

## Alexis Bay History



Dear Readers;

Compiling this booklet was one of the most interesting things I have ever done. I am a descendant of the Campbells who played a major role in the history of St. Michael's Bay. While I was researching, I gained a great deal of knowledge about my own family history. I am very proud of my Labrador roots.

Learning together has been our motto throughout all Oral History Projects and will continue to be. I have been blessed by the learners in the White Bear area who have always been my support team. They have been my inspiration throughout this and other projects. When we work together and share our ideas and experiences there is no limit to what we can accomplish.

The *Literacy Management Committee and I*, apologize to those of you whose stories were not included in this booklet. Unfortunately we had to limit the number of stories this time around. On the up side, all stories are preserved at the local literacy office and will eventually be placed in an archive. We assure you that your story was just as important as the ones printed in this book and your efforts were not a waste of time. Thank you all for your cooperation and wonderful stories.

Our deepest regrets for the many stories from the past that have been buried already. We realize that unfortunately for many questions we may never know the answers, since the stories are now lost and buried forever with the story tellers of yesteryear. This is a real tragedy, for we have lost genuine treasures May we learn from these past mistakes and take measures such as this Oral History project to ensure this does not happen again.

The purpose of this booklet is to give you a glimpse of the many people who have

contributed to the strength and culture of our "isolated" communities. We hope to not only preserve our heritage but also capture some of the character, personal triumph, pride and humor possessed by our ancestors of yesteryear.

May the tradition of story telling and the courage of our ancestors be forever a part of our heritage and may it be an inspiration in your life today. We must realize the importance of preserving our community history before it falls by the way side.

We thank you for your support as readers. We ask that you please give us some feedback Please forward your comments or questions to Ardena Cadwell. P0 Box 114. Charlottetown, Labrador. AOK 5Y0.

Happy Reading,

*Ardena Cadwell*

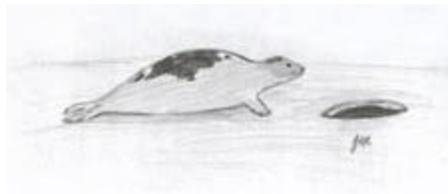
Ardena Cadwell

Oral History Director

#### Information Collected From:

- *Newfoundland and Labrador Encyclopedia*
- *Informant Wallace Campbell, Pinsent's Arm 1998*
- *Labrador by Choice, B. W. Powell*
- *Them Days Magazine, Doris Saunders*
- *Informant Thomas Penney, Port Hope Simpson 1998*
- *Informant Dave Thuroit, Port Hope Simpson 1998*
- *MUN Archives, St. John's, Newfoundland*
- *Informant Freeman Russell, William's Harbour 1998*
- *Alluring Labrador 1982, Doris Saunders*

*Many thanks to all who contributed to this booklet!!*



## Table of Contents

[Port Hope Simpson History](#)

[William's Harbour History](#)

[Folklore](#)

[Interesting Facts](#)



## Port Hope Simpson

In southern Labrador, nestled on the south side of the Alexis River you will find the community of Port Hope Simpson. “Port Hope” as locals call it, has a fairly short but interesting history.

Labrador’s economy was in trouble, the fishery was at a low and the government knew something had to be done to help this situation. In 1933, the Commissioner of Natural Resources, Sir John Hope Simpson funded Welsh entrepreneur J.O. Williams to establish the Labrador Development Company. Williams was to hire employees to cut pitprops at Alexis Bay, St. Michael’s Bay and St. Lewis Bay. The government hoped this would boost Labrador’s economy and create security for its future.

The following year, Williams built a sawmill and townsite at Alexis River. News of woods work for the fall of 1934 rapidly circulated along the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. Approximately, 600 workers came to seek work. The fishery had been extremely poor following World War I and many were in desperate need of work. Many fishermen living in the area relocated their families to the work site. As well, unemployed men from Newfoundland were sent to the site on government passes.

In 1941, the new found community was named Port Hope Simpson after Sir John Hope Simpson. Many say that the community should have been named for J.O. Williams since he was really the founder. Others speculate that Williams named the community after Sir John as an effort to stay in his favour and to secure future funding for his company.



