MAKING HOME:
PERFORMANCE, SOCIABILITY, AND IDENTITY IN ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND, 1810-1860.

by

Angela Christine Duffett

A thesis submitted to the Department of History

In conformity with the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Queen's University

Kingston, Ontario, Canada

(November, 2018)

Copyright ©Angela Christine Duffett, 2018

Abstract

St. John's, Newfoundland underwent an economic and cultural transformation in the early nineteenth century. With a growing year-round resident population, and mercantile operations increasingly headquartered out the town, St. John's began to take on the appearance and infrastructure of a colonial town rather than a temporary summer fishing outpost. "Making Home" explores an emerging middle class's attempts to change the town itself to reflect their values and ideals, and it charts the performances and expressions of identity that took place on the ground. The thesis examines how, in the years between 1810 and 1860, St. John's rising middle class created a sense of space and place: how they thought of their local environment, and how they defined it in relation to the wider world. In short, how they made a home and how they saw themselves within that home. It does this by analyzing a selection of the events and sites that compelled people to move through the city: the activities of fraternal and benevolent clubs and societies, the cornerstone-laying and consecration ceremonies of cathedrals, various parades, and the wharfside ceremonies to greet visiting dignitaries. These were the moments during which people performed identities and created imagined communities of club, church, city, and colony, while simultaneously creating literal spaces for those communities by staking claim to city streets.

The city's geographic and economic location (deeply rooted in patterns of Atlantic trade, yet relatively isolated from other major centres by climate and geography) shaped many residents' ongoing feelings about their home. As a case study of sociability and identity in a colonial setting, "Making Home" explores how both local and Atlantic contexts created a sense of place in a nineteenth-century port town.

Acknowledgements

There is no way that I could have gone the distance on this thesis without generous help and support from family members and friends.

At Queen's, I would like to thank my supervisor, Jane Errington, whose guidance and challenging questions about colonial history profoundly shaped this thesis. I will greatly miss our conversations in her office at Watson Hall.

Thank you to Professors Laura Cameron, Sandra den Otter, Jeffrey McNairn, and external examiner Professor Jerry Bannister for their interest and time. Queen's University Historian Duncan McDowall very generously commented on many grant applications related to this project over the years and always offered useful advice on navigating graduate school.

Conversations, commiserations, and jokes with fellow graduate students brought a feeling of community to the time I spent at Queen's and helped me make sense of what I was doing there. Chats over coffees, drinks, and dinners with Pete Anderson, Georgia Carley, Mary Chaktsiris, Kendall Garton, Alexandra Giancarlo, Peter Price, Stephen Smith, and Allison Ward were especially clarifying as we moved through graduate school and entered our careers.

A grant from the J.R. Smallwood Foundation for Newfoundland and Labrador Studies allowed me to undertake archival research in England and Scotland.

Support and interest in the project from colleagues at Parks Canada, particularly Alexandra Mosquin and Meaghan Beaton, kept me on track during the final stretch of revisions.

My brother Bryan Duffett provided a spare room and gave me a ride across town every morning while I researched in St. John's during the summer of 2012. His hospitality and friendship mean so much!

Finally, I extend my deepest thanks to my parents, Bruce and Peggy Duffett, who put up with me when I was lost in the weeds of this project and always believed in my abilities. Their support has been invaluable. Thank you!

Table of Contents

Abstract ... i

Acknowledgements ... ii

List of Figures ... v

List of Tables ... vi

Introduction: A Town "Very Much Improved?" ... 1

Chapter 1 Making Home on the Page: Place, Class, and Identity in Letters, Diaries, and Travel Writing ... 27

- Landscape and Built Environment ... 32
- Lives on the Page ... 48
- Conclusion ... 69

Chapter 2 Socializing for Success: Respectability and Middle-Class Consciousness in Voluntary and Fraternal Organizations ... 71

- Origins of Fraternal and Charitable Groups and Membership in them ... 79
- Reputation and Respectability ... 90
- Charitable Activities ... 101
- Social Spaces: The Orphan Asylum School and BIS Hall ... 107
- Social Events ... 112
- Public Spectacles ... 115
- Conclusion ... 123

Chapter 3 Making Home from Above: A Tale of Two Bishops, Two Cathedrals, and a "Pretty Colonial Mess." ... 126

- Roman Catholic Cathedral (later Basilica) of Saint John the Baptist ... 130
- The Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist ... 153
- Conclusion ... 176

Chapter 4 "The land of fish and fog… far exceeded expectations,": Inventing Traditions at the Visit of the Prince of Wales, 1860 ... 179

- Readying the Streets: Decorations, Archways, and Displays of Loyalty ... 190
- Arrival ... 198
- Activities ... 206
- Departure and aftermath: A summer of comparisons ... 211

Conclusion 217
Conclusion: Places Beyond the Pages 221
Bibliography 231

List of Figures

Figure 1. A. Ruger, Panoramic view of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1879................33

Figure 2. Detail from surveyor William Noad's 1852 map of St. John's.......................................36

Figure 3. Detail from surveyor William Noad's 1852 map of St. John's.......................................37

Figure 4. Roman Catholic Cathedral, St. John's, 1871. 141

Figure 5. W.R. Best, St. John’s, Newfoundland from the domain of Government House, looking west, 1851...142

Figure 6. Sketch of George Gilbert Scott’s planned Anglican Cathedral, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1849. 171

Figure 7. William Grey, Sketch of St. John’s, 1857..174

Figure 8. E. Walker, The Landing and Reception of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at St. John’s Newfoundland on the 24th July 1860..205

Figure 9. The Embarkation of the Prince of Wales at the Queen’s Wharf, St. John’s, Newfoundland, 1860. 211

List of Tables

Table 1: Order of the Procession at Cornerstone Laying Ceremony, Roman Catholic Cathedral, 8 May 1841. 135

Table 2: Order of Procession for cornerstone laying at the Anglican Cathedral, August 1843. .. 160

Table 3: Signees of a letter calling for a public meeting to appoint an organizing committee for the visit of the Prince of Wales, 1860. 182

Table 4: Groups not initially on the organizing committee and later invited to join. 184

Table 5: Parties invited to attend the Prince of Wales' landing at the Queen's Wharf, 1860. ... 202

Table 6: Order of the Procession to Government House, following the Prince of Wales' arrival in St. John's, 1860. 205

Table 7: Groups and individuals who presented addresses to the Prince of Wales during his 1860 visit to St. John's.......... 207

Introduction: A Town "Very Much Improved?"

In the spring of 1820, shortly after arriving in St. John's, Newfoundland for his fourth summer in Newfoundland, Richard Morris, a clerk in the mercantile firm of Brown, Hoyles & Co., wrote to his sister Ann that "I have found the town very much improved," adding "I am better pleased with this place every time I come to it and if I ever leave England I think it will be to come here."[1] This was quite an about face for a man who had only three years earlier described Newfoundland as "a wild country covered with fish and fishermen."[2] By 1820, Richard eagerly described the amusements and activities that had been established in the town since his first arrival: an amateur theatre, horseraces, an opera performance, and a fair were among the events he attended that summer.

Morris's description of the city and his social calendar reflect the changes that occurred in St. John's during the period 1810-1820, as merchants increasingly headquartered their fishing operations out of St. John's rather than Britain.[3] With its growing population of year-round

---

[1] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, St. John's, 18 May 1820, Memorial University of Newfoundland Archives (MUN), MF 279, Ann Morris Collection. Brown, Hoyles and Co., formed in St. John's in 1813, had branches at Port de Grave and Trepassey, and fishing stations on the Labrador coast. Pamela Bruce, "HOYLES, NEWMAN WRIGHT," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2 September 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hoyles_newman_wright_1777_18407E.html.

[2] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, St. John's, 14 July 1817, MUN, MF 279.

[3] For the changing demographics of early 19th century Newfoundland and the political and economic conditions that led to these changes, see W. Gordon Handcock, "*So Longe as There Comes Noe Women": Origins of English Settlement in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1989); Alan MacPherson, "The Demographic History of St. John's, 1627-2001," in *Four Centuries and the City: Perspectives on the Historical Geography of St. John's*, ed. Alan MacPherson (St. John's: Department of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2005), 1-18; Alan MacPherson, "The People of Newfoundland: A Longue Durée in Historical Geography," in *A Social Geography of Canada,* ed. Guy M. Robinson (Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1991), 373-392; the essays in John Mannion ed., *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography* (St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1977), and Shannon Ryan, "Fishery to Colony: A Newfoundland Watershed, 1793-1815," *Acadiensis* 12, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 34-52.

residents, St. John's slowly began to take on the appearance of a colonial town rather than that of a temporary summer fishing outpost. Richard Morris was among these new permanent residents. Satisfied with life in St. John's, in 1820 he seemed pleased to fulfill his employer's request that he stay on in St. John's the rest of the year. Although he sometimes mused about returning to England permanently, and did return for business and pleasure several times throughout his short life, Richard married in St. John's, established a home there, and appeared content with the life he led on that side of the Atlantic.

Richard Morris's letters portray the concerns, desires, and anxieties of many first-generation permanent settlers of his social class. Having moved their businesses and families across the Atlantic, many St. John's merchants, traders, clerks and professionals became concerned with establishing the social events and activities they had participated in in Britain (or in the case of the upwardly mobile, that they felt befit their newly acquired status as respectable men). As these men (and sometimes women) made and remade themselves, their reputations, and families, they actively attempted to restructure and reorganize the built environment and the community around them to reflect their ideals. They created and performed identities that adhered to the script of what they believed a respectable, middle-class colonist should look and act like.

"Making Home" explores this cohort's attempts to change the town itself to reflect their values and ideals, and it charts the performances and expressions of identity that took place on the ground. The dissertation examines how, in the years between 1810 and 1860, St. John's emerging middle class created a sense of space and place: how they thought of their local environment, and how they defined it in relation to the wider world. In short, how they made a

home and how they saw themselves within that home.[4] It does this by analyzing a selection of the events and sites that compelled people to move through the city: the activities of fraternal and benevolent clubs and societies, the cornerstone-laying and consecration ceremonies of churches, various parades, and the wharfside ceremonies to greet visiting dignitaries. These were the theatres in which people performed identities and created imagined communities of club, church, city, and colony, while simultaneously creating literal spaces for those communities, and by staking claim to city streets. In this regard, "Making Home" is influenced by other "biographies" of North American towns and cities, such as T.W Acheson's work on Saint John, New Brunswick, which examined how "the growing complexity of the colonial social order was reflected in the variety of political, religious, and ethnic institutions that emerged in the period, in the array of voluntary numbers of wage-earners, and in the extremes of wealth and poverty that came increasingly to characterize the society."[5] Andrew Holman's study of middle class emergence in Galt and Goderich is a similarly useful model of a town study that explores class relations and emerging civic identities in colonial towns.[6]

St. John's had transformed enough by 1814 that Governor Richard Goodwin Keats declared that during the last fifteen years it had become "the Emporium of the Island and changed its character from a fishery to a considerable commercial town."[7] The population

---

[4] Coincidentally, *Here, We Made a Home* is the name of the permanent exhibit on settlement and intangible cultural heritage (opened in 2013) at the Rooms Provincial Museum in St. John's. See The Rooms, "Here, We Made a Home," https://www.therooms.ca/exhibits/always/here-we-made-a-home (accessed 2 September 2018).
[5] T.W. Acheson, *Saint John: The Making of a Colonial Urban Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 4.
[6] Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).
[7] Quoted in Shannon Ryan, "The Newfoundland Salt Cod Trade in the Nineteenth Century" in *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. James Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 48. Keats, whose tenure as governor lasted from 1813-1816, was the last of the seasonal governors.

increased to the point that in 1818, the Colonial Office appointed a resident (rather than seasonal) governor to Newfoundland. A first and only wave of immigration in the early part of the century resulted in St. John's resident population growing from 3800 permanent residents in 1800 to 15,000 in 1836, and 25,000 in 1850.[8] These year-round settlers prompted a dramatic change in the town's nature. Alan MacPherson writes that prior to the emigration wave of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, "few of the planters and none of the men servants can have thought of themselves as permanent residents, destined to die and leave a progeny in Newfoundland."[9] After the watershed early nineteenth century, most arrivals did just that.[10] By mid-century, a distinct middle class was emerging in the town, which had grown from trading outpost to an increasingly complex community, where a cadre of newspapers reported on club meetings, church events, and other social occasions, in addition to political developments such as agitation for representative government.

The early and mid-nineteenth century was therefore a time of transformation and a time of self-definition for the town and people of St. John's, but this is only partly a story of change over time. As much as the men and women living in the town attempted to shape its landscape, working within or around its constraints, local conditions profoundly influenced how these actors moved and performed. Newfoundland was not a deliberately planned colony where institutions of state and imperial power were established in tandem with the arrival of settlers. As Elizabeth Mancke points out, the region that became Atlantic Canada, and

---

[8] The city's population remained in the mid to high 20,000s for the rest of the 19th century. See MacPherson, "The Demographic History of St. John's, 1627-2001," 16. For the effects of the Napoleonic Wars in shifting the management of trade to St. John's, see Handcock *"Soe Longe as There Comes Noe Women,"* 182. The period 1810-1816 would be the only real "wave" of emigration in the city's history, and is a contrast to the continual arrival of emigrants to the other British North American colonies.
[9] MacPherson, "The People of Newfoundland," 379.
[10] Ibid.; Mannion *The Peopling of Newfoundland*, 279.

Newfoundland particularly, does not fit neatly into the history of colonialism along North America's Atlantic seaboard.[11] The established trope of a group of settlers arriving in North America following a royal proclamation or with a charter granting them land, where they cleared space for farms, established cottage industries, and eagerly took part in self-government does not apply to the haphazard patterns of settlement and governance at play throughout Northeastern North America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This was a region where spaces of power (political, economic, cultural, and military) were not necessarily coterminous.[12] In Newfoundland, the lack of local centres of power, coupled with a proliferation of unsponsored settlements related to the fishery, led to communities that were different kinds of spaces from the British settlements to the south or the French settlements in Canada.[13] The study of what Mancke calls the "colonial transition" (the development of civic provisions and local government) reveals that, as she puts it, "colonies needed more than settlers of European extraction for them to exist."[14] Once the colonial transition had taken effect, as it did with the calling of a legislature in Newfoundland in 1832, what kind of society emerged there? What is the legacy of non-coterminous spaces of power? "Making Home" reveals that even as formal systems of power (a legislature, cathedrals) emerged at St. John's, the city's landscape reveals its origins as a different kind of space from an intentionally planned settler colony. The town was, as John G. Reid describes it, a "complement to commercial enterprise rather than a state sanctioned goal."[15]

---

[11] Elizabeth Mancke, "Spaces of Power in the Early Modern Northeast," in *New England and the Maritime Provinces: Connections and Comparisons*, ed. Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 33.
[12] Ibid., 42.
[13] Ibid., 43.
[14] Ibid., 47.
[15] John G. Reid, "How Wide is the Atlantic Ocean? Not Wide Enough!" *Acadiensis* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 84.

Local studies bring nuance to Atlantic history, whose emphases on transatlantic frameworks and global patterns can sometimes obscure regional differences. Jerry Bannister argues that transnational and global perspectives can free historians from parochialism and help forge new meta-narratives, but they can also push demographically smaller regions such as Atlantic Canada out of the narrative altogether.[16] The challenge of Atlantic history is therefore to explore transatlantic connections "without losing sight of regional variations."[17] Local and regional histories can be set within an Atlantic context and make creative connections beyond the region without viewing the region or its people as peripheral.[18] Luca Codignola also advocates for setting local studies within an Atlantic context, in order to challenge some of the narratives that have dominated Atlantic history. Codignola points out that with their smaller, more dispersed populations and lacking the ideological bonds of revolution to bring them together, the British North American colonies proceeded along separate routes from the post-Revolution American colonies. Codignola argues that the ocean "never became too wide" for certain settlers to the British North American colonies.[19] Its ties to the Atlantic world played an important role in the process of making home in St. John's. Indeed, the landscape, economy, and social and political cultures of St. John's were all influenced by its proximity to the ocean and the people, goods, and ideas that entered the port from there. This is a uniquely local story, yet early nineteenth-century St. John's was also an environment inextricably bound to and

---

[16] Jerry Bannister, "Atlantic Canada in an Atlantic World? Northeastern North America in the Long 18th Century," *Acadiensis* 43, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 23.
[17] Ibid., 9.
[18] Ibid., 25, 29-30. Political scientist Alex Marland and novelist Lisa Moore reinforce this point, suggesting that the comparative or global turn has eroded expertise in local politics (and history) and has curtailed the ability of public universities to respond to local political and civic questions. Alex Marland and Lisa Moore, "How the Democracy Cookbook Came Together," in *The Democracy Cookbook: Recipes to Renew Governance in Newfoundland and Labrador*, ed. Alex Marland and Lisa Moore (St. John's: ISER Books, 2017), 22, 25.
[19] Luca Codignola, "How Wide is the Atlantic Ocean? Larger and Larger," *Acadiensis* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 79-80.

influenced by the outside world. Its local and regional variables and ways of doing things did not emerge in a vacuum. St. John's in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was "visited by many but inhabited by few."[20] The many and the few converged to make the place what it was.

St. John's is also a useful case study of space in an Atlantic context when we consider how the ocean was both bridge and barrier for the town. The town was at once connected to the wider world (as a port town and colonial capital) and disconnected (particularly in the winter when ice prevented entry to the harbour and fears over food supply shortages and the possibility of fire with nowhere to evacuate ran rampant). Examining the town's historical geography: new arrivals' and old seasonal residents' desires to stake out space, how they decided what the most desirable spaces were, and how space on the rest of the island seemed at once unlimited (the island's largely uncharted interior prompted expeditions and surveys) and confined (the colony had little arable land, no railway, and few roads), reveals the contradictions involved in defining the ocean as either a barrier or a bridge.[21] From the writings of its residents and visitors, we see that St. John's took on the trappings of a colonial town whose social offerings mirrored those of an English town. At the same time, a dichotomy between the town and the rest of the island began to emerge. The capital city was itself a colonial outpost, yet it bore its own metropole-periphery relationship to the rest of the island. In its built environment, trade patterns, class relations, and political economy, "town" was becoming a world apart from the outports.[22]

---

[20] Keith Matthews, "Profiles of Water Street Merchants," (unpublished manuscript, 1980), mimeograph, entry on Thomas Holdsworth Brooking.
[21] For the concept of the ocean as a highway and barrier or conduit to communication, see Ian K. Steele, *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).
[22] John Mannion makes a similar point regarding outports becoming more socially egalitarian as outport merchant firms declined and mercantile activity became centred in St. John's throughout the nineteenth

Although the town had accrued the power and population to render it the "emporium of the Island" compared to outport settlements whose trade and commerce were usually routed through the capital city, and although it continued to change in various aspects throughout the nineteenth century (architecturally, economically, governmentally), in many ways it retained characteristics of the fishing station (with its attendant sights, smells, and sounds) and commercial outpost. With a few exceptions, travel writing dealing with nineteenth-century St. John's was overwhelmingly critical of the town's architecture and layout.[23] Prince Edward Island based merchant and writer John MacGregor's 1828 account is an illustrative example:

> The town is built chiefly of wood, it extends nearly along the whole north side of the port, and there can scarcely be said to be more than one street: the others are no more than lanes. A few of the houses are built of stone, or brick, and some of the buildings are handsome; but the appearance of the town altogether, indicates at once what it has been – a mere lodging place for a convenient time – a collection of stores for depositing fish, with wharves along the whole shore, for the convenience of shipping. The streets and lanes are irregular and in wet weather extremely dirty.[24]

---

century. See "Introduction" in *The Peopling of Newfoundland*, 11. Keith Matthews points out that the most successful fish exporting firms in Newfoundland had bases in St. John's, from which point they could more easily access international markets. Matthews, "Profiles of Water Street Merchants," profile on James MacBraire. Meanwhile even as St. John's transformed into the metropole of the Newfoundland fishery in the 1810s, absentee landlords delayed the evolution of municipal institutions. See Sean Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 96.

[23] For descriptions of the city in published travel accounts, see: Lewis A. Anspach *History of the Island of Newfoundland*, 1819; Richard Bonnycastle, *Newfoundland in 1844* (London: H. Colburn, 1844); Edward Chappell, *Voyage of HMS Rosamond* (London: J. Mawman, 1818); Joseph Jukes, *Jukes' Excursions: being a revised edition of Joseph Beete Jukes' "Excursions in and about Newfoundland in the years 1839 and 1840*," ed. Robert Cuff and Derek Wilton (St. John's: H. Cuff, 1993) and *Letters and Extracts from the Addresses and Occasional Writings of J.B. Jukes* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1871); John McGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of the Maritime Colonies of British North America* (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Browne, and Greene, 1828).

[24] MacGregor, *Historical and Descriptive Sketches*, 236.

The town had no municipal government and was dependent on private enterprise, and later, the colonial legislature, for local services.[25] It had no facilities for higher education. The largest and most successful firms were those who established bases in Britain as well as in Newfoundland, and it was a common pattern among merchants for men to "retire to the main office" in London, Liverpool, or Glasgow in middle-age and leave the running of the Newfoundland end of things to their sons, who in turn would make the same retirement journey themselves one day.[26]

This is the state of affairs in the colony at the conclusion of Jerry Bannister's study of naval government in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Newfoundland. Bannister focusses on the capital city's emergent public sphere, noting that the background, class orientations, and values of St. John's population changed in the 1810s, and the city's first newspapers, established in this decade, created a "public space in which the bourgeoisie could fix its place in the social environment, identify its local interests and promote its own particular causes."[27] The social lives and social networks of this nascent bourgeois class are an afterthought to *The Rule of the Admirals*, which concludes by analyzing the work of a middle-class group of St. John's reformers to bring representative government to the colony.[28] "Making

---

[25] See Melvin Baker "Absentee Landlordism and Municipal Government in Nineteenth-Century St. John's," *Urban History Review* 15, no. 2 (October 1986): 165-71 for a history of municipal government in the town. Furthering this point on the legislature as a de facto city council, Sean Cadigan points out that the colonial legislature was often concerned with advancing St. John's interests, rather than those of the colony as a whole. Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador*, 96.

[26] Matthews, "Profiles of Water Street Merchants," T.H. Brooking entry. David Keir's *The Bowring Story* (London: The Bodley Head, 1962) commissioned by the Bowring firm to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 1962 contains several examples of different generations of Bowrings enacting this pattern. Gordon Handcock cites Liverpool, London, and Glasgow as the three ports that figure most prominently in mid and late nineteenth-century trade with Newfoundland. Handcock, *"Soe Longe As There Comes Noe Women"* 216.

[27] Jerry Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals: Law, Custom, and Naval Government in Newfoundland, 1699-1832* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 258.

[28] For more on the reform movement, see Keith Matthews, "The Class of '32: St. John's Reformers on the Eve of Representative Government," *Acadiensis* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 80-94 and Jerry Bannister, "The

Home" picks up the thread here, shifting the focus from the overtly political to an analysis of the city's social worlds during this time and in the following fifty years, revealing how many of the city's residents perceived their city, their colony, and themselves. Its sources reveal these individual's lives and stories as they recounted them, and reflect upon the city itself, its geographies, landscapes, and the process by which individuals imbued these spaces with meaning.

"Making Home" draws on political studies for context on business and political relationships in the city, which certainly influenced the social scene, but is ultimately a study of the social world, maintaining a focus on performance and place as thematic pillars around which to explore the emerging colonial town and its residents. Historians have devoted a great deal of attention to the political history of nineteenth-century Newfoundland, in terms of its political climate, attainment of representative and responsible government, and Confederation debates in the 1860s and 1890s; comparatively little has been written on social life in the colony during the same period.[29] Two important contributions to nineteenth-century Newfoundland social history in recent years have been Kurt Korneski's *Conflicted Colony*, which melds social and political history to explore how legislation and economic policy played out on the ground away from St. John's, and Willeen Keough's *The Slender Thread* which explores ethnicity, gender, and

---

Campaign for Representative Government in Newfoundland," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 5 (1994): 19-40.

[29] For political history of 19th century Newfoundland, see W.S. MacNutt, *The Atlantic Provinces: Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965); Gertrude Gunn, *The Political History of Newfoundland, 1832-1864* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966); S.J.R. Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970); the essays in *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. J.K. Hiller and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980); Melvin Baker, "The Government of St. John's Newfoundland, 1800-1921" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1981); Ryan "Fishery to Colony"; Rosemary Ommer, "The 1830s: Adapting their Institutions to their Desires," in *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History,* ed. Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); John P. Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000); Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals.*

religion on the Avalon Peninsula's southern shore, providing important context on women's experiences and understandings of Irish womanhood in a New World environment.[30] Like Korneski's study, "Making Home" draws on political events to illuminate social trends and developments. Like Keough's it uses personal sources (letters and diaries, in lieu of the oral histories which figure prominently in *The Slender Thread*) to reconstruct wider social trends related to identity and place.

"Making Home" is also indebted to studies of religion in Newfoundland, which illuminate how ethnic, class, and regional identities intersected with denominational identities and religious practices. It draws upon J.E. FitzGerald's research on the Roman Catholic church's attempts to establish church-controlled schooling in Newfoundland and build a cathedral and educational precinct in St. John's as means by which to assert cultural parity with the official British culture of the state.[31] It also draws upon Carolyn Lambert's research on the political, religious, and social lives of St. John's Irish-Catholics in the mid nineteenth century, a second-generation community for whom local political issues and concerns were paramount.[32] "Making Home" also owes much to Calvin Hollett's work on popular resistance to Bishop Edward Feild's agenda of high church order and solemnity. Much to Bishop Feild's frustration, many Newfoundland Anglicans embraced a vernacular spirituality, a resistance that suggests Feild's particular notions of Anglicanism (or Britishness) were not widely accepted throughout the colony.[33]

---

[30] Willeen Keough, *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); Kurt Korneski, *Conflicted Colony: Critical Episodes in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland and Labrador* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).
[31] John E. FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture in Newfoundland Catholicism," (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 1997).
[32] Carolyn Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers: Irish-Catholics in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1840-1886," (PhD diss., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2010).
[33] Calvin Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1844-1876* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

Any study examining mercantile families and an emerging middle class in nineteenth century Newfoundland must address the tangled historiography of class in the colony. D.W. Prowse's extensive 1895 *History of Newfoundland* laid the foundations for an historiography that depicts the colony as being a two-class system consisting of 1) merchants and 2) all others who were subservient to them. Prowse's epic work blamed West Country merchants and imperial officials for the colony's delayed development through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[34] This assertion went largely unquestioned until the 1970s, when historians (led by Keith Matthews) began to challenge it. Although the focus of Matthews' groundbreaking 1978 article "Historical Fence Building" is more about Newfoundland's constitutional and legislative history (and how successive generations of historians approached the topic) the article also signaled a rethinking of class relations in Newfoundland history. In the article, Matthews argued that Justice John Reeves, in the first published history of Newfoundland in 1793, depicted Newfoundland history to that point as being largely a conflict between those who favoured settlement and the West Country merchants who did not favour settlement on the island. Successive generations embraced Reeves' theory, and according to Matthews, "the emergence of a Newfoundland nationalism during the 1820s and 1830s made parts of the theory acceptable even to literate and mercantile groups in St. John's," which explains why the early and mid-nineteenth century characters who populate the coming pages embraced the notion of resilience in the face of forbidden settlement in the toasts and speeches they gave at dinners and civic events, and in the way they talked about the town's institutions and buildings.[35]

---

[34] D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, 2nd ed. (Portugal Cove-St Philip's, NL: Boulder Publications, 2007). Jerry Bannister discusses the enduring popularity of Prowse's *History* in "Whigs and Nationalists: The Legacy of Judge Prowse's *History of Newfoundland*," *Acadiensis* 32, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 84-109.
[35] Indeed, by late century "this ideology had become an implicit part of Newfoundland culture, perfidious Albion and heartless West Country merchants being blamed for every difficulty in which the struggling colony had ever found itself." Prowse, a judge and descendant of West Country merchants was therefore

Matthews' article was important because it triggered an historiographical shift, moving attention from political to economic factors in the writing of Newfoundland history. It challenged what Matthews referred to as "the conflict thesis" and demanded why there was a lack of interest in other factors (economic, cultural, geographic, climatic) that accounted for Newfoundland's underdevelopment in comparison to the other British North American colonies. In Jeff Webb's words, it "correctly identified these historians as repeating the conflict thesis without looking for supporting evidence and of being interested in Newfoundland primarily as a case to test ideas in other historiographic traditions."[36] The essay influenced several generations of historians, such that professional opinion is now solidly in favour of Matthews's interpretation that settlement bans were short-lived and ineffectual.[37]

But even then, as Jerry Bannister argues, historians researching Newfoundland continued to view class as a descriptive category rather than an analytical one until the emergence of labour history in the 1980s brought with it E.P. Thompson's model of viewing class as a series of relationships.[38] As Sean Cadigan's work has demonstrated, the two-class model is particularly inapplicable in the urban environment of St. John's, where an increasing number of professionals and tradespeople had established themselves, and where merchants themselves wielded varying degrees of social, political, and economic power.[39] In Cadigan's

---

"forced to half praise, half damn his own origins" in his *History of Newfoundland,* first published 1895. Keith Matthews, "Historical Fence Building: A Critique of the Historiography of Newfoundland." *Newfoundland Studies* 17, no. 2 (October 2001): 146.

[36] Jeff Webb, "Revisiting Fence Building: Keith Matthews and Newfoundland Historiography," *The Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 337.

[37] Webb, "Revisiting Fence Building," 336.

[38] Jerry Bannister, "A Species of Vassalage: The Issue of Class in the Writing of Newfoundland History," *Acadiensis* 24, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 136, 143.

[39] Sean Cadigan, "Artisans in a Merchant Town: St. John's, Newfoundland, 1775-1816" *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 4 (1993): 95-119. Cadigan also observes the rise of a "shopkeeper bourgeoisie" in St. John's, desirous of "cracking what they saw as an oligarchy of English bureaucrats and merchants governing the colony." Sean Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 147.

words, "Newfoundland fish merchants may have been beasts, but they were no special ones."[40] Cadigan's work explores how the relationships between outport merchants and fishing families, while paternalistic, relied on mutual accommodation. The characters in "Making Home" were merchants, clerks, small business owners, mid-ranking military officers, newspaper editors, and clergymen. Some were certainly wealthier than others, some wielded more social power than others, but all fell somewhere on the spectrum of middle class and interacted regularly with one another on the streets, in business, at church, and at clubs and charitable organizations.

This project's emphases on place, class, and identity take to heart Bannister's reminder that historians must consider how fishing families and merchants interacted with the "frontier maritime environment" to better understand how social relations on the island developed the way they did.[41] Although Bannister is referring to class relations in outport communities here, the question certainly resonates in St. John's. At their events, parades, and clubs, and in their diaries and letters, we see how this environment gave shape to class relations for men and women who had settled in St. John's. Environment and landscape underpinned the actions and performances the major players in "Making Home" enacted. In their introduction to a special issue of *The William and Mary Quarterly* focusing on class in early America, Simon Middleton and Billy G. Smith synthesize the arguments of a number of historians to argue that "social power is best conceived not as a linear imposition by which one group drives another toward an objective but as a field of relationships and interactions that pulls as much as pushes men and women into social and cultural arrangements with particular economic outcomes while remaining constantly in flux: contested, negotiated, and rarely, if ever, static."[42] When

---

[40] Cadigan *Hope and Deception*, x.
[41] Bannister, "A Species of Vassalage," 143.
[42] Simon Middleton and Billy G. Smith, "Class and Early America: An Introduction," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (April 2006): 216.

townspeople from across the class spectrum interacted at public events like parades, church services, or the annual Regatta, classes came together but they also drew circles around themselves, defining what it meant to be 'one of us.' As in other British North American and American towns, nineteenth-century St. John's offered a whirlpool of trade, status, and economic identities its residents could define themselves by depending on the setting and their company. Context mattered: class was rooted in how you viewed yourself based on those around you, and was therefore "a constitutive element of social relationships," marked by inequalities in material conditions and social power, and serving "as a primary way of signifying power relationships."[43]

The historiography on class in other nineteenth-century North American towns provides useful models for attempting to define who the middle class in St. John's were. In Andrew Holman's *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns*, "class divisions were domestic socioeconomic divisions" with occupation and finances being the prime signifiers of class identity.[44] The local context was also very important; people's understanding of their class identity developed as they compared themselves with the people they interacted with. They defined themselves through their relationships with those around them.

The urban context is also important when considering class relationships. Focusing on the northeastern US in the nineteenth century, Stuart Blumin's *The Emergence of the Middle Class* situates the growing use of the term "middle class" as an urban phenomenon associated with pedestrian cities where merchants, artisans, and laborers lived and worked in close proximity to one another.[45] The letters, diaries, and organizational records "Making Home" consults reinforce

---

[43] Ibid., 216-217.
[44] Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 16.
[45] Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 20.

Blumin's point about pedestrian cities being places where interactions between classes frequently occurred – for instance, in the 1850s and 1860s banker Edward Morris (no relation to Richard Morris), made note almost daily of who he and his wife Catherine met while walking and who was out and about on the streets, with his observations typically focused on people of his own station or above it. For Morris, running into a priest or sometimes even the bishop while out on an evening stroll, was news worth remarking upon in his diary. Likewise, Morris commented on attendance at a meeting of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1854: "entirely of persons of the middle class. Last year there were a great number of persons of the laboring class but scarcely one on this occasion."[46]

In Blumin's work, urban North America presented a landscape where class relations could function in a different way than in the old world. Where Holman focuses on occupational distinctions, Blumin discusses the institutions and practices associated with urban living. City living offered both opportunities for face-to-face interaction among members of different classes ("decidedly inegalitarian" occasions "in which inferiors defer to betters, and betters command and patronize inferiors") as well as institutions and events that had nothing to do with mixing ranks, such as dinners, dances, and other social events that "helped to define and reinforce the urban elite by establishing spaces from which social inferiors were simply excluded."[47] The middle class, like the urban elite Blumin describes, also established spaces to define themselves and exclude perceived social inferiors. What Blumin describes here occurred every day on the streets of St. John's and other colonial cities.

---

[46] Edward Morris Diaries and Journals, 17 December 1854, Maritime History Archive (MHA), Memorial University of Newfoundland, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[47] Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, 26.

The central characters in "Making Home" are members of what Blumin refers to as the "business class," a term once associated with large-scale, socially prominent merchants and later used to refer to retailers, small and medium-sized manufacturers, clerks, salesmen, and accountants. Some of them would also be among what were known as "middling sorts," artisans who were distinct from the "poor and inferior."[48] While Blumin focuses a great deal on how industrialization (which is not within the scope of this project) contributed to distinctions between the classes, elements of his work are quite useful to this study, particularly his discussion of clerks, merchants, and other members of what he terms the "business class": people working in salaried jobs, who were neither elites nor members of the working poor.[49]

For its part, "Making Home" employs a definition of middle class inspired by Blumin, with his emphasis on space and business, and Holman, with his emphasis on civic responsibility. In nineteenth-century St. John's, an emerging middle class included salaried workers, business owners, and professionals who used their leisure time to promote and demonstrate "respectability." This was a group who adopted behaviours and material culture to differentiate themselves from others, who saw themselves as duty-bound to church, charity, and improving local conditions, and who emerged in tandem with the public sphere and its newspapers, clubs, meeting rooms, and participatory politics. In St. John's, merchants and clerks, clergy, military officers, professionals such as doctors and lawyers, and their wives and children formed part of this emerging middle class. Their social world imitated Britain's in many ways, but it was influenced by uniquely local circumstances. This was a world like that Nancy Christie describes in "A Plague of Servants," where social status was not related to wealth and economics as much as it was to comportment and manners. Class boundaries in North America were more fluid than in

---

[48] Ibid., 137.
[49] Ibid.

England and status therefore required vigilance and comparison with others.[50] Christie's "Upper Canadian gentry" – (farmers in Upper Canada who owned their land) held a similar status in their world to the men and women discussed in "Making Home." At balls, dinners, parties, clubs, parades, and church, these men's and women's actions formed elaborate performances indicating their class consciousness – a class consciousness influenced in large part by gender, ethnicity, and space. "Making Home" relies on the historiography of class to interpret these actions and employs a methodology influenced by historians of performance, place, and pageantry.

Of course, none of this (migration, settlement, the establishment of fraternal clubs and newspapers, attempts to build a society that mirrors metropolitan values, an emerging public sphere and middle-class sensibilities) was unique to St. John's. Other studies reveal similar forces at play in other settler colonies. Katherine McKenna's *A Life of Propriety* illustrates shifting perceptions of public and private and social life and how these values were carried from the old world to the new, while Jane Errington devotes a chapter of *Wives and Mothers, Schoolmistresses and Scullery Maids* to elite women's attempts to recreate the social life of Britain and to build a self-selected community that "accentuated differences between the various social and economic classes." Kenneth Lockridge's "Colonial Self-Fashioning" explores the tensions between colonial identities and metropolitan ideals.[51]

---

[50] Nancy Christie, "'The Plague of Servants': Female Household Labour and the Making of Classes in Upper Canada," in *Transatlantic Subjects: Ideas, Institutions, and Social Experience in Post-Revolutionary British North America*, ed. Nancy Christie (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 93.
[51] Katherine McKenna, *A Life of Propriety: Anne Murray Powell and Her Family, 1755-1849* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); Elizabeth Jane Errington, *Wives and Mothers, Schoolmistresses and Scullery Maids: Working Women in Upper Canada, 1790-1840* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 182; Kenneth Lockridge, "Colonial Self-Fashioning: Paradoxes and Pathologies in the Construction of Genteel Identity in Eighteenth Century America," in *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*, ed. Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobel, and Frederika J. Teute (Chapel Hill: University of North Caroline Press, 1997): 274-339.

Yet, the political and economic trajectory of Newfoundland's capital city was markedly different from York in Upper Canada or cities in other British North American colonies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Its social life and customs, its environment, economy, and invented traditions are all part of the puzzle as to what made this town and this colony so different. By mid-century, boosters, clubmen, and newspaper editors were eagerly proclaiming Newfoundland "the ancient and loyal colony," the first of Britain's overseas possessions, and St. John's "the oldest city" in the Americas. What did it mean to stake that claim and why did certain people flock so eagerly to it, when responsible government was not achieved until the 1850s and the city had no municipal corporation until the 1890s? In the tales its boosters told, St. John's was both old and new: a fishing station in use by Europeans since the 1500s, linked not only to Britain but the world economy since that time, or a settlement just getting established and eager to catch up to the infrastructure and institutions already established in other British North American and American towns: whichever narrative suited their needs at the time. In the stories these people told, St. John's was an imperial city as well as a colonial city. They looked outwards as they built the town and as they built their own personal identities.

In recreating the social world of nineteenth-century St. John's, "Making Home" uses landscape and geography as organizing devices, employing Rhys Isaac's concept of the "landscape of experience." For Isaac, the landscape of experience consists of built environment and social spaces, and one's knowledge of it varies based on social class, gender, and ethnicity. These spaces are sites of performance where social mores are established but also challenged and negotiated.[52] Although Isaac's *The Transformation of Virginia* focusses on different geographical and temporal subjects than I do, Isaac's methodologies of landscape, performance,

---

[52] Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 320.

and experience can be transposed to St. John's geographic setting. The town's location as a trade centre, isolated in the winter and connected in the summer, undergoing a demographic and political transformation during the period under consideration, makes it an ideal case for this methodology.

In the bowl-shaped city of St. John's, all buildings were oriented towards the narrows, the thin entrance in and out of the harbour. News and information flowed from the harbour. The harbour view greeted each new arrival to the city and was the last image those sailing away took with them as they left. The harbour was the centre of communication and news; when governors, dignitaries or bishops arrived in St. John's, their arrival would be publicized and they would delay coming ashore until newspapers were able to announce their arrival and hour of debarkation. On arriving, they would be greeted at the wharf by crowds, but the crowd was not amorphous. The crowd had its own degree of order, organization, and distinction; for example, groups such as the Benevolent Irish Society and Natives' Society waved wands, wore rosettes in their lapels, and marched under banners to differentiate themselves. When a particularly eminent visitor came ashore, special viewing places were set aside for politicians, members of various clubs, clergy, women, and schoolchildren. These events provided the occasion for elaborate demonstrations, where club members, for example, dressed for the event, met with compatriots and marched through the streets to a building or wharf, and made the city their stage on which to perform, a space to see and to be seen. For all this, the harbour was a working harbour as well as a social hub. Travel accounts stressed both its smells and its sightlines. To recover past realities and understand the degree to which place influenced identity, we must seek out the meanings contemporary inhabitants attached to their environment.[53] In the case of

[53] Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 12.

this colonial outpost becoming a town and a capital city, transformation and change were regular features of life. At once geographically isolated and connected to the wider Atlantic World, the city's very setting was a threshold for liminality.[54] As the appearance, economy, demographics, and governance of the city and colony changed around them, people reflected on their own natures and characters. These reflections form the core of this study.

