
Battle Harbor

LABRADOR STORES, LIMITED,
GENERAL DEALERS.

SPECIAL FILE
No. 31-24
Col. Secy's Dep.

BATTLE HARBOR, Labrador...Sept., 25th., 1919

Hon. J. H. Bennett,
Colonial Secretary,
St. John's.

Dear Sir:-

Sometime ago I wrote you with reference to having a Doctor stationed in this vicinity, during the coming winter, in case we should have a repetition of an epidemic similar to last winter.

I understand the Grenfell Hospital here is about to be closed, and I hear there are some cases of Small Pox at Red Bay, and I also heard that there is a similar sickness at Indian Cove, a small settlement about three miles from here.

To have the coast left without a Doctor or any similar person with so serious a sickness around is a very serious matter. There is not a Magistrate or Justice of the Peace around here to enforce any regulations in case of an outbreak of any contagious diseases during the winter.

We are installing a Steam Saw Mill, and will have a large number of men working this winter, and I fear that an epidemic of Small Pox if it got among them, would have a very disastrous effect.

I trust you will see the seriousness of the situation and endeavour to have something done.

I would suggest that a Doctor be sent to look

BATTLE HARBOR, Labrador... 1919

Hon J. H. B..... 2.

after the needs of this part of the coast, and also that a Justice of the Peace be appointed to help enforce any quarantine regulations that may be necessary

In any case, I believe it is necessary to have a Justice of the Peace on the Coast during the winter.

Yours truly,
George Bellef

4.113 A 1919 letter from a Labrador merchant to the Colonial Secretary urging more services for Labrador

4.114 Selected Hudson's Bay Company posts in Newfoundland and Labrador during the 19th and 20th centuries



4.115 A Hudson's Bay Company factor and two clerks hold a selection of furs in Cartwright, c. 1921-22.

The Hudson's Bay Company

In 1836, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) expanded its territory to Labrador and built headquarters in North West River. As the company expanded and built trading posts along the Churchill River in the interior and along the northern coast, it became an intricate part of Labrador's history. The HBC was the biggest draw for European migration to Labrador, and its fur-trading activities influenced Innu, Inuit, and European settlers' cultures throughout the region. In addition to its fur-trading business, the HBC also became involved in the salmon fishery in Labrador and the exporting of seal oil.

As an important source of European goods and a provider of credit, the HBC wielded significant power over many of Labrador's inhabitants. In addition, many of the company's agents took on duties from the Newfoundland government* and delivered poor relief, acted as justices of the peace, and/or collected customs duties. In 1926, the HBC expanded further into the north and leased the Moravian mission's stores in Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik, and Hebron – which were faltering because of the decline of the fur trade. The HBC ran these posts until 1942, when it relinquished them to the Newfoundland government.

**The fact that HBC agents did these duties was cited as evidence of the Newfoundland government's involvement in the area during the Labrador boundary dispute in 1927.*

Hudson's Bay Company Journal
Nachvak Post, Labrador
Friday, August 22, 1873

About the middle of the night there was a fearful gale from the North. I was almost afraid it would carry away our houses, and made quite sure something was going wrong outside, where we could not show ourselves in fear of getting hurt by something blowing about; we had to leave everything until day break, and in the mean time spent a very uncomfortable night. Our place in the morning was much like a town after a battle - barrels were floating about, which however were saved with the exception of a few flour barrels. Our boat in the harbour capsized, oars and rudder had departed, the roof of our Turfhouse was all found in pieces about the post; during the day however these trifles were restored to their former state.

4.116 Transcriptions of Hudson's Bay Company journal entries

Such journals typically addressed the state of trade with local hunters as well as employees' successes and failures at fishing, hunting, and even growing vegetables. Also recorded were the arrivals and departures of supply vessels, weather, health, and sometimes personal relationships. Entries were made at least several times a week.

Hudson's Bay Company Journal
Nachvak Post, Labrador
Saturday, February 24, 1872

... Some of the Esquimaux are talking of going to the Missionaries with some fur they have. I don't know the reason why they are going there as we have everything they need except tin kettles ...