Prior to the arrival of Williams, inner Alexis Bay had been inhabited as a winter place by families who fished on the “outside.” One such family was the Notley family. Job Notley has been noted as living on an Island at Light Tickle (10 km east of Port Hope) in the mid 1800s. Job’s descendants continued to live there long after Job was deceased. Alexis River appeared in the 1884 Census with a population of eight. Today, Notleys (descendants of Job) still remain at Port Hope Simpson.

Many came to work with the company and soon the newly found Port Hope Simpson was booming. J.O. Williams built a campsite and some company houses for the company elite. Many of the employees were from the Northern Peninsula and White Bay, NF. All the able bodied men and boys in Alexis Bay sought employment, as well as a few from along the Labrador coast. Workers were eager to work and were excited about the whole

prospect of employment.

Working conditions were not at all as the employees had anticipated. Williams was concerned with making money only and did not care about treating his workers well, he was like a slave driver. He provided poor accommodations and little food for his workers. The majority of Labrador workers had barely any education and Williams thought this gave him leeway to exploit them. Within the first year of operation, the number of employees dropped from 600 to 400. Hardships endured during the winter left much to be desired and many away from home and family became discouraged and quit.

It was soon discovered that woods work must be carried out during the winter. Production was much easier after freeze up and summer was when the wood was shipped out. During summer, fewer men were needed and many were laid off.

Very little wood production took place that first year but it was firmly established that Port Hope Simpson offered much potential. Woods work for Port Hope's future was now a sure thing.

During its second year the company constructed about 60 small houses for rent. Port Hope Simpson was now beginning to expand into a fairly large settlement. A general store, "a hall" which served as both school and church and a seven room medical clinic was also built at Mill Cove Point. The clinic housed several nurses and later a doctor. These buildings were situated together in what was referred to as the "*Flant*."

Most Labradorians chose not to live in company housing. They resided one quarter of a mile away on the opposite side of Black Water Brook. Informants say the reason being that they could not afford the rental costs. A number of families from the Northern Peninsula built camps below the brook as well. They had become friends with these people and chose to be their neighbors rather than living on the "Plant" with people they did not know. This segregation caused some conflict between the two groups. Many of these Newfoundlanders who settled below the brook were Pentecostal believers, After some encouragement from this group, a Pentecostal church was established at Black Water Brook under the pastorage of William Gillett from Newfoundland. Most of the Labradorians below the brook repented. Meanwhile, on the "Plant" church was conducted in the hail in an undenominational manner. The company's manager usually led the services,

Once Williams had his company firmly in place, he became very strict with his employees. The company tried to monopolize everyone and everything. Since Williams operated the only supply store in the community, he had much power over the people. He prohibited any other buying or selling there. He also became very harsh with regard to setting regulations for his employees. The workers were underpaid and undernourished.

He especially mistreated the Labradorians, since they were poor and uneducated he

thought they knew no better. Men were paid a scanty wage of 25 cents an hour and boys were given twelve cents an hour. They received \$1 .75-\$2.00 per cord of pitprops. The work was mostly done by man power. The men worked hard, using a bucksaw for twelve hours a day. The wood was then hauled from the forest by horses or dogs. The men were put on rations, mostly beans and porridge. The Labradorians were forced to buy the deteriorating food from the company store.

The men who had sought work with the company had hoped to earn and save cash over time. Their hopes were soon crushed by the high cost of living and the low wages. The company drained every cent they could from these poor workers. They made certain that they were always in debt with the company store.

The majority of fishermen worked with the company for the winter season only. Fishers moved "outside" to their fishing stations during summer. They were now able to purchase supplies and food from their fish merchant much cheaper than from Williams. Most of these fishers settled at Black Water Brook during winter.

Within the first few years Port Hope Simpson had grown into a large town by Labrador standards. But working and living conditions continued to be poor. Williams continued to treat the Labrador illiterate unfairly, making certain they were placed in the hardest area for cutting. Wages did not improve over time and nor did Williams. All this unfair treatment led to an organized strike in 1936, lasting for several months during the summer.

Williams was devastated, he knew he was losing ground with the people. He could no longer get away with his unfair tactics. The fishermen who worked as woodsmen despised Williams. He could no longer get his workers to obey his commands. In desperation, he informed the Government about the happenings. He exaggerated the situation, telling the Government that his employees had become hostile. The Government was very appalled. They sent fifty Newfoundland Policemen to the site to investigate and maintain order.