The first chapter, "Making Home on the Page: Place, Class, and Identity in Letters, Diaries, and Travel Writing," uses contemporary writing to provide an orientation to the city of St. John's, its natural features, and its built environment as both visitors and emigrants saw it. It relies on the diaries, letters, and travel writing of clerks, newspaper editors, clergy, military officers, and club members – the "middling" types and business class Blumin identifies. These are the people whose writings and reminiscences of nineteenth-century St. John's have been preserved in archives, libraries, and published accounts. (The letters, diaries, and daybooks of countless others have surely been lost, while others could not make a record of their perceptions and impressions in the first place.) These individuals' writings are the brushstrokes that paint a picture of the town's appearance, its significant places, and the meanings people attached to them. Through their reflections on the town, its appearance, its places of significance and how they relate to them, the writers in these collections shed light on men and women crafting and articulating colonial identities.

As an orientation, this chapter introduces the place and time as well as the people. The 1810s in Newfoundland were a decade of boom and bust. In addition to a growth in population, the decade saw the arrival of a year-round permanent governor, expansion of the public sphere through a proliferation of newspapers and voluntary organizations, and a fishery that was more

[54] For liminality in early America, see Greg Dening "Introduction: In Search of a Metaphor," in Hoffman, Sobal, and Teute, *Through a Glass Darkly,* 1-6.

profitable than ever due to lack of competition from American and French interests. Once the Napoleonic wars concluded however, fish prices dropped and many firms went out of business or changed hands.[55] The city also saw two disastrous fires during the winter of 1817-1818, provoking discussion (if not much action) on poor relief, social welfare, and what the rebuilt town should look like. Although the brief period of prosperity was over, the stage was set for the ensuing decades – the influx of migrants who arrived during the first two decades of the nineteenth century would be unparalleled in the rest of the town's history, and those migrants who installed themselves in the capital city transformed St. John's from seasonal outpost to town. They brought, borrowed, and outright invented the institutions and civic spaces they felt a town should have. In turn, they lamented their failures and boasted of their successes, crafting and articulating identities, both for themselves personally and for the places they inhabited.

Chapter Two, "Socializing for Success: Respectability and Middle-Class Consciousness in Voluntary and Fraternal Organizations," examines associational life to see how these groups inscribed space and place on the town. It uses the town's Benevolent Irish Society (BIS), founded in 1806, as its main case study to explore what this and similar groups can reveal about ethnicity, civic identity, gender, class, and religion, in a British North American town and particularly in St. John's. As both a social club and a benevolent organization, the BIS records reveal nineteenth-century attitudes towards charity and poor relief as well as place and space. Their hall and school hosted activities (school, talks, dinners, balls, other organizations renting the space, the legislature meeting there briefly following the fire of 1846) that were important

---

[55] Ryan, "Fishery to Colony" explains the positive effects of the American Revolution and Napoleonic Wars on Newfoundland's saltfish exports and details the transition from a largely migratory to largely resident fishery in this period. For the effects of the Napoleonic wars on St. John's, see Handcock, "*Soe Longe As There Comes Noe Women,"* 137; David Sutherland, "1810-1820: War and Peace," in *The Atlantic Region to Confederation*, ed. Phillip Buckner and John G. Reid (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 234-262.

sites of performance and place-making, and occasionally these attempts to define middle class or ethnic identities or to place a physical stamp on the town through parading or constructing a hall could lead to conflict. Examining the activities of this group and others like it reveals that the entrenchment of values such as respectability were integral to the emergence of middle-class masculinity. This chapter interrogates organizations as spaces of performance and power, where members attempted to establish norms for the emerging settler society.

Having set the stage with the geographical outlay of the city in Chapter One, and carried out a case study of organizational life in Chapter Two, Chapter Three "Making Home from Above: A Tale of Two Bishops, Two Cathedrals and a 'Pretty Colonial Mess,'" recounts the efforts of Anglican Bishop Feild and Roman Catholic Bishop Fleming to construct monumental cathedrals in the town at mid-century. Their differing approaches, and the varied responses each bishop received from his congregation, speak to how residents of nineteenth-century St. John's conceived of religious and ethnic identity. Feild and Fleming's building programs also lead us to consider the extent to which identities can be imposed from above. When the outspoken prelates cajoled, complained, and scrambled to build temples not just of faith but of ethnicity (the Anglican cathedral, high church and neo-Gothic recalled medieval Britain while the Catholic cathedral's design and décor spoke to ultramontanist associations and Irish independence), they were attempting to speak to Newfoundland, Ireland, England, and British North America through architecture. The buildings, erected mid-century, stood in contrast to the more haphazard building styles that had dominated the city in the early 1800s and came to symbolize the city and colony's newly acquired sense of permanence. Through looking at parades and processions associated with cornerstone-layings and consecration ceremonies, the chapter explores the imperatives that directed making home.

While chapters two and three explored how the city's streets, wharves, and waterfront were settings at which people performed identities, the most elaborate of these performances, the Prince of Wales's stop in St. John's at the beginning of his 1860 North American tour, is the subject of Chapter Four, "'The land of fish and fog… far exceeded expectations': Inventing Traditions at the Visit of the Prince of Wales, 1860." The planning process for the Prince's visit demonstrates how the city streets were stages where identities were expressed, affirmed, and contested. It serves as an extended case study of how the city's boosters used the visit to create an idealized version of the city, the colony, and its history, invoking invented traditions to define St. John's, who belonged there, and establish an imagined past for the town. This civic display is a culmination of the trends, identities, and values the actors cultivated in the preceding three chapters. The townspeople built elaborate and contrived stages on which they performed taste, class, and loyalty. They were concerned with what others thought, and devoured dispatches from visiting reporters, hoping for good reviews of how they had defined and displayed their city.

Through examining these elements of social life in nineteenth-century St. John's, "Making Home" explains how individuals built a sense of place from the patchwork of events, spaces, and groups available to them. To fashion a home was to fashion a place and to fashion oneself, both in relation to local landmarks and to the wider world. The emigrant experience in nineteenth-century St. John's, and the story of changes in the city during that time, can therefore be considered in terms of the relationships between several different spaces. The middle-class letter-writers and diarists whose writings populate this dissertation defined the town as a series of oppositions. They imbued the landscape with meaning by considering it in terms of the landscapes it was not: the island and outports beyond the town, the sea beyond the harbour, and the spaces in Britain and Ireland they had physically left behind but continued

to occupy mentally. Colonial anxieties, a desire to climb the social ladder, and a desire to emulate the metropole all influenced what a person seized on when they described the landscape or received communications from home.

Many people wished to stake out a space in the changing city, whether in domestic space as in the case of Richard Morris describing his move from above the shop quarters to a "small farm belonging to the concern little more than half a mile from St. John's by the side of the beautiful lake Quidi Vidi" or in something grander, like the competing efforts of the Catholic and Anglican bishops to construct temples of faith visually dominating the townscape.[56] In the final chapter, these individuals proudly show off the home they had made (and strategically hide the rest).

For all this, the process of making home also entailed erasing and forgetting the meanings and interpretations that Indigenous people had already imprinted on the landscape of St. John's and its environs. John Reid reminds us that as late as the late eighteenth-century, the Atlantic colonies were "predominantly aboriginal territory in which some colonial settlement existed."[57] The first and second-generation settler processes of making home explored in this thesis were not the first layers of meaning to be given to this locale, and the fires that swept through the city in 1816, 1817, 1846, and 1892 ensured they would not be the last. The city reinvented itself in the aftermath of each fire, erasing certain spaces, and redefining them through reconstruction.[58] Consider, for instance, *The Times and General Commercial Gazette*'s

---

[56] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 9 October 1820, MUN Archives, MF 279.
[57] Reid, "How Wide is the Atlantic Ocean? Not Wide Enough!" 87.
[58] This thought is influenced by Shane O'Dea's observation that architecture is "the most potent manifestation of Newfoundland's culture – it speaks to how we held onto, yet made practical and effective use of, old forms, old patterns." Just as vernacular architecture can be read as a statement of culture and local identity, so too can the words of emigrants describing the place they had arrived in. Shane O'Dea, "Newfoundland: The Development of Culture on the Margin," *Newfoundland Studies* 10, 1 (1994): 80-81.

declaration in 1846 that "our readers will see that our language is not exaggerated when we say that St. John's is *not.*"[59] Very few pre-1892 buildings (or documents, for that matter) survive in modern-day St. John's. This study concludes with the last iteration of the city before the 1892 fire. On the cusp of the conflagration that shaped so much of the current city, "Making Home" traces the footpaths, sightlines, and identities that 1892 obscured. It uncovers the city below the current one, for although some prominent landmarks remain, "Making Home" asks what it meant to be immersed in the town's earlier iterations.

[59] *The Times and General Commercial Gazette* (St. John's), 17 June 1846.

Chapter 1
Making Home on the Page: Place, Class, and Identity in Letters, Diaries, and Travel Writing

When mercantile agent Richard Morris first arrived in St. John's in July 1817, he wrote to his sister Ann that he had landed in "a wild country covered with fish and fishermen."[1] Richard frequently complained about Newfoundland's isolation during his first months in the city, but activity in the port town's bustling harbour suggests that while the community was isolated in some respects, it was also a nexus of trade. The weeks surrounding Richard's arrival saw vessels entering the harbour from Britain and Ireland (London, Liverpool, Newcastle, Bristol, Waterford), Europe (Cadiz, Madeira) the West Indies (Grenada, Montserrat, St. Lucia, Trinidad) and British North America (Halifax, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec). Vessels departing St. John's in those weeks were bound eastwards across the Atlantic for Liverpool, Waterford, Bilboa, Oporto, and Lisbon, south for St. Vincent, Barbados, Demerara, Jamaica, and St. Lucia, and westwards for Prince Edward Island, Halifax, Miramichi, and Quebec City.[2] During his nine years in St. John's, Richard himself travelled back and forth across the Atlantic several times, with business taking him to the Azores, Portugal, and Britain. Richard frequently travelled for business, and died at sea in 1826. Richard's correspondence reflected the brisk trade occurring in St. John's. His familial, social, and trade networks were transatlantic in nature, and his letters and correspondence reveal a colonial town rooted in Atlantic trade.

---

[1] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 14 July 1817. Memorial University of Newfoundland Archives (MUN), MF 279, Ann Morris Collection. Morris's arrival in St. John's drew the notice of the *Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser*'s editor, who listed the arrival of "Mr. Richard Morris, merchant, of the firm Brown, Hoyles and Co.," among notable arrivals in the town that week. *Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser* (St. John's), 17 July 1817.
[2] *Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser*, "Customs Report," 24 June, 1 July, 8 July, 17 July, and 22 July 1817.

Richard Morris and his contemporaries lived in St. John's at a time when it was changing from trade outpost to colonial capital. This chapter examines their lives and writings, exploring how these emigrants and visitors wrote about, experienced, and described the town. Looking at the land and the people in a place some of them called "scrabble," many of these writers, like Richard Morris, saw that their middle-class values (or aspirations) were not reflected in their surroundings. Looking at the land influenced how people saw both their location and themselves. Over the first half of the nineteenth century, their writing and judgement gradually reflected that they had found (for the most part) the respectability, civility, and social life that they expected of a colonial capital. The town's relationship with the Atlantic world, as a port town on the North Atlantic, and its relationship with the British World, as a colonial capital, garrison town, and destination of English and Irish emigrants engaged in the fishery or provisions trade, is evident in these writings. In travel writing, letters, and diaries, writers measured themselves against other people in the community. The North Atlantic environment and Atlantic and British worlds shaped the town's physical geography and built environment while also shaping imagined communities and mental geographies. The letters, diaries, and travel writings this chapter analyzes are therefore tantalizing sources because in describing places, people described themselves. They crafted identities at the same time as they put pen to paper to capture what they saw in the town and streets surrounding them.

While this chapter relies on all three (and frequently uses newspapers to bolster and contextualize descriptions of the town), letters, diaries, and travel writing are very different types of sources because they were produced for very different audiences. Letter and diary writing are often interpreted as exercises in self-fashioning and the negotiation of identities.[3]

---

[3] On the historiography of transatlantic letters and diaries see Eve Tavor Bannet *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005);

Greg Dening pointed out that the 'self' is an important point of analysis for colonial historians, and the process of emigrating provided settlers with the opportunity to (re)invent themselves. Letters and life-writings are thus important spaces of reinvention and self-fashioning.[4] Letters frequently depict a transnational experience where personal and local lives and identities overlap or clash with ethnic and national identities.[5] Other historians, such as Eve Tavor Bannet, are reluctant to ascribe too much strength to letters as exercises in self-fashioning, pointing out that they are two-way correspondences governed by rules and etiquette, providing limited opportunities to change or challenge one's role in society. Tavor Bannet calls letter-writing an exercise in self-censorship and performing prescribed social roles as much as an exercise in self-expression and self-invention. In Tavor Bannet's interpretation, the letter was a stage upon which historical actors consciously created and cultivated a specific version of the 'self' for a critical audience.[6] The correspondents featured in this chapter certainly created specific 'selves' in their letters, careful to portray their successes in their social and business lives. Writers may have performed prescribed social roles, as Tavor Bannet suggests, but in the idealized world of the page, they performed them impeccably. It is perhaps in the blank spaces and silences of a

---

Konstantine Dierks *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); Elizabeth Jane Errington *Emigrant Worlds and Transatlantic Communities: Migration to Upper Canada in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007); David A. Gerber, *Authors of Their Lives: The Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2006); Sarah Gibson, "Self-Reflection in the Consolidation of Scottish Identity: A Case Study in Family Correspondence, 1805-50," in *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, Identity*, ed. Philip A. Buckner and R.D. Francis (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 29-44; Sarah M.S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Latter Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Ian K. Steele, *The English Atlantic 1645-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

[4] Greg Dening, "Introduction: In Search of a Metaphor," in *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*, ed. Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobel, and Frederika J. Teute (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 1-6.

[5] Gerber, *Authors of Their Lives*, 7-8.

[6] See Bannet's conclusion in *Empire of Letters*, particularly page 315.

letter, where a writer mulled saying something and then restrained himself, where the most important self-fashioning occurred.

Diaries also reflect self-fashioning. They are, in Rhys Isaac's words, "one of the prime means by which the emergent self-conscious introspective self and its stories can be the object of personal study."[7] They are "little theaters – cumulating stories spotlighting a self" against whose backgrounds global transformations and spectacles occur.[8] Like letters, diaries were often intended for a broad audience. Writers used them to create a personal myth or legacy, defend their choices, or leave a record for posterity. Yet diaries are rarely records of one's best self. The "carefully wrought, smooth surface" of colonial diaries and commonplace books is itself an artifact that these individuals create, and as Kenneth Lockridge points out, "the civilized self was often fashioned with unusual intensity in juxtaposition to an alien other."[9] In colonial societies, diaries can reveal much about how writers position themselves within their social context – how they perceive themselves as fitting in or not fitting in, how those situations might differ from those in the metropole (itself a contributing factor in the patriarchal rage Lockridge's subjects expressed), who is like them and who is not like them. They describe places in similar ways, which is useful in this chapter as it seeks to "set the stage" of significant places to these characters as they experienced life in St. John's.

Travel writing, written for the broadest audience of the three sources for this chapter had its own objectives: as an emigrant guide, educational treatise, entertainment. The nineteenth-century travel writer viewed the world through "imperial eyes" with a view to

---

[7] Rhys Isaac, "Stories and Constructions of Identity: Folk Tellings and Diary Inscriptions in Revolutionary Virginia," in Hoffman, Sobel, and Teute, *Through a Glass Darkly*, 217.
[8] Ibid., 237.
[9] Kenneth A. Lockridge, "Colonial Self-Fashioning: Paradoxes and Pathologies in the Construction of Genteel Identity in Eighteenth-Century America," in Hoffman, Sobel, and Teute, *Through a Glass Darkly*, 291.

measuring the utility of a place to himself or to other readers. They were concerned with questions about what opportunities a place presented, what it could provide, and how it compared to "home." Travel writers were pleased with the familiar, and sought out novelty only to be simultaneously troubled by differences they encountered, a reflection of both the power and fragility of empire.[10] In travel writing, which in Newfoundland was largely written by middle-class military and naval officers, bureaucrats, and clergy, the visitor viewed the landscape through an imperial lens, describing natural features in terms of how they compared to their own home landscape, combined with an inclination to characterize and classify.[11] As a primary source, travel writing is a unique window into a place, for things seen as too commonplace for a local to mention were often deemed noteworthy by visitors.[12] Travel writing is less explicitly about the self than the other two types of sources this chapter relies on, but regardless of the medium, given a platform upon which to perform, the players involved portrayed the circumstances of their lives. Self-fashioning and place-making occurred in tandem on the page. What did the letter-writers, diarists, and travel writers of nineteenth century St. John's have to say about the place? And, by extension, about themselves?

Exploring how inhabitants and visitors made, described, and imagined the places they found themselves in sets the stage for this dissertation's later chapters on social organizations, church building, and the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1860, providing an orientation to the landscape upon which these activities occurred. As James Opp and John C. Walsh point out, local

---

[10] Jeffrey L. McNairn, "'Everything was new, yet familiar': British Travellers, Halifax and the Ambiguities of Empire," *Acadiensis* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 53.
[11] In the introduction to his edited and annotated version of Anglican Bishop Edward Feild's Newfoundland diary, Ronald Rompkey makes a similar point, one that I extrapolate to much 19th century travel writing on Newfoundland. Ronald Rompkey, ed., *The Diary of Bishop Feild in 1844* (St. John's: ISER Books, 2010). Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation,* 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008) also influences this observation.
[12] Paulette M. Chiasson, "As Others Saw Us: Nova Scotia Travel Literature from the 1770s to the 1860s," *The Nova Scotia Historical Review* 2, no. 2 (1982): 9.

conditions of place and landscape are focal points for interrogating the personalities and institutions that remember the past and create local identities. As a useful category of analysis, the local is "is a fluid and uncertain category, reminding us that despite the claims of planners, architects, and other spatial engineers, the production of place is always unfinished and uneven."[13] These claims about the production of place are useful here because although this dissertation does not explicitly deal with commemoration and memory, it interrogates how writers produced certain spaces in the town of St. John's and how they imbued these spaces with meanings, meanings that often persist to the present day in some form. Middle-class travel writers, letter-writers, and diarists engaged in the production of place in nineteenth-century St. John's, assigned meaning to the landscape and engaged in that unfinished and uneven process. Meanwhile, newspaper editors commented on issues of interest, and this chapter uses information gleaned from newspapers to further contextualize and illuminate the places and events travel writers, letter-writers, and diarists discussed.

Landscape and Built Environment

From its days as a seasonal trading post, the bowl-shaped harbour ringed by steep hills has been St. John's focal point. Written sources emphasize that the built environment radiated out from the harbour. The oldest parts of the town were built on the waterfront and led up the hillside on the harbour's north side and east sides. By the mid-nineteenth century an array of institutional buildings at the top of the hills on the north end of town provided impressive vantage points facing towards the narrows and Signal Hill. As Figure 1 shows, the town below was clearly visible from high elevations such as Signal Hill and Military Road (the highest of the

[13] James Opp and John C. Walsh, "Introduction: Local Acts of Placing and Remembering," in *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, ed. James Opp and John C. Walsh (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 6.

streets running parallel to the harbour). All sightlines led to the harbour. St. John's never had a town square, but the harbour, the nexus of work (and for a time, play), arrivals, and departures, seemed to act as a similar social and economic space. This orientation towards the harbour remained intact during successive waves of rebuilding following fires that scorched the town in the nineteenth century and persisted despite the relative lack of organized planning in the town. The bowl-shaped city's layout created an environment for watching and for being watched. On Signal Hill (a military garrison until 1870 and only publicly accessible after the garrison departed), where it was possible to surveil both the open ocean and the town, this element of surveillance was especially evident with a system of flags signaling the approach of vessels to the townspeople below.[14]

Figure 1. A. Ruger, Panoramic view of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1879. Library and Archives Canada, C-006557. Used under a Creative Commons license.

---

[14] James Candow's *The Lookout: A History of Signal Hill* (St. John's: Creative Publishers, 2011), goes into detail on the flag system.

Throughout the town's history, the harbour has been a site of work, with the sights and smells that attend that work. Merchants each had their own wharves fronting their premises and retail stores, and the Government Wharf (also known as the Queen's Wharf) "a fine broad quay… open for the accommodation of the public" took most other traffic.[15] Wooden flakes and stages for drying and curing fish were a common sight, covering every inch of available land between wharf, mercantile store, and street, a typical feature of the built landscape not only in St. John's but in outport communities all over the island. Naval officer Edward Chappell, writing about the same time that Richard Morris arrived in St. John's, observed that "the attention of a stranger is mostly attracted by the innumerable stages erected along the sea-side for the salting and drying of cod. The shores around the harbour of St. John's are entirely covered with them."[16] A quarter of a century later, geological surveyor J.B. Jukes commented that "the first thing that strikes a stranger on entering a harbour in Newfoundland is the abundance of what are called the fish flakes and stages, together with the wooden wharfs and the great dark red storehouses." Jukes also noted that by 1846 in St. John's and other larger settlements in the colony, flakes and stages were juxtaposed with structures of

> more imposing character. Large stone houses, good-sized churches, chapels, and courthouses: shops built of wood and painted white, a tolerably regular street and a road or two, mark the seat of greater wealth, and a more numerous population. Even in St. John's however, fish flakes are by no means entirely absent, though they are confined to the south side of the harbour, and to a small nook, bearing the euphonious appellation of Maggoty Cove.[17]

---

[15] Edward Chappell, *Voyage of HMS Rosamond to Newfoundland and the Southern Coast of Labrador* (London: J. Mawman, 1818), 46. This is an account of a voyage taken in 1813.
[16] Ibid., 42.
[17] Joseph Beete Jukes, *Jukes' Excursions: Being a Revised Edition of Joseph Beete Jukes' "Excursions in and about Newfoundland in the years 1839-1840*,*"* ed. Robert Cuff and Derek Wilton (St. John's: H. Cuff, 1993), 102.

A comprehensive city map of St. John's produced by surveyor William Noad in 1852 (Figures 2 and 3) displays the mercantile premises and piers that surrounded the harbour, showing each firm with its shop, premises, and pier. According to the colour coding on Noad's map, mercantile premises were most often made of stone or brick and roofed with either iron, zinc, or slate.[18] This was a rarity in a town where most structures were built of wood. On Noad's map, only the mercantile premises, certain churches, and government structures such as Government House were built of stone or brick.

The smells of the fishery were inescapable in St. John's, and were frequently the first thing visitors remarked on in their writings. As early as 1766, naval officer Joseph Banks commented on the harbour's assault on the senses. He had visited the town in spring and fall, and voiced relief that he was not at St. John's in the summer, a season "which… must cause a stench scarce to be supported."[19] While Banks relied on conjecture for his description, other visitors had firsthand experience to draw upon when describing the harbour smells: for Robert Steele, a naval officer who visited in 1810, the smells in the harbour were "inconveniences of necessity" given that the town had been established as a site to cure fish.[20] American businessman Bayard Taylor visited St. John's in 1880 on business related to laying a submarine cable across the Gulf of St. Lawrence and observed that "the picturesque flakes… and a powerful fishy smell in the atmosphere, proclaim at once to the stranger the principal business of St.

---

[18] William R. Noad, *Map of St. John's, Newfoundland from Actual Survey*, 1852. City of St. John's Archives, MG 30.
[19] Joseph Banks, *Joseph Banks in Newfoundland and Labrador*, ed. A.M. Lysaght, quoted in Jerry Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals: Law, Custom, and Naval Government in Newfoundland, 1699-1832* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 164.
[20] Robert Steele, *A Tour Through Part of the Atlantic; or: Recollections from Madeira, the Azores, and Newfoundland… Visited in the Summer of 1809* (London: J.J. Stockdale, 1810), 101.

Figure 2. Detail from surveyor William Noad's 1852 map of St. John's.
Legend: Pink buildings - stone or brick; yellow buildings – timber.
A – Fort Townshend; B – the Factory; C – Anglican Cathedral; D – Orphan Asylum School; E - Roman Catholic Cathedral; F – old Roman Catholic Chapel.
City of St. John's Archives, MG 30. Photo by the author.

Figure 3. Detail from surveyor William Noad's 1852 map of St. John's.
Legend: Pink buildings - stone or brick; yellow buildings – timber.
D – Orphan Asylum School; E - Roman Catholic Cathedral; G – Queen's Wharf; H – Newfoundland Native's Society Hall; I – Colonial Building; J – Government House.
City of St. John's Archives, MG 30. Photo by the author.

John's."[21] As Chapter 4 will reveal, when the Prince of Wales made a stop at St. John's during his 1860 North American tour, the reception committee appointed to make local arrangements enacted temporary measurements to beautify the harbour and mask any unseemly sights or smells.

For a time, in addition to being a working harbour linking residents of St. John's to the wider Atlantic world, the harbour was also a social space. This was particularly evident in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a time when the built environment lacked suitable halls or residences in which to host parties so naval ships were used as substitutes. In 1766, Governor Hugh Palliser hosted a shipboard ball to mark the coronation of George III. Officer Joseph Banks was among the attendees, and recorded the event in his diary. Although pleasantly surprised by the selection of food and drink on offer during supper, Banks found many of the attendees lacking in sociability. He incredulously noted that "the want of ladies was so great that my washerwoman and her sister were there by formal invitation" and the female partygoers greatly enjoyed the wines and liqueurs the host provided: "dancing it seems agreed with them by its getting them such excellent stomachs."[22] Banks' amazement at the presence of these working-class women at the governor's ball speaks to the lack of an entrenched middle or upper class population in Newfoundland to attend these types of soirees, as well as to the small population of women (of all classes) on the island in the late eighteenth century.[23] Although Joseph Banks' experience at the coronation ball is an early example, Jerry Bannister observes

---

[21] Bayard Taylor, *At Home and Abroad: A Sketch of Life, Scenery, and Men* (New York, 1880). Quoted in R.G. Moyles, *"Complaints is Many and Various but the Odd Divil Likes It": Nineteenth Century Views of Newfoundland* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associations, 1977), 17.
[22] *Joseph Banks in Newfoundland and Labrador*, quoted in Bannister, *Rule of the Admirals*, 164.
[23] See W. Gordon Handcock, "*So Longe as There Comes Noe Women": Origins of English Settlement in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1989) and the essays in John Mannion ed, *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography* (St. John's: Memorial University, 1977) for detailed information on the demographics of 18th and early 19th century Newfoundland.

that the Royal Navy remained “a fixture of social life” in St. John’s well into the nineteenth century, and its ships at anchor in the harbour were important social venues even after the construction of (the first) Government House in 1781. Bannister argues that for men like Banks, a warship moored in the harbour represented social authority as much as it did military power, something that is evident in Banks’ pronouncements on the town and its inhabitants.[24] As a social space, the harbour (or ships berthed there) held important associations of identity, class, and ties to the British Empire, and in later years little changed in this regard. In 1828, the officers of HMS *Tyne* hosted 100 guests for a luncheon of “viands and fruits of all kinds, with the choicest wines – in short every delicacy that could be obtained were provided in great profusion.” After lunch, there was dancing, followed by most guests disembarking the ship to go to the theatre. The ship itself “bespoke much of good taste” and the “cheers of the crew were deafening,” claimed one local newspaper, describing the visual and aural display of power and rank.[25] In 1838, newspapers recorded that 50 people, including the governor, attended a “dejeuner” on HMS *Crocodile*.[26] A much more select assembly was in attendance by this time, as a distinct middle class began to emerge in the town and washerwomen could no longer expect invitations to dine with the governor.

As for the built environment surrounding the harbour, for naval officer Edward Chappell, who visited Newfoundland in 1813, the town was a gritty and hardscrabble place, its landscape dominated by wharves, flakes, and pubs, and boasting “very few handsome or even good-looking edifices.” Unpaved streets were rendered “almost impassable, by mud and filth” when it rained. The town featured many shops “of all descriptions” but commodities, especially

---

[24] Bannister, *Rule of the Admirals*, 164-165, 180.
[25] *Newfoundlander* (St. John’s), 30 October 1828.
[26] *Newfoundlander*, 27 September 1838.

meat, poultry, and vegetables (all imported from Nova Scotia) were "very dear" and while the town had a "great number" of public houses, only one of its inns could be deigned "tolerable." The built environment reflected the fishery as the dominant industry and showed the town's origins as a temporary outpost. Stores, piers, flakes, and wharves proliferated, obvious markers of the fishery's importance.

Most buildings were made of wood, and unpainted, an effect geological surveyor J.B. Jukes called "sombre and dismal."[27] According to SPG missionary Lewis Anspach in 1819, the best houses were "two stories high, raised on brick or stone foundations, which include excellent cellars." Most building materials were imported from America and even these "best" houses were "continually wanting repair and require a coat of paint every twelve months to support a decent appearance."[28] As for the "common dwellings," these were usually one or two stories, and all building materials except shingles came from the woods in outlying areas. Some had clapboard on the sides, while others "are built of logs left rough and uneven on the inside and outside, the interstices being filled up with moss and the insides generally filled up with boards planed and tongued."[29] Writing in 1820, newly arrived mercantile clerk Samuel Rogerson observed "the coast is inhabited by fishermen, it is a very wild country about St. John's, abounding with wood here and there but few houses. The houses are all wood except this and another one, there are plenty of stones here but no lime and people are not acquaint."[30] It is not

---

[27] Jukes, *Jukes' Excursions*, 4.
[28] Lewis Amadeus Anspach, *History of the Island of Newfoundland* (London, 1819), 466-467.
[29] Chappell, *Voyage of HMS Rosamond*, 462-63. For more on vernacular architectural styles in 19th century Newfoundland, see David B. Mills "The Development of Folk Architecture in Trinity Bay, Newfoundland," in Mannion, *The Peopling of Newfoundland*, 77-101.
[30] Samuel Rogerson, St. John's, to William Rogerson, Gillesbie, 18 November 1820, National Records of Scotland (NRS), Rogerson Family in Russia, Newfoundland, and Scotland, GD1/620/66.

immediately clear what Samuel meant by “acquaint” in this sentence. In his writing he conflated the people and landscape and wrote about them as if they were extensions of one another.

Commentators frequently acknowledged that the narrow streets filled with wooden buildings, constructed haphazardly and with little planning, were a fire hazard. Sheriff John Bland observed in 1811 that mercantile stores and shops clustered along the waterfront had created “one uninterrupted chain of extensive buildings.”[31] That same year, a petition to the British parliament from “the merchants and principal householders of St. John’s” made the same point. “Imagination could not portray a more dreadful picture of human misery, than would be realized, were this Town in the depth of winter to become a prey to conflagration… during three months of the year, owing to the severity of our climate, we are shut out from all intercourse with our neighbours,” argued the petitioners, who were concerned with protecting their assets and mercantile stores in the event of a fire.[32] Lack of infrastructure to fight a fire or rebuild following one was not their only concern. Their petition paints a picture of a town with no police, no public schools, no marketplace, no legal provision for the poor, and described the town streets as narrow, unpaved and unlighted.[33] The town had none of the amenities and institutions that a colonial centre should have. The petitioners’ demands provide a sense of the town’s built landscape at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and the worries and wishes a certain subsection of inhabitants had for the place.[34]

---

[31] High Sheriff John Bland to Governor Duckworth, 6 October 1811, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), MG 204, John Thomas Duckworth Collection, Reel 3, 2145-48.
[32] Petition signed by “Merchants and principal householders” of St. John’s, 7 November 1811. In William Carson’s pamphlet *A Letter to the Members of Parliament* (Greenock: W. Scott, 1812), 32.
[33]Ibid., 32.
[34] These petitioners demanded that rent monies for ships’ rooms (harbour berths leased from the Crown) stay in the town and be invested in infrastructure but, as Sean Cadigan points out, these demands should not be interpreted as an attempt to advocate for local government or greater autonomy. Sean Cadigan “The Role of the Fishing Ships’ Rooms Controversy in the Rise of a Local Bourgeoisie: St. John’s, Newfoundland, 1775-1812,” paper presented to the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, 1992.

True to these petitioners' worries, and Sheriff Bland's warning, fire swept the town in February 1816 and twice in the month of November 1817. The November 1817 fires destroyed most of the storehouses and shops at the water's edge and left such a shortage of winter provisions that the governor issued a proclamation preventing any vessel from leaving St. John's until the quantity of provisions remaining in the town could be determined.[35] Richard Morris wrote about how his firm, as "the only holder of several articles, including butter and c" was profiting handsomely in the wake of the November 1817 fires. The winter of 1817-1818 brought food shortages and violence and came to be referred to as "the winter of the Rals" (or rowdies).[36] Fire was a scourge in many colonial towns built largely of wood, but in a town only accessible by water, locked in by ice several months of the year, and dependent on the outside world for much of its food and supplies, it was an especially substantial threat in St. John's. Water connected the settlement to the world beyond the island, but when disaster struck, as in 1816 and 1817, it also served as a barrier, compounding isolation.

In the wake of the 1817-1817 fires, some middle-class and mercantile families began to abandon the practice of living in rooms above their mercantile premises in favour of homes further from the waterfront and commercial district.[37] Officials and merchants (people with the

---

[35] *Royal Gazette*, 18 November 1817. The *Royal Gazette* of 25 November 1817 estimated that 500 people were left homeless. The *Royal Gazette* of 10 February 1818 refers to a delivery of provisions and aid donated by the people of Boston and expressed thankfulness that the harbour was not icebound that year as it was in 1817 when "every effort to relieve their wants were rendered abortive by the extensive barriers of Ice which surrounded the coast."

[36] See D.W. Prowse *A History of Newfoundland*, 2nd ed. (St. John's: Boulder Publications, 2002), 405-407 [originally published 1895] for detail on "Winter of the Rals" and food shortages that year. Sean Cadigan's *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) also discusses food shortages, 57.

[37] Robert MacKinnon, "The Agricultural Fringe of St. John's, 1750-1945," in *Four Centuries and the City: Perspectives on the Historical Geography of St. John's* (St. John's: Department of Geography, Memorial University, 2005), 53-81. Travel accounts mention the city's "environs" (including Quidi Vidi, Waterford Bridge, and Goulds) as picturesque. Richard Bonnycastle commented in 1842 that "many pretty little villas, or ornamented cottages are springing up in every direction." Richard Bonnycastle, *Newfoundland in 1842* (London: H. Colburn, 1842), 2:235.

money to improve the land), likely spooked by the colony's reliance on imported goods, vied with one another to create country residences and farms, a phenomenon Judge D.W. Prowse, writing in 1897, described as a "perfect furore" to become landed proprietors.[38] Richard Morris, for example, decamped from his quarters above the shop to a cottage at Quidi Vidi, a pastoral location that was still walking distance to the waterfront. Morris described his new home to his sister Ann in 1820 as "a small farm belonging to the concern little more than half a mile from St. John's by the side of the beautiful lake Quidi Vidi." He wrote of tranquil surroundings and agriculture: "I have six meadows laid with wood and shrubs as pleasure grounds besides a considerable piece of uncleared with cattle by the side of the lake which is full of trout and is considered to be the most beautiful spot in this country."[39] (It is unclear, however, if these amenities were Richard's alone or shared with others.) In comparison to the smelly, bustling downtown, Morris's neighbourhood was quiet, isolated, and tranquil: the perfect location for family life. (Indeed, Morris's acquaintances joked the house was "too good for a batchelor" and he married shortly after moving.[40]) Where people lived in the town was becoming increasingly tied to their social class, reflecting the shift towards permanent settlement from frontier town.

Apart from this move to residential neighbourhoods, little else on the face of the town changed until mid-century. By the time military engineer Richard Bonnycastle wrote in 1842, the town had changed enough from his earlier visits that he could say it had "improved of late years, by the addition of stone houses, and some superior shops; but still requires a good deal to raise it above the appearances of a sea-port waterside." He cited Queen and Cochrane streets as new

---

[38] Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, 427.

[39] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 9 October 1820, MUN Archives, MF 279. The reference to small-scale farming at his new residence also reflects an expansion in farms around the periphery of St. John's in the years 1810-1830, one of the peak periods of immigration to St. John's. MacKinnon, "The Agricultural Fringe of St. John's," 63.

[40] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 9 October 1820, MUN Archives, MF 279.

streets that had improved the city, but cautioned that "St. John's has not yet arrived at much architectural embellishment, and it will be many years before the thickly crowded little wooden tenements will give way to a better and safer class of buildings, owing to the expense of importing cut stone, brick, and lime."[41] (As Chapter Three reveals, the cost and logistics of importing building materials would aggrieve both the Anglican and Catholic bishops in their attempts to build stone cathedrals in the town during the 1840s and 1850s.) Bonnycastle looked forward to the day when St. John's would "become as worthy of notice to the eye as it is now to the nation in its wealth and commerce."[42] For Bonnycastle, and the merchants he wrote about, St. John's remained a place to extract resources, convert them into wealth, and then leave, retiring to Britain. Little investment in the local landscape (or society) was required.

In summer 1846, four years after Bonnycastle made his observations, fire struck the city again. This time, in the fire's aftermath the newly-established House of Assembly passed a series of resolutions widening the two main streets parallel to the harbour (Water and Duckworth streets) and requiring that all rebuilt buildings along those streets be made of stone or brick.[43] The legislature commissioned a survey on rebuilding the town, but few of its recommendations were put into effect, due to high costs and the reluctance of property owners to submit to municipal assessments. The winding path of Water Street was not straightened as the report had recommended and although the city saw some increased use of stone in building, particularly in the business district, much of the town was rebuilt in wood.[44] Ten new streets were built as firebreaks to intersect Duckworth and Water Streets, and interrupt the continuous

---

[41] Bonnycastle, *Newfoundland in 1842,* 2:229.
[42] Ibid., 234.
[43] *The Times* (St. John's), 1 July 1846.
[44] Melvin Baker, "The Great St. John's Fire of 1846," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 79, 1 (1983): 31-34.

chain of buildings that had previously existed along the water.[45] Although the main streets were widened, their cleanliness was still a topic of discussion. *The Newfoundlander* reported in August 1846 that "in the centre of this densely populated town, the drains at the side-paths and such places are made the receptacles for these accumulations of filth and rubbish… the air is impregnated with the noxious effluvia arising therefrom." The writer felt it "more than ever important that some regard should be shown to cleanliness in the public thoroughfares."[46]

As was the case in 1817, some middle-class families, who could afford it, migrated out of the city centre in the wake of the fire. The Howley family of merchants and traders, for example, moved out from their harbourfront premises in 1846 after fire destroyed it.[47] Their new home, a farm at Mount Cashel, had previously been their summer home, and it offered the possibility of food for the family and for sale, an important supplement to their mercantile business. The development of strictly residential neighbourhoods in St. John's at mid-century speaks to Victorian ideals of separate spheres and the desire to escape the putrid downtown and waterfront in the wake of the 1846 fire.[48] It also speaks to a growing number of women and children resident in the town. With the shift from outpost, defined by work and trade, to permanent settlement where families, homes, and social life took on more importance, the shape of the city and the way people used its spaces changed.

---

[45] Ibid. See also Moyles, *"Complaints is Many and Various,"* 14-16.
[46] *The Newfoundlander* (St. John's), 27 August 1846.
[47] MUN archives, COLL-262 (Howley Family Collection), file 10.01.004 (notes on Howley family by John Mannion). See *The Times*, 1 July 1846 for Richard Howley auctioning off, from his Torbay Road cottage, articles damaged by the fire on 9 June.
[48] Parks Canada "Rennie's Mill Road Historic District National Historic Site of Canada," https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=243&i=45256 (accessed 8 September 2018). Roderick Mcleod's "The Road to Terrace Bank: Land Capitalization, Public Space, and the Redpath Family Home, 1837-1861" *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 14, no. 1 (2003): 165-192, makes similar observations about public and private spheres and the development of Mount Royal in Montreal as an upper-middle-class mercantile neighbourhood.