Hudson's Bay Company Journal
Nachvak Post, Labrador
Saturday, March 6, 1875

Ikra died last night, his wife and children are better and managed to come down to our house, where they will have to remain until some Esquimaux come up from below. This is a time of horror! The Ghost of Death is lurking about every day.

Hudson's Bay Company Journal
Lampson Post, Labrador
Saturday, September 19, 1874

We are in for another winter without wood or other supplies. God knows I have had enough or more than my share of misery since I have been on the Labrador. I don't know what this post is kept open for.



**This British evangelical organization which focused on fishers in the United Kingdom was part of a global Christian missionary movement aimed at improving the spiritual and daily lives of those deemed less fortunate.*



4.117 Battle Harbour Hospital was the first Grenfell Mission building on the coast
The building for the hospital was provided by Baine, Johnston, and Company. It burned down soon after this picture was taken in 1930.



4.118 Dr. Grenfell provides medical assistance to a Labrador resident, c. 1939
The greatest health challenges the Mission faced related to nutritional diseases and tuberculosis. Even on the eve of Confederation, there were reports of poverty, malnutrition, and even starvation on some parts of the coast. Many people had severe vitamin and mineral deficiencies, which caused diseases like rickets and beriberi.

The Grenfell Mission

In the summer of 1892, a young British medical missionary, Wilfred Thomason Grenfell, travelled to the coast of Labrador with the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen (MDSF).^{*} During his first summer on “the Coast,” with the MDSF, Grenfell provided medical treatment to approximately 900 people. The poverty and lack of basic health care that he witnessed that summer convinced him to form the Grenfell Mission as a branch of the MDSF. He returned to Labrador the following year and opened the first of many Mission buildings on the coast – the hospital in Battle Harbour.

The Mission was funded primarily through public donations – much of which were raised by Grenfell himself. For instance, in 1894 Grenfell toured across Canada in an effort to raise money and find support for the Mission. He was a captivating public speaker and his efforts for the people of the coast found a ready following. Grenfell later had similar success in the United States, which eventually became the source for the majority of the Mission’s funds.

In the following years, Grenfell created an extensive network^{**} of hospitals and nursing stations throughout



4.119 The Strathcona, c. 1910
The Grenfell Mission acquired the medical vessel *Strathcona* in 1899, which allowed volunteers to treat patients at remote fishing stations and coastal communities in Labrador and northern Newfoundland.

Labrador, the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland, and the North Shore of Quebec. Hospital ships (and later, airplanes) also travelled along the coast as far north as Nain. The health care provided by the Grenfell Mission was of high quality. Grenfell was as successful in recruiting distinguished physicians, surgeons, dentists, and medical specialists for the coast as he was at raising funds. The hospitals contained up-to-date medical equipment and were centres for medical knowledge on the coast.

***Prior to the establishment of these facilities, people on the coast would have likely received only one visit a year from a government doctor.*

“... he led me to a tiny, sod-covered hovel, compared with which the Irish cabins were palaces. It had one window of odd fragments of glass. The floor was of pebbles from the beach; the earth walls were damp and chilly. There were half a dozen rude wooden bunks built in tiers around the single room, and a group of some six neglected children, frightened by our arrival, were huddled together in one corner. A very sick man was coughing his soul out in the darkness of a lower bunk, while a pitiable covered woman gave him cold water to sip out of a spoon. There was no furniture except a small stove with an iron pipe leading through a hole in the roof. My heart sank as I thought of the little I could do for the sufferer in such surroundings.”

– Dr. Wilfred Grenfell



However, with the scattered pattern of settlement, the medical staff at these locations could not reach everyone on the coast. In response, the Mission established nursing stations in some of the larger communities. From these stations, nurses travelled by foot, boat, dogsled, and eventually snowmobile and airplane to reach their patients in the surrounding areas. They also performed a range of health-related and non-health-related duties, as once described by a Grenfell Mission secretary in a correspondence to a nurse:

Nurses in charge of Nursing Stations need even more general experience, and to be interested in Midwifery as there is a great deal to do in these districts ... They have in-patients and out-patients; visits to make in sometimes a scattered district, medical returns; housekeeping, gardening – chiefly vegetables – and sometimes looking after hens. They need to be able to give anaesthetics – that applies to most Stations – and to haul teeth. It all sounds very formidable, but the nurses do combine all these things, and thoroughly enjoy their life and work in the North.