Once the police arrived, they assessed the situation and found Williams had been lying, the people were in no way hostile. For most, it was like being on a vacation because the people were so pleasant to be around. In the end, more workers quit and J.O. Williams was instructed by Government to provide better working conditions. The workers were in no way penalized for the strike.

Williams tried to make a come back. He purchased some equipment, including a tractor to haul the wood from the forest. He tried to Improve working conditions in order to please the government and gain Rapport with his employees. Williams soon found It was too little, too late. The damage had been done and he could in no way erase his past mistakes. People no longer wanted to work under him.

Williams spent many sleepless nights wondering how he could once again increase production. He decided to subcontract to the locals, this way they were practically their own boss. His idea was a seller and soon many accepted small contracts of 100 to 300 cord of wood. Several men would work together to fill the contract. Production increased considerably. They used dogs to haul the wood out to the landwash. They found dogs could not haul as much weight as horses but could work well in all types of weather conditions, unlike horses who were useless in deep snow and slushy conditions.

Just as Williams thought he could once again make a go of it, he began having difficulty with his DR22 tractors. Due to the lack of operator training or maybe the mechanical design, the tractors were more trouble than good. Locals speculate that the extreme cold temperatures at that time were largely to blame. In the late 1930s and 40s, many Newfoundland workers went back to the Island. Employment had increased in Newfoundland, especially during World War II. However, the war had negative effects on the woods operation at Port Hope Simpson. Because of the war, many transportation difficulties were experienced and the wood could not be exported as easily as before. Also, markets for pitprops reduced due to the impact of war on Britain.

The 1940s brought about many changes for the people of Port Hope Simpson. Williams set up a sawmill in Mill Cove and the people sawed lumber to build proper houses. The company would let the individuals saw their logs in exchange for half of the sawed product. Locals cut enough logs to ensure that once Williams took half of the lumber they still had enough left to build their homes.

The company started to pay its employees by provision of food stamps or cheques which could only be cashed at the Company Store. Once again Williams was becoming the people's dictator. He thought he was on a roll now and could once again get away with treating his employees unfairly. 1944 proved to be a bad year for Williams. The company was unable to make the loan payment to the Government. Williams met with government to discuss his difficulties and ask that they fund him once again. After several meetings, Williams was able to reach an agreement with government and was provided with more funding. Williams tried to hire additional men as the government had instructed him but was unsuccessful. He later reported that he had to cancel a half million dollar contract because he could not recruit enough employees.

Williams and the company were sinking fast. Once again in November of 1947 the company did not make enough profit to pay their government loan and therefore was forced into liquidation. Williams tried to bounce back but was unable to convert British Sterling into dollars to support any operation. Financially crippled, Williams departed from Port Hope permanently, selling much of his equipment to locals.

After the closure of the company, about 40 families went back to their homes in Newfoundland. The Labradorians and those who had integrated with them remained at Port Hope Simpson. The majority of which returned to the fishery. Many had never given

up fishing and therefore still held the same berths.

Williams was not a people person but he had created work which led to the development of a new community. His company had brought Labradorians and Newfoundlanders together at the work site. As a result many friendships and even marriages evolved from this uniting. Many people at Port Hope Simpson today are descendants of liveyers. Some of the surnames that make up the community of 577 include: Burden, Butt, Kippenhuck, Strugnell, Savory, Green, Turnbull, Ward, Parr, Moss, Paul, Penney, Notley, Russell, Rumbolt and Sampson.

Over the years other companies such as Bowaters have operated woods operations at Port Hope Simpson. Bowaters studied the area and found it to be promising for a pulpwood operation. Roy Penney, a local, was given a contract to cut as much pulp wood as he could and then ship it to Corner Brook. This contract was given on an experimental basis. Roy hired 20 men to work with him. They were successful and cut some 1250 cord of wood. Bowaters was very pleased with the results. Port Hope Simpson was once again on the road to a bright future in the woods operation.