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall point out a similar phenomenon in the growing middle-class suburbs of Birmingham in the period from 1780-1850. Where Birmingham's early historians had been "struck by the absence of a local aristocracy and the speed with which gentlemen who made their fortune left the town," the emergence of a middle class ensured that families "stayed and worked to build a town renowned not only for its brass but also for the culture which brass could buy."[49] Davidoff and Hall point out that the inhabitants of middle-class suburbs perceived them as a "haven of domestic tranquility." John Tosh makes a similar point about residential neighbourhoods and the rise of the middle class in Britain, observing that "on grounds of both amenity and economy, middle-class men preferred to maintain a residence away from their place of work."[50] In St. John's, there is some evidence that this was the case, as residential neighbourhoods like the area around Rennie's Mill Road grew alongside the town's growing middle class. Still, as late as 1855 one visitor marvelled at how few homes and cottages dotted the lakes surrounding the town. According to army officer R. B. McCrea, who resided in St. John's from 1861-1863, St. John's merchants were reluctant to build country homes distinct from their premises in the town because they "prefer[red] the dirt and dust and cod-oily smells of the fishy town; not for economy or meanness, but in the belief that, in the gambling nature of their business, each year would turn up the ace of trumps, and prove the last of exile."[51] McCrea's observations aside, it does appear that by mid-century, business and leisure, public and private became delineated in the city's geography in a way that they had not been before.

---

[49] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850,* revised edition (London: Routledge, 2002), 39, 43.
[50] John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 16.
[51] R.B. McCrea, *Lost Amid the Fogs: Sketches of Life in Newfoundland* (London: 1869), quoted in Moyles *"Complaints is Many and Various,"* 24.

Also in the years following the 1846 fire, several new buildings overlooking the harbour's north side, constructed by the state, churches, and social clubs, further demarcated the city's geography, orienting city sightlines towards the waterfront (see Figures 2 and 3 on pages 36 and 37, which depict many of these buildings). These institutional buildings created a ring along the town's high point, where structures representing respectability and authority encircled the town and looked over it. This would be the location, from west to east, of the Catholic cathedral (consecrated 1855), the Benevolent Irish Hall and Orphan Asylum School, home of one of the town's leading fraternal and charitable associations (hall first built 1827, renovated 1842-44, rebuilt in stone in 1880, and rebuilt yet again following a devastating 1892 fire), the Colonial Building (1850), a new Government House (1828) to replace the much maligned 1781 structure on the site of Fort Townshend, Bannerman Park (1870) the city's first public park, carved from Government House's grounds as a location for respectable displays of socialising, and St. Thomas's Anglican Church (1835). Fort Townshend, headquarters of the military garrison in St. John's, was at the west end of Military Road while the road up Signal Hill (and leading towards the Queen's Battery, another military installation) was at the east.

By mid-century, traversing Military Road meant seeing the buildings and institutions that represented the transition from naval to colonial rule and the social institutions that represented the transition from seasonal to year-round settlement.[52] The one-time seasonal fishing station had established a complex class structure with middle-class institutions and social spaces. Institutional edifices all occupied commanding vantage points, facing towards the harbour, and could be seen upon entering the town. Symbols of local authority and identity (the

---

[52] Shane O'Dea's article "Newfoundland: The Development of Culture on the Margin" *Newfoundland Studies* 10, no. 1 (March 1994): 73-81, explores the relationship between architecture and permanent settlement in Newfoundland.

Benevolent Irish Society hall, the Colonial Building – see Figures 2 and 3) juxtaposed the forts, the symbols of military rule and connection to the empire. The new Government House grounds were carved from crown land, overlooking the town, and Government House itself was no longer situated on the site of a military fort. St. Thomas's Anglican Church was the garrison church but it was also the town's main Anglican church until consecration of the cathedral in 1850. Changes in St. John's built landscape went in tandem with how its burgeoning middle class thought of and imagined the place. These year-round residents wanted the amenities that they felt should accompany a settled town. The letters and diaries of some of the individuals who occupied these homes and worked in these businesses provide insight on how they responded to and moved through the town, and to how they perceived its changing (or stagnating).

Lives on the Page

Even as the "colonial transition" took place in Newfoundland, a legislature was called and institutions began to establish themselves, its middle-class and elite inhabitants maintained a transatlantic outlook.[53] As Elizabeth Mancke explains, "the vast expanse of the fishing grounds, their international exploitation, and the Europe-based investment in the fishing industry positioned Newfoundland within economic, political, and military spaces that were transatlantic in their breadth."[54] Letters and diaries show that the city's middle class maintained a transatlantic outlook in their social lives and in their families, while local elements of the town and landscape affected social lives, identities, and class consciousness. For instance, mercantile

---

[53] For the establishment of responsible government in Newfoundland see Jerry Bannister, "The Campaign for Representative Government in Newfoundland," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 5 (1994): 19-40. See Keith Matthews, "The Class of '32: St. John's Reformers on the Eve of Representative Government," *Acadiensis* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 80-94 for detail on the reform movement.

[54] Elizabeth Mancke, "Spaces of Power in the Early Modern Northeast," in *New England and the Maritime Provinces: Connections and Comparisons*, ed. Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 46.

agent Richard Morris's letters to his sister Ann create an image of the city and its social scene, and put it in an Atlantic context with references to social, familial, and business networks spanning the ocean. The letters provide a reflection on social class in early nineteenth century St. John's. After three summers and one winter in St. John's, Richard had greatly warmed up to the town and became a regular attendee of social events such as amateur theatre, horse racing, fairs, and the subscription library. He had also decided to get married, to twenty-year-old Catherine McCaulay. (Richard's age is unclear from the correspondence.) Richard seemed desperate to show his sister (who, from all appearances, did not approve of the match) that he had married into middle-class respectability and that both the woman and the location provided a suitable life for him. To do so, he frequently invoked his wife's transatlantic connections and social circle.

When Richard Morris introduced his wife-to-be to his sister, he referred to both literal and figurative places: her place in his social network, her place among other women in the city, his wish that both women could meet in the same place one day. Because he was describing a woman his sister had not yet met, it became especially important that Richard paint an ideal picture with words. Letters were the only means of acquainting Ann and Catherine, and Richard included only the most flattering details:

> She is now considered by far the most accomplished young woman in St. John's and in addition to a handsome person is of a most amicable disposition… I wish you could pass an evening with Miss McCauley, I am sure you would be delighted with her, with the most reserved and modest demeanor she unites the most amiable and friendly disposition… Miss M is herself only 20 years of age of rather serious disposition very steady and as I have already stated the most accomplished girl in this place besides being handsome.[55]

[55] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 28 November 1820, MUN Archives, MF 279.

Richard employed the word "disposition" three times in this short letter of about 300 words, demonstrating that character and demeanour were important traits. Both men and women frequently referred to their beloved's "disposition" when describing them. Amanda Vickery, referring to women's choosing of partners, writes that "character" and "disposition" were traits that contemporaries frequently invoked as determining characteristics in a marriage. Yet for all this, "shrewd evaluation" of a suitor's character and financial prospects were crucial in order to ensure a "prudent and considered choice."[56]

Indeed, beyond Catherine's character, her social and economic connections were also appealing, as she was related to both partners in the firm of Hoyles and Brown, Richard's employer. Her mother was the first cousin to Hugh William Brown and his sister Lucretia, who was married to Newman Wright Hoyles.[57] Davidoff and Hall point out that it was not uncommon for young men to meet their future wives, often relatives of other men in the concern, during a period of apprenticeship or training early on in their careers.[58] Such marriages "provided a form of security in binding together members of the middle class in local, regional, and national networks, a guarantee of congenial views as well as trustworthiness in economic and financial affairs."[59]

Richard's description of Catherine makes it evident that a colonial middle class had established itself in St. John's. Middle-class values and pastimes proliferate in the letters where he discusses Catherine and her suitability as a wife. For instance, Richard stressed that while

---

[56] Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998), 40.
[57] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 28 November 1820, and 5 January 1821, MUN Archives, MF 279. Pamela Bruce, "Hoyles, Newman Wright," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003-, accessed 2 September 2018. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hoyles_newman_wright_1777_18407E.html.
[58] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 219.
[59] Ibid., 221.

Catherine had been born in Newfoundland, her manner and deportment were nothing short of metropolitan: "Miss McCauley was educated at Teignmouth in Devonshire, will be 21 years of age March next, speaks French fluently, draws on paper and velvet, plays on the pianoforte and is a most accomplished person of the best temper and disposition."[60] Richard mentioned all of these things because he wanted to show Ann the types of people who lived in the place he had chosen to make his home: accomplished, and erudite, with favourable connections for Richard's business. In a period when the middle class was becoming entrenched in St. John's, consolidating and signalling its power amongst itself, Richard felt he did not need to return to Britain to find a woman whose connections and accomplishments would make her a suitable wife. In his letters introducing Catherine, he set out to show Ann that people in St. John's could perform gentility and respectability as well as those at home.[61]

Catherine, for her part, had stormy waters with which to contend. Establishing a friendly relationship with her husband's sister, who had made her opposition to the match known, and whom she would likely never meet in person, was no small task.[62] In *Emigrant Worlds and Transatlantic Communities*, Elizabeth Jane Errington argues that letters between emigrant family members "were a means of integrating the Old World and the New, of tying the familiar

---

[60] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 5 January 1821, MUN Archives, MF 279.

[61] Letters of the Bowring mercantile family provide another example of the difficulty young men faced convincing family members in Britain of the suitability of their colonial-born paramours. When Edward Bowring became involved with a local woman in St. John's in 1842, his brother Charles wrote to their parents in Liverpool alerting them of the woman's "unsuitability." Family patriarch Benjamin Bowring's reaction reveals the anxiety middle-class businessmen had to see their sons marry women whose connections and background would be a boon for the business. He wrote that the courtship "may drive him ultimately from the station which has been secured for him and lead to his ruin. What indeed could result from his alliance with an ignorant and uneducated girl, who has had set before her no example of feminine worth and respectability, and with no other recommendation than the fickle fancy for a face." The identity of the woman in question is unknown and six months later Edward was back in Liverpool under his father's watchful eye. Benjamin Bowring to Charles Tricks Bowring, 1842, quoted in David Keir, *The Bowring Story* (London: The Bodley Head, 1962), 87.

[62] For the process of establishing a correspondence, letters of introduction, writing practices and conventions, see Dierks, *In My Power,* 5.

domestic landscapes, people, and relationships of home into the new and increasingly familiar world of a face-to-face colonial community."[63] For Catherine, who had few shared reference points with her sister-in-law, creating ties and relationships proved a challenge. Richard smoothed the way for Catherine's opening salvo with an introduction and a rather tentative plea to his sister: "She has promised to write to you as you have not thought fit to write to me. I was aware you would not like to correspond with a person of whom you have little or no knowledge but of whom you will be able to form some idea when you receive her letter. I can only assure you she is considered the most accomplished and best educated person here."[64]

Catherine's first letter to Ann contained a detailed description of the town, its entertainments, and social events, and began a spirited defence of St. John's and its society: "From reports you are doubtless prejudiced against our Island for I believe the English in general entertain a very despicable opinion of it. The Country contrasted with England is certainly far inferior but it possesses many advantages. The Society of St. John's is good and by no means so divided as in most of your towns." As for the climate, winters are "sometimes severe but they pass pleasantly. Sleighing is a very favourable amusement during this season." Catherine noted that while England had advantages over Newfoundland in "beauty and fertilization" she would still "choose Newfoundland as a residence." She closed her first letter by imploring Ann to write to her on any subject she chose, invited her to visit the couple in their "little cottage" and signed off as "your sincerely affectionate sister."[65] With no shared knowledge of places and no people in common in their lives besides Richard, both Ann and Catherine might have struggled to find something to say in a letter, compounding the already difficult, awkward, and time-consuming

---

[63] Errington, *Emigrant Worlds*, 138.
[64] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 16 June 1821, MUN Archives, MF 279.
[65] Catherine Morris to Ann Morris, 21 August 1821, MUN Archives, MF 279.

task. Catherine chose to write about her local surroundings and the leisure activities they afforded her, creating a picture of middle-class leisure life in early nineteenth-century St. John's in the process.

The Morris letters reflect the "webs of affection and obligation" identified in Errington's article of the same name. Using Nancy Christie's notion of the "familial economy of obligation," Errington points out many instances of invocation of duty to one's family that pervaded transatlantic correspondence.[66] Through correspondence, an imagined world of kin and community was built and sustained upon assumptions of family needs and interests. We see this in the Morris correspondence when both women made the acquaintance of a Mr. Hesseltine, a colleague of Richard's at Brown, Hoyles, and Co., who frequently travelled back and forth between Newfoundland and Britain. Hesseltine's activities (and speculation about his romantic prospects) became a topic of Catherine's letters to Ann.[67] Catherine also tasked Ann with tracking down some goods for her, and thanked her sister-in-law "for executing my little commissions last summer" and sending out a bonnet and collar as gifts.[68] Having a connection across the Atlantic to send goods and stylish accessories helped a person indicate their social rank and status through dress, allowing the middle class to associate themselves with the elite and separate themselves from the poor.[69] Asking for goods also suggested that they or the quality desired was not available in St. John's, another reflection of the consumer lives of its middle-class inhabitants. As Richard Bushman writes of letter-writing in colonial America, "the

---

[66] Elizabeth Jane Errington, "Webs of Affection and Obligation: Glimpse into Families and Nineteenth Century Transatlantic Communities," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 19, no. 1 (2008), 4.
[67] Catherine Morris to Ann Morris, 26 May 1825, MUN Archives, MF 279.
[68]Ibid.
[69] This reflects the patterns Richard Bushman points out where after the American Revolution, American planters and merchants appropriated British gentry culture in what Bushman calls "one of the great democratic movements of the age." Richard Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 273.

gracefully turned phrases, the high sentiments, the touches of wit were contrived to confirm the writers' sense of themselves as ladies and gentlemen of fashion."[70]

Throughout the letter collection, an underlying sense that Ann felt Richard had withdrawn from his brotherly "affection and obligation" by choosing to remain in Newfoundland complicates her correspondent's attempts at establishing familiarity. Meanwhile, the reader never actually hears Ann Morris's voice: her brother and sister-in-law attempted to convince her of certain things, cajoled her, and described their lives and comforts to her in detail, but the reader's impression of Ann herself is drawn entirely from what other people wrote to her, and how they addressed her and her perceived worries. Ann's position in the "web of affection and obligation" can only be pieced together from the writings of her brother and sister-in-law, as in this excerpt from a letter Richard sent her shortly after his marriage:

> it gave me much concern to find you was in bad spirits and complain of my having married here without giving you any intimation… My Dear Sister can you suppose I would have made a secret of it to you if I had such an affair in contemplation when I left London, or can you Suppose for a moment that such an Engagement will lessen the affection I have for you, with whom I have passed all my early days and to whom I am bound by the strongest ties not only of affection but of Gratitude for the Constant attention you have always paid our Dear Father and be assured no new Engagement I have made will ever decrease the attachment I shall always have for you nor will I ever desert you.[71]

As an unmarried adult daughter living at home, Ann's life was devoted to caring for her elderly father and step-mother. The letters give the impression that the elder Mr. Morris was too incapacitated to carry on his business dealings, and Ann acted as agent for several properties he owned. Richard occasionally advised her on business dealings and expressed his

---

[70] Ibid., 92.
[71] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 16 June 1821, MUN Archives, MF 279.

thankfulness for her attention to her family. After not having heard from Ann for several months, Richard wrote that "my first wish is to make amends for all the anxiety and trouble you have undergone for the sake of my poor Father which I will never forget… Perhaps you may feel uneasy at the new Engagement I have made but the reverse should be the case and I rather think you will one day rejoice at the choice I have made."[72] Ann seemed never to fully "rejoice" at Richard's choice. Did she resent the lot that had cast her as caretaker to elderly parents while Richard could pursue marriage and family? In 1828, after Richard's death at sea and the deaths of her father and step-mother, Ann married shopkeeper William Yale, whose name frequently appeared in passing in Richard's letters, but without any hint of a romance between Yale and his sister.[73] While Richard's web of transatlantic obligation and affection was a virtual one, confined to the pen and the page, Ann was not free to marry until she was discharged from the very real and tangible web of obligation and affection that required her to attend to her parents in their old age. For all that Richard Morris's letters to his sister reveal about social activities, business, and courtship in early nineteenth-century St. John's, there is much that remains unsaid about middle-class family obligations and the strain that emigration placed on family members, particularly female ones left behind.

Nevertheless, through their writings, these individuals enacted a performance and constructed identities. In retelling events for an audience or for themselves, letter-writers and diarists crafted and articulated identities, filtering places and experiences through the lenses of

---

[72] Richard Morris to Ann Morris, 22 July 1821, MUN Archives, MF 279.

[73] After Richard's death in 1826, Catherine Morris married customs collector Edmund Fanning Stewart of PEI. They had one child and later moved to Berkshire, England where Catherine remained for the rest of her life. She maintained some connections to Newfoundland: Three individuals from St. John's mercantile families (Susan Rennie, Ann Angel Bully, and Newman Wright Hoyles [grandson of N.W. Hoyles who had founded the mercantile firm]) witnessed her will in London in 1865. MUN, MF 279, will of Catherine Stewart.

gender and class. Just as letters contributed to defining and challenging familial roles and relationships, they also played a role in defining one's sense of self. The process fits the liminality Greg Dening associates with life in early America, a place full of thresholds and boundaries that served as prologue to performance. Self-descriptions, such as those found in transatlantic letters are:

> ...pulled out of the babble and noise of every moment's consciousness and are given a beginning and an end. A space is contrived for presenting that dramatization and interpreting it. That is its theatre. There are audiences and performers in this act of viewing. And if there is theatre, there is theatricality. There is a sense of contrivance and staging. And there is performance consciousness, a sense of personal distance in the acting and of audience. The self, whether of group or of individual, given identity is thus not merely reflected in the drama; it is reflected upon.[74]

Dening's description of texts of self as performances provides a useful framework for examining transatlantic letters: the writers created extended meditations on who they were, where they were, how they got there, and what this meant. To reflect on themselves, they must create context by setting the stage and describing a place. Letters are therefore important sources for place-making as much as they are for self-fashioning.

If self-fashioning and place-making are evident in Richard Morris's and Catherine MacCauley's letters, they are also evident in the correspondence of Samuel Rogerson, a young mercantile clerk who arrived in St. John's in 1820 to work in the firm of Henderson and Rogerson, where his uncle was a partner. The Rogerson letters are considerably less one-sided than many letter collections, for in addition to letters Samuel sent to his family during his time in Newfoundland, the Rogerson papers include missives Samuel received from his family.

---

[74] Dening, "In Search of a Metaphor," 5.

Nonetheless, 18-year-old Samuel probably told his relatives what they wanted to hear, not necessarily what he was actually doing in his leisure time. The letters from his family members are rife with advice and instructions, and while it would be remiss to refer to these documents as examples of self-fashioning (since they did not originate with Samuel himself), we might still consider them examples of fashioning – attempts to fashion someone else. Ideals of masculinity, respectability, and middle-class self-improvement and benevolence pepper the advice, warnings, and instructions Samuel's family members sent to him, as they attempted to mold him to fit their ideals. Samuel, the youngest of eight siblings, with both parents recently deceased, and newly arrived in a colonial setting and a new career, was certainly on the cusp of several liminal thresholds. By turns, the family members showed both hope and fear about what a few years of colonial living might do for Samuel's career and personal life.

Arriving in September 1820 after a 28-day passage from Greenock, Samuel described his work: "I am standing in a shop selling coarse articles for fishermen such as staves, drawers, reels, trousers and many things besides. Also copying letters and c."[75] Unlike Richard Morris, who after his initial displeasure with St. John's, became increasingly involved in cultural events and leisure activities like going to the theatre, boat races, and horse races, Samuel Rogerson never made any references to group socialization in his letters, despite the establishment of a few social and charitable fraternal clubs at which men of Samuel's station passed their time. (These associations are the subject of the next chapter.) Still, his solo hobbies and endeavours reflect genteel aspirations (or his family members' aspirations for him), and evidence of what

---

[75] Samuel Rogerson, St. John's, to William Rogerson, Gillesbie, 18 November 1820, NRS, GD1/620/66. Rogerson was employed in the firm Hunters and Company of Greenock. His uncle James Rogerson was an agent, and later a partner, in the firm. Matthews, "Profiles of Water Street Merchants," entry on Hunters and Company. See Handcock *"Soe Longe As There Comes Noe Women,"* 251-252 for practice of sending younger family members in mercantile firms out to Newfoundland as agents.

was available in St. John's at the time. Rogerson seemed to prefer devoting his leisure time to self-cultivation. In 1821, on his Uncle James' advice, he was going to devote several months, "when there is nothing doing in the winter until the arrival of the first vessel" to learning French, perhaps an attempt at achieving respectability through his leisure activities.[76] This comment also speaks to St. John's continued isolation in the winter, suggesting that Samuel had a great deal of down time during the winter months due to the cessation of trade. Samuel's brother Alex suggested that "when you finish your counting house business you ought to devote a certain portion of your extra time to reading books which from your last I observe you have the means of getting from the subscription library."[77] This was another suggestion for leisure time for a respectable middle-class man, and it revealed what social and cultural events the town offered.[78]

The men in Samuel's circle often dispensed advice in their letters.[79] These letters, laden with counsel, were written by people who had never visited St. John's, and they reveal the ideas people had about how middle-class masculinity might operate in a colonial setting. Their letters are an indication of the type of town people who did not live there perceived it as being. "I beg you will for every good reason take care not to indulge in grog drinking which I am sorry to hear is too much the fashion in St. John's" wrote Samuel's brother Alex in the winter of 1824.[80] A

---

[76] Samuel Rogerson to William Rogerson, 27 November 1821, NRS, GD1/620/69.
[77] Alex Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 17 January 1824, NRS, GD1/620/71.
[78] Older men in Samuel's family also frequently commented on his penmanship and letter-writing skills, likely in an attempt to foster respectable middle-class masculinity in him so that he could reap the social and business consequences that could reward particularly good letter-writers. See Thomas Henderson to Samuel Rogerson, 27 March 1821, NRS, GD1/620/68, and John Rogerson junior to Samuel Rogerson, 15 May 1821, NRS GD1/620/125. For the social and economic benefits that good letter-writing could bestow, see Bushman, *Refinement of America,* 90-91.
[79] Rogerson's father had died two years earlier and his mother had died a few months before he left for Newfoundland. At eighteen, Samuel was the youngest of eight siblings. File entitled "Genealogical Notes," NRS, GD1/620/144.
[80] Alex Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 17 January 1824, NRS, GD1/620/71.

cousin also warned Samuel away from grog: "I know you have a great deal of leisure time in the winter. Be careful that you contract no bad habits, particularly that of carousing and drinking when those vices have a liking to that most pernicious of all vices, alike injurious to your health and your future prospects in life. Enjoy your leisure hours over and above what exercise is proper for your health in reading proper books and in writing to your brothers and sisters, your uncles and c."[81] The long winter provided a young man such as Samuel with the chance to study and cultivate genteel aspirations and affectations, but it was also a time when trouble might occur. When no trade was doing, what would a young single man get up to? Whether he remained in Newfoundland or returned to Scotland, Samuel Rogerson's family was determined to ensure that he would be the type of man who could move comfortably through polite society. They had sent him there to improve him, and were determined that the experience would do just that, rather than corrupt him.

From the sounds of things, Samuel had long been a cause for worry among older family members. He had barely made it to Newfoundland in the first place. He was supposed to have left Glasgow in August 1820 on a vessel belonging to his uncle's firm. When Samuel did not arrive in Glasgow to board ship as planned, his uncle James Rogerson wrote to Samuel's brother Robert, painting Samuel in a rather irresponsible light:

> I am sorry to learn that he has neglected to write to Mr. H according to promise. We do not know where he is to be found but think that you should despatch a man instantly on receipt of this letter to endeavour to find him out and make him write to Mr. Henderson by the coach of tomorrow to give orders respecting his journey… he should not neglect the opportunity to get out on the ship belonging to the House… You probably know where he is to be found at this time.[82]

---

[81] John Rogerson, Jr to Samuel Rogerson, 15 May 1821, NRS, GD1/620/125.

[82] James Rogerson to Robert Rogerson, 29 July 1820, NRS, GD1/620/124.

Eventually Samuel was located and sailed on the intended vessel, although he appears to have departed in a rush and was short of clothing. His letters to family throughout the fall contain repeated requests for clothing such as shirts and stockings, and for towels to be sent out to him, and they continued to send him clothing throughout his time in Newfoundland.[83] Even in St. John's, keeping up appearances mattered, and Samuel, for all his indiscretions, was aware of this. Samuel asked his brother William to pay Thomas Henderson 20 pounds on his account for clothing and shoes that he had bought since arriving in St. John's. "I would not wish to be so extravagant although necessary to be like others," he explained, justifying the expense.[84] Samuel's turn of phrase suggests that he was aware of his status and wished to fit in with other men of a similar station.

Throughout the correspondence between Samuel and his family members in the 1820s, there is a sense that he needed to be cultivated, and made respectable. The family worried about him. In his study of letter-writing and communication in early America, Konstantin Dierks points out that a "baseline of family duty and affection" served as the catalyst for most transatlantic epistolary relationships, and demonstrates that while family affection and obligation were important factors in establishing epistolary relationships, men and women experienced these relationships in very different ways.[85] For men, letter-writing gave them "greater role and license in family life," allowing them to "add expectations of sentimentalism and male domesticity to their patriarchal repertoire," themes we see at play in the

[83] Samuel Rogerson to William Rogerson, 18 November 1820, NRS, GD1/620/66; Samuel Rogerson to David Rogerson, 26 November 1820, NRS, GD1/620/67; John Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 23 February 1830, NRS GD1/620/132.
[84] Samuel Rogerson to William Rogerson, 27 November 1821, NRS, GD1/620/69.
[85] Dierks, *In My Power*, 172-173.

correspondence from Samuel Rogerson's male relatives.[86] As Eve Tavor Bannet puts it, power relationships in letter-writing "resided in the exchanges carefully hidden from view."[87] The ability to control what was displayed was at the root of self-fashioning and power relationships in letters. If letters were a way of extending informal networks of surveillance across the Atlantic, the actors entered a delicate dance, where given a stage upon which to perform, they carefully portrayed the circumstances of their lives.[88] This is evident in Samuel Rogerson's letters – between what he writes and what his family infers and worries about, much is left unsaid. If the goal is to envision the town and its social life based on correspondence, Samuel Rogerson's letters are an apt reminder that much remained offstage.

There is a gap of about 15 years in Samuel Rogerson's records, and the date at which he returned to Scotland is unclear, but the remaining letters fast-forward him from a capricious youth in St. John's to a family man back in Scotland. By the 1840s, Samuel was back in Scotland, living in the family home, Leithenhall, with his wife Agnes, their two children, and Samuel's brother David and sister Janet, both of whom were unmarried.[89] At this time, Samuel kept up a regular correspondence with his cousin Peter who remained in St. John's. Peter often wrote about goings-on in St. John's, events, people, and places with which Samuel would have been familiar, and their letters are evidence of how the two men thought of respectability and social class in the colonial environment. Peter's letters frequently dealt with political scandal and the affairs of various firms that went out of business. He referred on two separate occasions to the

---

[86] Ibid., 142. Dierks is also careful to point out that while letters allowed men the chance to enter into domains that were traditionally labelled feminine, women for their part saw no increased role in business or economic life because of their letter writing endeavours.
[87] Bannet, *Empire of Letters*, 227.
[88] Sarah M.S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families*, 30. Pearsall also observes that "concern over from larger parental and communal networks" is prevalent in letter writing manuals and epistolary novels such as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*.
[89] See file entitled "Genealogical Notes," NRS GD1/620/144.

fact that money from the colonial accounts was unaccounted for on the death of colonial treasurer Patrick Morris (an influential trader and importer, and a leading member of the town's Irish-Catholic community): "the late P. Morris was some 5000 pounds short in squaring up his accounts and I think he knew how he stood and did not open his mind to any friend and he broke his Heart."[90] The built environment was also a frequent topic of communication: Peter mentioned construction of the Colonial Building (completed 1850), and of "a splendid new bank equal to many in Scotland" (likely the Bank of British North America, completed 1849).[91] Peter's son James also wrote to Samuel on occasion. In 1841 James mentioned "a great procession at the laying of the Cathedral (Catholic one). I shall send you a Ledger which will explain all (truly disgraceful)."[92] The face of the town was changing since Samuel's days there, and in describing its changes James and Peter also described where they fit into it (Protestant, aligned with the state and the commercial sphere). The Rogersons performed and self-fashioned, providing news and opinions on events and spaces in St. John's.

In addition to public affairs and public buildings, Peter mentioned private buildings (such as the new house he was building, and his son James's house adjacent to his own – another marker of his success, he hoped that his grandchildren would inherit his house one day) and how he navigated the city's streets; he requested that Samuel pick out and ship to him a second-hand carriage.[93] The carriage was not so much for Peter's use since "I seldom go in one, still being able to walk well but my wife and grandchildren it does them good a ride now and then."

---

[90] Peter Rogerson, St. John's, to Samuel Rogerson, Leithenhall, 31 January, 1850, NRS GD1/620/88; Peter Rogerson, St. John's to Samuel Rogerson, 28 November 1848, NRS GD1/620/87.

[91] Peter Rogerson, St. John's to Samuel Rogerson, 28 November 1848. NRS GD1/620/87. For the building, see Canada's Historic Places, "Former Bank of British North America National Historic Site of Canada," http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=12643&pid=0 (accessed 2 September 2018).

[92] James Rogerson, Newfoundland, to Samuel Rogerson, Leithenhall, 25 May 1841, NRS GD1/620/78.

[93] On the houses, see Peter Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 28 November 1848, NRS GD1/620/87 and Peter Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 31 January 1850, NRS GD1/620/88. On the carriage, see Peter Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 13 February 1850, NRS, GD1/620/89.

Besides, "tradesmen here have mostly some kind of carriage." Therefore, merchant Peter certainly needed one.[94] It paid to have friends overseas to entrust with such a favour. We already saw a similar pattern enacted with Catherine McCauley and Ann Morris over Catherine's "little commissions" executed by Ann in Britain. During his own younger days in Newfoundland, Samuel Rogerson frequently requested newspapers and clothing from family members and in exchange sent cod liver oil, seal skins, and salted fish to them, for their own use or to sell.[95] Catherine Rennie, wife of St. John's mill owner James Rennie, visited family in Scotland in 1870 and brought back items for her children that would be "a novelty in our far off land."[96] In St. John's, having goods and clothing picked out for you and sent from overseas was a marker of class status. It set those who had the funds to execute "little commissions" apart from those who did not.[97]

Transatlantic ties of kinship and affection resulted in goods being exchanged from both sides of the ocean. In 1841 James Rogerson sent his Uncle Samuel a Newfoundland dog and inquired if Samuel was interested in a pair of deer (he probably meant caribou, there being no deer on the island) horns to ornament the gate of his home: "I have a pair at your service, prime

---

[94] Peter Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 13 February 1850, NRS, GD1/620/89.

[95] Samuel Rogerson requested items from family members in his letters of 18 November 1820, NRS GD1/620/66; and 2 November 1820, NRS GD1/620/67. In 1830, John Rogerson (likely an uncle of Samuel's) took the opportunity to enclose a letter to Samuel in a box of clothing that William Henderson (a partner in the firm) was sending out, NRS GD1/620/132. For Samuel sending things see: letter of 3 November 1826 to his brother David Rogerson, when he sent five barrels of codfish and a barrel of caplin and mentioned an intention to send some seal skins in the spring, NRS GD1/620/75 (note that these were all intended for sale and not as gifts). In his letter of 28 November 1848 Peter Rogerson mentioned that he and Samuel send newspapers to one another, NRS GD1/620/87. Peter Rogerson sent Samuel two tierces of salmon (4 November 1852, NRS GD1/620/91).

[96] Transcription of Catherine Rennie diary, 26 August 1870, MUN Archives, MF-369, file 1.01.

[97] The carriage example supports Amanda Vickery's contention that while women may have been the chief consumers in a household, men were "hardly untainted by the world of goods and fashion; rather, men and women were expected to consume different items and in different ways." Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*, 167.

ones, I assure you."[98] Although Samuel was some years removed from his life in Newfoundland, he found a place for useful souvenirs, reminders of family, his previous career, and valuable or useful commodities that served as markers of class and status.

As the years went by, ties of kinship and affection delved into nostalgia: "O how many changes since; many kind friends are gone, gone forever, like a morning dream!!! And you and I must soon follow and in a little you and I shall be like the old oak in the forest, left alone amongst strangers," Peter, then aged 61 observed in 1850.[99] (He also implored his cousin to write using two sheets of paper instead of using crossed writing, even if it was more expensive: "when we get old we get peevish," he explained.[100]) The cousins had grown up in similar circumstances in Scotland, both had gone to Newfoundland as young men to engage in the provisions trade, but one had chosen to stay on and the other returned to Scotland. The cousins' correspondence supports Jane Errington's observation that the assumption of a shared community and close relationships persisted among letter-writing friends and family members who wrote even intermittently or received news second or third hand, years out of date.[101] When Peter died in 1858, his son James wrote to let Samuel know that Peter had received a letter from Samuel shortly before his death, allowing Peter time to read it and "express his attachment to you" one final time. Although Peter had been resident in Newfoundland for 44 years, his son still requested that a death notice be placed in a Scottish newspaper, and paid for an inscription on the family tombstone in Leithenhall. James clearly wished that his father would be remembered on both sides of the Atlantic. Peter Rogerson was an emigrant, who maintained ties to Scotland for the duration of his life in Newfoundland. Their letters show that the

---

[98] James Rogerson, Newfoundland, to Samuel Rogerson, Leithenhall, 25 May 1841, NRS GD1/620/78.
[99] Peter Rogerson, St. John's, to Samuel Rogerson, Leithenhall, 31 January 1850, NRS GD1/620/88.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Errington, *Emigrant Worlds*, 143.

Rogerson cousins, like so many other characters in this study, were firmly rooted in what they perceived as a wider British world, where a variety of networks (familial, business, religious, associational, etc.) created a shared sense of identity, in a process Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich call "globalisation from below."[102]

Denizens of the British world, like Peter and Samuel Rogerson, saw themselves as sharing real or imagined common origins, culture, or identity, a perception that imperialism and emigration created and strengthened.[103] As Bridge and Andrew S. Thompson write, migration is by nature transformative, and "it changes the way in which individuals – and the families they left behind – imagine their social and political spaces, thereby making migration a defining part of their identity." Migration encouraged people to "see themselves as part of a global chain of kith and kin… and turned national (and indeed regional) identities into transnational ones."[104]

Examples of the importance of networks and migration's transformative effect abound in the writing of Irish emigrant and long-time St. John's resident Edward Morris (no relation to the previously mentioned Richard Morris), a proud and vocal member of an Irish-Catholic diaspora. Edward Morris emigrated to Newfoundland in 1832 at the age of 19 to work with his uncle, Patrick Morris, in the provisions trade. (Patrick Morris was the colonial treasurer whose financial troubles Peter and Samuel Rogerson later speculated about in their own letters.) Edward Morris was an active member of many clubs and societies in St. John's, and his name (and frequently his hand-writing, for he was a prolific record-keeper) appears in a variety of

---

[102] Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, "Mapping the British World," in *The British World: Culture, Diaspora, Identity*, ed. Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 9-10.
[103] Ibid., 6.
[104] Kent Fedorowich and Andrew S. Thompson, "Mapping the Contours of the British World: Empire, Migration and Identity," in *Empire, Migration, and Identity in the British World*, ed. Kent Fedorowich and Andrew S. Thompson, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 15. Fedorowich and Thompson are also careful to note that this process was not all "rosy": the common cultural identity underlying these networks and chains did not include peoples or regions not deemed white and 'British,' 16.

archival collections consulted for this project.[105] Yet as active as his social life was, his private diary reveals the emotional turmoil of emigration and feeling of uprootedness accompanying the move to a new country. On one lonely night in 1851, Edward Morris lamented that after twenty years he still did not feel at home in Newfoundland: “After that vast space in the life of man there is not more than two families into whose house I could go as a friend… It is the nature of colonial life. One parts with the circle of which he was a link when he emigrates and when he settles in a new country he cannot expect to be otherwise than a stone taken from a forest and planted in the midst of a newly formed garden.”[106] On a stormy Shrove Tuesday, Morris’s bachelor status was also beginning to grate on him: “No pancakes for a solitaire,” he despaired. “Beginning to think on the misery of being an old bachelor. Chimney smoking as if to remind me that the scolding wife was absent. Sad sad pancake night.”[107]

Two years later (age 40) he married Catherine Howley (age 23) and entered quite happily into her family’s large and extended social circle. In his diary, Edward Morris wrote frequently of Catherine’s brothers and proudly detailed their achievements. He and Catherine frequently entertained her family members at their home. After he married, Morris took to recording, in painstaking detail, the names of everyone he and Catherine met on their daily walk, where they met them, who they entertained, and who entertained them. As years went by and Catherine’s brothers grew up, some leaving Newfoundland either temporarily or permanently, the faces around their table changed, supporting characters entered and exited

---

[105] Primary sources associated with Morris include: his personal diary, dating from 1852 to 1887, Maritime History Archive, Memorial University [MHA], Reels. 1-3-3-(1-3); the records of the Benevolent Irish Society, where he served as secretary and later president, PANL, MG 612; the minute book of the organizing committee for the Prince of Wales’s visit to St. John’s in 1860 (Morris was the group’s secretary) PANL, MG 631; and an 1850 article Morris penned in the *Courier* on the occasion of the first mass celebrated of the Catholic cathedral, *Courier* (St. John’s) 9 January 1850.
[106] Edward Morris Diaries and Journals, 23 March 1851, MHA, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[107] Edward Morris diary, 4 March 1851, MHA Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

their lives, and the walks shifted in route and duration. Edward Morris's diary gives evidence of the town's changing contours. Morris recorded the construction of the Catholic cathedral, the dedication of its bells, arrival of various artworks, and the cathedral's consecration. As secretary of the Benevolent Irish Society (BIS) he listed the subject of each toast at the annual St. Patrick's Day dinner, the parade route, and the hour of adjournment. Streets and buildings are frequent reference points in his diary: whose home he visited, where he shopped, the path of a funeral procession. Why did Edward Morris record these comings and goings? In choosing which aspects of life merited inclusion on the page (whether in a diary, chosen to record events for one's own memories, or in a letter written with a view to what the recipient should or would like to hear about) people gave meaning and definition to their lives, chose what was important, and engaged in place-making. They created a world in their written accounts. For Edward Morris, literally walking around town and figuratively walking into his wife's social circle were fundamental parts of making home. Place (both the place he left and the place he arrived in) figures prominently in Morris's diary.

Unlike Richard Morris, writing in the 1810s, or Samuel Rogerson writing in the 1820s, Edward Morris's world on the page was a complex, busy community. Perhaps this was a difference in age and maturity, or perhaps it reflected changes in the society they lived in. Where the earlier correspondents wrote of "nothing doing" and described the townspeople as "wild" and eagerly seized on new developments or social activities, Morris's St. John's was filled with established social, business, and family occasions and places. For all his talk of uprootedness on one particularly lonely night, through his long residence in St. John's, Morris was invested in the town in a way the two other correspondents were not. Through his participation in social activities, his writing, his consumer habits, and his religion, Edward Morris performed middle-class Newfoundland Irish identity and the town was his stage.

After Edward Morris married, his sense of himself and his world in the 1850s, 60s, and 70s was that of a successful, established emigrant in a town that he also judged established, where he and his wife Catherine went visiting most evenings, sometimes together and sometimes separately. It was a world where "between the talk and the punch and the laughing" an evening could "pass most agreeably."[108] It was a world where Morris conversed with businessmen, politicians, doctors, priests and bishops as he walked the streets to and from his home, work, and social activities. It was a world where, for all his social activities, Morris found much happiness at home: "after Mass, stayed at home all day at the fire reading and sleeping and enjoying the great comfort of happy home"[109] with the "amiable, estimable, gentle, pure, pious, and accomplished" Catherine.[110]

Throughout his life Edward Morris attended clubs and marched through the city streets as they changed around him over the years. On St. Patrick's Day 1871, he proudly wore a shamrock to march with the Benevolent Irish Society to the cathedral and then to Government House, accompanied by the bishop, Presentation nuns, and Sisters of Mercy, where he and other officers of the society were invited in. Then the BIS marched all over town before tucking in to their annual dinner. "Tired after a day of unusual exertion to me in these my gouty old days," Morris returned home at 10:30 in the evening, early for him.[111] In the words of James Hiller writing in the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Morris lived "a quiet life of modest achievement."[112] Religion, family, friendships, and work dictated the rhythms of his life as he

---

[108] Edward Morris diary, 22 November 1852, MHA Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[109] Edward Morris diary, 1 July 1854, MHA Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[110] Edward Morris diary, 30 July 1854, MHA Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[111] Edward Morris diary, 17 March 1871, MHA Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[112] James K. Hiller, "MORRIS, EDWARD," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 15 September 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/morris_edward_11E.html.

settled into a routine that he painstakingly recorded for over thirty years. Through his writing, Morris fashioned an identity against the backdrop of the changing city.