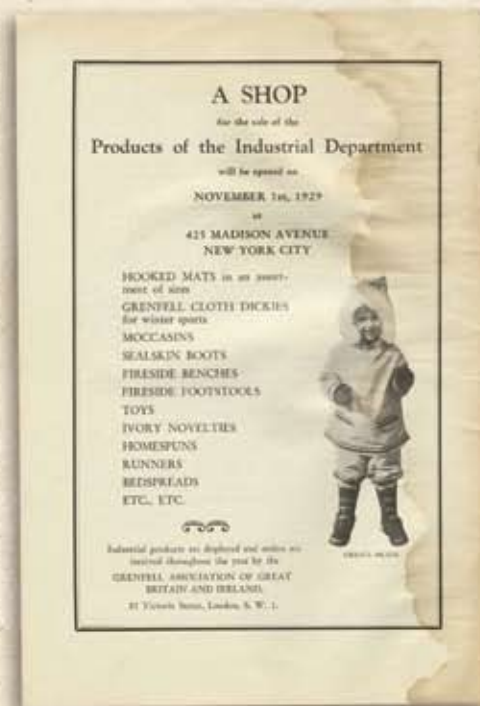
Although he began his career with the MDSE, Grenfell later became more inspired by the social reform movement in the United States, which emphasized practical assistance over preaching the Gospel. Based on these principles of self-help and practicality, Grenfell's Mission established many social projects in addition to its medical facilities. These included several schools, an orphanage, an industrial department, co-operative associations, and land-based industries which all attempted to diversify the northern economy.

The Grenfell Mission operated as a branch of the MDSF for over 20 years. It finally separated from the MDSF in 1914, with the incorporation of the International Grenfell Association (IGA) and the transfer of administrative authority to that organization. The IGA hired staff and distributed funds, but depended on five independent organizations for financial

support. These organizations raised money by hosting lectures and by selling Christmas cards, postcards, and goods from the Industrial Department. They also collected clothing and other necessities for the coast and promoted the work of the Mission.

In the 1930s, the establishment of social projects declined as Grenfell became less directly involved in the Mission's activities. In 1937, Charles S. Curtis replaced Grenfell as Superintendent of the Mission and the organization began to focus more on developing further medical services. Confederation marked the beginning of a shift in the Grenfell Mission from a charitable organization to a government institution. The provincial government slowly became more involved with health care in the region and completely took over the Grenfell Mission's responsibilities in 1981 with the creation of the Grenfell Regional Health Authority.

4.121 An advertisement for the sale of products from the Grenfell Mission's Industrial Department.



4.122 Non-medical projects, 1896-1938

Year	Project
1896	Cooperative Store at Red Bay
1901	Cooperative Lumber Mill
1906	Industrial Department (Grenfell Handicrafts)
1908	Reindeer Project
1909	School at St. Anthony and Industrial School at Red Bay
1910	Animal Husbandry at St. Anthony
1916	Gardens and Chicken Houses at North West River
1919	Cooperative Store at Flowers Cove
1920	School at Muddy Bay
1921	Orphanage at St. Anthony
1924	Sheep Flock at St. Anthony
1925	Cattle Farm at North West River
1926	Yale School at North West River
1928	Greenhouses at St. Anthony
1930	Lockwood School & Dormitory at Cartwright
1931	School at Mary's Harbour
1932	Greenhouses at North West River and Flowers Cove
1938	Machine Shop at St. Anthony

4.123 Grenfell supporting organizations

Organization	Headquarters
Newfoundland Grenfell Association	St. John's
Grenfell Association of America	New York
New England Grenfell Association	Boston
Grenfell Labrador Medical Mission	Ottawa
Grenfell Association of Great Britain and Ireland	London

“The fog played havoc with the Radio-telephone reception too. I had quite [a sick] patient here and was wondering what next to do ... no plane could possibly get in ... About ten days later Dr. Thomas arrived out of the blue literally no RT reception yet. During the 16 hrs he was here we did some intensive work, operations, X-rays to read, and patients to see ... We had not seen a Doctor for two months.”