In 1959 Port Hope Simpson experienced a major forest fire, much of the forest was destroyed. Bowaters pulp wood operation was now on hold. It wasn't until 1962 that they set up house and cut haul roads and went into the pulp wood operation big time. This company was fully equipped, unlike Williams. They set up some five miles up Alexis River to be near the timber sites. They constructed many buildings there, including a medical clinic. They established drum barkers and a large servicing garage as well. They hired many people from the area and the unemployment rate dropped swiftly. Dunn this time many gave up fishing to be employed full-time.

Bowaters created more than 20 miles of forest access road. In 1963, in conjunction with the government, Bowaters constructed a wharf just below Black Wate Brook. This made shipping much easier for the company and the workers as well.

Bowaters hired some 300 men, mostly from various Labrador coastal communities. Locals returned home on weekends while the others resided in the company camps permanently. Bowaters brought in top of the line equipment and production was great. Port Hope, Simpson was once again booming.

Earlier on Garland Penney and Jacob Penney had received government funding to set up a retail store. Now with the increase in population several more stores were established at Port Hope. A large increase in children was experienced, therefore a small Pentecostal school was built.

Informants describe Bowaters as being an excellent company to work for. They paid good wages and provided well for their employees. The men were given excellent accommodations and could eat all they wanted at the camps. Because they treated

employees with respect, the workers enjoyed working for the company and production was high.

Port Hope families were usually large, thus some member(s) of a fishing family still returned to their summer stations to fish. This enabled fishers to hold their good fishing berths, to keep the merchants returning and to earn extra income. During the 1960s, Fishery Products and Earle's were the merchants for the main fishing villages.

Bowaters incurred much expense with regard to road construction. Also, pulp wood markets were at a low. Despite all their efforts, they were unable to make a profit. In 1967, they took most of their equipment and retired from Port Hope Simpson. In 1974, another major forest fire destroyed much of Port Hope's timber. Studies have been carried out since that time, discovering that there is still profitable timber remaining in the area.

Once again the locals returned to the fishery. They were now able to purchase loans from the Fisheries Loan Board for boat building and purchasing new gear to enhance their fishing operation. Federal and Provincial governments also made substantial subsidies and bounties available to the fishermen.

Some Fishermen built longliners while others improved on their smaller boats. This meant that the fishermen were better equipped and could make more profit.

Over the years Port Hope has preserved its ties to the fishery. Today the community's main industry is the fishery. Some people still move "outside" to their summer stations to fish but many stay in the bay and fish in the area. The government has placed a moratorium on the cod since 1992. Fishers now harvest other species such as scallop and crab. The people have had to adapt to many changes, giving up their historical rights to fish cod and learning to fish "new" species instead. Despite all the difficulties they have wrestled over the years, Port Hope people have always come out on top. They are survivors to say the least!

Port Hope Simpson owes its beginnings to Williams and Sir John Hope Simpson who saw its potential and started a woods work operation there. Since then woods work has played an important role in the development of the community. Today both Simon Strugnell and Reg Russell have individual woods operations at Port Hope. It seems as though Port Hope Simpson is deeply rooted in harvesting this natural resource. I guess for many its in the blood!



## William's Harbour

On the south western side of *Granby Island*, (so named by Captain Cart In 1770) at the mouth of Alexis Bay (approximately 35 km east of Port Hope Simpson) lies the quaint village of William's Harbour. William's Harbour is said to be 190 air miles from Goose Bay.

William's Harbour is thought to have been inhabited by migratory fishermen from England in the early 1700s. In the early 1800s, fishing and trading in the area increased. It was in 1827 that the judge of the Labrador court noted six schooners there.

How William's Harbour received its name is not known for certain, however, there are many different speculations. It is possible that it was named after one of the Newfoundland Williams' in the fishery around the late 1770s or for John Williams, a surgeon's mate from Chateau who came to help one of Cartwright's crew members. The seemingly most popular belief amongst the residents of William's Harbour is that it was named after William Russell, a young man originating from England Whales who married an Eskimo girl (Susan Kibenook) and stayed in Labrador It was Susan's family who were said to have been the first residents of William's Harbour, settling there sometime in the 1840s.