Conclusion

In St. John's, a nascent middle class used letters, diaries, and travel writing to show correspondents what kind of colonial society existed there. They took pains to stress the respectability of their social circles and leisure activities, attempting to assuage relations' worries and anxieties about the kind of life they were living. Letters, personal diaries, and travel writing reveal that this was a transatlantic world. In putting pen to paper, diarists, letter-writers, and travel writers created a world on the page. Their descriptions extended beyond self-fashioning, and served to fashion a world at the same time. Two people could move through the same world and describe and interpret it in different terms, but the sources examined in this chapter all reveal that when they wrote, emigrant letter-writers and diarists overwhelmingly wrote about place. Art historian Joan Schwartz writes that place is "a site made meaningful by memory and commemorative practices to frame the tensions between the personal and public expressions of memory and between official stories and vernacular stories." We see this in how these sources discuss and create place: officially the harbour was important because it was the centre of trade and commerce. But that was not what made it memorable! The smell and the visual of flakes and stages were what writers lingered on. Schwartz also suggests that the mediating influence of archives affects our perception of place.[113] The letters, diaries, and travel writing depicting nineteenth-century St. John's fit this description. The vernacular and the

---

[113] Joan Schwartz, "Complicating the Picture: Place and Memory between Representation and Reflection," in *Placing Memory and Remembering Place*, ed. James Opp and John C. Walsh (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 307.

official, the personal and the public intertwine on the page, while the archive mediates what information is passed down over the years in the first place.

These letters and diaries show the emergence of a middle class in nineteenth-century St. John's. Moreover, they show how the men and women of this nascent middle class attempted to inscribe the landscape with meanings attuned to their own values and desires. Considered together, the more personal letters and diaries, and the published travel accounts provide more than just a visual and spatial orientation to nineteenth-century St. John's. They show the meanings that a certain subset of the population attached to the landscape, and they lay a groundwork, setting the stage for the activities and events that later chapters in this dissertation attempt to find the underlying meaning of. As Greg Dening points out in *Through a Glass Darkly,* colonial America was full of liminal experiences that prompted self-description; letter writing was but one of these performances. It is up to historians to interpret the performance as critics, finely reading emigrant letters for truths and distortions, interrogating them as not only texts explaining the author's motivations, but looking for the outside motivations and influences of family, ethnicity, gender, commerce and trade, among others, that motivated the actor to write and perform as they did.

Travel writing, letters, and diaries show us how people described a place. The following chapters examine these characters' actions in activities such as fraternal organizations, parades, church-building, and special events, showing how they made and remade place, and inscribed narratives of class, religion, and ethnicity upon certain corners of the city.

Chapter 2
Socializing for Success: Respectability and Middle-Class Consciousness in Voluntary and Fraternal Organizations[1]

In St. John's in March 1836, two groups of men held separate dinners to mark St. Patrick's Day. The Benevolent Irish Society (BIS) met at the Orphan Asylum School, which also served as their headquarters, and the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick met at the Factory, a daytime "house of industry" where destitute women spent their days making and mending nets and working on handicrafts for sale. Both the BIS and the Loyal Sons had a great deal in common: each group was largely comprised of middle-class, white-collar workers such as clerks and doctors, meeting at night to dine in locations that during the day were devoted to reforming the poor through industry and hard work. Each group claimed that they and they alone, represented the best of the town's Irish community. Yet for all these similarities, there was much animosity between the leadership of the two groups. Examining their political and religious allegiances can tell us a little about how and why these two groups came to be at loggerheads. The activities of these groups and other fraternal and benevolent organizations operating in St. John's in the nineteenth century reveal how their members performed ethnicity, respectability, and middle-class identity.

The Loyal Sons of St. Patrick were newly established that spring, and many members had left the older BIS (formed thirty years earlier) to join the group, including the Sons' new president Dr. Edward Keilley. At the Loyal Sons' St. Patrick's Day party, Thomas Hogan, formerly

[1] This chapter is indebted to Carolyn Lambert's work on Irish identity and religion in nineteenth-century St. John's, particularly her chapter "Associational Life" which provides analysis of Catholic societies and their activities. Carolyn Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers: Irish-Catholics in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1840-1886," (PhD diss., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2010).

a member of the BIS, gave a toast lamenting the circumstances that led to the Loyal Sons' establishment. He likened the BIS to "a fair and stately tree" that over the years had afforded "raiment and shelter to the naked and to the homeless, and assuage[ed] the anguish of the penniless and forlorn." But, Hogan went on, this culture of compassion and shelter had not continued. The sheltering tree had been hit by "spoliative rudeness" which had "sapped her strength and marred her luxuriance."[2] Word of Hogan's toast (he had never officially resigned from the BIS) made it back to the BIS, who sent him a letter demanding that he explain himself and his comments. Hogan claimed to have been misheard and the BIS let the matter go.[3] This incident is an example of a fraternal/charitable group actively monitoring what people (particularly its own members) were saying about it and upholding and enforcing certain standards for behaviour. As vehicles for performance of middle-class identity, organizations were concerned with how the public perceived them. Even though they shared some members in common, things were about to get more heated in the rivalry between the two organizations.

Later that spring, each group held a charity ball within a few days of one another. Depending on their own allegiances, the town's newspapers positioned one ball as being superior in guests and decorum than the other. According to the *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, which was aligned with the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick, "every son of St. Patrick who possesses a spark of loyalty, or honourable, or gentlemanly feeling [has separated] from the present officers and main movers of the Malevolent Irish Society," and although the governor had attended both balls, at the BIS ball there surely "were not two persons… with whom it was possible that he, his lady, or any of his party could have held ten minutes' conversation without

[2] *Times and General Commercial Gazette* (St. John's), 23 March 1836.
[3] Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), Benevolent Irish Society minutes, 30 May 1836, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland (PANL), MG 612, Reel 75.

a painful sense of degradation."[4] In a final volley, the *Times* ran a poem entitled "The Ass-Silly-Hum Ball" (the ball had been held at the Asylum school) which depicted the BIS as having "forc'd a sprinkling of gentlefolks into their hall" where the governor and his party "shone" in a "mass of vulgarity."[5] The virulently anti-Catholic *Public Ledger* also got in on the action, referring to the Sons of St. Patrick as "the respectable and intelligent portion" of the city's Irish population, and their gathering as consisting of "the enlightened and respectable part of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, and of a great number of highly respectable Protestant guests."[6] No one seemed overly concerned with whether it was possible to maintain one's own respectability while drawing attention to someone else's lack of it.[7]

After these few heated months, references to the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick no longer appeared in the town's newspapers after the summer of 1836. Dr. Edward Keilley, president of the Loyal Sons, did not return to the BIS. He founded the Newfoundland Natives' Society in 1840, another group who frequently found themselves at odds with the BIS.[8] Most of the men

---

[4] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 13 April 1836. The *Times*' editor J.W. McCoubrey, had a reputation for avoiding political and sectarian controversies, but the split between the Loyal Sons and BIS is one instance where McCoubrey waded into the fray. See E. J. Devereux, "McCOUBREY, JOHN WILLIAMS," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2 September 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mccoubrey_john_williams_10E.html.
[5] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 20 April 1836.
[6] *Public Ledger* (St. John's), 22 March 1836. Henry Winton, editor of the *Public Ledger* entertained a long-standing feud with many of the men who comprised the BIS's leadership, citing their Catholicism and their claims to represent the popular interest as reasons for his animosity. See Patrick O'Flaherty, "WINTON, HENRY DAVID," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 22 July 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/winton_henry_david_8E.html.
[7] Unfortunately, copies of the *Newfoundlander*, the newspaper that in all likelihood would have come out in favour of the BIS's side in this squabble, are missing for the years 1835-1836, so we will have to make do with only one side's pointed barbs and a rather unbalanced portrayal of events. Copies of the *Royal Gazette* are also missing for the first ten months of 1836.
[8] As background, Keilley's (also spelled as Keilly) most notorious conflict occurred in 1838, when he was serving as a member of the House of Assembly. He and fellow MHA John Kent got into a verbal spat on the street, and upon his return to the House, speaker William Carson had Keilley detained for breach of privileges of the House. Keilley sued for wrongful imprisonment and appealed to the Supreme Court, but the court ruled against him. He appealed to the Privy Council in Great Britain who ruled in his favour in 1843. The case established that colonial parliaments only had "the self-preservative power" of removing immediate obstructions to their own proceedings, and did not have the right to adjudicate on or inflict

who attended the Loyal Sons dinner and ball continued to appear in the BIS minutes, suggesting that they retained their membership in the original group. The crux of the 1836 split had to do with the degree to which the BIS, a group whose constitution bound it to political neutrality, had become involved in politics. Writing about Upper Canada, Jeffrey McNairn observes that most voluntary associations had no formal connection to politics but were nonetheless political, whether through seeking to influence government policy, acting as vehicles for those who felt slighted by existing political structures, or as vehicles for the already-powerful to contain or direct popular mobilization.[9] As further examples in this chapter will show, the BIS was able to insert itself into a variety of political and religious debates while still maintaining an official position of neutrality and ecumenism. The group tried to maintain some independence from the Catholic Church, but as the Keilley incident shows, members disagreed over the amount of distance that ought to be held between the church and the benevolent organization. Edward Keilley was a Catholic who objected to the increasing involvement of Catholic religious leadership in the BIS. Keilley and his counterparts in the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick were part of a faction of liberal Catholic reformers who disapproved of the degree to which the Catholic clergy had inserted itself into the colony's political conversation.[10] Carolyn Lambert writes that these

---

punishment for breaches of parliamentary privilege occurring outside of the council chambers. See John Courage, "Parliamentary Privilege in Newfoundland: The Strange Case of Keilly vs. Carson," *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 4, no. 3 (1981): 10-12. For more on the Kent-Keilley affair, see Gertrude Gunn, *The Political History of Newfoundland 1832-1864* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), 54-55; Carolyn Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 266; Patrick O'Flaherty, "KIELLEY, EDWARD," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 22 July 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kielley_edward_8E.html.

[9] Jeffrey L. McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 68.

[10] For a background on this political climate, see John E. FitzGerald "Conflict and Culture in Newfoundland Catholicism" (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 1997); John P. Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000); Lambert, "Far From the Homes of their Fathers"; Lambert, "Emblem of our Country: The Red, White, and Green Tricolour," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 23, 1 (2008): 21-43.

individuals were "socially ostracized and estranged" from the Catholic church and 32 of them chose to dine at locations other than the BIS hall on St. Patrick's Day 1836.[11] The rival dinners and balls held in St. John's in 1836 reflect the adage that "much depends on dinner." Reputations and respectability hinged on which event one attended.

The ostensibly apolitical fraternal and charitable organizations of St. John's moved across a political backdrop, and parties and social events were spaces at which allegiances and alliances were made and fractured. Fraternal and charitable organizations were quintessentially middle-class nineteenth-century institutions, where men demonstrated their respectability, solidified their social and business networks, engaged in self-fashioning, and attempted to remake society according to their values and outlooks. The BIS and its short-lived counterpart, the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick, are but two examples of the numerous societies and associations organized along professional, charitable, ethnic, political, or cultural and scientific lines in St. John's during the nineteenth century. These organizations proliferated throughout the British world at that time. David Sutherland points out that in settler colonies, they assisted in the transition from frontier society to settled community and their members, "situated between the extremes of wealth and poverty," were among the prime beneficiaries of settlement and development.[12] Coupled with the local press, another middle-class creation, voluntary societies "transformed individual dissatisfaction into alienated public opinion," prompting calls for entrusting community affairs to these "self-made" men.[13] Judith Fingard writes that civic pride motivated members of these associations, who aspired to "an acknowledgement of their

---

[11] Lambert, "Far From the Homes of their Fathers," 268.
[12] David Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation in Early-Victorian Halifax, Nova Scotia," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 5, no. 1 (1994): 237, 239.
[13] Ibid., 239-240.

benevolence and modernity."[14] According to Andrew Holman's study of Ontario towns, public display was a central part of a benevolent organization's operations: through their halls, public events, published meeting minutes and announcements, "associations had a cognitive presence in people's minds beyond the visual."[15] Indeed, nineteenth-century newspapers are peppered with references to these organizations and their exploits.

In *Family Fortunes*, Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall separate fraternal organizations and clubs into four overlapping categories: charitable, cultural, professional, and political. Although they may have had different stated aims, organizations and clubs provided more formal ways of gathering, and "inaugurated a new era in public life which offered very different opportunities to middle-class men and women." According to Davidoff and Hall, this more formalized public sphere connected with the "gathering of the middle ranks into a more coherent class."[16] In the nineteenth century, joining fraternal and benevolent groups, for individual and wider societal benefit, was a default activity for respectable middle-class men to do.[17] Writing of nineteenth-century England, John Tosh notes that a "fine line" divided fraternal societies between those designed to benefit the individual, and those intended to benefit wider society. This distinction however, was "vital to the public understanding of the bourgeoisie. It was the dedication with which like-minded men of the middle class foregathered to pursue intellectual, political, and philanthropic goals which underpinned their claim to be public men

---

[14] Judith Fingard, "The Relief of the Unemployed Poor in Saint John, Halifax, and St. John's, 1815-1860," *Acadiensis* 5, no. 1 (Autumn 1975): 35.
[15] Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 107.
[16] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850,* revised edition (London: Routledge, 2002), 419-420.
[17] John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 126; Stuart M. Blumin, *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 192.

and members of the body politic."[18] As examples in this chapter show, these organizations were sites where class and gender identities were groomed and cultivated, social networks defined and refined, and values demonstrated, all at the service of increasing one's social capital and improving one's social status. Public displays such as parades and newspaper announcements were part and parcel of that work. Organizational life became especially important for men who wished to cultivate a reputation of respectability, responsibility, and civilization.[19] For first-generation emigrants in particular, societies and organizations were a way of finding their place in a new world. As sites of performance and power, for many men these organizations represented the promise of remaking oneself through climbing the social ladder.

Not only did men shape their own fortunes in these spaces, but voluntary associations presented members with the chance to shape their communities and circumscribe their values and beliefs onto them. As Michael Katz put it in his study of prominent Hamiltonians, these men conflated the city's public interests with their own private economic prospects.[20] The middle-class white-collar men who drove these organizations were motivated by a sense of duty that they felt separated them from the idle rich or the poor, Holman argues. They had a perceived moral imperative to shape their communities and to offer their own explanations for the state

---

[18] Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 132.

[19] For the role organizations played in brokering reputation and social climbing, see Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, 27; Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation," 246-247; Tosh, *A Man's Place*, 134-136. S.J.R. Noel is less convinced on the effectiveness of fraternal societies, particularly the Masons, in assuring prominence. He writes: "The most that can be said about membership in the Masonic Lodge is that it may in some cases have been useful in obtaining an office or getting elected, that it reflects the overlapping nature of regional and central leadership relationships in Upper Canada, and that the whole subject could do with much closer study." S.J.R. Noel, *Patrons, Clients, Brokers: Ontario Society and Politics, 1791-1896* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 95. Although this chapter does not look specifically at the Masons, it contends that involvement in voluntary and fraternal societies was an integral part of the matrix of political and business success.

[20] Michael Katz, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 184.

of society as “natural, rational, and effective” ones.[21] In shaping and projecting their values onto their communities, individuals defined themselves and engaged in self-fashioning.

Through examining both their charitable endeavours and their social events, this chapter shows how benevolent and fraternal organizations are useful sites to study performance because they are groups which brokered reputations. Men who joined clubs used them to demonstrate all sorts of traits, or to gain association with other people who represented certain characteristics: respectability, authority, and the air of a successful businessman and patriarch. As a letter-to-the-editor trying to attract young men to the debating society in St. John’s put it in 1845, “He will find there those near his own age, and of similar tastes, met with the same purpose, and all equally eager in the search after knowledge. By contributing his mite to the common stock he will be abundantly rewarded.”[22] For that writer, the financial investment in joining the club would pay off intellectually and socially. For striving new arrivals to the town, in search of status and social events, clubs were sites to take in and observe other men’s performances, learn from them, and hope to someday occupy a space on centre stage themselves.

In examining organizations and societies as sites of performance and self-fashioning, this chapter focusses mainly on the BIS, whose records are particularly thorough, as a vehicle for performing identity, ethnicity, and class. Although this chapter takes the BIS as its main case study, it occasionally refers to groups from across a spectrum of denominational, class, and professional affiliations to sketch a more detailed portrait of the types of activities fraternal and charitable groups engaged in. These include the mutual benefit society known as the Society of Fishermen and Shoremen, the Beothuk Institute (a group dedicated to studying and

---

[21] Holman, *A Sense of their Duty*, 110.
[22] *Newfoundlander*, 30 January 1845.

"preserving" any surviving Beothuk people), the St. John's Factory Committee, a charitable group initially consisting of only women but later comprising a mixed membership, who ran an enterprise where impoverished women could earn money making nets and spinning cloth, the group of tradesmen and artisans known as the Mechanics' Society, and the Newfoundland Natives' Society, who advocated for greater representation of the Newfoundland-born in government appointments. Except for the women of the St. John's Factory, these were all male organizations – there is a relative paucity of primary source materials on early to mid-nineteenth century women's groups in St. John's.[23]

Origins of Fraternal and Charitable Groups and Membership in them

Societies generally followed certain patterns in establishing themseves. In St. John's, the societies made use of the city's expanding newspaper industry (by 1833 there were five newspapers regularly publishing in the city) to publicize and draw attention to their activities. The city's newspaper proprietors populated the ranks of its clubs and societies, and newspapers announced the time and date of club meetings and printed minutes, in displays designed to garner respect and consolidate power and authority. An auspicious editor, such as John Shea at the *Newfoundlander*, and secretary of the Society of Fishermen and Shoremen, would make sure to give pride of place to the clubs and societies he personally was involved in.[24]

---

[23] The Catholic St. Vincent de Paul Society took charge of the Factory in the 1860s when the Ladies of the Factory disbanded. Fingard, "Poor Relief in Atlantic Canada," 51. See Maudie Whelan, "Newspapers and the Temperance Movement: 'Civilizing Voices' of the Nineteenth Century," and "The Press and Poverty: Portraits and Policies," in "The Newspaper Press in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland: Politics, Religion, and Personal Journalism" (PhD diss., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2002) for detail on women's charitable and temperance activities and their representation in the press in chapters. Newfoundland women's charitable endeavours and social lives in the early twentieth century have seen more study: see the essays in Marilyn Porter and Linda Cullum, eds., *Creating this Place: Women, Family, and Class in St. John's, 1900-1950* (Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014).

[24] John Shea hailed from "one of the most talented and respected families" in nineteenth-century Newfoundland family and was succeeded as editor by his brothers Edward and Ambrose. John Mannion, "SHEA, HENRY," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 13 July 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shea_henry_6E.html.

For instance, in the edition of December 6, 1828, Shea announced that a meeting had recently been held to discuss the establishment of "a society of fishermen" whose main aim would be to create "a fund for the relief of distressed persons of their own class." (The ad did not indicate who was behind the group, but given the use of the article "their" instead of "our," the scheme likely did not originate with the fishermen themselves.) The advertisement encouraged interested parties to meet the following week at the Globe Tavern, "to appoint a committee of persons competent to draw up rules and regulations for such an institution." Whoever wrote the ad (likely Shea himself) was careful to note that the plan had the support of Thomas Scallan, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Newfoundland, who had endorsed the society with the express wish that "it must become a stimulus to industry, frugality, and independence among the fishermen, which is the best mode of bestowing charity."[25] In addition to providing insurance and financial aid to fishermen, the proposed society endorsed values and ideals frequently associated with charity in the nineteenth century: industry, frugality, and independence. Nineteenth-century charitable endeavours often embraced the notion that the poor were poor due to some defect of character, that they were not already industrious or frugal and needed to be taught these habits, and that distributing charity was an opportunity to teach lessons and inculcate values of virtuousness and thrift. The distinction between the poor who supposedly brought poverty upon themselves through intemperance and vice and those who were poor due to illness, age, or disability was another common feature of nineteenth-century charitable work.[26] The *Newfoundlander*'s coverage of the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen attempted to make this distinction, blaming both the unpredictable and dangerous

---

[25] *Newfoundlander*, 6 December 1828.

[26] Carmen J. Nielson discusses this value judgement at play in the work of the Ladies Benevolent Society of Hamilton. Carmen J. Nielson, *Private Women and the Public Good: Charity and State Formation in Hamilton, Ontario, 1846-93* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014), 36-37.

nature of fishing as well as the fishermen themselves for indebtedness: “frequently a very large part of the balances received by the Fishermen at the end of the season is dissipated in unnecessary and thoughtless expenses in a short period after they are received, and how destitute they are consequently.”[27] The newspaper likewise absolved merchants of any responsibility for fishermen’s destitution: “an obstacle was raised by some, who stated that the *Merchants* would not give it their countenance, *because their interest lay in keeping the Fishermen in debt*.... but many of them have already evinced the most lively interest.”[28] The Association of Fishermen and Shoremen was not interested in overthrowing the credit system or casting aspersions on the relationship between merchants and fishermen. It was a benefit system designed to supplement incomes, to which members could subscribe by paying an annual fee.

Two months later, the *Newfoundlander* ran another announcement proclaiming the inception of the “Association of Newfoundland Fishermen and Shoremen,” outlining the society’s constitution and listing the names of its leaders. The society’s executive consisted of a president (Judge Brenton), two vice-presidents (merchants T.H. Brooking and Newman Wright Hoyles), 12 directors, a secretary (John Shea, editor of the *Newfoundlander*), and a 21-person Committee of Relief.[29] The organization had ordinary (fishermen) and honourary (executives who paid higher annual membership dues) members. Direction and leadership in the Association of Newfoundland Fishermen and Shoremen came not from fishermen themselves but from the dealers and merchants they traded with. By 1830 the association was making plans for its first anniversary.[30] A parade and dinner occurred in January and while honourary and

---

[27] *Newfoundlander*, 20 February 1829.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] *Newfoundlander*, 21 and 28 January 1830.

ordinary members marched in the parade (directors wearing sashes, honourary members behind them, and ordinary members wearing a rosette on their lapel), the newspaper does not specify whether all attendees were invited to the "excellent repast" that followed.[31] Although the Association of Newfoundland Fishermen and Shoremen's constitution created the impression of being a benefit organization, it clearly had its social elements as well.

How actual fishermen and shoremen responded to this organization that was ostensibly instituted for their benefit is difficult to gauge. Credit was already a mainstay of life for fishermen, and in instances when merchants refused to extend sufficient credit for winter supplies, government extended financial relief only after decades of encouraging impractical agricultural development.[32] The people behind the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen clearly intended it as an insurance against lack of credit, but it is not clear whether the fishermen themselves interpreted the scheme this way, especially since they were required to pay in cash to join. Did those working in the industry have any say in how the society's funds were dispersed? Or was it impossible to exercise agency in an organization whose very existence was predicated on the inevitability of fishermen being unable to make ends meet in any given year? As "ordinary members" they paid a smaller membership due than the "honourary

---

[31] *Newfoundlander*, 25 February 1830.

[32] Sean Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 63, 124. The Association of Fishermen and Shoremen is unique in that, unlike the colonial government and other charitable organizations (like the BIS), it did not trumpet subsistence agriculture and kitchen gardens as the solution to fishermen not being able to survive on the provisions extended to them on credit each year. For more on the various degrees to which government stepped in with relief and/or promises of deliverance through agriculture, see Chapter 7, "Agriculture and Government Relief" in *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay.* For the role of credit and the truck system in the nineteenth-century fishery, see some of the essays in Rosemary Ommer, ed., *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1990). Ommer provides a detailed analysis of truck and accounting in the Jersey-Gaspé fishery in *From Outpost to Outport: A Structural Analysis of the Jersey-Gaspé Fishery, 1767-1886* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 36-41, 123-35.

members" did, but were also barred from putting forth their name for a leadership position.[33] Stuart Blumin makes a similar point about temperance societies in nineteenth-century America, noting that leadership and membership "were entirely different matters, and it would be a mistake to view this organization as a classless community."[34] A similar division existed within the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen.

At any rate, the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen was a short-lived endeavour. The group released its final report in 1838, noting that membership had fallen to 68 individuals and only 39 of those were up to date with fees and payments owed to the society. [35] The members unanimously voted to dissolve the organization at their annual meeting in May 1838. The group divided half of its remaining funds among members who were up to date with their dues, gave one quarter of its funds towards construction of the Catholic cathedral and another quarter towards purchase of winter provisions, to be bought and distributed the following winter by members of its Committee of Relief. Patrick Cormack was left in charge of a funeral pall (a cloth spread over a hearse or coffin) the group had purchased for the funerals of its deceased members.[36]

The Association of Newfoundland Fishermen and Shoremen's brief lifespan illustrates many themes associated with nineteenth-century social and charitable organizations.[37] The advertisement announcing its inception reveals the process involved in establishing a social

---

[33] "Rules and Regulations of the Association of Newfoundland Fishermen and Shoremen," *Newfoundlander*, 20 February 1829.
[34] Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, 197.
[35] For instance, in 1832 the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen donated 5 pounds to the Benevolent Irish Society. BIS minutes, 17 February 1832, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[36] *Newfoundlander*, May 31, 1838. Patrick Cormack was the brother of William Cormack, founder of the Beothuk Institute, who will be discussed later in this chapter. The Cormack brothers were also related by marriage to Mrs. Catherine Rennie who is briefly mentioned in Chapter One: Rennie's husband William Frederick Rennie was their half-brother.
[37] Another mutual aid association, the non-denominational Newfoundland Fishermen's Society was established in 1858. Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 194.

organization or benevolent group. Other nineteenth-century social organizations in St. John's, such as the Factory Committee and the Scottish Society, followed a similar pattern when they were first formed: publishing a general appeal to meet, followed by a constitution and list of elected members chosen at a formal meeting shortly thereafter.[38] They would usually approach a high-ranking public or religious official to serve as their patron. The groups published the proceedings of annual (and sometimes quarterly, as in the case of the BIS) reports for public perusal, and used the press to announce meeting times and locations, parade muster points and routes, donations, and other events. These announcements were intended for both their membership and the public at large.

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall describe these measures as "hallmarks" of the new societies, for whom public character meant a concern with public accountability.[39] This was certainly the case in St. John's, where Henry Winton, editor of the *Public Ledger*, lauded the Anglican women's Dorcas Society for publishing annual reports, "so that every individual who gives his mite against the suffering of his fellow creature, may have the satisfaction to know that mite has been faithfully and judiciously appropriated."[40] For a women's group like the Dorcas Society, demonstrating the utmost standards in accountability and transparency was a way to ward off potential criticism for interfering in the public sphere. Still, they could not stray too far from the norms established by public opinion: as Carmen Nielson explains of women's charitable organizations in nineteenth-century Canada West, "their rhetoric had to be consonant with public opinion as it already existed… Insofar as public opinion and the public

---

[38] For the Scottish Society see *Newfoundlander,* 9 February 1838, and 2 March 1838. For the Factory Committee see *Newfoundlander*, 13 December 1832.
[39] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 419, 421. See Nielson, *Private Women and the Public Good*, 30-34 for typical pattern of how benevolent societies were founded, created legitimacy in the public eye, and established a membership base.
[40] *Public Ledger*, 4 May 1827.

good were negotiated in the realm of the public sphere, women's rhetorical acts were constrained by a discursive field constituted by property-owning men."[41]

This observation may explain what happened to another organization, the Factory in St. John's: although it was founded by a group of 36 women in 1832, women did not run the organization on their own for very long. By at least 1838 (if not earlier) men occupied executive roles within the organization.[42] In 1843, the executive committee consisted of 24 women and 12 men, and the chair, treasurer and secretary were all men.[43] It is likely that the women who founded the Factory committee found that they were more likely to garner authority and financial resources (the Factory received financial support from the colonial legislature and from other benevolent societies) when men were also at the helm.[44] In mixed-gender societies men held the most prestigious positions and were responsible for accounts.[45] Some of the Ontario women's groups Carmen Nielson studied stipulated that men should audit their accounts, write their reports, and approve their minutes, a measure that was deemed to make the societies better able to withstand public scrutiny and serve as what Nielson refers to as a "legitimizing technique."[46]

While annual reports and other statements on behalf of voluntary societies could in theory challenge public opinion, to do so would be a risky proposition for a women's voluntary association. But for men's organizations, the practice of publishing meeting reports and annual

---

[41] Nielson, *Private Women and the Public Good*, 35.
[42] An 1838 petition to the legislature showed that by that time men occupied the roles of chair and secretary on the Factory committee. Leona M. English, "Teaching the 'Morally and Economically Destitute': 19th-Century Adult Education Efforts in Newfoundland," *Acadiensis* 41, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2012): 80.
[43] *Newfoundlander*, 14 September 1843.
[44] For the various sources of funding the St. John's factory received, see Fingard, "Relief of the Unemployed Poor," 51.
[45] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 423.
[46] Nielson, *Private Women and the Public Good*, 70.

returns goes beyond accountability and ensuring continued public support, although this was important. Organizations also served as spaces for the display of power and authority: the hegemony of colonial elites and the upwardly mobile men who wished to one day be counted among them. The annual report was an exercise in fashioning the group's identity and values. Nielson explains that for both men's and women's societies "annual reports are fundamentally rhetorical: their purpose – then as now – was to defend and justify past actions, attempt to create consensus among an audience in support of particular objectives, and direct future actions."[47] In early nineteenth-century St. John's, where "middle ranks" who were neither merchant, planter, dieter, or servant were beginning to establish themselves, voluntary associations had a similar effect, allowing those middle-class types who had committed, for at least a couple of years, to residing in the town year-round, to shore up power, establish respectability, and influence policy and politics.[48] While the Society of Fishermen and Shoremen was a blip on the radar, other groups, such as the BIS, maintained a lasting influence on charity, sociability, and ethnic identity in the town.

The BIS was more successful than the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen in both its philanthropic efforts and its longevity. Much like the Association of Fishermen and Shoremen, it originated with a group of concerned townsmen meeting in a pub: in this case, at the London Tavern in February 1806, when "a number of Irish Gentlemen desirous of relieving the wants and distresses of their Countrymen and fellow-creatures at large… unanimously agreed, that a

---

[47] Ibid., 35.
[48] Servants were workers who were engaged or indentured each season on wages or shares from the fishery. Dieters were workers who overwintered in exchange for cash, board, and/or the promise of service in the next fishing season. The term "planter" sometimes referred to all settlers but generally referred to a fisherman and owner of a fishing premises, boat, or small vessel who, supplied by a merchant, engaged a crew to work on the share system. Definitions "dieter," "planter," and "servant," from the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, second edition with supplement, ed. G.M. Story, W.J. Kirwin, and J.D.A. Widdowson, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 140, 382-383, 461.

Society formed upon true principles of Benevolence and Philanthropy would be the most effectual mode of establishing a permanent relief to the wretched and distressed."[49] The BIS was the first fraternal order established in the city and is still active today. While its stated aim according to its constitution was to provide relief to the poor, the BIS also played a prominent role in its members' social lives, through its parades, dinners, balls, and other events.

The Benevolent Irish Society was a non-denominational group and rules stated that members were to refrain from discussing politics at group meetings and events. Yet, as the acrimony between them and the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick revealed, there were moments when society members differed on the extent to which this rule should be applied. It was occasionally difficult to reach a consensus on just what constituted political activities and political conversation, showing that in their actions and choices, even avowedly non-political groups like the BIS could still be political. Its constitution took pains to assert that Irish ethnicity and not religious denomination was the defining characteristic of members. The 1806 BIS constitution stated that any man of Irish ancestry was eligible to join the organization, regardless of religious affiliation.[50] Although Irish Protestant merchants and members of the garrison initially dominated the group, by the 1830s most members were Catholics living year-round in the city,

---

[49] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society, February 17, 1806* (St. John's: John Ryan and Son, 1807), 3.

[50] Ibid., 4. The BIS's 1806 constitution read that "Natives of Ireland Sons of Irishmen, or Women descendants of any present or future Members of this Society, are qualified to become members." This wording suggests that female descendants were eligible to join the group, but this wording is probably the result of imprecise writing more than any desire to open membership to women. The 1847 revised version of the constitution attempted to clarify the matter, stating: "Sons of Irishmen, and women, descendants of any present or future member of this society, are qualified to become members." I suspect the intended meaning was "sons of Irishmen and of Irishwomen." At any rate, no women would join the organization until the 1990s. *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806* (St. John's: J. Woods, printer, 1847), 4. Lambert suggests that the BIS was a mixed gender group, but apart from the oddly placed comma in the 1806 constitution there is no evidence suggesting that women were members. Lambert, "Far From the Homes of their Fathers," 190.

and the organization had far fewer military and seasonal members.[51] According to Carolyn Lambert, a large influx of Roman Catholic Irish in the 1820s and 30s changed the city's Irish population from an "emergent gentry" of Irish Protestant physicians and temporary resident naval officers to a more settled community that was overwhelmingly Catholic.[52] These changing demographics are reflected in the BIS's membership rolls and could account for how the nature of the events the BIS attended and hosted and the guests present became increasingly Catholic as the years wore on. As the demographics of the town's Irish population began to change, so too did the BIS's non-denominational nature.

For instance, on the passage of the Roman Catholic relief bill in 1829, a bill that removed many of the restrictions on Roman Catholics in Great Britain and Ireland, the BIS invited the Mechanics Society to assemble at their "usual place" and move in procession to a service at the Roman Catholic Chapel, "in accordance with the spirit of civil and religious liberty in which the Society was founded."[53] This event marked the first mention in the BIS minutes of the members attending a religious ceremony together. By mid-century the BIS's presence was expected at most Catholic social events in the city. If there was a cornerstone to be laid or a Catholic institution such as a church, convent, or school to be opened, the BIS proudly attended and as Bishop Michael Anthony Fleming (bishop from 1829-1850) and his successor John Mullock (bishop from 1850-1869) embarked on ambitious building schemes in the 1840s and 50s,

---

[51] Phillip McCann writes that the BIS's Irish-Protestant founders established the group out of a desire to "distance themselves from their potentially subversive Catholic compatriots then pouring into the fishery." The society allowed them to stress their ethnicity while preserving loyalty to the Protestant establishment. Phillip McCann, *Island in an Empire: Education, Religion, and Social Life in Newfoundland, 1800-1855* (Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, NL: Boulder Publications, 2016), 55-56.
[52] Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 24.
[53] BIS minutes, 18 May 1829, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75. The relief bill was officially extended to Newfoundland in 1832, the year of the first general election in the colony. John Mannion, "MORRIS, PATRICK," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 23 July 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/morris_patrick_7E.html.

creating a Catholic precinct in the heart of the city, there were plenty of opportunities for the BIS to join in.[54] (Chapter Three goes into further detail on these construction projects and how townspeople received them.) BIS members occupied pride of place at the ceremony laying the cornerstone for the Roman Catholic Cathedral in 1841, throughout the 1840s and 50s they accompanied Bishops Fleming and Mullock to the wharf when they departed the city and met them upon returning (always careful to note that this was done in the Bishop's capacity as patron and not as Bishop), and they attended the soil breaking ceremonies for St. Patrick's Church (1855), and St. Bonaventure's College (1857).[55]

In 1851 the BIS began to incorporate a church service as part of their St. Patrick's Day celebrations, parading through town on their way to the service and continuing to hold their dinner in the evening. They had held an evening dinner for many years, but this was the first time they had explicitly acknowledged the holiday's religious element.[56] Through these developments, the BIS still continued to portray itself as a nondenominational organization: for instance, in the 1830s and 40s they were reluctant to relinquish administration of their non-denominational school to a community of Irish Christian Brothers, even though Bishop Fleming frequently pressed the issue (and they did eventually capitulate in 1847). By mid-century, for the BIS Catholicism was so intrinsically linked to Irishness that it was taken as a given that the ostensibly non-denominational group would attend Catholic events and ceremonies. As the

---

[54] Lambert discusses this building frenzy, which by the end of the 1880s included a cathedral, another large church in the west end, an Episcopal Palace and library, five convents, an orphanage, a college, a seminary, and a monastery. Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 80-84.
[55] BIS minutes, 16 September 1855, 27 April 1857, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[56] *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's, Newfoundland 1806-1906.* (Cork: Guy and Company, [1906?]), 98.

author of the society's 1906 *Centenary Volume* put it, the BIS in "its public actions, as well as in its private deliberations… had become entirely Catholic."[57]

Reputation and Respectability

While religion was never a requirement for joining the BIS, reputation certainly was, as was the ability to pay the initial membership fee and keep up with regular dues. Prospective members had to be recommended by a current member of the society, and then needed to gain two thirds majority in favour of their acceptance in a vote by secret ballot.[58] (In the Society of Fishermen and Shoremen, applicants had to be recommended by two elected members, likely a screening tool to keep out those who might be seen as undeserving of membership.[59]) The process of recommendation and selection ensured that social networks broadened in a controlled way. New members would be admitted but their connections and recommendations were scrutinized to ensure continuity of the organization and its values. This was a self-preservation measure for the group itself and a test for the new recruit, eager to tap into the social capital and networks existing club members held (or wanted to hold).[60] Only men who were part of the same social networks and adhered to the same social values as the original members could enter the society.[61] In establishing these rules, Andrew Holman writes that members of associations in Ontario towns "were not being petty or haughty, but expressing

---

[57] *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society*, 113.

[58] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*, 2.

[59] *Newfoundlander,* 20 February 1829.

[60] Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, 195, 209.

[61] Although there are no records (if any were ever produced in the first place) of unsuccessful applications for admission to the BIS, we do know that until 1830, new members were admitted at the end of meetings, a practice that was ended at the suggestion of Dr. Edward Kielley who objected to non-members hearing business of the society prior to their admission. Kielley seems to have been a stringent enforcer of the society's rules and regulations. At another meeting, at Kielley's suggestion, a Mr. Wakeham was "withdrawn as a member of the institution, it have been found that he was not eligible to become such." BIS minutes, 30 August 1830 and 28 August 1831, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

their preferences, as respectable men, to organize their leisure time together in productive, "honourable," and exemplary (if peculiar) ways."[62] Jeffrey McNairn writes that in Masonic lodges in Upper Canada, "rules, rituals, fellowship, and quasi-judicial proceedings enforced broader community norms and taught discipline and civility to protect a social space within which members, divided by personal interest, occupation, religion and politics, could still be brothers."[63] In fraternal associations and voluntary societies alike, men of varying social status mingled, but they had to display adherence to middle-class values before being considered for admittance. These men wanted to create environments where they would socialize with other men who shared the same values, and wished to admit men whose behaviour would be considered a model, or those who they felt they could sufficiently mold and mentor.

The organization's power lay in its good name and in the good names of the men who populated its ranks. It would not have any behaviour that could tarnish its image. The constitution created a model of the ideal middle-class volunteer who reflected the best behaviours and morals.[64] Indeed, the BIS declared that "the prosperity of the society" depended on the members' "good conduct;" its constitution instructed members "in all cases to behave as good and Loyal subjects, zealously to exert themselves in support of the Laws of our Country, to avoid all controversy on Religious or Political subjects, to conduct themselves with kindness and friendship to their brother Members, and to promote harmony and good will in the Society."[65] Members were expected to attend religious services (of whatever denomination) regularly. All

---

[62] Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 119

[63] McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 81.

[64] Ibid. McNairn also notes that rules and regulations defining "civility, reason, and knowledge" were crucial in allowing the Masonic order to "diffuse its sociability."

[65] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*, 11.

of this was to set an example. The constitution had made clear the expectations and behaviours associated with performing the role of respectable middle-class townsperson of Irish descent.

Behaving in a respectable manner established credibility and lent voluntary organizations the authority to carry out their public work. This is evident in the activities of the Beothuk Institute, established at St. John's in 1827. Participation in the Beothuk Institute sent signals among members and outside the membership about race, class, settlement, governance, and the nature of the colonial society they lived in. Established in St. John's by entrepreneur William Cormack, with a scattering of members located on the island's northeast coast, the Beothuk Institute had two goals: to establish communication with the Beothuk people at a time when it was clear very few survived, and to learn more broadly about the geology and natural resources of the island, "the interior of which," according to Cormack, was "less known than any other of the British possessions abroad."[66] These twin goals married agriculture and science in a way that was typical of the time.[67] For Cormack and his contemporaries, the Beothuk were one among many unknown aspects of the island's interior, and the goal was to study them and benefit from any knowledge of the island's interior that they could parlay, rather than an explicit attempt to stem the tide of starvation and dispossession.