– Excerpts from a letter written by an IGA nurse on July 7, 1957 indicating that even in the 1950s practising medicine along the coast was challenging.



4.124 Boys in Labrador public school workshop, c.1925-26
 These school boys in Muddy Bay, Labrador received daily manual training from a Mission volunteer.



4.125 Postcards were created by the International Grenfell Mission to raise funds
 This one was used by Grenfell himself.



DIMENSIONS OF THINKING JUDGMENT

What is the truth?

When is it okay to emphasize certain truths and leave out others? Is a narrative ever truly balanced? In some cases, could it be argued that the end justifies the means?

In order to raise money to support the Mission in northern Newfoundland and Labrador, Wilfred Grenfell frequently embarked on lecture tours across Canada, the United States, and Britain. Grenfell's lectures were known for captivating audiences with tales of adventure and heartache in the north and convincing thousands of people to support his cause. The focus of this fundraising technique was the portrayal of people on the coast as

poverty stricken and in desperate need of social and medical assistance. While Grenfell gained a favourable reputation throughout North America and Britain for his humanitarian activities, he was sometimes criticized back in Newfoundland and Labrador for portraying such a negative image of the people. Here is a glimpse of two sides of the same story.



4.126 Grenfell lantern slides

These slides are typical of what Grenfell showed his audience while fundraising. Note – the following titles in quotation marks are the titles that the Grenfell Mission used to describe the images: (left) "Sir Wilfred and a little crippled orphan at St. Anthony Orphanage," 1930; (middle) "Bare footed girl standing on snow," date unknown; (right) "Forget me not-child patient," St. Anthony hospital, c. 1920-29.

... Of Dr Grenfell's lecture we can honestly say it was convincing. He spoke of the work of the Deep Sea Mission principally from the social and medical standpoint, and showed that on both sides it was working for the betterment and well-being of the people. Many photographs were shown of the sick and maimed, the halt and lame who by treatment in the coast hospitals had been relieved of suffering and made useful members of society ... when one considers what the relief from suffering is to each individual concerned, taken from torture and helplessness and lifted into a position to enjoy the blessings of life, criticisms must be silent and the words of approval must be spoken.

4.127 An excerpt from *The Royal Gazette*, Dec. 5, 1905

*Mr. Editor, I said in my last letter that the means by which Dr. Grenfell obtains financial aid for his Mission is **A Degradation of the People of Newfoundland**, and I am surprised that any person claiming to be a Newfoundlander or whose children are Newfoundlanders, should tolerate, much less approve of and abet, an enterprise supported by such means. ... citizens who wrote in the press in favour of Dr. Grenfell's work, must be entirely ignorant of the details of it ... or they would never give their sanction to a scheme which shows up themselves, their wives, and their children as a lot of **Half Starved, Squalid Savages**. Dr. Grenfell ... collects abroad some \$20,000.00 (twenty thousand dollars) annually. This sum he collects by means of lectures which he illustrates by ... pictures, taken from the very lowest and poorest of our people's homes ... the impression left upon the minds of the hearers is that such is the general and **Normal State of Our People**. Thus the poverty of a few (and very few) of our poorest settlements is exploited as a means of extracting alms from a charitably-minded audience ...*

4.128 An excerpt from a letter to the editor by Archbishop M.F. Howley from *The Daily News*, Dec. 13, 1905



4.129 A recreation of a real adventure

Grenfell shows the improvised flag and cloak he made while trapped on an ice pan in April 1908. (Grenfell had been attempting to travel across sea ice by dog and sled in order to reach a patient.) The cloak is made from the skins of a few of the dogs that were with him. The flag is made from a bright flannel shirt which was hung from a pole fashioned from a dog's leg.