The Kibenook (later translated as Kippenhuck) family later moved to George's Cove while William and Susan remained in William's Harbour. William soon started up a herring factory. It was a large operation, employing approximately fourteen men As a result of his strong ties with England, he often had big cod traps come over from England for this operation

The community of William's Harbour appears in the first census taken of the Labrador coast in 1856 with a population of fourteen people Through the late 1800s, the population remained at this level

After 1894 the fishery was no longer viable this led many fishers of near by harbours on the island to return to their original Newfoundland bomes. This meant William's

Harbour/Rexon's Cove were now the sole "livyer" communities in the area.

The Russells were soon joined by other families; the Burdens, Larkhams, and Penneys from St. Francis Harbour Bight. The population increased to twenty-nine by 1901 and remained at that level through the early years of the twentieth century.

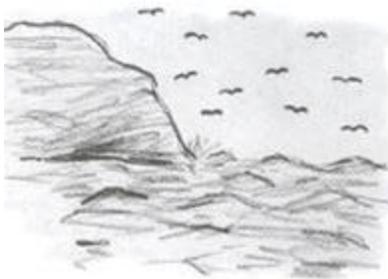
The founding of a pitprop and pulpwood operation at Port Hope Simpson in the mid 1930s provided an important source of seasonal employment in the area. The use of William's Harbour Run as the sea route to and from Port Hope Simpson made the community the usual port of call on Granby Island. By 1945, the population had increased to forty-nine. Subsequently, slumps in lumbering led to an increased summer population of about seventy. Half of whom wintered at Rexon's Cove and the remainder at Port Hope Simpson.

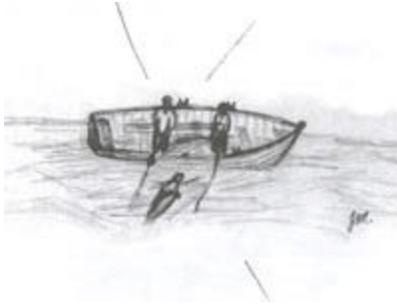
In 1965 William's Harbour was noted as having a population of 62; 60 "livyers", 2 stationers. They would arrive there by the first of June and depart again in early October.

In the 1970s William's Harbour became a year round community. The operator of a small fish plant convinced the people that they would have a stronger argument for obtaining electricity, a new school and other services if they remained at William's Harbour year round. Since that time Rexon's Cove has been abandoned.

Today William's Harbour has a population of?? The most common family name in the community is still Russell (descendants of William Rus8e11).

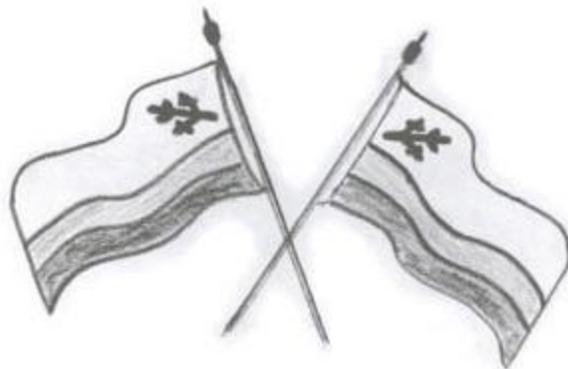
Even though there has been a Moratorium placed on the cod since 1994, locals still have strong ties to the fishery. Fishers have geared their industry toward "new species" such as scallop and crab. Locals speculate that William's Harbour will remain intact for generations to come!





## Folklore

*Folklore has always played an important role in Providing entertainment for the people of coastal Labrador. Folklore is part of our heritage. Each communj seems to have its own tales to tell.*



In the winter of 1993 Port Hope Simpson hosted a Snowblast. This is a scheduled event. Surrounding communities are invited to come together with Port Hope and celebrate winter. There are many events such as snowmobile racing and skiing, etc. Another event is a talent night, a time for people to sing, act, etc. Sherry Penney (Strugnell) talked to her sister-in-law, Beverly Russell and they decided they would enter a song in the talent show. They decided they would sing a song entitled "Spring Break up" which was written by a past teacher at their school. They read over the song and realized it was no longer relevant to Port Hope Simpson since people there were no longer able to fish cod. They decided to rewrite the song to apply to the people as they were now living since the cod moratorium. Here is what they came up with:

### **Spring Break-up Since the Cod Moratorium**

*The ice is melting slowly as the sun shines on the bay  
The people are so anxious, they want to get away  
But because of the cod Moratorium it's just as well to stay  
And make the best of everything and settle in the bay*

*The wind is blowing from the south and warming up the air  
The men they're thinking, "oh what a day to b out on the gear"  
But because of the cod moratorium this cannot be so  
It doesn't matter which way the wind may blow*

*Intil the spring of '94 we'll just have to wait and see  
We hope and pray that it will be better than '93  
We hope the fish will be back better than ever before  
Then we'll all be so thankful to be on the coast once more*

This song is sung to the same tune as "The Bismark Song"



## Tormented Souls

by Wallace Campbell

A Newfoundlander once moved to Gilbert's River. He wanted to learn to trap fur. His buddy who had lived in the area for years was a good trapper, therefore he was able to teach the Newfoundlander. They both went to Gilbert's River to build homes.

The Newfoundlander's buddy had heard the "old people" say there were Indian graves on one side of Gilbert's. He told his Newfoundland friend of this and suggested that he not build on that side of the cove. His friend just laughed and said, "that is where I like it, on top of the grave." He went ahead and built his house there anyway. The other guy would not build his house on the burial ground but built up on the other side of the cove.

The Newfoundlander lived alone in his new home on the burial ground. When visitors would come to his house, he would always put on a big fire. He would say to the dead, "I'll soon have you warmed up now." One fellow who had witnessed this event expressed some concern to the Newfoundlander saying, "if you keep that up, you will get a big start one of those days." The Newfoundlander replied, "the dead can't hurt you, once you're dead you cannot come back." He kept up his little remarks about the dead for most of the winter.

One night his buddy across the cove woke up and heard his friend screaming in horror. He swiftly went over to see what was happening. It was dark, he stumbled into the house and lit a match to help him find his way. He found his friend in his room in bed. He was yelling, "get 'em off me, make 'em stop pinching me." There was no one to be seen so he questioned his friend about whom he was referring to. The Newfoundlander replied, "that crowd who is pinching me." His buddy replied, "no one is pinching you, you must have been dreaming." The Newfoundlander insisted that he was in no way dreaming and that he would show his buddy the bruise marks in the morning. He said, "they have me pinched black and blue, I know they do." He said, "Boy. They almost had me pinched to death." People lived near and he started to name some who might have come and attacked him.

His buddy went back home and waited for daylight. At daylight, the next morning he returned to check on his friend. Sure enough he was badly bruised. Buddy took a look around the premises to see if there were any footprints other than their own to be seen. He went back in and told his friend that there were no footprints other than theirs to be found. He then told his friend that he was always tormenting the poor dead souls about getting them warmed up with a big fire on. He said, "you would not let the dead rest, I told you something was going to happen if you didn't stop. You brought their spirits back to torture you as you had been torturing them."

The Newfoundlander left his house and went over to live on the other side of the cove with his buddy. He was too scared to live in his house any longer. When spring came he went back to his house, took out some of his belongings and burned the house down. He later returned to Newfoundland. No one heard tell of the Newfoundlander again

## Fairy Tales

Anonymous

First when the Labrador coast was settled and years later, people believed fairies roamed the area. The older people would warn their families about these fairies and tell them to always carry bread in their pockets. If they came upon a fairy, they were to throw some bread crumbs at the fairy. This would satisfy the fairies and they would leave the bread thrower alone.

They would warn children to stay away from certain rocks and places because fairies were said to be living there. They would say, "if the fairies get you, they will fairy change you. We would still be able to see you but you would no longer be able to talk to us. You too would become a fairy."

There have been many stories about berry pickers who were "fairy changed" and wandered around for days as if they were in a daze. To ensure you are safe from this hazzard, be sure you carry bread in the future!

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## Unexpected Visitor

Anonymous

Years ago a lone trapper would go to his trapline during the winter. He trapped around the Blue Hills. He would stay in the country until Christmas and then return to his home at Port Hope Simpson.