---

[66] William Cormack, "Report of Mr. W.E. Cormack's journey in search of the Red Indians in Newfoundland: read before the Beothick Institution of St. John's, Newfoundland," (S.l. : s.n., 1828?), 1. http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.61101/3?r=0&s=1 (accessed 24 July 2017). Cormack is perhaps best known for bringing Shawnawdithit, the last known survivor of the Beothuk, to his home in St. John's and collecting and annotating her drawings. Fiona Polack, "Reading Shanawdithit's Drawings: Transcultural texts in the North American colonial world," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 14, no. 3 (Winter 2013) https://muse.jhu.edu/ (accessed 6 August 2018); G. M. Story, "CORMACK, WILLIAM EPPES," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cormack_william_eppes_9E.html (accessed 6 August 2018).

[67] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 425. "The pursuit of agricultural improvement was often linked with scientific knowledge and again this presented problems for women, excluded as they were from scientific knowledge."

The Beothuk Institute's desire to document Newfoundland's interior was a by-product of political currents in late 1820s Newfoundland. Convinced that a more diverse industrial base was required to allow Newfoundland gaining self-government, many of the reformers involved in agitating for representative government were enthusiastic promoters of agriculture and geology. For these men, the island's interior was an unknown entity that potentially held the key to economic stability and governmental reform. These sentiments continued well into the nineteenth century. In his study of the reformers' rhetoric, Keith Matthews observed that they created a tenuous link between agricultural potential and the need for a local legislature, creating a narrative that Newfoundland's progress had been deliberately stalled by an alliance between West Country merchants and the British Government.[68] In the 1820s, reformers used this narrative to unite Newfoundlanders behind the campaign for representative government.[69] Referring to the St. John's middle class and elites' fascination with the island's interior, Kurt Korneski explains that the colonial government saw landward development as a potential solution for the island's economic woes and, by the late nineteenth century, as a modernizing factor that would bring Newfoundland out of the truck-based fishery.[70] The expeditions and studies the Beothuk Institution launched embodied these themes, tying their desire to learn more about the island's interior with a middle-class charitable imperative.

Class was an important part of how members of the Beothuk Institute conceived of themselves. Cormack stressed the class position that the Institute's members occupied relative to the northeast coast's fishermen and trappers, who had infuriated him with their lack of

---

[68] Keith Matthews, "The Class of '32: St. John's Reformers on the Eve of Representative Government," *Acadiensis* 6, no. 2 (1977): 82-83.
[69] Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay*, 141.
[70] Kurt Korneski, *Conflicted Colony: Critical Episodes in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland and Labrador* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), 77.

information during his 1827 expedition across the island in search of Beothuk people. "We could hardly have expected any [information], for these, and such people have been the unchecked and ruthless destroyers of the tribe" he lamented.[71] For Cormack, the urban middle and upper-class residents of St. John's were better positioned to study the Beothuk people than the settlers of the northeast coast, who to his mind had worsened relations through their antagonism. At the institute's first meeting, Cormack offered a lengthy speech, invoking attendees' middle-class position as justification for becoming involved in the group: "Those who by their own merits, or by the instrumentality of others, become invested with power and influence in society, are bound the more to exert themselves – to do all the good they can" he implored, invoking the sense of moral authority that motivated many nineteenth-century charitable organizations.[72] Cormack plainly felt that the group's respectability and middle-class virtue lent them the credibility and authority to carry out their plans. This rhetoric was also a way for Cormack to separate himself and his peers from the violence of colonialism. Despite his own investment in fishing and trapping concerns in Notre Dame Bay, which allowed him to profit from the violence and dispossession enacted against the Beothuk, Cormack invoked his class status and his location in urban, genteel St. John's to separate himself from the settlers on the northeast coast.[73]

Not only did the Beothuk Institute trade upon its members' self-professed respectability, it was, according to Jerry Bannister, a by-product of the same public sphere that advocated for a

---

[71] Cormack, "Report of Mr. W.E. Cormack's Journey," 4.
[72] "Formation of the Beothuck Institution," *Royal Gazette* 13 November 1827. Reprinted in James P. Howley, *The Beothucks, or Red Indians*, *the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Newfoundland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 182.
[73] Jeff Webb makes a similar point regarding the context around which much eighteenth and nineteenth-century information about the Beothuk was gathered. Jeff Webb, "A Few Fabulous Fragments: Historical Methods in James P. Howley's *The Beothucks*," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 50, no. 101 (May 2017): 110.

colonial legislature in Newfoundland and brought an end to naval government.[74] Sean Cadigan makes a similar observation, arguing that the naval government's failure to protect the Beothuk contributed to the public outcry in St. John's that eventually undermined its legitimacy in the early 1830s.[75] Membership in a group such as the Beothuk Institute was a way to demonstrate one's "civilized" nature, devotion to science and knowledge, and to carry out the assimilating work of empire. The early nineteenth-century attempts at contact, such as naval officer David Buchan's expeditions in 1810 and 1820 and Cormack's walks in 1822 and 1827 reflected "a new bourgeois culture" in St. John's that "sought to protect 'noble savages' from barbarous fishermen and ignorant trappers," and embodied a larger "bourgeois culture" shift occurring on the island between 1810 and 1830.[76] For Sean Cadigan, the Beothuk Institute "exemplified the nineteenth century bourgeoisie's interest in using natural history and science as ways of taming the wilderness and bringing it within the knowledge and control of civilization."[77] Even when they were as bungled and short-lived as the Beothuk Society (Cormack, the group's most active member, left the colony in 1828, only a year after its inception, and the Society ceased to operate in his absence), organizations and societies were vessels for the consolidation of middle-class values and the ascendency of middle-class authority.

---

[74] Bannister, *Rule of the Admirals*, 23.
[75] Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 95.
[76] Bannister, *Rule of the Admirals*, 13.
[77] This is a particularly useful observation given Andrew Holman's point that the local state was "the most conspicuous public arena of the middle class" and that it "granted middle-class values legitimacy over those of the wealthy and the working class." In St. John's, these middle-class reformers undermined naval government and advocated for representative (and later responsible) government. The town had no town council, but the legislature, according to Melvin Baker, was its de facto council: under representative government (and, after 1855, responsible government) "the colony held administrative and financial sway over the capital's institutions and services such as roads, law and order, poor relief, education (shared with the colony's churches), and medical attendance on the sick poor. Certain other services – fire protection, street lighting, and the water supply – were left to private enterprise." Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 13; Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 100; Melvin Baker, "Absentee Landlordism and Municipal Government in Nineteenth-Century St. John's," *Urban History Review* 15, 2 (October 1986), p. 167.

Establishing favourable public opinion was a key part of this ascendency. Favourable public opinion lent charitable organizations like the Benevolent Irish Society the authority they needed to do their work. Groups used the newspapers to maintain a presence in people's minds and further contribute to a sense of a classed society.[78] This display translated into success in business and politics for individuals involved in fraternal and charitable organizations and societies. As David Sutherland points out in his study of Halifax fraternal societies, it is difficult to know the extent to which participating in voluntary associations led to their success, but the men who led these groups were clearly in the public eye.[79] As part of the public sphere, benevolent and fraternal societies, a local independent press, and the reform movement that led to the establishment of representative government in 1832 emerged at the same time, and some of the same men were involved.[80] Organizations and politics both attracted a group of men with shared interests, who wanted to protect or attain a certain position. Societies served as nurseries for politics, preparing men for debate and entry into politics. While they may have prohibited political and religious debate, they played an "undiminished" role as training grounds for political life.[81] The biographies of some St. John's clubmen provide examples. For instance, in the 1830s and 40s carpenter Patrick Kough was captain of the fire company, a member and officer of the BIS, at various times was chairman, treasurer and secretary of the Orphan Asylum School committee, and was president of the Mechanics' Society. In the 1850s he added president of the Agricultural Society to his resume. Kough's involvement in these groups occurred in tandem with his being contracted to build several prominent new buildings in the

---

[78] Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 107.
[79] Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation," 247.
[80] For more on the rise of the public sphere in early nineteenth-century St. John's, and particularly the role of the press, see Bannister, "The Fall of Naval Government," the final chapter of *The Rule of the Admirals*.
[81] McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 90.

changing town. He was appointed superintendent of public buildings in 1834 and oversaw the construction of the Colonial Building in the 1840s. As a private contractor, he built St. Thomas's Anglican Church in 1835, oversaw additions to the Orphan Asylum School in 1841, and built the Presentation Convent in 1850. Kough also served a term in Newfoundland's First House of Assembly in 1832 and was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1860.[82] Kough's record of volunteerism and service could have allowed him to transcend class boundaries. Being frequently in the public eye probably increased his likelihood of securing building contracts.

For trader and political advocate Patrick Morrs, who spent a great deal of time in Ireland and England in the 1830s and 40s, service in fraternal and charitable organizations was probably a way to stay at the forefront of the public mind in St. John's even while he was away. John Mannion notes that Morris's involvement in the passenger trade and as a merchant supplier meant that he would have been known to many people, particularly among the town's Irish population. Morris's voluntarism further increased his public profile. Morris was a founding member of the BIS in 1806 and served as its president for many years. In 1841 he was the first president of the Agricultural Society, was active in a Committee for the Relief of Distress, and was on the Board of Directors for a group calling for the Relief of Disabled Fishermen and Shoremen. With Dr. William Carson, Morris was one of the most vocal advocates for the establishment of legislative government in Newfoundland, and wrote three pamphlets on the subject. Morris served in the legislature from 1836-1840 and was appointed Colonial Treasurer in 1840. He was, according to Mannion, St. John's "leading Irish layman."[83]

---

[82] Fabian O'Dea, "KOUGH, PATRICK," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 August 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kough_patrick_9E.html.
[83] Mannion, "MORRIS, PATRICK."

Membership in one or more fraternal or benevolent societies, success in business, and success in politics were certainly intertwined but it is impossible to ascertain the degree to which one of these elements influenced the other, not to mention the fact that involvement in voluntary societies and organizations did not seem to preclude any long-term commitment to staying on in Newfoundland. While the examples of Kough and Patrick Morris suggest that organizational life was pivotal in advancing their careers, there were other other men who were involved in organizations but did not enter the political arena, or who wielded influence within voluntary organizations rather than using them as a stepping stone to politics. For example, James MacBraire, founding member of the BIS, and a leading businessman in early nineteenth century St. John's, was involved in philanthropic endeavours, but retired to Scotland in 1817 and played no role in the agitation for representative government that many of his peers entered in the 1820s. As Keith Matthews wrote of MacBraire, "charity not politics, and business not rhetoric, seem to have been his principles."[84] The same holds true for businessman Benjamin Bowring, who was active in a variety of educational and charitable causes, advocated for legislative reform in the 1820s, but later distanced himself from the reform movement (both literally and physically, since he retired to Britain in 1834).[85] Some of the most active members of clubs and organizations were permanent residents of Newfoundland, while others, like MacBraire and Bowring, spent many years there but ultimately retired to Britain. Although the

---

[84] Keith Matthews, "MacBRAIRE, JAMES," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 August 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/macbraire_james_6E.html.

[85] Melvin Baker, "BOWRING, BENJAMIN," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 August 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bowring_benjamin_7E.html. In letters from 1833 and 1834, Bowring recounted his displeasure with the legislature. Arthur C. Wardle, *Benjamin Bowring and His Descendants: A Record of Mercantile Achievement,* 2nd ed. (London: Hodder and Staughton, 1940), 50-51, 58.

proliferation of voluntary organizations occurred in tandem with a rise in permanent settlement, not all active club members remained in the colony as permanent settlers.

As Chapter One showed, and as the examples of Bowring, MacBraire, and particularly Patrick Morris, who frequently moved back and forth, remind us, many of the people who moved in, about, and through St. John's in the early and mid-nineteenth century lived transatlantic lives. This was apparent from the time the BIS was founded. Few members of the BIS in its early days stayed in the colony permanently. St. John's was a place to stop on the way somewhere else, to establish one's fortune and then retire elsewhere. Recognizing their lack of knowledge of local concerns, the society's relative newcomer founders decided in 1806 to consult with Catholic Bishop Louis O'Donel (who had been in Newfoundland for ten years at that point) "and others, whose local knowledge of this Country could best inform them" of the most effective way to establish a charitable organization.[86] The BIS also made provision in its constitution for the admission of temporary members. These men went through the same nomination process as other applicants but were only required to pay an entrance fee to the society, and not its quarterly fee, although it is not clear how frequently this membership category was ever put into use.[87] We can interpret societies and organizations as a reflection of the town shifting towards permanent settlement, but organizations propagated a sense that temporary residents bolstered societies and organizations, and that those residents benefited as individuals from doing so. There was an impression within some organizations that temporary residents' contributions were bolstering year-round settlers; the 1827 report of the Library

[86] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*, 4.
[87] Ibid., 5.

Society pointed out that “it is well known” that annual income supporting the library “arises solely from one of those classes which has no permanent interest in the institution.”[88]

Given the extent to which its membership moved around, the BIS became something of a transatlantic organization. After permanently leaving St. John’s, some BIS members retained their membership and continued to donate to the organization. In the 1820s and 1830s, James Stuart in Greenock, Marmaduke Hart in London, and James McCraken in New York contributed to the society’s funds and corresponded with its executives, suggesting that despite having left St. John’s, they continued to take an interest in the town and its people (or just an interest in their friends in the BIS).[89] It is likely that they continued to conduct business with firms and individuals still located in the city, and saw some benefit in maintaining a connection to the city and maintaining their reputation there. The BIS acknowledged the transatlantic elements of its members’ lives and loyalties by providing letters of introduction to members travelling abroad. Even after he left Newfoundland, James MacBraire continued to correspond with the BIS, writing in 1822 that he was disturbed to have been presented with a duplicate letter of introduction when a young man’s employer had retained the original, and urged the BIS executive in St. John’s to keep careful records concerning membership certificates.[90] MacBraire’s umbrage provides an example of the importance placed upon written recommendations in social and business interactions. In another letter to the BIS, MacBraire mentioned having given W. Brooking, who was on the way to Newfoundland from Scotland, instructions for a donation. On another occasion he wrote the BIS to provide a recommendation

---

[88] *Public Ledger*, 9 February 1827.
[89] BIS minutes, 17 February 1823 (Stuart); BIS minutes, 17 February 1830 (Hart); BIS minutes, 25 November 1831 (McCraken), PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[90] MacBraire to BIS, 17 November 1822, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

for a Capt. M. Mafford to join the society.[91] Membership in charitable societies could be taken as an indication of one's respectability and good character, and leveraged for success in new surroundings.

The BIS also had a presence elsewhere on the island. At least as early as 1823, Harbour Grace established a BIS, modeled on the one in St. John's.[92] A published list of members' names from 1807 reveals an abundance of men from other major Newfoundland settlements who took out membership in the St. John's branch. In 1807, members came from Fogo and other northeast coast communities, communities around Conception Bay like Harbour Grace and Harbour Main, Burin on the south coast, and communities on the southern shore of the Avalon peninsula like Bay Bulls, Ferryland, and Trepassey. The BIS never published another full list of members' names and residents, but references in the minutes to members in other communities rarely appeared after its first couple of decades, which could suggest that the social and business benefits of being a member of the organization were becoming increasingly restricted to men who lived in St. John's.[93] Indeed, for the rest of the century, the BIS was a St. John's group, not a Newfoundland-wide entity.

Charitable Activities

For all its effectiveness in bolstering reputations and networks, the BIS had been established as a charitable organization, with a mandate to raise money so that it could distribute food and supplies to the poor. Organizing charitable endeavours was a distinct domain of the middle class in the nineteenth century. In St. John's, the seasonal work cycles of the fishery left many

---

[91] MacBraire to BIS, 15 May 1822 and 17 November 1822, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[92] BIS minutes, 1 April 1823, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[93] *A Report of the Members Names Belonging to the Benevolent Irish Society* (St. John's: John Ryan and Son, 1807). 34 of 104 members, or 17.5 per cent, resided outside of St. John's.

workers out of work or underpaid during the winter months.[94] The middle-class poor relievers in Andrew Holman's study of Ontario towns could "publicly promote [their] own explanations of poverty and solutions to it as natural, rational, and effective… poor relief was a sphere in which the middle class could help alleviate real social problems and at the same time register and even impose their closely-held views concerning work and self-discipline."[95] In Newfoundland, the BIS took a similar approach. It raised its funds through members' quarterly dues, and frequently canvassed the town at large for donations. In keeping with the performance of the reasoned and enlightened middle-class man, capable of judgement, home visits were part of the charitable application, during which, James MacBraire claimed in 1817 "no questions are asked, but such as are best calculated to ascertain the extent of their wants and the best mode of alleviating their sufferings."[96] The BIS initially distributed money to poor relief applicants, but stopped the practice in 1823, on the grounds that it had been "rather an encouragement to idleness than a stimulation to industry, providing temporary, but not permanent, succour. The new mode of relief focussed on encouraging subsistence agriculture and distributing seed potatoes and other foodstuffs.[97]

By creating a dichotomy between the industrious and the idle poor, the deserving and undeserving poor, and adhering to an unyielding faith in the ability of hard work to rescue people from austerity, the BIS reflected the prevailing attitude that hard work could alleviate poverty.[98] Through cultivating the land and engaging in subsistence agriculture, "the labouring

---

[94] Fingard, "Relief of the Unemployed Poor," 33.
[95] Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 110.
[96] *The Royal Gazette*, 12 November 1817.
[97]BIS minutes, 25 May 1823, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[98] This approach of improvement through work was common in charity work in the nineteenth century. See Fingard, "Relief of the Unemployed Poor," 41; Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 110. Carmen Nielson notes that this approach was deemed "scientific" whereas other attempts to relieve poverty were merely "palliative." Nielson, *Private Women and the Public Good*, 32-33.

classes" would "by a moderate exercise of industry and economy… [foster] the spirit of improvement which is beginning to be felt so generally," the minutes of the meeting in 1823 stated. Any poor person with land fit for cultivation would be provided with "seed potatoes of the very best description" to "rescue themselves from poverty by honest industry."[99] Judith Fingard explains that "work was seen as the great panacea for the prevailing urban malaise produced by seasonal unemployment, dangerous mendicancy, and exorbitant, gratuitous aid."[100] Receiving seed potatoes meant that aid recipients still had to work for their charity, or as the minutes of one BIS meeting put it, "charitable relief, when administered with too much liberality, and without sufficient inquiry and discrimination, produces more evil than good, by weakening the inducement to industry, and presenting a temptation which is not easily resisted." [101] The St. John's Factory, the other main charitable organization in the town, displayed similar notions of improvement through hard work. "Applicants" worked in net-making and mending, mat-making, carding, spinning, and knitting, and received "industry instead of charity."[102]

Around the same time as the BIS began to turn its emphasis away from distributing food and money in favour of activities that would reform the poor, they began to discuss the possibility of opening a school and an orphan asylum in St. John's. In August 1823 the group received approval from the governor to proceed with this plan, and began fundraising. The Orphan Asylum School (OAS) opened in 1826.[103] So named because it was originally intended to house and educate orphans, the orphanage aspect of the Orphan Asylum School (OAS) never came to

---

[99] BIS minutes, 25 May 1823. In 1831, the group changed its constitution to officially reflect this change in policy: BIS minutes, February 17, 1831, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[100] Fingard, "Relief of the Unemployed Poor," 41.
[101] BIS minutes, 17 February 1831, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[102] *Newfoundlander*, 23 October 1834.
[103] *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society*, 51.

fruition. The institution operated as a day school for working-class children for many years and was often referred to as the Orphan Asylum School even though no orphanage ever existed there. Working-class children attended lessons at the school during the day. Annual reports and records of the BIS present the OAS as an institution that was often on the verge of collapse, yet it was a long-lived institution. Plagued by low attendance despite measures designed to combat the problem, the school's directors expressed their frustration with the working class's supposed apathy and disinterest, often failing to acknowledge the wider social and economic issues that kept both children and adults away from school. For all its struggles, the OAS building represented an important addition to the built landscape. It doubled as the BIS hall, and allowed the group a permanent space to be seen.

The OAS's success rate is incredibly difficult to gauge. There are very few surviving sources that reveal anything about curriculum, graduation rates, or even what the direction or mission of the school was to be, beyond vague references to "improvement." The high absentee rate among OAS pupils is a recurring theme throughout the entirety of the surviving BIS minutes, and while records indicate several hundred students were enrolled in the school at any given time, actual attendance was always much lower than enrolment.[104] The school offered adult programs in net-making and navigation, but numbers are again difficult to ascertain. Throughout the British world in the nineteenth century, education for both adults and children was concerned with addressing economic destitution and perceived moral shortfalls. Leona M. English interprets the OAS's adult-education programs as upholding the "persistent belief that poverty

---

[104] According to the BIS's minutes for August 1828, 600 children were enrolled at the school. Yet 1847 the school's furnishings consisted of 2 desks, 16 stools, 1 stove and funnels, and 6 tables which does not seem like a lot of furnishings for a school of several hundred pupils. BIS minutes, 12 August, 1828, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75; *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*, reprinted 1847, 23.

was connected to immorality and that education was one means to make people less immoral and less poor."[105]

Like the BIS itself, the OAS was non-denominational in name and in its regulations, but in practise its religiosity was a different story. Although the school was not (on paper) intended to function as a Catholic school, most people viewed it as such since all of the other charity schools in the city were run by Protestant organizations.[106] The student body was almost entirely Catholic and in 1845 the colonial government allotted the OAS monies from Catholic School Board funds.[107] As Carolyn Lambert found, there was significant overlap between the BIS and the Catholic school board, with about half the men who served on the Roman Catholic school board between 1845 and 1884 also holding officer positions in the BIS.[108] State funding was an important development because it showed the BIS's values and the state's values were congruent with one another. As Bruce Curtis puts it, public schools in Canada West represented the respectable classes' attempts to "solidify their rule, mediate class conflict, and colonize civil society."[109] Through all this talk of moulding, remaking, and improving people, members of the BIS were building the type of society they wanted to see in St. John's and creating conditions wherein their own values became normalized. By taking this task upon themselves (and being entrusted to do so by the government, who funded them), the BIS was taking hold of an opportunity to build the type of society its members wanted to see in St. John's. As Andrew

---

[105] English, "Teaching the 'Morally and Economically Destitute,'" 69.
[106] Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 118, footnote 24.
[107] Ibid., 118.
[108] Ibid., 119.
[109] Bruce Curtis, *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871* (Barcombe, England, and Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1988), 370. Susan E. Houston and Alison Prentice take a more generous tack, arguing that while schools were powerful institutions that created societal norms and dictated family routines, Curtis's emphasis on schools as sites to create a governable population overlooks the socio-economic and political factors that drove both students and school administrators. Susan E. Houston and Alison Prentice, *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988), 100, 197-198, 343-344.

Holman puts it, "social control and interclass consensus were the tools for establishing class hegemony. The mechanisms of class domination in mid-nineteenth century Canada and elsewhere, were both conflictual and, on the surface at least, harmonious. Respectable people attempted to make the wealthy, workers, and indigent behave in ways suitable to the middle class by using both the carrot and the stick."[110] The carrot and the stick are evident in how the BIS ran, promoted, and talked about their school. They played the role and met the duties they felt their lot in life had assigned them and became frustrated when poor families would not play along.

Bishop Fleming, vice-patron of the BIS, took considerable interest in the institution. Throughout the 1830s and 40s he maintained that the Catholic Church should assume control of the school to the point that in 1830, "in spite of all opposition," he prepared a group of children from the OAS for their First Communion.[111] Fleming frequently approached the BIS to suggest bringing over an order of Irish Christian Brothers to superintend the school, but members rejected the proposal. Fleming remained unconvinced and wrote in 1847 that the real reason for his proposal's rejection stemmed from "those who whispered to members of your Society that my object in their introduction was to grasp at their establishment, the pride of every Irishman and of every man of true benevolence in the country."[112] In linking the school with Irishness and successful philanthropy, Fleming acknowledged not only the BIS's successes in the public realm but its position as a focal point of middle-class Irish identity. Whoever controlled the BIS (and its

---

[110] Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty*, 99.

[111] According to the 1906 BIS centennial volume, re-telling this story seventy years after the fact, "the good Bishop knew that it was only a matter of time when the school would become Catholic in fact as well as in spirit." *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society,* 57. The *Centenary Volume* also claims that this group consisted of 400 children, but this seems excessive.

[112] Bishop Fleming to BIS, 9 March 1847. PANL, MG 612, Reel 75. Eventually the BIS capitulated and in 1847 four Christian Brothers arrived from Ireland to take over running the school. By 1851 all but one had returned. In 1876 a new group of Christian Brothers again took over running the school.

school) would also occupy a powerful role in determining the community's priorities. Fleming took such a deep interest in the school because it dovetailed with his own goal of creating a Roman Catholic precinct in the heart of the city, challenging the colony's Anglo-Protestant establishment, and transforming the city into Irish-Catholic space, a theme that Chapter 3 explores in more detail.

Social Spaces: The Orphan Asylum School and BIS Hall

The Orphan Asylum School was far more successful as a social space than as a school, an outcome that is attributable to its central location and the multitude of uses to which it was put, more so than to any educational or charitable activities carried out there. The OAS was a community hub, a gathering place and social centre. The BIS used it as their headquarters and often rented out the building to other organizations. In February, 1833, for instance, the "Ladies of the St. John's Factory" requested the use of the OAS for a charity ball. The BIS was quick to approve this "praiseworthy endeavour to improve the condition of the poor and unfortunate of this community."[113] In the 1830s, the Mechanics' Society frequently met there until its own hall was completed, the Commercial Society used the building during 1846-47, and the colonial legislature met at the OAS in the weeks after the 1846 fire that destroyed much of St. John's.[114] Groups often used the school as a muster spot for parades and processions. The BIS held its regular meetings, St. Patrick's Day dinners, and annual charity balls there. In his diaries, Edward Morris refers to decorating the space several days in advance of special events, revealing the anticipation (and stress) with which he approached these events. For example, in the days leading up to the 1855 St. Patrick's Day party, for which he was a steward, Morris visited the

---

[113] BIS minutes, 19 February 1833, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[114] BIS minutes 12 June 1846 (legislature); BIS minutes July 1847 (Commercial Society), PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

OAS five times to confirm and check on arrangements, and after attending church on the morning of St. Patrick's Day, spent the better part of the day setting out the dining places.[115]

From its hilltop location at the corner of Queen's Road and Garrison Hill, the two-story wooden building constructed in 1827 was one of the town's focal points. For the members of the BIS, who had previously met in taverns, having a building like this was a mark of distinction. With its prominent location and sightlines, the building made a decisive claim on the city landscape, a sign of the members' long-term goals and authority, of their investment in the town and its people, and of their desire to make a home in St. John's. It held a commanding view of the harbour, and was directly across the street from what would eventually become the geographical centre of St. John's Catholic community: a complex that would eventually house the cathedral, episcopal residence, two convents, a private school, and the espiscopal library. The BIS renovated the building between 1842 and 1844 to add a "public room," a tower, and an observatory – all the better from which to survey the town below and act as a beacon of Irish identity and pride visible from the town and water. This activity was likely spurred on by Bishop Fleming's zeal for "the physical improvement of his country"[116] and construction of the cathedral that had begun in 1841. In Bishop Fleming's words, the tower and observatory "impart an air of improvement [to the town], particularly gratifying and being placed on commanding sites, [they] have an excellent effect as you enter the harbour."[117] The newly renovated building was opened with a public breakfast and a ball in January 1845.[118] While not at the heart of the

---

[115] Edward Morris diaries, March 1855. Maritime History Archive (MHA), Memorial University, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

[116] Address from BIS to Bishop Fleming, 1 December 1841, copied in BIS minutes of Dec 1, 1841. PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

[117] Quoted in *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society*, 70.

[118] BIS minutes, 17 November 1844, 8 January 1845, 9 January 1845, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75. This original wooden building was torn down in 1880 and replaced by a stone structure known as St. Patrick's Hall, only for the new hall to be destroyed in the devastating fire that swept the city in 1892.

city (at least at the time of its construction), the BIS hall, coupled with the cathedral, furnished an impressive focal point. Seen from the harbour, both buildings dominated the skyline. And each respective building provided a panoramic view of the city below.

The building was a stamp of the Irish community's mark on the town and although it was a popular location for community events, the BIS did not rent the premises to everyone who wished to use it. In 1840, following "a very angry and protracted discussion" at which "a majority of the meeting appear[ed] adverse to this proposition," the BIS denied an application from the Newfoundland Natives' Society (NNS), who wished to use the building as a meeting location until their own hall was constructed.[119] Although the minutes do not go into detail, we can speculate as to why the NNS' request was denied. Since the time of the Natives' Society's founding, there had been no love lost between it and the BIS. Rumblings about "native rights" first appeared in the colony's newspapers during the push for self-government in Newfoundland, and by 1840 these sentiments had coalesced into an organized group who advocated for public service appointments to be made from among Newfoundland-born residents. Fed up with what they perceived as a pattern of men coming to Newfoundland, making their fortune as an importer/exporter, securing patronage appointments, and then retiring to Britain, the NNS represented fulminating social tensions within the middle class in the colony. The NNS relied on its members' respectability and middle-class values to justify its argument that Newfoundland-born men could now take on pivotal roles in running the place. According to Phillip McCann, the Natives Society "fused nativism, patriotism, and a respect for the social order into a political creed."[120]

---

[119] BIS minutes, 23 August 1840, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

[120] Phillip McCann, "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition: Newfoundland, 1832-1855," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, (April 1988): 93.

One would think that these goals complemented the BIS's aims but the organization predicated on greater political power for the Newfoundland-born and the organization predicated on Irish ethnicity, whose patron was the overtly political Irish-born Catholic bishop, did not look kindly upon one another. The non-sectarian NNS had a history of acrimony with Bishop Fleming. Carolyn Lambert notes that many of the so-called "mad dogs" (Bishop Fleming's epithet for Catholics who opposed his interference in politics) were Newfoundland-born, and that Fleming enjoyed more enthusiastic support from Irish-born members of his congregation than he did from those born in Newfoundland.[121] The NNS, meanwhile, rejected Fleming's interference in politics.[122] The conflict reveals two societies with competing visions of what middle-class respectability and their role in the political life of the colony entailed. After their request to use the BIS Hall was denied, the NNS aligned with the Factory committee, using its space for their meetings, dinners, and occasional balls.[123] In some cases, fraternalism could bridge gaps of ethnic, sectarian, and political fragmentation, rather than accentuating them.[124] But as the tension between the BIS and NNS (and the BIS's earlier conflict with the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick) reveals, fraternal associations could on occasion shine a spotlight on these gaps and tensions.

The various scuffles over who had authority over the orphan asylum school building are most certainly related to the BIS's attempts to maintain some independence from the church, and to accommodate both "mad dogs" and members of the "priests party." In October 1849

[121] Lambert, "Emblem of our Country," 24. Concerned with recreating Ireland in Newfoundland, Fleming even refused to accept Newfoundland-born men as candidates for the priesthood. Raymond J. Lahey, "FLEMING, MICHAEL ANTHONY," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2 October 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/fleming_michael_anthony_7E.html.
[122] Gunn, *Political History of Newfoundland*, 81.
[123] *Newfoundlander*, 25 January 1844 contains an account of the NNS holding a ball at the Factory.
[124] Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation," 250.

when St. John's barrister Harcourt Mooney wished to lecture on the history of Ireland at the OAS, Bishop Fleming, who disapproved of Mooney, ordered the Christian Brothers teaching at the school to close the building so Mooney's lecture could not go ahead. BIS president J.V. Nugent had already personally granted Mooney use of the building, and upon learning that Fleming would close the doors Nugent called a meeting to inquire whether he had been within his powers as president in permitting Mooney to use the school.[125] After some discussion, the society passed a resolution that only the society as a body had the authority to grant use of the space. The society then defeated (by a margin of one vote) a proposal that Mr. Mooney be allowed the use of the school room to lecture for six nights. Bishop Fleming was not appeased and several months later sent the BIS a scathing letter in which he chastised their handling of the situation and resigned as Vice-Patron to the society.[126] Fleming wrote that he had been "slandered and calumniated by your Society" when all he had set out to do was protect the group from "a very doubtful character" who would "desecrate your Asylum, a place devoted to religion, and scandalize the faithful with his indecent songs."[127]

The BIS executive, mindful of Fleming's authority and not wanting to offend decorum, sometimes had to take part in a complicated dance. The degree to which Fleming was or was not involved in steering the BIS reveals tensions that manifested within the group (and within the larger Irish community in St. John's) during the mid-nineteenth century, as they struggled over just how much politics and how much religion could be invited into their activities. This was

[125] BIS minutes, 10 October 1849, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[126] BIS minutes 10 October 1849 (vote concerning Mooney); BIS minutes of 18 February 1850 (Fleming's letter), PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[127] Bishop Fleming to BIS, 18 February 1850. PANL, MG 612, Reel 75. Carolyn Lambert points out the popularity of lecture series hosted by associational groups in "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 240-242.

not only a source of conflict within the BIS but a source of friction within this particular colonial society as identities and values clashed against one another.

Social Events

The Mooney episode notwithstanding, the BIS's own events that took place inside the building were occasions of careful self-fashioning, where the group displayed its values and respectability. Stuart Blumin observed that for American men involved in fraternal and charitable organizations, "more than in the workplace, the marketplace, and the home, decisions as to whether and how to be involved were voluntary expressions of social preference."[128] At parties and dinners, these choices and social preferences were evident in the speeches, toasts, and decorations. These events were where societies and organizations told a story about themselves, to themselves. The story usually involved their duty to lead, and the respectability that compelled and enabled them to do so. For the BIS, loyalty, Irishness, and a burgeoning sense of local pride could also be added to the mixture.

St. Patrick's Day was the BIS's social highlight of the year. The group held a dinner most years, at first at a tavern such as the London Tavern, where they had been founded, and in later years at the OAS. Ever-conscious of appearances, on occasions when the BIS did not hold a party, it was usually because the fishery had failed and there was "general despair" in the town. In other years, they cited lack of interest. One year they did not hold a dinner because the Irish Christian Brothers were living in the school building. Attendance numbers varied wildly from year to year, but the group always sent an invitation to the governor (their patron) and the Roman Catholic Bishop (their vice patron).[129] It was considered a great coup to have either of

---

[128] Blumin, *Emergence of the Middle Class*, 192.

[129] Carolyn Lambert observes that although attendance at these dinners always averaged over 100 prior to 1880, the frequency of dinners dropped off markedly in later years, with only 4 held in the period 1870-1885. She attributes this to members' interests turning towards other social events such as balls and

these men attend. Senior public servants such as the sheriff and judges were also usually invited.

Transparencies (scenes painted on a translucent material like paper or lightweight cloth and lit from behind), boughs, the BIS flag, and fresh flowers usually comprised the decorations. Secretary William Curtis provided a description of the room in 1824, when the group met at the Crown and Anchor Tavern:

> The room was beautifully decorated with the transparencies of St. Patrick, British Union, the rose, thistle, and shamrock, the arms of Sir Charles Hamilton (and his patron) and a very handsome design presented to the Society by Wm. Egan, the subject charity supported by faith and hope, on a pedestal; and a ribbon displaying the names of Tonge, Murray, and MacBraire, the founders and presidents of the institution. The ceiling was festooned with evergreens, and handsomely ornamented with artificial flowers. A natural shamrock was suspended in a glass at the President's head, which had been presented to this society by Mrs. Commodore Roberts.[130]

The soiree entertained 118 guests, including the band of the 60th Regiment who played a response to each toast. Many guests, in making toasts, commented on the shamrock Mrs. Roberts had donated to the society. So strong were the feelings of patriotism (and the influence of alcohol) that as the night wore on, "two gentlemen of true Hibernian society, we understand, cut up the shamrock and drank it in tumblers of Irish whiskey" in a custom known as "Drowning the Shamrock."[131] The dinners were often raucous affairs with late nights and much drinking, but the secretary usually put a genteel spin on his reports. As the secretary put it in 1831, "nothing could exceed the regularity, harmony and hilarity which prevailed during the whole

---

picnics that were mixed gender, larger, and more lavish. Lambert, "Far From the Homes of Their Fathers," 237-239.

[130] BIS minutes, 18 March 1824, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

[131] Ibid. For an explanation of the custom, see archivist Larry Dohey's blog entry "Drowning the Shamrock," *Archival Moments*, March 17, 2017, http://archivalmoments.ca/2017/03/drowning-the-shamrock/ (Accessed 7 August 2017).

evening."[132] In some ways, the BIS dinners resembled those of the Beaver Club of Montreal, a much more exclusive dining club, where Northwest Company bourgeois gathered for events that began with formal meals and speeches but "quickly degenerated into drunken revelry" rife with romanticism and nostalgia and where the presence of invited guests allowed attendees to "forge business alliances, exchange information, share ideas, and cement social ties."[133]

The toasts given at the BIS dinners revealed the group's allegiances. Usually attendees offered 25 to 30 toasts. In 1824, the men offered 26 toasts, starting with St. Patrick and followed by the King, Duke of Clarence, Duke of York, and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. As the toasts wore on, their content became more local: the St. Andrew's and St. George's Societies, the Governor, the Chief Justice, local clergymen, the land itself, the fisheries, the "fair daughters of Terra Nova", the BIS of Harbour Grace, "our worthy guests and the inhabitants of St. John's, supporters of charity," and finally, looking outwards once more, to "our absent members." Even as the BIS became more associated with the Catholic Church over the years, it made sure to pledge loyalty to the Queen, to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and to the United Parliament at each gathering, as well as to the other ethnic and fraternal societies in the town (except for the NNS).[134] Even as the number of Irish Protestants involved in the society began to decline, these toasts remained in use, indicating that despite its largely Irish-Catholic ethnic makeup, the organization saw itself as existing comfortably within a British World and was explicitly loyal to the Crown. The content of the BIS toasts supports Phillip McCann's observation that

---

[132] BIS minutes, March 17, 1831, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

[133] Carolyn Podruchny, *Making the Voyageur World: Travellers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 71, 145. See McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 76-77 for the formal rituals, toasts, and dining that contributed to a sense of community among Freemasons.

[134] By 1906, the author of the *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society* railed against toasts to the Queen, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the United Parliament as "un-Irish" and detrimental to the Irish people, but at the time there did not seem to be any protest within the group. *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society*, 22.

Newfoundland's governing administrations attempted to overcome religious and political tension in the colony by fostering social rituals and festivities steeped in both British patriotism and local culture.[135] Interpreted in the context of Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan's definition of loyalism not as "a literal description of a particular group or party but… an amalgam of values, practices, laws, and politics that distinguished between who was loyal (and deserved the full rights and privileges of Britons) and who was disloyal (and subject to varied prohibitions and punishments)," the toasts reveal how members of the BIS used their speeches and their actions to claim citizenship.[136]

The decorations, the toasts, and the company combine to create a portrait of the middle-class Irish men of St. John's enjoying a festival but also consciously creating an image of fraternization and middle-class respectability. The parties occasionally became boisterous but the group could excuse themselves by relying on the goodwill and respectability they had spent the entire year building up. In 1833, for instance, some revellers stayed "till the grey dawn" and "at 7AM paraded through town accompanied by the band, with their colours flying."[137] The privilege they held in the community allowed the revellers to march through the streets in this manner without attracting too much negative attention. The parties were private affairs but could on occasion spill over into public space.