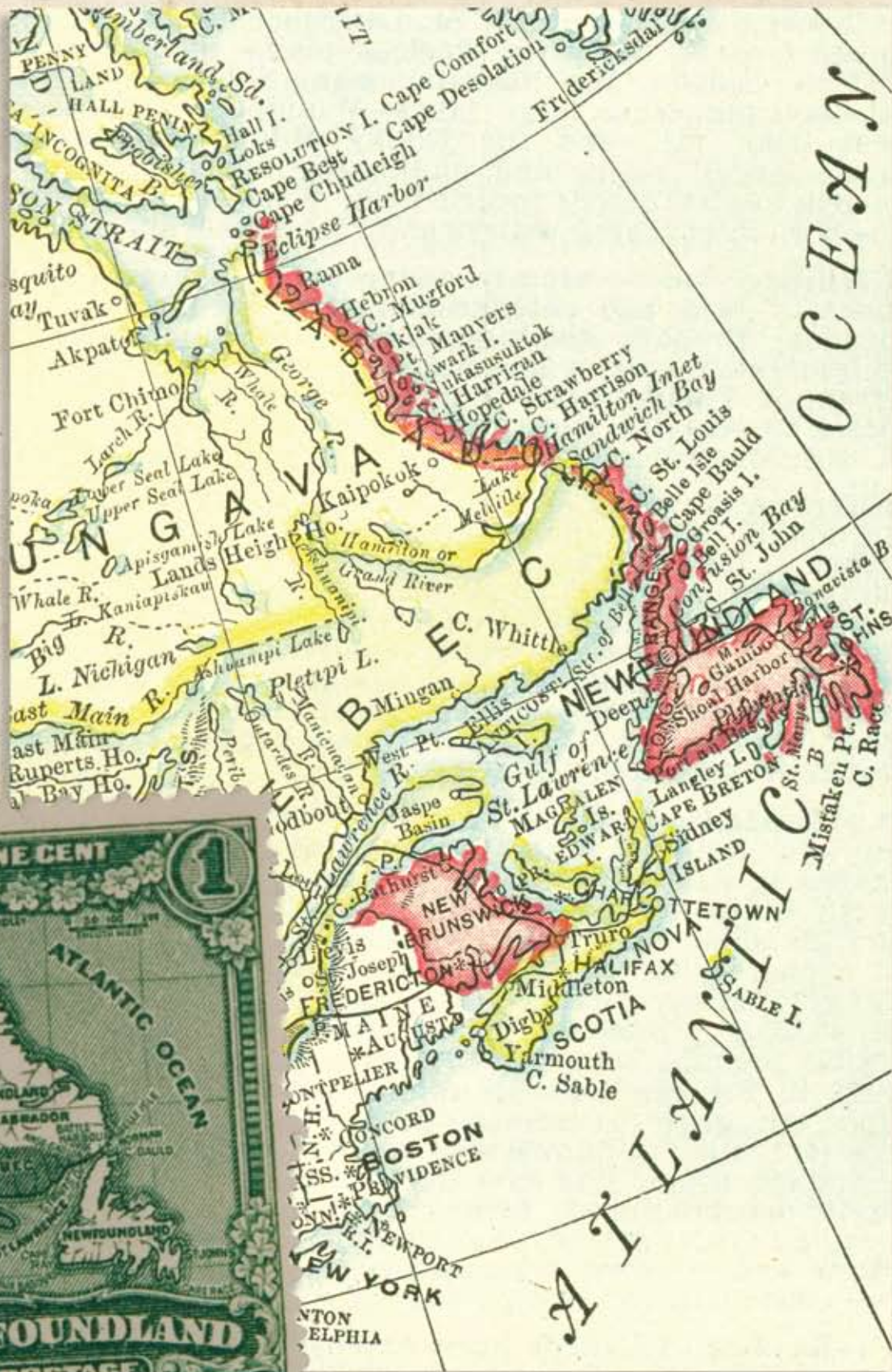


4.130 Rough conditions under which to practise medicine
Wilfred Grenfell administering anaesthetic to male patient on kitchen table, c. 1892-99

Questions:

1. Based on the data provided in this lesson, what were the benefits of Grenfell's work?
2. What were the issues raised by Archbishop M.F. Howley in this letter concerning Grenfell's work?
3. Many people would argue that Grenfell's work accomplished much good for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Was the way in which Grenfell depicted people to raise funds for this work appropriate? Explain.
4. Today, some charitable organizations use a similar approach to Grenfell's when fundraising. What are the strengths and weaknesses of using such an approach?