He was a jolly man who liked to tell ghost stories. He would tell about many encounters with ghosts on his country travels. He claimed that when he built one of his cabins, he used some nails which he removed from an old deserted cabin. Once he had the cabin completed, he spent the night there. That night when he was just about to drift off to sleep he heard a rapping on the door. He went out to see what was happening. He was surprised to find no one at the door. He went inside again and lay back down. Suddenly he heard a voice saying, "I wants me nails, I wants me nails." At first he was startled but he soon gained his composure. He told the voice, "you're not getting your nails, so go away." The voice then disappeared.

The trapper later told he had heard many ghostly voices and saw some strange things on his journeys to his trapline. He said he was often startled but never too scared to return to his beloved trapline.

## Unexplained Light

by Thomas Penney

J.O Williams had a boat come to Port Hope to export the company wood. The boat was moored in a tickle at Port Hope Simpson. There was much activity and employees were working about, boarding and unboarding the boat. In the dark of the night one employee was getting off the boat when he tripped and fell overboard. His body was later found. He had drowned.

On several occasions' people claim to have seen a ghostly light in the tickle where the man drowned many years ago. This light is said to appear on a stormy night. Many believe it to be the ghost of the deceased man.

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## Rivers Run Deep

Labrador communities, Islands and rivers were usually named by the earlier settlers to the coast. One such river that stands out from the rest is the Gilbert's River. It has two names; the outer part is called the Gilbert's and the inner is known as the Jefferies.

Mr. Jefferies for which the river was named is still somewhat of a legend in the area. He was said to have been one of the early trappers in the Port Hope Simpson area. He was supposedly an Englishman who came to Labrador in the eighteenth century. Some say he came on a pirate ship. He was not happy on the ship and so he planned to escape. He was a very strong swimmer. When he got close to land in an area that looked very pleasing to him he waited until nightfall and then he jumped overboard and swam ashore. He settled "up in the bottom" of Gilbert's Bay where he later married an Eskimo woman and had a family together. He learned to trap and soon became a top of the line trapper.

Ben W. Powell, better known to the coast as "*Uncle Ben*" goes into more details of the life of Mr. Jefferies in his book, *Labrador by Choice*. It makes for very interesting reading.



## Interesting Facts:

The word Labrador is the Portuguese and Spanish term for “laborer.” It is said to have been applied by King Emmanuel, under whose auspices Cortereal made his voyages, to characterize the natives whom Cortereal had brought from the western land. These were Montagnais Indians, not Esquimaux as it is generally supposed.

## Murray’s Harbour

Murray’s Harbour is known to fishermen as “the home of the two-eyed beefsteak” (the herring); and in olden times it was the greatest herring post on the shore,

It was originally settled by Devonshire fishermen, who returned every fall to the “old country” but in the early 30s it was frequented by fishermen from St. John’s who established permanent rooms there. The earliest planter was one Motty, who carried out an extensive trade in herring and salmon at Murray’s Harbour.

## The Great Auk

It seems that the “Great Auk” or Gare-fowl, once frequented the coast of Labrador.

The Great Auk was a larger bird than a goose. Its wings were very small, and not constituted for flight, but were admirable paddlers in the water. They could move more swiftly than a loon. Their legs were very short, but powerful, and placed so much posteriorly that, in resting on the rocks, the birds assumed upright attitude, the whole of the legs and toes being applied to the surface. They had broad webbed feet and short wings, resembling the flippers of a seal.

It was a native of the northern hemisphere, the penguin being its relation in the south. The Auk was said to have been the connecting link between fish and bird, partaking of the nature of both!

## The Narwhal

The *Narwhal* which has habits similar to the White Whale is found in the extreme north; it generally travels in bands or “schools,” and seems to prefer the proximity of ice, so that its summer range is more northern than the white whale. It is distinguished in the water from the white whale by its darker color, its white spots and its horns. The color becomes lighter with age, so that very old individuals become dirty white.

According to the Esquimaux, the horn is confined to the males and its chief use is for domestic battle. Only one horn is usually developed, growing out of the upper jaw, and projecting directly forward. The horns vary in length up to eight feet, and are composed of a very fine quality of ivory. This Ivory is more valuable than that obtained from Walrus tusks, being worth about four dollars a pound in the early 1900s. It was sold for China trade, where the Mongolians use it for medicine as well as ornamental purposes, and for the manufacture of cups supposed to absorb all poisons placed in them.