Public Spectacles

While the impromptu parade mentioned above was a spill-over from what had initially been a private event, the BIS, like their contemporaries in other clubs and societies in St. John's, also made more deliberate use of the public streets to demonstrate their authority and manage their

---

[135] McCann, "Culture, State Formation and the Invention of Tradition."
[136] Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, "Preface," in *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, ed. Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), x.
[137] BIS minutes, 19 March 1833. PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

public image. Peter Goheen observes that parades in urban Victorian Canada were carefully organized occasions, often described in terms of "spectacle" and "grandeur," language that lent importance and authority, tinged with fun, to an event. A successful parade was the ultimate public performance of respectability. Goheen found that parades were generally peaceful demonstrations and rather than actively challenging a group's right to occupy public space, opponents *usually* ignored the procession.[138] To effectively convey a message through the participation of hundreds of individuals, parade organizers required meticulous preparation and control in advance of the event.[139]

Visual and material culture formed a central part of these displays. Having established respectability in their words and their actions, and circulated their news through the press, members of fraternal organizations used symbols like banners and sashes to display their affiliation. As Amanda Vickery points out of Georgian England, material culture and consumer habits reflected certain cultural elements; both men and women constructed culture and meaning through the goods they consumed.[140] Donning accessories to proclaim allegiance to a fraternal organization reveals the importance of material goods in the construction of identity. On public days, members were to "wear a sash with the harp and crown," paid for by the society's general funds and considered the society's property.[141] The BIS procured much of its regalia from Great Britain, instructing members on overseas business trips to buy certain items. Since St. John's lacked manufacturing facilities and almost all goods were imported, it made sense to have members scour the shops while they were away (not unlike the "little

---

[138] Peter G. Goheen, "Negotiating Access to Public Space in Mid-Nineteenth Century Toronto," *Journal of Historical Geography* 20, 4 (1994): 430-449.
[139] Peter G. Goheen, "Symbols in the Streets: Parades in Victorian Urban Canada," *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine* 18, no. 3 (February 1990): 237.
[140] Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*, 163-164, 166-167.
[141] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society, February 17, 1806*, 11.

commissions" executed by friends and family members shopping for one another in Chapter One). In August 1829, member Aaron Hogsett sent a box from London containing a funeral pall, silk scarves, and hatbands. Hogsett described the items in the most flattering terms: "a very elegant four breast Genoa velvet pall, livied with brown Holland, trimmed with deep patent gold frieze and large gold crest in the centre with extra loose white silk fringes…to hook on occasionally 4 large black silk tassels." Hogsett also mentioned that he had looked into the costs of "transparencies" (18 pounds each) and sashes, which he suggested the officers bear the costs of individually as he could not find anyone to make them at a price he approved of.[142] In 1831, members resolved to procure "a common green flag with the letters B.I.S. to use at quarterly meetings" and "a green silk flag with a suitable device" to use at processions.[143] Hogsett's pricing out clothing and accessories for the BIS was a chance for him to demonstrate his good taste and to contribute to this meaning-making.

The BIS made a point of attending members' funerals (Edward Morris's diary is littered with references to funerals) and items like the funeral pall ensured that even in death, group identity remained intact. This was evident at the funeral of longtime BIS president (and Edward's uncle) Patrick Morris in 1849, when the society met at the Orphan Asylum School, marched to Morris's home, and then to the graveside, "wearing crepe round their hats."[144] They even put protocol for funerals in their constitution; bylaws adopted in 1830 instructed mourners on the order for funeral processions, with newer members at the front, followed by members of various subcommittees, then the bishop (if he was a member), then judges (if any), retired presidents, retired vice-presidents, and the president and vice-president. Reflecting the hierarchy within the

---

[142] Aaron Hogsett to BIS, 10 August 1829, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[143] BIS minutes, 17 February 1831, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[144] BIS minutes, 24 August 1849, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

group, committee chairs, presidents, and vice-presidents carried wands, while all marchers wore a green silk rosette.[145] Accessories such as these were vital parts of the demonstration. Clubmen were making their middle-class selves by signalling belonging in the group. Mary P. Ryan writes that funeral processions reveal antebellum Americans "interrupting their everyday, individual activities [to enter] public time and space to represent themselves in a profusion of custom-made identities."[146] The accessories like wands and rosettes lent visual continuity to this representation and made group members easily identifiable, to one another and to the broader public. They did not even need a body to hold a funeral procession. When news of the death of BIS founder James MacBraire arrived from Scotland in 1832, the group met at the OAS on a Sunday morning, each person wearing a black crepe armband, and marched carrying their banner "as if in funeral procession to the respective places of worship."[147] The organization took measures to set themselves apart from society at large and debated what was the best position to take in a funeral procession, deciding in 1831 that "in order to better to distinguish the society from the populace at funeral processions, members should be appointed to keep off the spectators and oblige them to walk at a reasonable distance from the society."[148]

Marching at the funeral of an ex-member could be a thorny proposition, as occurred on the 1855 death of Dr. Edward Keilley, former BIS member and founder of the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick and Newfoundland Natives Society. BIS rules stated that members were expected to attend the funerals of other members, except for those who died in arrears to the society, and although Keilley had not been a member of the group since his departure in 1836, when he died

---

[145] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*, reprinted 1847, 18.
[146] Mary P. Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 59-60.
[147] BIS minutes, 3 May 1832, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[148] Ibid.

in 1855 Patrick Kough and John Nugent put forth a motion that the BIS march at the funeral.[149] Most members opposed the motion. Writing in his private journal, Edward Morris explained that the group had obliged Kough and Nugent "to recede from their very foolish motion by an unmistakeable manifestation of its opposition to such a proposal" noting that Keilley had "abandoned the Society upwards of twenty years ago and for several years was a notorious opponent of it and of course never paid a farthing towards its funds since his departure." Keilley's political leanings were also a point of contention for Morris, who described Keilley as "courted by the High Tory party and admitted to their society" while entertaining a feeling of "contempt for the low Irish of the Society and regarded them as unworthy of his association." (Morris's saying that the BIS and its members were "low" is a bit of a stretch as many members, Morris's family included, were among the leading families of St. John's at the time.[150]) Morris concluded his thoughts on Keilley by noting that "in his latter years he became a changed man again and was liked by his acquaintances but he never returned to the BI Society." For Edward Morris, being on good terms of acquaintance with individuals in one's own personal dealings was not enough to merit a return to the folds of the organization Keilley had abandoned years earlier.[151]

From the way Edward Morris and his contemporaries wrote about it, parading (and deciding who to parade for) was a serious undertaking, rife with symbolism. Fraternal clubs marked holidays, funerals, and important guests arriving in the city with elaborate demonstrations. For

---

[149] *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*, reprinted 1847, 17.

[150] John FitzGerald's "Conflict and Culture" provides a useful appendix illustrating the kin relations between the most prominent Irish-Catholic families in nineteenth-century St. John's (Morris, Fleming, and Howley, and Carson, Job, and Shea) all of whom were involved in the BIS. FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 470.

[151] Edward Morris diary, 11 March 1855, MHA, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

participants, parading was to put themselves on display. As Chapters Three and Four will discuss, parading could be an act of defiance, asserting a claim to exist in a space, or an act of alignment, a way for groups to associate themselves with the cause or individual being feted, gaining social status through proximity. As an example of the latter type of parade, charitable and fraternal groups typically marched to the harbour to greet a new governor and see off a departing one. Jerry Bannister points out that the governor benefitted from these performances too, since even after the establishment of representative government in Newfoundland in 1832, these ceremonies established the governor's legal and political legitimacy.[152] Bruce Curtis makes a similar point regarding Lord Durham's 1838 tour of the Canadas. Durham selectively relaxed protocols of dress and initiated contact between "the great and the small." In doing so, he performed a political ritual in which "the aristocratic and the democratic were blended in an effort to affirm and legitimate rule."[153] Durham's condescension reproduced relations of domination through their temporary denial. Such was also the case in the processions and ceremonies where fraternal and benevolent associations met the governor on his arrival in St. John's.

These processions typically followed a pattern: as the governor's ship became visible on the horizon, flags and signals indicated the envoy's approach. Once anchored, a member of the governor's entourage would communicate with organizations and civil servants to make the arrangements for a suitable welcome on shore. Fraternal organizations and groups would typically post an ad in the evening newspapers to alert their members of the muster point and

---

[152] Bannister, *Rule of the Admirals*, 181-183.

[153] Bruce Curtis, "The 'Most Splendid Pageant Ever Seen': Grandeur, Condescension, and the Domestic in Lord Durham's Political Theatre," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 1 (June 2008): 72. McCann's "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition," offers a similar perspective on the state legitimising itself/reinforcing or reproducing its power through public events.

time. The schools would sometimes also bring children down to the harbourfront to watch the parade. After the guest of honour came ashore, the assembled groups lined up behind his carriage and followed him to Government House. The groups would give cheers and deliver written addresses, the texts of which they would also submit to the newspapers. The newspapers would publish the governor's response to these addresses of loyalty. Sometimes the governor would hold a levee. When all was said and done the groups and societies involved usually paraded back to their hall or meeting place and held a party there.[154]

Military engineer Richard Bonnycastle described Governor John Harvey's arrival in 1840, where "the different public societies with their banners and ornaments, the people in mass, and all the clergy of every denomination, the magistrates, merchants, and official gentlemen, formed themselves near the Queen's Wharf – at which his Excellency landed with his suite, under a salute from the frigate." After landing, "Sir John walked up to the Government House, about half a mile distant, followed by a train of many thousand persons, and was immediately sworn in, and then addressed the assemblage; and in a short time afterwards held a levee."[155] The BIS were so eager to meet Governor Gaspard LeMarchant in 1847 that they attended his landing without an official invitation to do so.[156] The incident became a matter of discussion at their next meeting, with some members wondering whether the governor had intended to eschew tradition by landing privately without inviting any local delegates to be present, but the group shook off the question, noting that the Governor "graciously received the deputation" regardless of any etiquette breach or whether they were officially invited.[157]

---

[154] For example, see BIS minutes, 26 July 1823, and 30 July 1828, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75; *Newfoundlander*, 14 August 1828.
[155] One wonders if Bonnycastle exaggerated by saying "many thousand" people were present. Richard Bonnycastle, *Newfoundland in 1842* (London: H. Colburn, 1842) 2: 166-167.
[156] BIS minutes, 11 April 1847, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[157] BIS minutes, 23 April 1847, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

The BIS's eagerness to meet each governor on arrival should not be understood as an indication that societies and organizations marched to meet every arrival of political, social, or religious prominence. Although it was also an explicit demonstration of their loyalty, the BIS minutes stressed that they met the governor in his capacity as patron of their organization. When the Dutch Prince of Orange visited Newfoundland in 1845, the BIS, having initially decided to march, hastily called a meeting on the morning of the arrival to reconsider on the grounds that a nominally Catholic organization should not greet a member of the House of Orange. That the group ultimately decided to march shows its desire to remain independent of the church.[158] When John Mullock, coadjutor bishop and eventual successor to Bishop Fleming arrived in St. John's in 1848, the BIS debated whether it would be proper to meet him at the wharf and present an address. Edward Morris argued that "if the Society was to wait on every ecclesiastic that came into the Colony, members would have time for very little else all the year round." Patrick Kough countered that the society should meet all "persons of distinction" at the wharf. William Hogan thought the society should greet Mullock, not because of his position as coadjutor bishop, but because he was an "illustrious Irishman." This was the same logic that allowed the BIS to think of itself as a nondenominational organization while at the same time strongly embracing Catholic individuals and events; they honoured events and individuals not because they were Catholic, but because they were Irish, or because they were "illustrious" or had "distinction," although in practice it is hard to imagine that religious sentiment did not compel the individual men marching to meet the Bishop or attend a cornerstone-laying for a Catholic building. In the case of Mullock, the BIS decided to send the prelate an address but not

---

[158] BIS minutes, 11 August 1845, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75. BIS president Patrick Morris was also vice-president of the Agricultural Society and the prince was guest of honour at their dinner that year. *Newfoundlander*, 24 August 1845. See McCann "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition," for more on the Prince of Orange in Newfoundland in 1845.

to walk to meet him at his arrival.[159] Both the Mullock and Prince of Orange incidents demonstrate the social weight and importance attached to presenting addresses and meeting newcomers at the harbour, and the BIS's desire to retain autonomy from the church while also respecting it.

Conclusion

The emergence of benevolent and fraternal groups in St. John's marked a shift in the town's character and in the demographics of its inhabitants. As the number of middle-class and white-collar workers residing in the town grew, so did their desire for amenities of the type that fraternal and benevolent organizations provided. With the uptick in permanent settlement, the means to build amenities became concentrated in the town rather than exported overseas. These amenities included social occasions and spaces where they could associate with men of similar backgrounds and cultivate a sense of middle-class respectability, and pursue the charitable activities that allowed them to assist the poor while also setting an agenda for how society should function and be ordered.

Many members of fraternal and benevolent societies were active in the reform movement for local government, showing a desire to influence and shape the community (and to benefit personally and professionally). As David Sutherland observes of Halifax, by the mid-nineteenth century voluntary societies took on considerable power in setting the agenda for the employment of state power.[160] As Jeffrey McNairn observes of Upper Canada, "developments in associational and print life ensured that officials, legislators, and the most privileged no longer

---

[159] BIS minutes, April 16, 1848, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75. While the BIS minutes indicate that the group decided together not to walk to meet Mullock, John FitzGerald cites evidence showing that it was in fact Mullock who declined the BIS's proposal to walk, and that on the morning of his arrival, the prelate landed discretely at a wharf farther away from the crowds who had gathered to meet him. FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 436.

[160] Sutherland, "Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation," 255.

held a monopoly on the ability to reason in public. Those who gained entry into that life earned the capacity and the right to judge."[161] Such was also the case in St. John's, where associational life was a vehicle for the colonial middle class to define itself and its values, to draw circles around itself and make a mark on wider society. Voluntary and fraternal organizations, a burgeoning newspaper press, and the reform movement were all part of a nascent public sphere in St. John's that began to emerge with permanent settlement.

Still, as the examples of James MacBraire, William Cormack, and Benjamin Bowring showed, not all the individuals active in fraternal and charitable societies remained in the colony long-term. Whether they permanently settled in St. John's or not, the men who steered these organizations lived trans-Atlantic lives, with connections in Britain, the Canadas, and the United States. The material culture and regalia associated with the BIS, procured during members' overseas visits, and its correspondence with members who had once lived in St. John's but later moved elsewhere, shows the extent to which the emerging middle class in St. John's was rooted in a transatlantic world.

Given that fraternal and charitable organizations proliferated across the British world in the nineteenth century, it should come as no surprise that those in St. John's operated similarly to those in other parts of that world. Their paths to establishment, governance, activities, and material culture tell a story that has been reproduced in many different colonial and metropolitan locales. Their emphasis on respectability was their hallmark. For this emergent middle class, public-facing activities like charity work, parades, and newspaper announcements, and internally-facing activities such as parties were ways of asserting respectability, to others and among themselves. Fraternal and charitable organizations were collective expressions of

[161] McNairn, *The Capacity to Judge*, 17.

class identity. The topic of voluntary and benevolent societies is by no means unique to this setting but studying how these groups operated in specific local conditions can tell us a great deal about place-making and identity-formation. In St. John's, the religious and political climate reflected through personalities like Bishop Fleming and Dr. Keilley brought heightened drama to benevolent and charitable groups' social events. These factors created the conditions for the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick and the Benevolent Irish Society to hold their rival St. Patrick's Day parties in the spring of 1836.

Through examining the activities of the BIS and other fraternal and charitable groups in nineteenth-century St. John's, this chapter has demonstrated that the groups were important sites for the consolidation of class, ethnic, and religious identities. The next chapter focusses more intently on physical spaces in the city where these identities were shaped and performed. It examines the construction of the two significant buildings in the town: the Anglican and Catholic cathedrals, and events that occurred at these buildings (including parades that used the buildings as start and end points), to further chart the town's changing physical landscape, what its residents and visitors had to say about it, and how local attitudes and sociability were reflected in all of this. If voluntary and charitable organizations reflected the shift towards permanent settlement, so too did the construction of cathedrals, imposing statements of denominations planting themselves on colonial soil, representing each church's conviction that there would be future generations to minister to.

Chapter 3
Making Home from Above: A Tale of Two Bishops, Two Cathedrals, and a "Pretty Colonial Mess."[1]

In July 1844 Edward Feild, Oxford graduate, inspector of the Church of England's National School Society, previously the rector of English Bicknor, Gloucestershire, and the newly consecrated Bishop of Newfoundland arrived in St. John's for the first time. Writing in his diary that evening, Feild recorded his first impressions of the seat of his diocese. St. John's was "meaner in its streets and buildings than Halifax," which had been Feild's first stop in North America. As for the churches in his command, St. Thomas' (the garrison church) was a "picturesque little wooden church," the chapel at Quidi Vidi was "not sufficiently gothic," and the parish church in the city was "old, ugly, dusty, dirty, and dismal," and pervaded by a strong odour of fish. Construction on an Anglican cathedral had been stalled since a perfunctory cornerstone-laying ceremony the previous August, hastily arranged so that Feild's ailing predecessor could lay the stone before departing the colony for sunnier climes. As worrisome to Feild as the state of his own churches was the sight of the Roman Catholic cathedral, then under construction, in an area once known as "the barrens," former Crown land on the outskirts of town, the highest point in the city and towering over everything. The Catholic cathedral, wrote Feild, was "conspicuous and commanding… I could have wished it devoted to a purer and more primitive form of worship."[2] While money and materials to proceed with construction on the

---

[1] Bishop Edward Feild's diary, 22 August 1844, in Ronald Rompkey, ed., *The Diary of Bishop Edward Feild in 1844* (St. John's: ISER Books, 2010), 80. This chapter is indebted to the work of John FitzGerald and Calvin Hollett on religion, ethnicity, and authority in nineteenth-century Newfoundland. John E. FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture in Newfoundland Catholicism, 1829-1850" (PhD diss., University of Ottawa, 1997); Calvin Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1844-1876* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016).

[2] Feild 's diary, July 4, 1844. Quoted in Rompkey, 31-32.

Anglican cathedral were lacking, construction on the Catholic cathedral was progressing under the watchful eye of Bishop Michael Anthony Fleming.

Both Feild and Fleming were outspoken prelates who played an integral role in establishing a political climate and built landscape that endured in the town through the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth. They are the central characters in this chapter, which focusses on the construction of the town's Anglican and Catholic cathedrals, and the cornerstone-layings, consecrations and other events associated with them. The Anglican and Catholic cathedrals were both under construction from the late 1830s to the 1850s and while these two imposing stone edifices of different architectural styles (the neo-Gothic Anglican cathedral and the classical Roman Catholic Cathedral) took shape, they signalled a rivalry played out in the legislature, the newspapers, and in the streets. As the two previous chapters established, the mid-nineteenth century saw the town's built landscape shift dramatically as it changed from trading post to colonial capital. In constructing the kinds of buildings they felt their town should have, people were also constructing identities. The examples of Feild and Fleming and their cathedrals represent different angles on that process of making home: the extent to which making home and the various components of it were imposed from above, and the extent to which people accepted or rejected the prospect.

This chapter explores how people in nineteenth-century St. John's imagined, built, and understood two significant places in the city. Like the middle-class clubmen who came together on ethnic, benevolent, or other grounds in the previous chapter, and who wished to stake a visual claim on the landscape to complement their settlement and arrival, figures of authority such as Feild and Fleming also wished to leave a mark. Beyond the somewhat obvious categories of religious and ethnic identities, the openings of cathedrals, churches and civic buildings were nascent expressions of colonial identity, emerging in a transatlantic community where many

individuals maintained business and social links to Great Britain and Ireland. In one instance that demonstrates this transatlantic feeling of connection, on the day the cornerstone for the Catholic cathedral was laid in 1841, marchers carried a portrait of Irish Catholic emancipation campaigner Daniel O'Connell through the streets and to the building site. As William Westfall observed of Ontario, church-building provides historians with entry points for understanding how a culture organized its environment, "where it found and proclaimed the sacred in the world."[3] (Or in the case of the portrait of O'Connell at the parade, how a culture intertwined the sacred and the secular). Reading these buildings as expressions of identity also reveals stories of resistance; as bishops crafted narratives, congregations sometimes resisted them. The process of making home came from above and below. Although the source base for interpretations "from below" is relatively sparse, reading against the grain in sources like Feild's journal begins to reveal how residents received his intentions. Other sources such as newspapers, diaries, and letters provide glimpses, however fleeting, into how the people met with these attempts to reorganize the landscape.

Meanwhile, as permanent settlement grew, successive governors became increasingly devoted to cementing the Church of England as the ascendant church in the colony. Concerned about the "political militancy" of the Catholic Irish, who formed half the population of the island, and the majority in St. John's, governors attempted to shape Newfoundland into a "Protestant colony in the making," sponsoring and encouraging organizations and rituals that attempted to "inculcate imperial sentiment on the basis of a 'patriotic' and nativist outlook."[4] So although the

---

[3] William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 126.
[4] Phillip McCann, "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition: Newfoundland, 1832-1855." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, (April 1988): 87. It is difficult to get an accurate sense of demographics in the colony due to irregular record keeping, the migratory fishery, and the political agendas that directed gathering statistics. In 1895 D.W. Prowse offered numbers from an 1815 survey suggesting that 73% of St.

Anglican Bishop Feild enjoyed the support of political authorities, he still struggled to achieve "buy-in" on his massive cathedral project, from his congregants who were unaccustomed to his formal, high-church manner of worship. For many of them, Methodism's rejection of rituals and hierarchy was a welcome alternative. Bishop Fleming meanwhile, focussed his attentions on building an Irish-Catholic enclave, complete with cathedral, schools, and convents on the highest point of land overlooking the town. In the face of governors who actively tried to shape a Protestant colony, Fleming used sectarianism to consolidate feelings of ethnic and religious identity in his congregation, rallying them around him and his cathedral project.

How people approached, wrote about, and considered these two buildings speaks to how people thought about land and space in St. John's more generally. These building projects reveal power dynamics, a sense of place, and identity. By looking in depth at the construction process and significant "days in the life," first for the Roman Catholic and then for the Anglican Cathedral, this chapter explores what these places reveal about making home and efforts to shape the built environment to reflect transatlantic identities, Irish Catholicism, or high church Anglicanism. The chapter's approach of analyzing special occasions and events on the city's streets and at its churches does not reveal what these spaces were like every day. They are not

---

John's inhabitants were Catholic at that time. Gertrude Gunn offers data from the *Journal of the House of Assembly* suggesting that the population of St. John's was about 60% Catholic in 1836. Gunn also points to an 1845 pamphlet authored by N.H. Hoyles (politically motivated and arguing against responsible government for Newfoundland) suggesting that St. John's was 75% Catholic. The 1891 Newfoundland census, quoted in Prowse's *History of Newfoundland*, gave the following breakdown of religious demographics in St. Johns: 8550 Church of England, 20756 Catholic, 5135 Methodist, 1030 Presbyterian, and 556 other denominations. Gertrude Gunn, *The Political History of Newfoundland, 1832-1864* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), 206-208; 1891 census of Newfoundland, quoted in D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland*, 2nd ed. (Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, NL: Boulder Publications, 2007), 701. Also see Newfoundland's Grand Banks: Genealogical and Historical Data"1891 Newfoundland-Labrador Population Census" http://ngb.chebucto.org/C1891/1891-01-dist-idx.shtml (accessed 20 July 2018).

representations of quotidian life.[5] We can read these places and people's reactions to them to explore how church building inscribed collective identity through material culture.

Roman Catholic Cathedral (later Basilica) of Saint John the Baptist

It is not clear when the idea to construct an elaborate neo-classical Roman Catholic cathedral in St. John's first took hold, but between 1833 and 1846, Bishop Fleming made at least 10 transatlantic voyages to fundraise for the construction of the cathedral, secure title to land, and procure building materials and commission artwork.[6] Fleming referred to the period 1833-1838 when he was attempting to procure land as "nearly five years of vexation and annoyance without pause or intermission" during which "calumny, insult, and opprobrium, were heaped upon me to impede the accomplishment of my wishes."[7] Fleming's attempts to obtain land were complicated by a mutual distrust between him and Governor Thomas John Cochrane, a distrust that saw both men actively trying to have the other removed from the colony. At Cochrane's request, the Colonial Office lodged a complaint with the Vatican about Fleming's involvement in both the legislature and the judiciary in Newfoundland, while Fleming, a vocal critic of Cochrane, went over the governor's head to petition the Queen for a grant of crown land for the cathedral.[8] In 1838, Fleming gained rights to an eight-acre parcel of crown land on the north side of town near Fort Townshend.

---

[5] This is a different approach than that of Julia Roberts in her monograph *In Mixed Company*, which examines "everyday life" at the tavern, hotel, and pub with a view to how Upper Canada's "mixed peoples" used the spaces to define patterns of association. Julia Roberts, *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 5.

[6] Raymond J. Lahey, "FLEMING, MICHAEL ANTHONY," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 2 October 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/fleming_michael_anthony_7E.html.

[7] Bishop Michael Anthony Fleming, *Letters on the state of religion in Newfoundland. Addressed to the very Rev. Dr. A. O'Connell, P.P., by the Right Rev. Dr. Fleming* (Dublin: James Duffy, 1844), 12, http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/ref/collection/cns/id/22544, accessed 2 October 2017.

[8] John E. FitzGerald offers a detailed account of the animosity between the two, Cochrane's attempts to have Fleming censured, and the process by which Fleming procured the land. John E. FitzGerald, "Roads to Rome, 1834-1835," in "Conflict and Culture," 152-209.

In the twenty years that followed the 1838 land grant, Fleming and his successor John Thomas Mullock oversaw a variety of building projects on this parcel of land, a prime location overlooking the harbour and visible from most corners of the town.[9] Apart from the cathedral, they directed the building of the Mercy Convent (1842), Mercy School (1843), and Presentation Convent (1850). After Fleming's death, Mullock oversaw construction of an episcopal residence and library (1856), St. Bonaventure's College (1856), and then rebuilt the Mercy Convent and chapel after the original buildings were destroyed in a fire (1856). Both Fleming and Mullock consciously crafted a district that emphasized Irishness and Catholicism, with the cathedral (at the time of its construction, the largest in North America) as its focal point.[10] The cathedral

---

[9]Myths about the construction process endure in St. John's to this day. As "useful myths" these stories obscure the degree of infighting and strife that existed within St. John's Catholic community in the 1830s. (Chapter Two detailed some of this infighting, with the spat between the Benevolent Irish Society and the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick, and the so-called "mad dog Catholics" and "priest's party.") One of the more popular versions of the story has a colonial administrator telling Fleming that he was welcome to as much land as he could fence in in an hour. According to legend, the dubious official underestimated the resolve of the Bishop and his congregation, who fenced the land in record time thereby guaranteeing themselves more land than administrators perceived they would take. (The land *was* fenced quickly, but the boundaries themselves were already established. Fleming confirms this in his *Letters on the state of religion in Newfoundland*, 13.) Fleming himself was not present in St. John's for the fencing. Another legend has Fleming personally approaching Queen Victoria as her carriage journeyed through Hyde Park. Chuffed by his persistence, she personally granted him his land. There is no archival or legal basis for these stories but their endurance as oral legends reveal the significance of the cathedral and its grounds in the collective consciousness of the town's Catholic population. Furthermore, these oral legends all present the acquisition of the land as a process that occurred relatively quickly, when in fact negotiation was a drawn-out process that spanned the administrations of two colonial governors (one of whom was, Cochrane, particularly averse to the grant) and required numerous transatlantic trips on Fleming's behalf. John FitzGerald argues that these myths celebrate the political and social ascendency of St. John's Catholics. By invoking the Queen, the myths place the Catholic Church as just as deserving of the sovereign's attention as the Anglican church, and delegitimize the colonial government by going over their heads. FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 280.

[10] FitzGerald, "Building the Cathedral, 1838-1846," in "Conflict and Culture," 308-336 for more on this. This district, along with nearby cultural landscapes associated with Presbyterian, Methodist, and Anglican denominations was made a National Historic Site of Canada in 2008. The plaque points out that the Catholic precinct has "the most complete range of surviving ecclesiastical structures and spaces in the district, including convents, schools, a library, and the former bishop's palace all grouped around the basilica, imparting a particularly strong sense of historical time and place." Parks Canada, "St. John's Ecclesiastical District National Historic Site of Canada," https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=11843 (accessed 6 July 2018).

complex provided what John FitzGerald calls “a cradle-to-grave Irish Catholic environment” that stood as a statement of the power, place, and legitimacy of ascendant Catholicism and Irish culture in Newfoundland colonial society.[11]

Addresses the Benevolent Irish Society delivered to Bishop Fleming revealed the mental geographies with which its members approached the town and perceived its changing nature. As early as 1836, before the cathedral land had even been secured, the BIS complimented Fleming for his role in erecting “elegant and tasteful structures” that “improved and beautified” the town, and which “stand as monuments of his worship’s zeal for the promotion of the worship of God, and his desire to improve the country.”[12] Fleming’s reply showed that he was planning a Catholic precinct in the heart of the city even at this early point: “I hope to live to accomplish the erection of a suite of edifices that will prove a real embellishment to our Capital.” Fleming also gave credit to the people whose donations and labour supported his building projects: “it is to them and not to me Newfoundland has to be grateful for the improvement of the face of the country by the erection of churches and of the moral condition of the people.”[13] The correspondence between Fleming and the BIS shows their active efforts to organize a landscape of Catholicism and Irishness. Fleming harnessed popular support for his building projects, and in executing these projects, he consciously molded the city’s face as one that was Catholic and Irish. An 1841 BIS address referred to the cathedral, then under construction, as “a memorial of the patriotism of a Catholic Priest, who, in his zeal to advance

---

[11] FitzGerald, “Conflict and Culture,” 313.

[12] BIS minutes, 3 July 1836, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), MG 612, Reel 75. It is unclear exactly which buildings are referred to here. Most of St. John’s Catholic churches, orphanages, convents, and schools were not established until the 1840s and 50s. At this date, the town’s Catholic infrastructure consisted of a small chapel, episcopal residence, and the Presentation school and convent established in 1833 in a building Carolyn Lambert calls “ramshackle” and which was later replaced. Carolyn Lambert, “Far From the Homes of Their Fathers: Irish-Catholics in St. John’s, Newfoundland, 1840-1886,” (PhD diss., Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2010), 80.

[13] BIS minutes 3 July 1836, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

the interests of his religion, had not forgotten the physical improvement of his country." The "physical improvement" of the country, a central element of making home, was on people's minds in St. John's in the mid-nineteenth century, a time during which the middle and upper-class residents of St. John's attempted to build the public spaces they felt befitted a colonial capital. Fleming was determined that this capital would be an Irish, Catholic space in a Protestant, English colony.

In May 1841, a lengthy procession wound through the town for the cornerstone laying of the Roman Catholic cathedral. Those who wished to join in met at the site of the Catholic chapel at noon on Thursday, May 8, and marched "by Queen-Street, down the lower street [presumably Water Street], up the Beach, and by Cochrane Street towards the Cathedral ground."[14] This route of approximately 2.5 kilometres covered a significant portion of the town, taking the marchers through almost the entire length of the commercial district along Water Street, and past Government House on the way to the cathedral's site. Much as Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day parades in Quebec intertwined religion and ethnicity, this procession did the same for St. John's Irish Catholics.[15] Rosalyn Trigger, writing about Montreal and Toronto, observes that religious processions can have powerful political dimensions, and were caught up in local and national politics - the politics of governance in Ireland, the British imperial project, and the politics of the Catholic church.[16] The cornerstone procession in St. John's, with its inclusion of O'Connell's and Queen Victoria's likenesses, tradespeople, the military band, and its movement

---

[14] *Public Ledger*, 21 May 1841.

[15] Craig Heron and Steve Penfold, "The Craftsmen's Spectacle: Labour Day Parades in Canada, the Early Years," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 29, no. 58 (1996): 363.

[16] Rosalyn Trigger, "Irish Politics on Parade: The Clergy, National Societies, and St. Patrick's Day Processions in Nineteenth-Century Montreal and Toronto," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 37, no. 74 (November 2004): 199.

through key neighbourhoods illustrates these overlapping political concerns.[17] Parades also conveyed "powerful symbolic, non-literate messages about appropriate social and political values and acceptable social relationships."[18] An analysis of this procession reveals what the Catholic authorities in St. John's wished to convey, as well as how commentators (both Protestant and Catholic) perceived it.

The procession consisted of visual and aural components. Carpenters and masons carried their tools and implements, along with the cathedral's plans and a small model of the building. Farmers, fishermen, and tradesmen were present. The Benevolent Irish Society and Mechanics Society were there, wearing sashes and marching behind their own banners. Marchers carried several portraits along the parade route, including a portrait of Pope Gregory XIV (painted on a banner and carried by a person dressed in scarlet), a painting of Christ carried by a person wearing white, a painting of St. John the Baptist carried by two persons wearing white sashes, a banner embroidered with the likeness of St. Patrick carried in front of the BIS, a figure of Daniel O'Connell carried by one of a group of farmers, a banner with a painting of Queen Victoria, and a painting of the Virgin Mary carried by women of the Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the only women taking part in the procession.[19] (Adhering to the doctrine of gendered separate spheres, the women of this female benevolent society justified their public work because they were "distinguished for living virtuous and religious lives, whose example…

[17] This parade was peaceful, but Willeen Keough points to an Orange parade in Harbour Grace that turned violent as an example of ethnic violence that between socio-economic peers, rather than the sectarianism served up by politicians and clergy during election campaigns. See Willeen G. Keough, "Contested Terrains: Ethnic and Gendered Space in the Harbour Grace Affray," *The Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (March 2009): 30-31.
[18] Heron and Penfold, "The Craftsmen's Spectacle," 364.
[19] For more on the Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary (also referred to as the Marian Society) see Sister Mary Patricia Hogan, *The Role of Mary in the History of the Church in Newfoundland* (MA thesis, University of Ottawa, 1957), 34-37,. https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/22168/1/EC55932.PDF (accessed 2 October 2017).

will prove a source of public edification."[20]) Two bands accompanied the procession, interspersed at enough of a distance that one would not overwhelm the other. Table 1 presents the order of the procession, quoted in full from the *Public Ledger*.

Table 1: Order of the Procession at Cornerstone Laying Ceremony, Roman Catholic Cathedral, 8 May 1841.

Order of the Procession
Cross bearer, in purple tunic, and on each side of the cross two acolytes in white, carrying waxen torches
The Band, three and three (n.b.: the Military Band)
A Banner, with a painting of the present Pontiff Gregory XIV, borne by a person dressed in scarlet
A Carpenter carrying the plans, supported on the right and left by two Masons, one bearing on a cushion a square and mallet, and the other on a similar cushion a square and trowel
A Mason carrying on a cushion plans of the altars
The model of the Cathedral supported by four persons with sashes
Masons two and two, with aprons
Tradesmen in general, two and two
A painting of the Redeemer, carried by a person in white
Female Children three and three
Christian Doctrine Society, two and two
Boys three and three
A Painting of St. John, supported by two persons wearing white sashes on each shoulder
Fishermen three and three
Mechanics' Society, with their own banners
Benevolent Irish Society, with their own banners, and preceded by two persons carrying the embroidered figure of St. Patrick
Farmers three and three, preceded by one bearing a figure of Daniel O'Connell
Gentlemen three and three
A BAND
A Banner, with a figure of the Queen (n.b.: the Queen's Band)
Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary, three and three, preceded by two persons bearing a painting of the Blessed Virgin
A Priest, carrying in his hands a copper box, containing the parchment with the Inscriptions, coins, latest periodical, &c, and supported on the right and left by two clergymen, one bearing in his hands a vase filled with Holy Water, and the other an aspergil
Priests two and two
Lastly the Bishop supported by two Priests

Source: *Public Ledger*, 21 May 1841

[20] *Rules for the Government of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, quoted in ibid., 34-35.

If Bishop Fleming wished to create an identity for his congregation that conflated Irishness and Catholicism, as the presence of Daniel O'Connell's picture in the procession suggests, certain editors were not having it. *Public Ledger* editor Henry Winton accused him of "knowingly promoting strife in a mixed community," a statement not without irony as the boisterous Winton had promoted his own share of strife over the years.[21] Winton was most upset over the inclusion of religious icons in the parade, arguing "Dr. Fleming cannot be ignorant that the Protestants as well as those of all other communities have a strong aversion to those pictorial representations," and that juxtaposing the religious figures with secular and political figures was particularly insulting. "Is it fitting that the representation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and the representation of Daniel O'Connell should be associated in one and the same procession, and paraded through our streets, and exhibited to the common gaze as of equal value in the estimation of the vulgar!" Winton exclaimed.[22] An anonymous letter-writer lamented that it was improper to juxtapose images of the Queen and Daniel O'Connell with sacred images such as Christ and the Virgin Mary.[23]

Indeed, critics responded to the contested space the parade laid claim to, focussing on a supposed lack of respectability associated with the procession. Mercantile clerk James Rogerson, writing to his cousin Samuel in Scotland, agreed with Winton's description: "A great procession at the laying of the Cathedral (Catholic one). I shall send you a Ledger which will explain all (truly disgraceful)."[24] Former governor Henry Prescott, writing under a pseudonym,

---

[21] *Public Ledger* (St. John's), 21 May 1841. Winton and Fleming had engaged in a back-and-forth for years, with Winton denouncing Fleming in his newspaper while Fleming denounced Winton from the pulpit. Events culminated in a violent attack by anonymous masked men on Winton in 1835. Patrick O'Flaherty, "WINTON, HENRY DAVID," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/winton_henry_david_8E.html, accessed 4 October 2017.
[22] *Public Ledger,* 21 May 1841.
[23] *Public Ledger,* 8 May 1841.
[24] James Rogerson to Samuel Rogerson, 25 May 1841, National Records of Scotland (NRS), Rogerson Family in Russia, Newfoundland, and Scotland, GD1/620/78.

took umbrage at the ceremony: “Educated Catholics” would, he wrote, “learn with as much surprise as Protestants, that such an exhibition should have been made in this enlightened age; and they will judge whether the man who could project and enforce such a procession at such a period, and in a community so constituted as ours, is calculated for the important post of Vicar Apostolic.”[25]

Henry Winton even claimed to take issue with the event’s musical selections but was probably more upset at the inclusion of the military band, whose presence lent an air of official imperial sanction to the event. “The military band… struck up the merry air of the Garryone [sic: Garryowen]; the Queen’s Band… enjoyed the farce more heartily and played up the still more merry air of “Go to the d---l and shake yersilf, and when ye come back behave yersilf.”[26] The heated public conversation surrounding the parade revealed that all parties understood the performative importance of processions.

The parade was indeed a performance. It was a means of staking claim to territory within the city, and its participants, by their music and items they carried, displayed markers not only of Catholic identity (the model of the cathedral, the religious icons) but of Irish identity (Daniel O’Connell’s portrait, the BIS), Newfoundland identity (local newspapers in the copper box that was buried at the cornerstone), and imperial identity (the garrison band, Queen

---

[25] *A Sketch of the State of Affairs in Newfoundland by a Late Resident in that Colony* (London: Saunders and Otley: 1841), 63. Gunn cites a letter in the Colonial Office fonds in which Prescott “apparently” acknowledges authorship of the pamphlet. John FitzGerald also ascribes authorship of the pamphlet to Prescott, citing a different letter in the Colonial Office. Gunn, *Political History of Newfoundland*, 225 (footnote 50 of chapter 5); FitzGerald, “Conflict and Culture…” 171, note 75.

[26] Although it originated as a drinking song in Limerick, by the mid-nineteenth century Garryowen was well established as a military marching song. The air “Go to the Devil and Shake Yourself” dates to at least the eighteenth-century and musicologists have identified several different sets of lyrics accompanying the tune, several more crowd-friendly than the impious title Winton associated the air with. Wikipedia, “Garryowen (air)” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garryowen_(air) (accessed 12 November 2017); The Traditional Tune Archive, “Go to the Devil and Shake Yourself,” *http://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Go_to_the_Devil_and_Shake_Yourself_(1)* (accessed 12 November 2017).

Victoria's portrait). By tracing a long path through the business and residential heart of the town past Government House and Fort Townshend, the processioners asserted that they as much as anyone else should be considered a part of the town's fabric. The ceremony was both an ethnic and a religious performance, and observers like Winton interpreted it as an extension of Fleming's pattern of entrenching himself in colonial politics. (Indeed Fleming was an outspoken commentator on political affairs in the colony, and frequently clashed with governors, judges, and other establishment figures, who interpreted his efforts as attempts to achieve Roman Catholic political ascendancy).[27] But for the congregation, the procession was an important demonstration of their faith, ethnicity, and importance within colonial affairs. The procession illustrates Peter Goheen's explanation of processions as negotiations to "define the values that characterized public space in the city."[28]

The secondary literature on St. Patrick's Day parades in nineteenth-century Canada is useful in interpreting the cornerstone-laying parade. Michael Cottrell writes that for Toronto's Irish Catholics, the ritualistic nature of parades, masses, and speeches "played a vital role in rekindling tribal memories and inculcating the collective consciousness necessary for reforging a group identity in a new environment."[29] St. Patrick's Day parades communicated Irish Catholic identity to participants and to the host society alike, yet as Bonnie Huskins notes, while parade organizers often intended to articulate participants' respectability, spectators did not always

---

[27] Lahey, "FLEMING, MICHAEL ANTHONY." For Fleming's disputes with Governor Cochrane see John Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 90-94. For Fleming's disputes with Chief Justice Henry John Boulton see Sean Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 113-115. Boulton's wife Eliza, a Catholic, was often the subject of thinly veiled denunciations from the pulpit.