4.131 A map illustrating the Labrador boundary prior to the 1927 Privy Council decision.
 Note how only a thin strip along Labrador's coast is shown as part of Newfoundland's jurisdiction.



4.132 Newfoundland postage stamp, issued 1928-29
 This Newfoundland postage stamp is the first one to show Labrador's boundary as determined in the 1927 ruling by the Privy Council.



Jurisdiction Issues

As the importance of the Labrador fishery and fur trade grew, so did interest in controlling these resources. The first official agreement on who “owned” Labrador was the Treaty of Paris in 1763, which gave a portion of the Labrador Peninsula to Quebec and a portion to

Newfoundland. However, as this treaty did not define the western limit of the territory, it caused friction between Newfoundland and Quebec over the exact location of the border. This resulted in a series of legislations that transferred jurisdiction over parts of Labrador from

NEWFOUNDLAND MADE 3 TIMES PRESENT SIZE

Canada Loses Rich Prize in
Privy Council Decision

SPECTACULAR FEATURES

Quebec Sees Uncertainty
About Fate of Grand Falls—
More Negotiations Likely

(Special to The Gazette.)

Ottawa, March 1—Canada loses a rich prize and Newfoundland annexes an area aggregating 111,300 square miles by the decision of the judicial committee of the Privy Council announced today in London. The stake includes some 60,000 square miles of spruce forest valued at \$250,000,000 and a catract known as Grand Falls compared with which the mighty Niagara takes second place. Incidentally, the Privy Council decision means that all the maps of Canada will have to be changed and the ancient British Colony of Newfoundland will be three times its present size. Interest to Ontario is that Grand Falls, which have been seen by comparatively few white men, were discovered by a Hudson's Bay official, John McLean, whose descendants reside in the town of Ferrisburgh. He estimated that the available power in the disputed area is equal to a million horsepower, a total available in the city of Quebec. A spectacular feature in connection with the legal tug-of-war is that it has cost Canada and Newfoundland something like \$1,000,000 in expert fees. The dispute has lasted for twenty years and during that time a million words were written before the Privy Council by lawyers appearing in the case. It took five years for the committee to agree upon the answer to the question to be put to the law lords, which was: "What is the location and definition of the boundary as between Canada and Newfoundland in the Labrador peninsula under the statutes, orders-in-council and proclamations?"

Newfoundland to Quebec in 1774 and from Quebec to Newfoundland in 1809.

In 1825, a court decision established the 52nd parallel as the southern boundary of Labrador. However, when surveys of Labrador's interior in the 1890s revealed the existence of great mineral and timber resources, the 1825 border again came under dispute. This boundary issue became the subject of prolonged litigation between Canada and Newfoundland until it was resolved in Newfoundland's favour by the Privy Council in London in 1927. They ruled that the Labrador boundary was:

... a line drawn due north from the eastern boundary of the bay or harbour of the Anse au Sablon as far as the fifty-second degree of north latitude, and from thence westward ... until it reaches the Romaine River, and then northward along the left or east bank of that river and its head waters to the source and from thence due northward to the crest of the watershed or height of land there, and from thence westward and northward along the crest of the watershed of the rivers flowing into the Atlantic Ocean until it reaches Cape Chidley.

Questions:

1. The place of Labrador in the history of this province often receives less attention than the island. What are some factors that might account for this?
2. Compare the experience of the peopling of Labrador to the peopling of the island of Newfoundland. Present your analysis in the form of a Venn diagram.
3. What were the most significant effects of the Hudson's Bay Company on life in Labrador?
4. What were the most significant effects of the Grenfell Mission on life in Labrador?

Ironically, the Newfoundland government tried to sell Labrador to Quebec in 1925 to help pay the public debt but Quebec turned down the offer.