[28] Peter G. Goheen, "Negotiating Access to Public Space in Mid-Nineteenth Century Toronto." *Journal of Historical Geography* 20, no. 4 (1994): 446.

[29] Michael Cottrell, "St. Patrick's Day Parades in Nineteenth-Century Toronto: A Study of Immigrant Adjustment and Elite Control," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 49 (May 1992): 59.

arrive at the intended interpretation.[30] If Fleming intended the cornerstone procession as a show of Irish-Catholic respectability and presence, his critics interpreted it as a shot across the bow.

As construction of the cathedral continued throughout the 1840s, Fleming made several more trips overseas. The wharfside ceremonies and addresses as he left and returned also continued, frequently mentioned in the minutes of the BIS, whose records reveal their enthusiasm for the building project. The primary sources depicting these events speak to concerns and priorities unique to the town's residents and geography. For instance, recording the wharf from which a visitor departed or arrived indicates that it was a mark of honour to be the merchant at whose wharf the bishop docked. Bishop Fleming is recorded as leaving St. John's from John Kent's mercantile premises several times. The records also note the time of year at which someone arrived or left and what conditions might prevail on their crossing. In one address, the BIS drew specific attention to the difficult time of year (December) at which the bishop had chosen to leave the city and "hazard upon the ocean, a life so valuable to your people."[31] Fleming's reply, in which he lamented having to leave in the winter, illustrates how the pattern of work on the cathedral ebbed and flowed with the seasons, the demands posed on potential labourers by the fishery, and the harbour's accessibility. "I have no choice of season left me, it is only at this moment I can go," he wrote, adding that "if I allow this opportunity to pass, I lose another year, and so valuable is time to me at present, that if our Merciful God spare me life, I must be here again before the [sealing] vessels return from the ice."[32] Waiting until the summer to go to Europe would mean delaying the arrival of materials during prime construction

---

[30] Bonnie Huskins, "Public Celebrations in Victorian Saint John and Halifax" (PhD diss., Dalhousie University, 1991), 217.
[31] Address from BIS to Bishop Fleming, 1 December 1841, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.
[32] Fleming to BIS, 20 November 1841, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

months, and that Fleming would not be there to oversee construction. Returning to Newfoundland before the sealing vessels returned from the ice in the spring ensured that no construction time would be lost on the cathedral.

On January 6, 1850, an ailing Fleming celebrated the first Mass in the unfinished structure. The BIS were there, wearing green scarves and badges.[33] Fleming did not live to see the cathedral completed, and died aged 58 in July of that year. The BIS "occupied the place of precedence" at his funeral.[34] Why was the cathedral so important to him individually? The BIS *Centenary Volume* quotes Fleming as saying the cathedral would stand as "a pledge of the permanency of our holy religion."[35] According to John FitzGerald, the cathedral served to "legitimize Irish culture in Newfoundland, and to answer the charges and opposition of [Fleming's] British and colonial opponents. The cathedral became a rallying point for Irish Catholics in Newfoundland."[36] It was an exercise in making home. During the 1830s, 40s, and 50s as successive colonial governors attempted to inscribe Newfoundland as a Protestant colony, the cathedral stood as a bulwark against those efforts. In its materials, style, and location within the city, the cathedral spoke to Fleming's vision of an Irish Catholic Newfoundland, a vision that his congregation eagerly rallied around.

---

[33] *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's, Newfoundland 1806-1906* (Cork: Guy and Company, [1906?]), 96.
[34] *Centenary Volume*, 98. Note that this was only four months after Fleming resigned as BIS patron following his disapproval of a lecture at the BIS hall (see Chapter Two for more on this incident).
[35] *Centenary Volume*, 71.
[36] FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 308.

Figure 4. Roman Catholic Cathedral, St. John's, 1871.
Canadian Illustrated News, 1 April 1871. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons:
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roman_Catholic_Cathedral_St._John%27s.jpg?uselang=en

The cathedral (figure 4) was a focal point for the town. Situated on the highest point of the hills overlooking the harbour, it was visible from all over the community. Built of grey limestone and white granite quarried in Ireland, and grey sandstone from Kelly's Island, Conception Bay, it dwarfed surrounding buildings and at the time of its construction was the largest church in North America.[37] Architectural historian Peter Coffman observes that while the church's exterior is "relatively austere decoratively" (likely due to its Newfoundland's weather extremes), it is nonetheless "immensely impressive."[38] Its Romanesque revival style combined Italianate and neo-classical elements. The "foot" of its cross faced towards the narrows, and two 140-foot towers flanked the façade. Its neoclassical elements included Corinthian pillars framing the three façade windows, an oculus in the façade's gable end, and pedimented and hooded

---

[37] Parks Canada, "Basilica of St. John the Baptist National Historic Site of Canada," https://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/dfhd/page_nhs_eng.aspx?id=246), accessed 5 July 2018.
[38] Peter Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic* (Quebec City: Éditions Multimonde, 2008), 36.

arches over niches in the exterior transept walls at the clerestory level. Italianate features include string courses across the façade and around the towers, heavy cornices, rusticated quoins, and arcaded belfry openings in the towers.[39] On the interior, an elaborate cornice supported by a variation on the Corinthian order evokes classical architecture.[40] John FitzGerald suggests that the combination of Italianate and neoclassical styles hearkened to Rome and represented the church's increasing distance from British control.[41] On prime real estate (portrayed in figure 5) Fleming was carving out an enclave that was visually distinct from the Protestant establishment.

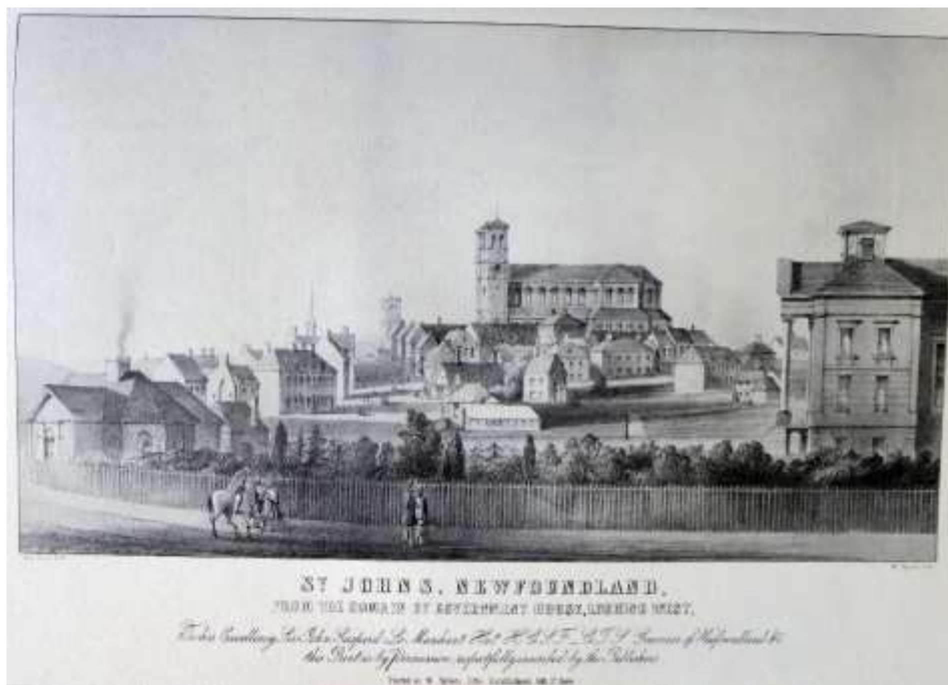

Figure 5. W.R. Best, St. John's, Newfoundland from the domain of Government House, looking west, 1851. The Catholic cathedral occupied the highest point of land within the town. The cupola on the Orphan Asylum School is visible directly opposite the cathedral. Drawn by W.R. Best, on Stone by W. Spreat, lithographed by W. Spreat's Litho Establishment, Exeter, England, 1851. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St._John%27s_from_Government_House.jpg?uselang=en

[39] FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 312.
[40] Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 36. Coffman describes the cathedral as neo-classical in style.
[41] FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 313, 335.

The cathedral was finally consecrated in 1855. Anticipation for the consecration built in the town for some time. As work continued, details such as bells, galleries, and statuary were put into place. A devoted churchgoer, Edward Morris paints a picture in his diary of the cathedral nearing completion. Morris's remarks show how he, as a congregant, interpreted the building and the art it contained. "The cathedral begins now to present a magnificent appearance," he wrote in May 1854.[42] In July he provided a lengthy description of the consecration of the bells, a ceremony that was an assertion of Irish Catholic identity. The smaller of the two bells was dedicated to St. Patrick, a fitting choice, as Morris put it, since Patrick was "patron saint of Ireland and of Newfoundland as the latter country has been settled by Irish Catholics and the Church of Ireland has always supplied this with ministers of the religion which the Glorious Patrick planted."[43] The bells, Morris wrote, paraphrasing Bishop Mullock, "were the tongues of the church, calling from the clouds to the people to assemble." For Morris, as for others assembled at the cathedral that day, the "tongues of the church", dedicated to St. Patrick and consecrated in a ceremony making heavy references to Irish Catholic settlement of Newfoundland and its tradition of an Irish-born priesthood, would tell a story that reached back into the colony's past and presented its Irish-Catholic population as long-standing, respectable, and powerful.[44] This was a home firmly rooted in St. John's but also tied implicitly to Ireland through faith.

[42] Edward Morris Diary, 22 May 1854, Maritime History Archive (MHA), Memorial University of Newfoundland, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[43] Edward Morris diary, 23 July 1854, MHA, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[44] Ibid., Morris attended the last mass of the day that day, while "Mrs. M went to 8 o'clock mass at the Cathedral, giving as a reason for going early that she had no decent dress to appear in at a more fashionable hour."

Among the artwork inside the cathedral were three pieces Fleming had commissioned from the Irish sculptor John Hogan.[45] When the monument to Bishop Scallan, Fleming's predecessor, was installed in 1854, Morris remarked, "it did not satisfy the expectations which I was induced to entertain… I cannot believe that it deserves to be ranked amongst the choicest of Hogan's sculptures." Morris described the sculpture, which depicted Scallan on his deathbed and Fleming delivering the last rites, as portraying Scallan with "energy incompatible with the close approach of death." Morris also criticized the portrayal of Fleming, which although an accurate "likeness of the Bishop as a young man," was imbued with an attitude of "admonition, rather than of solicitude and anxiety, which imparts a stiffness to the picture."[46] Morris returned to the cathedral two weeks later and upon viewing the monument again, he "felt much better pleased with it."[47] Perhaps he regretted his earlier criticism, or legitimately changed his mind, but his initial reaction to the monument is a glimpse into how a contemporary observer interpreted the work. Morris was unequivocally pleased with another Hogan sculpture installed in the cathedral, the *Dead Christ* which was installed under the altar. "A magnificent piece of art, ordered by Dr. Fleming some time before his death," Morris reported.[48] In the case of both this sculpture and Scallan's monument, Morris was sure to record the cost of the sculpture: 600

---

[45] For more on John Hogan, see Paula Murphy, *Nineteenth-Century Irish Sculpture: Native Genius Reaffirmed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 61-69.

[46] Edward Morris diary, 22 May 1854, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3). There may be more to that portrayal than Morris realized. John FitzGerald interprets the Scallan monument as an attempt to put to rest rumours circulated by Fleming's enemies that Scallan had died apostate and that Fleming's episcopacy was therefore illegitimate. In FitzGerald's interpretation, the sculpture presents a seamless transition of power from Scallan to Fleming by including symbols such as the Bishop's mitre lying in the corner of the room. Scallan was decidedly more ecumenical than his successor, so it is not surprising that Edward Morris interpreted an element of conflict between the two men when he looked at the sculpture. FitzGerald, "Conflict and Culture," 451 (interpretation of the memorial), 97-98 (rumours that Scallan was censured for his ecumenis). Also on those rumours, see Raymond J. Lahey, "SCALLAN, THOMAS," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed 4 December 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scallan_thomas_6E.html.

[47] Edward Morris diary, 9 June 1854, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

[48] Edward Morris diary, 9 March 1855, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

pounds sterling, plus the cost of shipping for the *Dead Christ*, and 280 pounds sterling plus shipping for Scallan's monument.[49]

On another occasion that summer, after Bishop Mullock took time in his sermon to thank the congregation for their contributions towards the cathedral and offered details on plans for the consecration, Morris wrote that

> Priests and Bishops from other countries would be present to render the ceremony of consecration as solemn and grand as possible. The people had done so much, the Church would make the utmost exertion to make the occasion such as never before occurred in North America.[50]

For a devoted churchgoer and Irish immigrant like Edward Morris, for whom religion and Irishness were central parts of his identity and worldview, the construction of the church and its consecration were once-in-a-lifetime events. Reflecting the desire to showcase his community, Morris was particularly pleased with the prospect of priests and visitors coming from elsewhere. The consecration was a performance to both the city and the wider English-speaking world.

The cathedral was finally consecrated in September 1855, touching off several weeks of festivities and events for the Catholic population of St. John's and environs. The month began on the evening of September 3, when a suite of visiting dignitaries - the Archbishop of New York, the Bishop of Toronto, the Bishop of Arichat, and the Bishop of New Brunswick - arrived in town,

---

[49] Morris's own family also made its mark on the church: in 1914 his wife Catherine Howley Morris donated a classically-styled marble altar rail with bronze gates. By this time Catherine's brother Michael Howley was bishop of Newfoundland, the first Newfoundland-born Bishop of the diocese. The gates themselves which bear an inscription about Howley and Morris were later removed but are on display in the Basilica Museum. See John E. FitzGerald, "The Year of Joy and Centenary Renovations to the Cathedral, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1953-55," Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies* 64 (2002), accessed 13 November 2017, http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_pauls/ccha/Back%20Issues/CCHA2002/FitzGerald.htm#_ftnref22. See also Basilica Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, "Basilica Tour," accessed 13 November 2017, https://thebasilica.ca/basilica-tourn. Oddly, Morris's diary does not mention the third Hogan sculpture (a monument to Fleming, commissioned by Mullock and erected in 1855).

[50] Edward Morris diary, 20 August 1854, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

greeted at the wharf by the Benevolent Irish Society, Mechanics Society, and Coopers Society. Cathedral and convent bells rang in the background as the ship approached the harbour. Vessels in the harbour displayed flags, as did mercantile establishments, and some individuals took it upon themselves to build arches on their streets.[51] The band of the Royal Newfoundland Companies followed the guests as they entered carriages that took them through the town, and the societies, in order of seniority, followed along too. The procession moved through commercial and governmental spaces: along Water Street and up Cochrane Street, past Government House, and then along Military Road, past the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy and through a triumphal arch at the entrance to the Cathedral grounds. The arch was illuminated with lanterns and featured the flags of England, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, and the United States. These flags covered several bases: Catholic Europe, Newfoundland's major trading partners, an air of imperial sanction and a statement of loyalty to Britain.[52]

The days leading up to the consecration saw a host of social activities and events, and newspaper coverage reveals the importance of these events to the town's Irish-Catholic population. Themes of respectability permeated the activities: on the Wednesday before the consecration the BIS met at their hall and walked to the Presentation Convent School to present an address to the prelates. On the same day, Judge Emerson hosted 150 guests for a "Fête Champêtre" with dinner and dancing in a large tent on the lawn of his home near Virginia Lake.[53] Many Catholics from outlying communities who could afford to make the journey in to St. John's came to town. "On the day or two before Sunday, our thoroughfares were literally thronged by, one would almost suppose, the entire Catholic population of the island,"

---

[51] *Newfoundlander* (St. John's), 17 September 1855.
[52] *Newfoundlander*, 6 September 1855, quoting from *Morning Courier* (St. John's).
[53] *Newfoundlander*, 6 September 1855, quoting from *Morning Courier.*

proclaimed the *Newfoundlander*.[54] The consecration showed off the city not only to international guests but to Catholics from within Newfoundland who had the means to travel to the capital city for the event.

Archbishop Hughes' of New York's sermon on the morning of the consecration fit with the town-to-city rhetoric that the town's boosters so readily embraced: the cathedral, he explained, was a work of faith "in the centre of a community principally made up of poor but laborious fishermen, and in a city, as it may now be called, which was known but yesterday or the day before, merely as a fishing station. This is a cathedral of which any city in Europe may be proud."[55] Here was a pronouncement that chuffed town boosters. Indeed, the consecration occurred at a time when those in public life in the colony were increasingly concerned with international perceptions and increasing trade, so this group probably found Hughes' comments particularly pleasing.

Notably, the cathedral's consecration and related festivities occurred at the same time as another influential group of visitors were making their way through and around St. John's; several investors and scientists from the New York, Newfoundland, and London Telegraph Company were on the island evaluating potential sites for a transatlantic cable station.[56] James K. Hiller has pointed out that from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, many Newfoundland politicians held an unwavering faith that further exploitation of natural resources beyond the fishery would shift the colony's financial fortunes for the better.[57] Indeed, editor Edward Shea of

---

[54] *Newfoundlander*, 10 September 1855.
[55] Quoted in *Newfoundlander*, 19 September 1855.
[56] A public ball at the Colonial building was held in honour of these guests. Michael P. Murphy, *The Story of the Colonial Building: Seat of Parliament from 1850 to 1960, now the home of the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Archives* (St. John's: Ministry of Provincial Affairs, 1972), 31.
[57] James K. Hiller, "Robert Bond and the Pink, White and Green: Newfoundland Nationalism in Perspective," *Acadiensis* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 113-133.

the *Newfoundlander* commented that visits such as that of the prelates and that of the businessmen "are eminently beneficial to the interests of Newfoundland," and went on to invoke the colony's founding myth, defined by Hiller as the belief that blame for Newfoundland's shortcomings could be shifted to outside forces, namely a supposed ban on settlement enforced by imperial authorities: "it is not to be disputed," claimed Shea, "that, almost from time immemorial, this place and its people have been the victims of interested misrepresentation. A fishing station it was originally, and a mere fishing station it would be to this day, could the policy and mis-statements of the lords of the soil have fully succeeded."[58] Shea's statement echoes the rhetoric of Newfoundland's agitators for responsible government, who thirty years earlier had used the same logic to create an imagined community.[59] Keith Matthews saw in the reformers' logic "a conception of the outside world as hostile towards, and retarding, the rightful and natural development of the island, and a large measure of millenarianism in the expectations and views of the people."[60] In their petitions and pamphlets, reformers portrayed Newfoundland as full of resource potential waiting to be exploited (a theme that also appears in Chapter Two, in the actions of some charitable and fraternal organizations, and will appear in Chapter Four during the 1860 visit of the Prince of Wales). For reformers, the possibility of resource potential was a justification for local government.

Embodying the general sense of optimism that pervaded among St. John's men of his class in the 1850s, Shea's editorial presented a sense that things were about to get much better

---

[58] *Newfoundlander*, 26 September 1855.
[59] The reformers' pamphlets and the proliferation of newspapers in St. John's in the first half of the nineteenth century fulfill Benedict Anderson's theory on how these print sources unite individuals within a defined geographic area, thereby creating socially constructed communities, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, revised edition, 2006), 6-7.
[60] Keith Matthews, "The Class of '32: St. John's Reformers on the Eve of Representative Government," *Acadiensis* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 93.

in the colony. “Some of the wealthiest capitalists and enlightened intellects of America…came to make St. John’s the electric link of intercourse between the old and new worlds,” he explained. The prelates’ visit came quick on the heels of the telegraph men, and “though contemplating an object beyond this world’s concerns,” the visitors’ “fame and influential position…[could] be productive of much general benefit. When not engaged in their sacred duties, they were constantly seeking and obtaining information on the country, its resources, population, and c…”[61] Shea’s rhetoric provides insight into how the town’s middle class used the events to construct a civic and colonial identity underscored by a vision of promise in the future and emerging prosperity. In St. John’s, middle-class Catholics imagined a town connected to Europe and the United States (hence why the presence of the Archbishop of New York was so important), a centre of trade and the site of a new technology in the form of the transatlantic telegraph.

Edward Morris captured this sentiment well at a dinner the BIS hosted on the occasion of the cathedral’s consecration. In his toast to “the land we live in,” Morris put forth that Newfoundland had seen “rise and progress,” commercial improvement, the advance of religion and religious institutions, schools, and great resources, despite an “old policy which made it unknown and discarded,” another reference to the invented tradition that early settlement in Newfoundland had been illegal. Now the tide had changed, and the colony’s geographically advantageous location nearly half way between Britain and America would lead to prosperity, Morris lectured. St. John’s would “ere long be a port of call for Atlantic steamers, and an electric telegraph shall unite us, in a social and commercial bond to the great Republic of the West.”[62] For Morris and his compatriots, Newfoundland’s past failures to keep up with political and

---

[61] *Newfoundlander*, 27 September 1855.
[62] BIS minutes, September 1855, PANL, MG 612, Reel 75.

economic developments in the rest of North America could be explained away with references to the colony's founding myth. Bishop Mullock issued a pastoral letter in 1857 that optimistically referred to "a new era now dawning on the country… steam and electricity render Newfoundland the connecting link between two hemispheres."[63] In 1855, the colony was looking forward, with the establishment of responsible government that year, its new public and religious buildings, and potential business opportunities in the transatlantic cable, agriculture, and steamship travel. The cathedral, and the slate of events associated with the consecration, provided townspeople with ample fodder to express sentiments of identity and community. Edward Morris's toast captured well the hopefulness among many middle-class St. John's residents in the mid-1850s.[64] Home had been tentatively made, and now it was theirs to promote and improve upon. The boosterism and optimism continued throughout the visit.

Reflecting this spirit of celebration, on the evening of the consecration many private homeowners placed lights in their windows, joining in an illumination that featured the cathedral, the convents, the Bishop's Palace, the orphanage, the Orphan Asylum School, and the Triumphal Arch. People set off "skyrockets," and the streets "were alive with human beings," who, the *Newfoundlander* was sure to note, were "conducting themselves in the middle of a scene so exciting, with order and decorum."[65] Over at the notoriously contrarian *Public Ledger*,

---

[63] Pastoral letter issued by Bishop Mullock, February 22, 1857. Quoted in Nancy Earle, "Introduction: The Life of John T. Mullock," in *The Finest Room in the Colony: The Library of John Thomas Mullock*, ed. Ágnes Juhász-Ormsby and Nancy Earle (St. John's: Memorial University Libraries, 2016), 11.

[64] On this feeling of optimism, Sean Cadigan notes that advocates for responsible government in Newfoundland emphasised the message that Newfoundland had great potential in its landward resources, shifting policy and political culture "decisively from an awareness of the extent to which most people depended on the resources of the sea." Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 124. This feeling of optimism did not last long. Carolyn Lambert observes that unlike most of the rest of North America, "Newfoundland's tale of economic expansion did not have a happy ending." Agricultural and economic expansion had no long-term effect on the country's economy, and railway debt eventually plunged it into financial disarray. Carolyn Lambert, "No Choice but to Look Elsewhere: Attracting Immigrants to Newfoundland, 1840-1890," *Acadiensis* 41, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2012): 90.

[65] *Newfoundlander*, 10 September 1855.

editor Henry Winton Jr. interpreted the scene differently. The *Ledger*'s rabidly anti-Catholic editor Henry Winton had passed away several months earlier, and his son Henry Jr. was now running the show. Winton Jr. wrote with much the same bombast as his father: "The whole city presented an appearance which we never before witnessed," he wrote of the evening of the consecration, and he did not mean it in a good way. Winton primarily took issue with noise, referring to sealing guns fired, squibs set off, and boys parading the streets with boughs of evergreens mounted with candles. Like his father, Winton generally disapproved of Irish-Catholic public spectacle: "Had the affair been confined to themselves and not extended beyond the illumination of their homes, we would have thought nothing of it," he wrote. But on a Sunday evening, when churches of four other denominations were worshipping nearby, he claimed that "no persons could walk from their church to their homes without being subject to great annoyance from the bursting of trains of squibs at their feet."[66]

Edward Shea of the *Newfoundlander* challenged Winton's reports of violence in the streets, and a back and forth between the two editors ensued. When the *Public Ledger* reported rowdy goings-on on the streets that night, the *Newfoundlander* ascertained that "we have made diligent inquiry of the Chief of Police, and others who passed through the town on that night all concur as to the good order which everywhere prevailed." Shea suggested that Winton, "woefully athirst for a No-Popery grievance of any sort," seized upon one instance of a broken window and exaggerated it, "playbill style" into an "alarming sacrifice, an awful outrage." Respectability was at the heart of the debate, with Winton attempting to appeal to the "respectable Catholics," who he implored to denounce Bishop Mullock and his pattern of political involvement, and to practise their religion privately, while Shea took pains to state that

[66] *The Public Ledger*, 11 September 1855.

"the respectable Protestant community" did not feel the same way Winton did towards Catholics.[67]

Winton and Shea's exchange over the place of religious celebrations on the public streets and the respectability of those involved recalls Marguerite Van Die's observation that gender and religion are best understood "as part of a web of social relations, structured by family, community and legal networks." Where older historiographical traditions placed religion firmly in the private sphere, "that increasingly marginalised world in which women and clergy sought mutual consolation," a better approach is to understand religion as one factor among many informing middle-class and upwardly mobile nineteenth-century men's self-construction as "self-made men" or "marketplace men."[68] As Chapter Two explored, respectability was a major component of nineteenth-century middle-class masculinity. Now, Shea and Winton were firing shots over how best to incorporate religion into one's performance of respectability. Discussions that divisions in the church pews carried over to the streets and the presses.

While the prelates were in St. John's for the consecration of the cathedral, they took part in a procession to the Riverhead neighbourhood, at the west end of the harbour, where the foundation stone for St. Patrick's Church was dedicated. With a precinct firmly established in the

---

[67] *Newfoundlander*, 17 September 1855; *Public Ledger*, 28 September 1855. Shea himself was a Catholic, albeit from a family that was not aligned with the network of immigrant Catholic families clustered around the BIS and the Liberal party (e.g., Morris and Kent). As editors of the *Newfoundlander*, both Edward and his brother Ambrose promoted the interests of native Newfoundlanders regardless of denomination and were involved with the Newfoundland Natives Society. J.K. Hiller points out the Sheas were native Newfoundlanders from a family "which espoused the older Irish tradition of cooperation with the British authorities." They were not aligned with the more aggressive Irish nationalism that dominated the Newfoundland Roman Catholic Church and Liberal party after the 1830s. J. K. Hiller, "SHEA, Sir AMBROSE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 11 October 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shea_ambrose_13E.html; and "SHEA, Sir EDWARD DALTON," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 11 October 2017, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shea_edward_dalton_14E.html.

[68] Marguerite Van Die, "A "Christian Businessman" in the Eastern Townships: The Convergence of Precept and Practice in Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Gender Construction," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, New Series, 10 (1999): 103-104.

town's core, the town's Catholic leaders looked to solidify the Irish Catholic presence in other neighbourhoods. The Presentation sisters established a convent in Riverhead the following year. By 1855 the Irish Catholics of St. John's had firmly established their place in the community. Their political and social ascendency was evident from the built landscape. The way people (like Edward Shea in his newspaper, and Edward Morris and other speakers at the BIS dinner), spoke about the cathedral reflects a larger sense of Irish-Newfoundland identity accruing in St. John's in the 1850s, where a distinctly Newfoundland feeling of nationhood was emerging. Creating a national identity was part of making home, and entailed telling certain stories about the people and the society they lived in. Examining remaining built heritage and contemporary writing about that heritage is an entry point into the origins of this particular imagined community. Examining buildings and how people spoke and wrote about them also provides us with important information about the Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, a building whose history reveals another distinct story of making home.

The Anglican Cathedral of St. John the Baptist

The Anglican and Catholic cathedrals were built as if in a race with one another, with cornerstones laid in 1843 and 1841 respectively, and consecrated in 1850 and 1855. Both stone structures replaced aging wooden buildings deemed inefficient and too small for the growing town. But as this section outlines, Bishop Feild's conflicts with his clergy and congregation over styles of worship, coupled with his "imperial eyes" and a disdain for all things colonial, meant that his building projects, although they made a significant impact on the landscape, would not impact people's sense of nationhood or ethnic identity in the way that the construction projects overseen by his Catholic counterparts did.

As soon as he arrived in the colony Bishop Feild embarked on a program building gothic revival style churches throughout the colony, leading to significant changes on the landscape of

St. John's and on that of several outport communities.[69] As a Tractarian (a branch of high Anglican thought originating out of Oxford University promoting the reinstatement of certain Catholic doctrines and rituals), Feild was devoted to neo-gothic architecture, which the Tractarians believed best reflected the church's religious and moral values and hearkened back to a purer form of Christianity.[70] Field thought the gothic revival style would influence Newfoundlanders' ways of worshipping, and throughout his tenure as bishop he struggled to impart his own high church sensibilities upon layreaders and parishioners in town, in the outports, and among members of his own clergy, many of whom were pulled towards more evangelical expressions of faith.[71] Ecclesiologists, as the promoters of the gothic style called themselves, recreated medieval styles and built churches with distinct porches, naves, and chancels, styles they perceived as "purposeful, severe, and chaste." Each part of a Gothic revival church expressed a purpose, with designs that were intended to give "the sacred a distinctive place in the secular world."[72] The return to medieval forms of worship and architecture through distinctive and symbolic architecture allowed the ecclesiologists to appeal to a "'golden period'

---

[69] Feild travelled widely throughout the island of Newfoundland and the Labrador coast in the summers, spending a month or two in St. John's each spring, and generally spent the winters (at least 21 of the 32 of his episcopate) in Bermuda. Regarding Field's lengthy stays in Bermuda, Calvin Hollett wonders "how much episcopal work there could have been," in a territory of slightly over fifty square kilometres and a clergyman every two square miles. Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 24.

[70] The Cambridge Camden Society (known after 1845 as the Ecclesiological Society) promoted the study of gothic architecture and was closely associated with the Tractarians.

[71] John Greene details Feild's approach to Wesleyanism. Feild attempted to replace low church clerics with those of his own disposition, and remarried and rebaptized those who had received those services from Wesleyans. Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation*, 200, 235-36. Curtis Fahey provides a detailed account of similar tension between high and low church factions in the Anglican Church in Upper Canada, noting that by the 1850s, the years of internal strife "had seriously weakened the Church of England's position in internal affairs and, at the same time, clouded its future as a spiritual society." Curtis Fahey, *In His Name: The Anglican Experience in Upper Canada, 1791-1854* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1991). The same effect occurred in the Anglican church in Newfoundland under Feild's tenure - Hollett makes this argument very forcefully in *Beating Against the Wind.*

[72] Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 137.

when the Church basked in unrivalled authority."[73] In St. John's, with construction on the Romanesque revival Catholic cathedral outpacing his own, and a Catholic bishop who frequently waded into the political fore, and a House of Assembly no longer dominated by Anglicans (in the 1850 election, Anglicans were returned in six of 15 electoral districts, reflecting, as John Greene points out, that political power in Newfoundland had shifted to Catholics and Wesleyans) factors converged to reinforce Feild's already strong allegiance to ecclesiological principles.[74]

It is less immediately clear whether Field's intended changes to people's style of worship left as indelible a mark as his architectural endeavours did. Colonial society confounded Feild, whether it was delays in importing building materials, outport people who had been worshipping under lay clergy for generations and resisted his interventions, or his own clergy, in whom, as he once remarked, "some little of the Colonial jealousy and dread of rivals will occasionally peep out," even in the "excellent ones."[75]

Feild's description of his first arrival in St. John's, where he was met at the harbour by church, state, and military representatives and brought to Government House amid much fanfare, set the tone for much of his episcopate. As Chapter Two established, it was common practice in St. John's to greet noteworthy new arrivals (governors, bishops) at the harbour. The practice was not to Feild's liking. At the wharf, "I made my best bow," Feild noted, "and that, I fear, a bad one, for I felt in a very strange and uncomfortable situation. There were, of course, many spectators. I just thanked them for their kind and dutiful attention." After he dined with Governor and Lady Harvey, their family, and a delegation of Anglican clergy, Feild retired to his

---

[73] Jane Russell-Corbett, "'The Ecclesiologist' and Anglican Church Architecture in the Colonies," *Study for the Society of Architecture Bulletin* 21, no. 4 (1997): 93.
[74] Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation*, 200.
[75] Field to Scott, 24 October 1844, Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador (AADENL), Collection 100.43, box 2, file 4.

room in Government House where he gave the manner of his reception a poor review, writing that it was not

> … in very primitive or apostolic style, yet I should hope as not to give offence to any high-minded Christians. The respect and ceremony were shown to me and accepted by me as a bishop of the Church, and though I would have preferred a procession with litanies and holy services and priests and choristers, yet where none could be found to make or understand them, the mixture of ecclesiastical with secular ceremony was not contemptuously to be rejected. To me individually, it was very distasteful, but that helped to reconcile me to it and made me hope it might be of use to others, if God please.[76]

Field's journal entry was unknowingly cloaked in foresight, for this tension between ecclesiastical and secular would become a defining theme of his time in Newfoundland. Newfoundland Anglicans were people who, as Calvin Hollett puts it, practised a Protestantism of egalitarian impulse "in the face of a hierarchical imposition of religiosity."[77] On that summer day in 1844, Feild recognized that the ceremony served a purpose in the hearts and minds of the people, and he was reluctant to speak against anything that might have further endeared them to the church.[78] Yet, Feild's "novel ideas," stemming from the Oxford movement, which reimagined the Church of England "in reaction to rationalism and liberalism and evangelicalism," would soon sow seeds of dissent among his congregation.[79]

---

[76] *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 32.
[77] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 4.
[78] Newspaper accounts of Feild's arrival do not offer much corroborating information: the *Newfoundlander* only printed a cursory announcement "arrived on Thursday last in the Royal Mail Steamer from Halifax, and immediately landed at the Queen's Wharf, where he was received by the Clergymen, Church Warden and a large and respectable portion of his flock. His Lordship then proceeded to Government House accompanied by a Guard of Honour." *Newfoundlander,* 11 July 1844.
[79] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 5. According to Hollett, decades of isolation and relative neglect from the established church had led to a protestant culture in outport Newfoundland where both working and middle classes had learned to discuss religious questions in spaces away from the authority of the established churches.

Throughout his journal Feild articulated what Ronald Rompkey, the editor of the journal, calls the "rhetoric of empire," a tactic wherein Feild "confirm[ed his] imperial authority through an assumed dominion of sovereignty" and saw "the lives of local people as extensions of the landscape."[80] Rompkey explains that Feild's fixation with the landscape and natural history, his tendency to describe natural features in comparison to those in the home country, and his inclination to classify, characterize and evaluate, all reflect tropes of travel writing. His observations and conclusions were frequently at odds with local identities. "On the surface," writes Rompkey of Feild, "he may seem merely to describe, but his gaze is the gaze of the colonizer and his discourse the discourse of numerous travellers, officers, and administrators who have carried out their duties throughout the British Empire."[81] Feild's rhetoric of empire is evident in his attempts to fundraise for and construct a cathedral. Condescending as his perspective could be, his diary reveals the tension between church officials' desire to make home from above, and congregations who for so long had been relatively self-directed in their worship. It also reveals tension as the established church tried to assert its authority while the Methodist and Roman Catholic churches grew.[82]

Even prior to Feild's arrival in St. John's, Anglican clergy were pointing to the town's growing Catholic population as justification for their own fundraising appeals. In his 1836 memoir of his time as a missionary in Newfoundland, written to fundraise in Britain for supporters of the mission to Newfoundland, Archdeacon Edward Wix included a letter from a "worthy lay member" of the Anglican congregation, lamenting the lack of room in the town's Anglican chapel, and the congregation's inability to raise sufficient funds for a new church on

---

[80] Ronald Rompkey, "Preface," in *Diary of Bishop Edward Field*, 3.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ronald Rompkey, ed., *The Diary of Bishop Edward Feild.*

their own. Setting the stage for church-building as competition for souls, the letter opened with breathless news of Catholic success in fundraising. Bishop Fleming, claimed the letter-writer, had acquired "a very large subscription" in Ireland for a new cathedral, which "is to be one of the finest buildings in any of the provinces." The deplorable condition of the town's Anglican chapel in comparison to the planned Catholic cathedral is a recurring theme in the letter (and the letter-writer was not alone in this opinion: at one point, the periodical of the Ecclesiological Society described the building as "a wooden shed of the most monstrous description.")[83]

For a short time, the construction of the garrison church, St. Thomas', overseen by Archdeacon Wix between 1834-1836 was the only talk of Anglican church-building in the capital city.[84] Once Newfoundland was established as an Anglican diocese in 1838, discussion of building a cathedral in St. John's began to mount. Aubrey Spencer, Newfoundland's first resident Anglican bishop, set the wheels in motion for a stone cathedral to mark the seat of the diocese.[85] Spencer referred to the old wooden chapel's condition as "so deplorable as to divest

---

[83] In order to create a sense of urgency necessary for a major fundraising drive, Wix was inclined to describe life in Newfoundland in terms of decadence and spiritual darkness. Peter Coffman quotes Wix's sensational account rather uncritically, for which J.K. Hilller takes him to task for failing to interpret "propaganda designed to open pockets back home" from a missionary who provided "few balanced insights" into the society he was writing about. Wix's writings provided salacious accounts of child neglect, drunkenness and violence in Newfoundland's outports. Calvin Hollett describes his writing as part of the ""sunk into utter spiritual vacancy" trope used to motive people to donate or come to Newfoundland as missionaries." Patrick O'Flaherty's work - describing Wix at one point as an "ecclesiastical snoop and a prig" - provides an important reminder not to take the accounts of missionaries at face value and to read against the grain of their reports. See Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 33; J.K. Hiller, "Peter Coffman, Newfoundland Gothic," book review in *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 24, no. 1 (2009): 159-160; Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 284; Patrick O'Flaherty, *The Rock Observed: Studies in the Literature of Newfoundland* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 21-22, 63. The letter Wix mentioned is printed in Edward Wix, *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary's Journal* (London, 1836, reprinted by Canadian House, 1971), 232-236. For the "wooden shed" comment is from "Colonial Church Architecture, Chapter VI: St. John's Cathedral, Newfoundland," *The Ecclesiologist*, 65, new series number 29 (April 1848): 275, quoted in Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 35.
[84] St. Thomas', designed by Patrick Kough, was the first gothic revival church in St. John's. For more on St. Thomas's church and subsequent alterations to it from the 1840s-1870s, see Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 17-19.
[85] The first Anglican bishop of Newfoundland, Spencer worked closely with the British and Newfoundland School Society (which John Inglis had criticised for its evangelical leanings) to establish church school, and

the service of religion of much of the veneration and dignity which rightly belong to it." Spencer asked the authorities about using Crown land to the north of town to build a cathedral, and they were amenable to the plan, but the bishop decided it was better to build on the site of the old chapel since it was a more central location for the congregation.[86] The Crown land would have provided a more impressive vantage point, on par with that of the Catholic cathedral. Spencer commissioned local builder James Purcell to design the building, and laid a cornerstone in May 1843.[87]

Much like the Catholic cornerstone laying in 1841, this procession wound through the town's commercial core. A procession formed at the Theological Institution, located near St. Thomas' Church, and continued to Government House, where Governor Harvey joined it. The procession then wound down Cochrane Street to Duckworth Street, west along Duckworth, and north up Chapel Hill to the wooden chapel, about 1.3 kilometres from the starting point. As Table 2 shows, like the Catholic procession, this one featured schoolchildren, bands, and fraternal groups. It also featured a heavy presence from the judiciary, executive and legislative branches, and the military, with the judges, governor, members of council, officers of the garrison, and garrison band, demonstrating the Anglican church's position as the established church. The Catholic cornerstone-laying procession was a demonstration of Irish Catholic culture

---

established a theological training school in St. John's. C. E. Thomas, "SPENCER, AUBREY GEORGE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 8 August 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/spencer_aubrey_george_10E.html.

[86] Aubrey Spencer, "The Church of God: a sermon on Acts XX. 28., preached in the Parish Church of St. John's Newfoundland, on Good Friday, 1842," (St. John's: J.W. McCoubrey, 1842), 22.

[87] Irish-born Purcell was the dominant architect in St. John's during the 1840s and 50s. He frequently worked with superintendent of public buildings Patrick Kough (who appears in Chapters Two and Four), and both major denominations commissioned designs from him. Purcell supervised construction on the Roman Catholic cathedral and designed several other prominent buildings in St. John's, including the Colonial Building, Christ Anglican Church at Quidi Vidi, and the Presentation Convent. Shane O'Dea, "PURCELL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed 21 November 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/purcell_james_8E.html.

and unity, while the staider Anglican affair drew on links to Britain and government. In poor health, the bishop preached at the cornerstone laying but did not join the procession. Spencer left Newfoundland for Bermuda later in the same year, with the understanding that he would not return to Newfoundland.

Table 2: Order of Procession for cornerstone laying at the Anglican Cathedral, August 1843.

Order of Procession
Military Band
Children of the Sunday Schools of St. John's and St. Thomas's, attended by their teachers
Members of the Church of England Temperance Society, with their brethren the St. John's United Abstinence Society
Committee of Management of St. Thomas's
Churchwardens of St. Thomas's
Vestry of St. John's
Building Committee
Churchwardens of St. John's
Collector
Masons
The Clerks of St. John's and St. Thomas's
Clergy in Deacon's Orders
The Rector of St. John's
The Lord Bishop of Newfoundland, attended by two chaplains [n.b.: the Bishop did not take part in the procession due to illness]
Clergy in Priest's Orders
The Civil Officers of Government
Members of Her Majesty's Council
The Judges
The Officers of the Garrison
His Excellency the Governor attended by his staff
Members of the Church of England

Source: Public Ledger, 18 August 1843.

Little work progressed on the cathedral after the cornerstone ceremony.[88] Bishop Feild arrived in 1844 displeased with his predecessor's plans and eager to put his own stamp on the

[88] For a detailed account of the ceremony, excerpted from the *Royal Gazette* August 22, 1843, see Philip Tocque, *Wandering Thoughts or Solitary Hours* (London: T. Richardson, 1846), 346-352. On the location of the theological institute, see James Joseph Curling and Charles Knapp, *Historical Notes Concerning Queen's College, St. John's, diocese of Newfoundland, 1842-1897* (London?: s.n, 1898), 11, https://archive.org/details/cihm_13166 (accessed 18 October 2017).

project, whose plans and drawings depicted what Feild deemed "a frightful structure."[89] As a Tractarian, for Feild, if it was not gothic, it would not do. Feild relied on his networks in England for advice and approbation and in a letter to Reverend William Scott, a classmate of his at Queen's College Oxford and a fellow Tractarian, Feild called local builder Purcell's plan a "wretched imitation" of a church by "an honest man [who] knows as much about ecclesiastical architecture as his drawings show."[90] When his contacts in England disapproved of Purcell's plans, after Feild sent them for inspection, Feild sighed that "I of course anticipated the sentence. No one who had ever seen a decent church could tolerate such an abortion."[91] There was nothing frightful or structurally unsound about Purcell's plan: Feild was simply inclined to interpret the colonial architect's drawings that way regardless of their merit. They were colonial, they were not gothic, and they came from "a supposed builder, an unimaginative Irishman," as Feild referred to Purcell.[92]

Feild was unhappy not only with the plans but also the materials he inherited from his predecessor. Despite having spent what Feild deemed to be an egregious amount of money to import cut stone from Ireland, Spencer and the building committee had not been able to amass enough stone to build a choir or tower, nor an arch between the chancel and the nave, all of which were key ecclesiological features.[93] A distinct chancel and nave were particularly important to the Tractarians, who believed each part of a church should be easily distinguishable from outside of the building. Lamenting a lack of funds and the poor quality of

---

[89] Feild to William Scott, 11 July 1844, in *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 78.
[90] Quoted in Shane O'Dea, "PURCELL, JAMES," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed 21 November 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/purcell_james_8E.html.
[91] Feild to Rev. William Scott, 20 May 1845, AADENL, Collection 100.43, Box 2, file 4. Unfortunately, we have no similar writings where Bishop Fleming reveals what he thought of the Anglican Cathedral.
[92] Entry of 25 July 1844 in *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild in 1844*, 43.
[93] Feild to Rev. William Scott, 22 August 1844, in *Diary of Bishop Feild*, 79-80.

local stone, Feild complained in a letter to Reverend Scott that he was mired in "a pretty colonial mess, out of which at present I cannot see how to escape."[94] He complained that "nothing can be depended on in colonies." Materials had to be imported, often driving costs up, and "the whole work may be stopped six months for want of a cargo of stone, or perhaps a single stone. Then comes six months winter and what has been already done and prepared may be spoilt."[95] The old wooden chapel was "fast falling to pieces"[96] while the building committee were "in great confusion: plans wretched, money exhausted, and debts already incurred."[97]

Faced with these problems on the cathedral, Feild focussed on the changes he could make immediately to the already-built Anglican churches in and around St. John's, rearranging them in order to suit his ecclesiological ideals. Shortly after arriving in St. John's, he examined St. Thomas', the garrison church, and "suggested several alterations among others to move the pulpit from the centre of the church against the gallery, the erection of a bishop's seat, a font..."[98] Although the exterior of St. Thomas's resembled "a Gothic box" its interior lacked a chancel or centre aisle, key ecclesiological features, and it boasted galleries, a feature that did not adhere to ecclesiological guidelines.[99] Feild moved the communion rails forward in order to have a larger area behind them as an approximation of a chancel, and moved the pulpit, which had been in the centre of the church, to the side.[100] Many congregants opposed the rearrangement. Calvin Hollett remarks that there was of course more to St. Thomas's than its

---

[94] Ibid., 80.
[95] Feild, undated draft of a letter or notes regarding the cathedral. Unclear who the intended recipient was. AADENL, Collection 100.43, box 1, file 6.
[96] Feild to Rev. William Scott, *22* August 1844, in *Diary of Bishop Edward Field*, 80-83.
[97] Entry of 8 July 1844 in *Diary of Bishop Edward Field*, 37-38.
[98] Entry of 15 July 1844 in *Diary of Bishop Edward Field*, 37-38.
[99] The church's north and south aisles, added in 1846, also had the benefit of stabilizing the structure which had shifted six inches on its foundation during a windstorm that fall. Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 17.
[100] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 51.

architecture – it also had people. Hollett asks whether Feild thought "that as a bishop he had the right to sail into the harbour, walk up to the church, and trample on their spirituality?"[101] Furthermore, Feild departed for the other part of his diocese in Bermuda weeks after making these changes, leaving his clergy to weather any fallout from the congregation.[102] Feild's immediate plunge into rearranging and changing the relatively new (only ten years old) St. Thomas's is an example of his "rhetoric of empire," as Ronald Rompkey called it, in action. Feild had no qualms about remaking the home his congregation and lay readers had already made for themselves. Because they did not worship in the "right" style, he tried to remake their home in the style of his own.

Feild knew that his Tractarian doctrine was unpopular in a colony where low church styles prevailed and Methodism was quickly gaining ground. The spread of Methodism throughout the colony brought Feild much worry. As a Tractarian, he found charismatic worship improper – and it was growing in popularity, particularly in the outports, far from St. John's where Feild was focussing his attention on the cathedral. Calvin Hollett points out that outport families' "lay zeal and mobility" spread Methodism throughout the island. Hollett's work paints a picture of the outport not as isolated but as a site of mobility; outport people on the Northeast coast frequently resided in more than one community over the course of the year, moving between summer and winter fishing grounds. As a populist movement, Methodism was a marked contrast to the hierarchical strains of Anglicanism and Catholicism emanating from St.

---

[101] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 51-52.
[102] Thomas Collett, a justice of the peace in Harbour Buffett and a vehement opponent of Feild, wrote several years later that in moving these items, Feild was "So anxious, so resolved …to introduce the novelties of Tractarianism, and [with] so little consideration did he, a stranger, manifest for the prejudices and feelings of the people, that, in four months from the time of his arrival, he had made all these alterations; and so determined was he to accomplish them, that if necessary he said, he "would shoulder an axe himself" to carry out his resolve." Thomas F. Collett, *The Church of England in Newfoundland, no. 2*. St. John's: Joseph Wood, 1854 https://archive.org/details/cihm_93141 (accessed 26 November 2017).

John's.[103] In the outports Methodism's "immediate, practical, and urgent call to salvation… had a greater appeal to families whose very lives depended on their abilities to cope with their situations in a challenging environment." The alternative was laying on of hands once every three or four years by a bishop who "hung his resplendent vestments and the weight of his episcopal authority on a very slender hook."[104] Although this phenomenon was more pronounced in the outports than in St. John's, people's responses to Feild in both town and bay reveal entrenched communities who were going about making home in their own way. Religion was an important aspect of people's lives, but modes of worship that fit the circumstances of their lives would be the most successful.[105] Methodism's prevalence in both urban and outport spaces greatly troubled Bishop Feild.

This was a milieu where Feild's high-church, formal preferences were not in favour. "You can easily understand what suspicions and jealousies would be excited in this country if I were reported as a vice patron or Member (newly elected) of the Cambridge Camden Society. You know how shamefully and perseveringly that Society is attacked in the Newspapers which are the authorities here, and do all the mischief," Feild wrote to Reverend William Scott in 1845.[106] (The Cambridge Camden Society was an architectural society devoted to gothic architecture and associated with Tractarian ideas. Feild was never a member but he did correspond with the

---

[103] Calvin Hollett, *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland*, *1774-1874* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), xv.
[104] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 127. John Greene also recounts the spread of Wesleyan Methodism in outport Newfoundland, and the consternation this caused among Anglican clergy, who were divided on how best to "secure their religion." Greene, *Between Damnation and Starvation*, 32-36.
[105] Methodism in St. John's was more markedly middle class than in the outports, Gower Street Methodist Church (built 1864) and George Street Methodist (built 1870) were both built in Gothic style and in Calvin Hollett's estimation, "as proper a place of worship as those of tractarian Bishop Feild." Hollett points to George Street Methodist in particular as a "statement that the new Methodist piety had to be embodied in cultivation and polish." Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 36, 64.
[106] Feild to Rev. William Scott, 20 May 1845, AADENL, Collection 100.43, box 2, file 4.

group.[107]) The “ignorant excited fishmongers” would not approve.[108] Feild attributed the discontent in Newfoundland to colonial attitudes: “Perhaps I ought not to be surprised or offended that the people here are not yet prepared for a Bishop,” he wrote. “The proximity to America gives them notions of interference and resistance, which do not or did not find much encouragement in England.”[109]

Feild blamed colonial notions of individual self-expression and democracy for the cool reception to his changes in church architecture. His exasperated musings on democratic ideologies echo those of his mainland counterparts, who some years earlier had felt threatened by the democratic critique (that the church was a man-made, voluntary institution individuals could join at will) and the evangelical impulse (with its emphasis on individual assertion and piety as a personal rather than communal exercise).[110] Moreover, Newfoundland’s own particular religious landscape likely compounded this reaction. In a place where neither the Anglican, Roman Catholic or dissenting churches had taken much interest until the development of resident colonial populations through migration and natural increase forced them to, settlers brought religious traditions with them and in the absence of clergy, developed their own informal forms of worship, performing marriages, baptisms, and funerals themselves. When church institutions and clergy began coming to Newfoundland in the late eighteenth century, settlers often challenged clergy’s sole right to perform and charge for religious services.[111] These practices had been all but extinguished in St. John’s by the early nineteenth century, but Feild

---

[107] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 11.
[108] Feild to Rev. William Scott, 20 May 1845, AADENL, Collection 100.43, box 2, file 4. William Westfall explains ecclesiological principles as the Camden Society saw them. Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 135-137.
[109] Field to Rev. William Scott, 24 October 1844, AADENL, Collection 100.43, Box 2, file 4.
[110] Nancy Christie, “‘In These Times of Democratic Rage and Delusion’: Popular Religion and the Challenge to the Established Order, 1760-1815,” in *The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760 to 1990*, ed. G.A. Rawlyk (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994), 18.
[111] Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 69.

often remarked on their prevalence in more isolated areas and their latent memory in St. John's could be an explanation for why people responded the way they did to Feild's efforts.[112]

While Field occupied himself with rearranging already-built churches to make them better suited to ecclesiological ideals, construction continued on the Roman Catholic cathedral. Shortly after arriving in St. John's, Feild visited the Roman Catholic cathedral, and did not like what he saw, describing it as "an immense pile of a building without any pretensions to ecclesiastical propriety."[113] Feild found the Catholic cathedral's appearance unpleasing and judged its pace of construction troubling, especially as there was no Anglican cathedral taking form on the town's horizon to counter the looming structure. "While the Roman Catholics are proceeding rapidly with an immense edifice in a most commanding situation…we have not been able to make a commencement," he observed to Reverend William Scott.[114] In another letter to Reverend Scott, he referred to the split between "liberal" and "tory" Catholics in the town as creating a further impetus for why the business of getting along with his own cathedral had to occur: "You cannot understand the dread and dislike, which our Protestants have and indeed some Romanists also, of the power of the RC priesthood – They do indeed carry things with a high hand."[115] (Chapter Two, in its discussion of tensions between the Loyal Sons of St. Patrick, the Newfoundland Natives Society, and the Benevolent Irish Society also alluded to this tension among St. John's Catholics and the involvement of priests in politics.) For Feild, the Anglican church needed its own beacon to counter the Catholic one rising quickly on the barrens. Feild

---

[112] Feild's *Newfoundland Journal of a Voyage of Visitation in the "Hawk" Church Ship* (London: Printed for the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel, 1850) often mentions being the first clergyman to visit a settlement in ten or twelve years. Also see Hollett, *Beating Aginst the Wind*, 41-42.
[113] Entry of 17 July 1844 in *Diary of Bishop Edward Field*, 38.
[114] Feild to Rev. William Scott, August 1844, in *Diary of Bishop Edward Feild*, 78.
[115] Feild to Scott, 20 May 1845, AADENL, Collection 100.43, Box 2, file 4.

hoped the Anglican cathedral would counter the growing Catholic influence in the colony's politics and civil society and represent home as he saw it: English and high church.

Feild grew increasingly convinced that the local mercantile establishment either could not or would not contribute to the cathedral building: "Indeed I do not conceive that committee of N.F.L. merchants would ever bring such a work to a happy completion."[116] He lamented to Rev. William Scott that "we are dealing remember here with cold, coarse, calculating, covetous colonists – a race of men not seen or understood in England."[117] In Upper Canada (and later Ontario) the "extraordinary growth in the development of churches… was partly due to the material development of the province," and the province's affluence helped sustain the rapid pace of church construction.[118] This would not be the case in Newfoundland. Although Field was being ungenerous towards the local people, it is worth noting that the relative economic fortunes of the two jurisdictions meant that the church in Newfoundland had fewer middle-class donors to draw upon than its counterpart in Upper Canada. Plus, as much as the year-round resident middle class was growing in St. John's, as seen in the introduction to this dissertation, visitors still commented on the pattern of men retiring to Britain after establishing a business in St. John's. Even by mid-century, wealth generated in the colony was not often put back into the local economy. For Feild, a smaller and less ornate cathedral would have to be the solution.

Field soon received the opportunity to start from scratch on a new cathedral, although it came in the form of a devastating fire. In May 1846 fire razed the town and destroyed the wooden parish chapel along with much of the stone Bishop Spencer had imported and that Feild did not want anyway. Preaching in Trinity shortly after the fire, Feild lamented that only days

[116] Feild to Rev. William Scott, 20 May 1845, AADENL, Collection 100.43, Box 2, file 4.
[117] Feild to Rev. William Scott, 5 June 1845, AADENL, Collection 100.43, Box 2, file 4.
[118] Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 129.

earlier he had "complained that such a structure, so mean and miserable, was ill-adapted to the sacred services," but now he would never preach in the old chapel again.[119] Ever concerned with the activities of other denominations, Feild was eager to commence work on a new cathedral: "we have now no parish church and though that might have been endured when people were of one heart and soul… the case is very different where Romanists and Schematics abound."[120] He soon travelled to England to fundraise and contracted the prolific gothic revival architect George Gilbert Scott to design a new cathedral.

To raise funds, Feild sought a "Queen's Letter," a fundraising effort allowing collections to be made in Anglican churches in Britain for the relief of fire sufferers and the rebuilding of the Anglican church in St. John's. This effort quickly devolved into scandal in St. John's when news broke that three-quarters of all the funds raised would go to the Anglican church and not towards general rebuilding of the town.[121] Low church Anglicans, Protestant dissenters, and Catholics were all incensed with Feild, and townspeople organized two unsuccessful petitions to Parliament requesting that the money raised in Britain be spent on no other purpose than relieving those who had lost their homes in the fire. They were particularly aggrieved that ₤15,000 was allocated to the cathedral when the building that had been lost was valued at only

---

[119] Feild at Trinity, June 3, 1846. Quoted in C. Francis Rowe, *In Fields Afar: A Review of the Establishment of the Anglican Parish of St. John's and its Cathedral* (St. John's: SeaWise Enterprises, 1989), 21.
[120] Feild, undated draft of a letter or notes regarding the cathedral. Unclear who the intended recipient was. AADENL, Collection 100.43, box 1, file 6. (The document refers to the 1846 St. John's fire that destroyed the parish chapel, and the hiring of William Hay as builder of the cathedral, so it likely comes from 1846 or 1847.)
[121] According to Frederick Jones, Feild had a verbal agreement from the Lord Mayor of London and the Bishop of London that three-quarters of money raised would be for the cathedral, and this was the basis on which bishops in Britain urged clergy to solicit contributions. Yet the letter itself contained no mention of how funds were supposed to be distributed and when news broke that the brunt of funds raised would not go towards rebuilding the town, there was public outcry in St. John's. Frederick Jones, "The Great Fire of 1846 and the Coming of Responsible Government in Newfoundland," *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* VI:2/VII:1 (Autumn, 1983): 64.

₤400.[122] Although Feild was legally within his rights, the Queen's Letter affair sank whatever remaining popularity and goodwill Feild enjoyed in the town.[123] The imbroglio surrounding the letter is yet another example of Feild's attempting to instill, from above, his values and priorities, to remake the church in Newfoundland, while ignoring local circumstances and needs.

Feild did occasionally consider how he would need to adapt his plans to local circumstances and conditions, but even then his perceptions dripped with condescension. In an undated letter Feild explained how George Gilbert Scott's design would need to be simplified, comparing the architect's vision to one of his own sermons with which Feild himself sometimes found fault

> only because it is too good; by which I do not, of course, mean that it is, or can be, too good in itself, but that it is too learned, and too much elaborated for the place and people. The same remark will apply to G. Scott's beautiful design for the new Cathedral Church, it is too beautiful and costly, not in itself, but for Newfoundland and the circumstances of the place and people.[124]

If his own sermons were "too good," Feild saw George Gilbert Scott's architectural plan in the same light. While local architect Purcell's earlier plan was an "abortion," Scott's was "a charge

---

[122] For the costs of the buildings, see Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 65. While Jones exculpates Feild and blames the ensuing controversy on newspaper editors who were not knowledgeable of the initial oral agreement behind the Queen's Letter, Calvin Hollett takes a more disapproving stance, pointing out that Feild himself had a moment of doubt over the allocation of funds, but pressed on. In Hollett's estimation, "the course Feild held dear was his Tractarian mission, and everything else was a distant second." Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 66, note 59, and page 65.

[123] Frederick Jones goes so far as to say the affair provided the Liberal party (dominated by Catholics) with a grievance to exploit in their campaign for responsible government in Newfoundland. Frederick Jones, "Bishops in Politics: Roman Catholic vs. Protestant in Newfoundland, 1860-2," *Canadian Historical Review* 55, no. 4 (December 1974): 410. Coffman quotes a petition the self-styled "certain of the Middle Class in St. John's" sent to the Colonial Secretary disproving of Feild's actions in the affair, causing "injustice to many of his own denomination… and serious injury to the cause of religion he is sworn to protect." *House of Commons Papers, Reports and c*, volume XXXVI, enclosure 2, number 81, quoted in Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 94. For Feild squandering goodwill towards him, see Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 68.

[124] Feild, undated draft of a letter or notes regarding the cathedral. Unclear who the intended recipient was. AADENL, Collection 100.43, box 1, file 6.

too good." It is "too beautiful," Feild lamented, and "my heart [is] breaking instead of being elated at the prospect of attempting or commencing it."[125] Scott had designed an elaborate neo-gothic structure with nave, chancel, transepts, and tower (figure 6), but Feild saw that even with the funds from the Queen's Letter, public support as it was in St. John's in 1846-47 would allow for building only a portion of this design. The criticism Feild encountered in St. John's over appropriation of the fire relief funds finally led to his realizing that he would not be successful in asking for more money and that Scott's design could not be fully realized.[126] It would be "graceless" to ask for further contributions to add to those already received "from home," he admitted.[127] Feild's vision was again at odds with that of his congregation and with local conditions. The people had already made a home and a church and had clergy whose practices aligned with their own, and in the wake of the fire, had more pressing concerns than building a cathedral.

[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid. Calvin Hollett is particularly searing in his criticism of Feild, who continued to press outport parishes for donations in years the fishery failed and reports of starvation and destitution in the outports filled the newspapers in St. John's. Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 64-66.

Figure 6. Sketch of George Gilbert Scott's planned Anglican Cathedral, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1849. This sketch shows a tower, which was never built, and transepts, which were not built until the 1880s. Illustrated London News, XIV, 1849. Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/16/Anglican_Cathedral_St._John%27s_Newfoundland.jpg

Construction on the cathedral began anew in 1847. Although Feild would have preferred a more imposing site on Military Road on the land occupied by St. Thomas's Church, adjacent to the Government House grounds, and a site which would have offered a similar vantage point to that of the Catholic cathedral, he reluctantly agreed to build on the site occupied by the now-burnt down parish church.[128] (The Military Road site would have put the two cathedrals on the same plane of vision.) In 1847 Feild rededicated the cornerstone his predecessor Bishop Spencer had laid in 1843. The rededication ceremony was an austere affair, to which the public was not invited. Feild, a few clergy, builder William Hay, and some workers who were already on the site paused to listen to a few brief remarks and prayers, and the day's work continued from there. In comparison to the earlier cornerstone-laying from 1843, this was a quiet event indeed.[129] It is

[128] Ibid, 63, note 43.
[129] *Public Ledger*, 1 October 1847.

possible that lingering fallout from the Queen's Letter contributed to the lack of celebration at the cornerstone rededication. Or, given Feild's disdain for public spectacle (recall his reaction to being met at the wharf by bands, spectators, and the governor) perhaps Feild opted to get on with work and did not feel he needed to include the public in the ceremony.

Builder William Hay of Edinburgh, who had apprenticed under George Gilbert Scott, built the new cathedral under Feild's supervision. As a pupil of Scott's, Hay was a suitable choice of architect because his outlook aligned with Feild's ecclesiological vision. For Hay, architecture was a moral system; gothic was the clearest expression of Christian belief, while neoclassical styles hearkened to paganism.[130] Indeed, Hay and other ecclesiological architects "confused architecture and ethics by asserting that a building embodied moral principles that had a direct impact on those who worshipped there and even on those who happened to look at the building."[131] Feild had high praises for Hay, writing that "he is everything we could wish, and when he has had more experience of colonial delays and difficulties he will able to erode all my doubts."[132] Of course, local builders like Patrick Kough (builder of St. Thomas's Church and the Orphan Asylum School, mentioned in Chapter Two) or James Purcell (whose design Feild had earlier scuppered) were knowledgeable of "colonial delays" too, but in Feild's view the metropolitan builder was eminently more qualified than any local.

The cathedral itself was opened and consecrated on September 21, 1850. At this time, only its nave was completed – a great irony given that a distinct nave and chancel were key features in ecclesiological design.[133] The ultimate effect was a gothic cathedral whose design

---

[130] Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 135.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Feild, undated draft of a letter or notes regarding the cathedral. Unclear who the intended recipient was. AADENL, Collection 100.43, box 1, file 6.
[133] The nave served as the entire church for thirty-five years until construction on the chancel and transepts commenced, based on Scott's then 40-year-old plan, in 1880, and was completed five years

was closely associated with Englishness and the established church (figure 7). Peter Coffman describes its demonstrably English and Anglican "visual brand" as "precisely the solution" to the problems articulated by Wix and other clergymen who felt themselves "isolated in a sea of Popery."[134] Coffman identifies the "sheer, cliff-like mass" of the east end, the graduated lancets of the west end, and the recessed and diminutive west door as gothic elements on the building's exterior.[135] That the cathedral was rebuilt to the same specifications after the Great Fire of 1892 reduced it to a shell reveals a desire to maintain the gothic style and all it stood for in St. John's. Yet, built on a slope, downhill from the Catholic cathedral, the Anglican cathedral was in a disadvantageous location, dwarfed by the Catholic cathedral. With no tower or even a chancel, the building prompted British garrison commander Robert McCrea, who lived in St. John's during the early 1860s, to compared it to "a long, blank, buttressed wall for a military storehouse."[136]

---

later. The building as it stands today is something of a palimpsest of Scott's original plan: after the additions of the 1880s, the structure burnt down in 1892. Most of the stonework remained intact and the building was rebuilt to Scott's specifications. Coffman, *Newfoundland Gothic*, 162.

[134] Ibid., 104.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Robert McCrea, *Lost Amid the Fogs* (1869), quoted in Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 64.

Figure 7. William Grey, Sketch of St. John's, 1857.
This sketch by Anglican minister William Grey depicts the Anglican cathedral as it looked at the time of its consecration: a nave without chancel or transepts. The building with cupola at far left is the Benevolent Irish Society's Orphan Asylum School and hall. From William Grey, Sketches of Newfoundland and Labrador (Ipswich: S.H. Cowell, 1857), http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/ref/collection/cns/id/4384.

But what did the cathedral's construction and style mean for the congregation? Where were they in this process of making home? Calvin Hollett cautions against reading too much into the proliferation of gothic revival church architecture in Newfoundland under Feild's tenure, since the presence of these sites does not necessarily mean people adapted Feild's intended style of worship.[137] William Westfall, writing about the neo-gothic proliferation in Ontario, reaches a more generous conclusion than Hollett. As Westfall sees it, "the forms and symbols that remain at a distance from the people quickly lose their power."[138] In Ontario, builders using the gothic revival style had to borrow and adapt in order to work in the context of communities,

[137] Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, xx.
[138] Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 128.

using higher walls, galleries, and amphitheatres that anticipated growing populations.[139] In Newfoundland, gothic under Feild was much less adaptable; galleries and amphitheatres were verboten and the bishop often willfully ignored the people's financial constraints.[140] The only real architectural adaptation to local contexts or desires came in the form of Feild's concession that the cathedral exterior would have to be less ornate than that of the typical English gothic revival cathedral, in order to account for the threat of damage from frost.

Furthermore, the example of how people reacted to Feild's demands to change the way they practised their religion is a good reminder of the limits we can put on interpreting material sources and physical sites. To what degree does the impetus for place-making and collective expressions of identity come from above or from below? What is written in stone lasts longer than other materials, thereby drowning out other statements made more ephemerally: a conversation, the act of *not* donating time and money, the act of re-arranging an outport church once Feild had sailed off. What is clear is that both Feild and Fleming used their positions to cast the town in certain ways. The extent of the buy-in is difficult to measure, but we do know that this re-envisioning of the town and its nature provoked reflection and writing from diarists, newspaper editors, and letter-writers on the nature of the town, its society, and its power relationships. All had their thoughts about making home, and all were invested in the process of making home, however much their visions and values differed from one another.

[139] Ibid., 156.
[140] Hollett's *Beating Against the Wind* influences this conclusion, particularly his discussion of Field's instructing clergy across the colony to a collect a mandatory minimum donation of 5 shillings a year from all church members. The donations would be sent to, and redistributed by, the Newfoundland Church Society, a committee dominated by St. John's lawyers and merchants. Local parish donations no longer went directly to the local parish and minister. Hollett, *Beating Against the Wind*, 61-62.

Conclusion

Both the Anglican and Catholic cathedrals in St. John's were distinct from anything else on the landscape. The cathedrals separated sacred space from the secular and diffused ethno-religious identities into the surrounding spaces. In building their cathedrals, both the Anglican and Catholic churches made deliberate attempts to shape not only how the town looked but how people perceived it: its history, its demographics and ethnicities, its relationship to the metropole. For the devout, the cathedrals were sacred spaces of worship that explained life's mysteries and served their spiritual needs. In an era of an emerging distinctly Newfoundland identity, which the following chapter enumerates on, the cathedrals served another role; they challenged people to think of the town, the colony, and their relationship to the metropolis in circumscribed ways. Bishop Fleming had an ability to rally people around him in a way Bishop Feild did not, but both left a visual and cultural imprint on the colony.

The story of both of these buildings is one of ethnic and religious identities coalescing and cleaving. Each reveals an anxiety or issue related to some aspect of group identity and how church authorities hoped to address it. The buildings, and the stories people told about them, provide useful contrasts to anyone contemplating St. John's built landscape. The two cathedrals, so different in style, seemingly hold a mirror to one other, each proclaiming what its congregation is and is not. Each cast a long shadow over the town, in a literal and figurative sense, and they affected how people moved through the town. The buildings were sites of celebration and devotion but also sites of strife and tension. Fleming's critics condemned the cornerstone parade for the Catholic cathedral and disparaged his involvement in politics.[141] At

---

[141] For Fleming's disputes with Governor Cochrane and the suggestion that one of Fleming's priests ordered people to jeer as Cochrane left the island for the last time, see Greene *Between Damnation and Starvation*, 90-94. For Fleming's disputes with Chief Justice Henry John Boulton see Cadigan, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*, 113-115.

the Anglican Cathedral, Bishop Feild garnered criticism over dispersal of fire relief funds and levelled criticisms towards evangelicals, who accounted for a significant number of his own parishioners and clergy. Feild built a gothic revival English cathedral and tried to inscribe romantic ideas of the medieval English church, in the hopes it would reflect the Anglican position as the established church. Fleming built a Romanesque revival church with an abundance of art of Irish provenance, while still including Queen Victoria's likeness in his procession, in an attempt to position the Roman Catholic Church as the authoritative (as channeled through Ireland with Queen Victoria's stamp of approval) denomination.

In the introduction to their compilation *At Home With the Empire*, Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose argue that empire played an integral role in how Britons understood the world and themselves, explaining that while thoughts of empire may not have been at the forefront of their minds, their lives were nonetheless "infused with an imperial presence." Hall and Rose challenge historians to explore how empire was "lived across everyday practices."[142] In St. John's in the nineteenth century, the relationship of empire to everyday practices is evident: in the newspaper lists of arrivals and departures, in the lists of foodstuffs and other goods available at shops, in the ethnic identities displayed as fraternal groups and organizations moved through its streets and put up buildings. The churches too were part of this everyday practice of empire: beyond their religious functions, the cathedrals in St. John's stood as symbols of local identity and permanent establishment, and they signalled a relationship with the metropolis, through the provenance of their building materials, artwork, liturgical implements, their community of

[142] Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, "Introduction: being at home with the Empire," in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, ed. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 2-3.

congregants, and their fundraising and building processes. For these reasons, the process of church building illustrates at least part of making home.

Both Feild and Fleming were aware of architecture's power to influence people's behaviour. Fleming particularly understood the value of sightlines to and from the harbour and the signals that a hilltop complex would send. The Anglican church, hamstrung by a bishop who alienated himself from much of his clergy and congregation, was left to play catch-up. A frequent refrain of this dissertation has been that the shift in the town's character from trading post to colonial capital is reflected in its built environment as one moves up the hills away from the harbour. This chapter has revealed that its rivalries and divisions are reflected in that landscape as much as any notions of progress or growth. Competing imperatives, from above and from below, directed the process of making home.

The next chapter discusses how, in a time of celebration, an imperial visitor (Albert Edward, Prince of Wales), visited each of these buildings. How the colonial government, middle class, and clergy prepared for the 18-year-old prince's three-night stay reveals much about burgeoning nationalism, civic boosterism, and place-making in Newfoundland's capital city at mid-century. While the previous chapters are about making home, what follows reveals how people showed off that home and how they wished others would read and react to it.

Chapter 4
"The land of fish and fog… far exceeded expectations,": Inventing Traditions at the Visit of the Prince of Wales, 1860[1]

In the spring of 1860, St. John's newspapers were aflutter with news that Albert Edward, Prince of Wales would make St. John's the first stop on his upcoming North American tour. Conscious that their city would momentarily find itself under the imperial eye, a hastily appointed reception committee eagerly set out to represent the city in a way that would resonate with both visitors and locals. Examining royal visits in historical context provides a great deal of information on the creation and negotiation of local, imperial, and dissenting identities.[2] St. John's inhabitants used the visit to bolster a series of invented traditions about their town, the origins of its settlement, the colony's relative lack of infrastructure, and their hope in its future. This was an opportunity to invent identities – individually and of the colony as home. Organizers showed Newfoundland, and St. John's more specifically, in an imperial light by stressing the axiom about Newfoundland being the "ancient and loyal colony," inflating Newfoundland's importance in the empire and emphasizing the Britishness of its inhabitants. Oblique references to Tudor-era explorers implied that the colonial state itself extended further back into the past than it did, and calling Newfoundland "ancient and loyal" overlooked those who came before settler society.

As Ian Radforth has chronicled, activities planned for the prince's visit to St. John's resembled the usual festivities associated with these visits (a ball, a levee, visits to public

[1] This chapter is indebted to Ian Radforth's work chronicling the way residents received the prince and used the royal visit to create identities.
[2] Ian Radforth, *Royal Spectacle: The 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004): 6-16.

institutions and scenic outlooks) but local and regional issues also presented themselves. Organizers attempted to inject local character and culture into the proceedings, quibbled over which areas and industries of St. John's and the Northeast Avalon Peninsula to show the prince, and expressed concerns over the city's cleanliness. The deliberations provide a picture of the state of the city streets and built environment, and into the cultural identity of middle-class residents of St. John's: when asked to present the city and its people to an outsider, they chose what they felt were the most significant places and features. Local newspapers provided thorough coverage of the preparations and visit and dissected the matter vigorously once it was over. Gleeful, earnest, sniping, fantastical, and self-important, the city's editors watched and commented on every detail the planning committee announced. Throughout their conversations, a series of questions emerged – what kind of place was this, and what kind of place ought it to be? Royal visits are thus useful sources of study for local historians, not for anything they reveal about the royal personality visiting, but for what they reveal about local concerns and culture and a city's impression of itself. Royal visits presented (a certain swathe of) townspeople with a chance to show off their home (or at least an imagined version of it) and to transform their environs into a stage on which to enact this performance. In *Royal Spectacle*, Ian Radforth analyses the royal tour of 1860 in a way that turns attention away from the dignitaries and focusses it towards the crowds. While this chapter does not delve into the crowds, it shines a light on the men who comprised the organizing committee, and the local newspaper editors who applauded and critiqued their efforts and wrote rejoinders to visiting journalists.

The royal visit of 1860 is a coda to the effects of making home discussed in the previous three chapters. Having "made" their home (and themselves), the men of the organizing committee (the same clubmen, churchgoers, letter-writers, newspaper editors and diarists who populated the previous chapters) now showed it off. Referring to the 1908 Quebec tercentenary

celebrations, H.V. Nelles wrote that the people gathered for that festival met each other "in scripted roles, in uniforms, costumes, and formal dress. They spoke in symbols; they marched, paraded, and danced. They mingled and displayed themselves in the reflected glory of their next sovereign."[3] In Quebec in 1908, commemoration was an act of self-invention, where people made themselves by remembering together.[4] Although 1860 did not mark a commemoration, it was a moment of self-invention, with individuals upholding symbols and scripts that spoke to (certain) people's sense of self, and aspirations for their communities. It was an act of making home and making selves.

The organizing committee's ledger book, for instance, shows a group of men trying to figure out how best to present their town and themselves, while disguising and detracting from its problems.[5] The committee itself was appointed at a public meeting in early June chaired by the governor and attended by "leading members of our society, the representatives of nearly all the public bodies, and large numbers of influential citizens besides."[6] Several days before the meeting took place, a self-selected band of church leaders, presidents of some fraternal and voluntary organizations, judges, and the speaker of the house of assembly had sent a letter to the Colonial Secretary and premier John Kent, indicating they were "desirous to co-operate" in the prince's reception, and requesting that the Governor convene a public meeting for that purpose (table 3).[7] At this meeting, men were appointed to an organizing committee. Not everyone was pleased with the committee's make-up. *The Newfoundlander* wrote that "the meeting passed off well, but we cannot help thinking it would have been an improvement if the

---

[3] H.V. Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 11.
[4] Ibid., 12.
[5] PANL, MG 631, Arrangements for the Reception of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales.
[6] *Times and General Commercial Gazette* (St. John's), 9 June 1860.
[7] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 2 June 1860.

requisition had been more generally subscribed" and suggested that "the movers in the matter" who requested the meeting in the first place ought to have obtained a wider array of signatures.[8] Indeed, after the committee's first meeting on June 12, representatives from several other organizations and societies that were not initially on the letter or at the public meeting were added to the committee.[9]

Table 3: Signees of a letter calling for a public meeting to appoint an organizing committee for the visit of the Prince of Wales, 1860.

Signee[10]	Date fraternal or benevolent group established (if applicable)
H.M. Lower, Archdeacon of Newfoundland (Anglican)	
Donald Macrae, St. Andrew's Church (Presbyterian)	
Rev. Jeremiah O'Donnell (Roman Catholic)	
Charles Pedley, Congregational Church	
M. Harvey, Free Church Minister	
George Gear, Circuit Steward, Wesleyan Church	
Henry Daniel, W.M. [Wesleyan Methodist] Chairman of Nfld. District	
Patrick Tasker, Deputy Provincial Grand Master of Freemasons	Established at St. John's 1746, defunct in 1832, re-established in 1848
Francis Brady, Chief Justice	
Bryan Robinson, Assistant Judge	
Ambrose Shea, Speaker	
Walter Grieve, on behalf of Commercial Society	At least since 1813
Frederick B. T. Carter, Treasurer, Law Society	1834

---

[8] *Newfoundlander*, quoted in in *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 9 June 1860.

[9] PANL, MG 631, Arrangements for the Reception of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales. Minutes of reception Committee, 23 June 1860.

[10] Names are listed in the order they appeared on the letter. Sources for dates in table: minutes of reception committee, PANL, MG 631, July 18, 1860; Elizabeth Browne, "Dr. Rev. Moses Harvey (1820-1891) Biographical Timeline" (unpublished manuscript, 2014) http://staff.library.mun.ca/~ebrowne/harvey/Harvey_DB.pdf (accessed 15 February 2018); Joy Fraser, "Performing Tradition and Ethnicity at the Newfoundland St. Andrew's Society Society Burns Supper," *Ethnologies* 30, 2 (2008): 181; Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of Newfoundland and Labrador, http://www.glnl.ca; The Law Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Barristers' Roll* http://www.lawsociety.nf.ca/publications-and-forms/publications/project-daisy/barristers-roll/; John E. Maunder, "The Newfoundland Museum: Origins and Development," *The Rooms: Museum Notes* (originally published 1990), https://www.therooms.ca/the-newfoundland-museum-origin-and-development (accessed 15 February 2018); D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland* 2nd edition (Portugal Cove, NL: Boulder Publications, 2002. Originally published 1895), 391.

Thomas R. Smith, President, St. George's Society	1840
P.G. Tessier, President of the St. John's Reading Room and Library	1823
Edward Morris, President of the Benevolent Irish Society	1806
George G. Geddes, President of St. Andrew's Society	1837
Charles Rankin, President of Newfoundland British Society	1837
John Munn, President of Commercial Society, Harbour Grace	Date unknown
Young Men's Literary and Scientific Institute	1858
John Maher, President of Mechanics' Society	1827
John Fox, President of Mechanics' Institute	1849

Source: *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 2 June 1860.

The initial absence of some of the town's voluntary associations might speak to how social networks functioned in the city. Perhaps the men who initially signed the letter calling for a public meeting only invited members of their close circles and contacts to sign and failed to think of the societies and groups with which they were not personally acquainted, maybe due to their working-class nature (three of the four missing organizations were largely populated by tradesmen and mechanics) or their having been more recently established (two of the four were less than five years old).[11] Perhaps the committee members knew of those other organizations' existence but were unsure whether they were still active or who to contact to issue an invitation (although three of the four groups were listed, along with their presidents' names, in the *Newfoundland Almanac* for 1860).[12] And it is unclear whether anyone from the groups that were

[11] For class associations of two of these four groups, see John Edward FitzGerald, "Irish Fraternities in Nineteenth and Twentieth-Century St. John's: the Total Abstinence Society," *Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador Website*, 2003, http://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/society/irish-temperance.php (accessed 11 February 2018) and Melvin Baker, "Voluntarism and the Fire Service in Nineteenth-Century St. John's, Newfoundland," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 77, nos. 1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1992), http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~melbaker/firedept.htm (accessed 11 February 2018).

[12] *Newfoundland Almanac for the Year of Our Lord 1860*, Joseph Woods ed. (St. John's: Joseph Woods, 1859), 48-50, online at http://collections.mun.ca/PDFs/cns_almanac/Almanac1860.pdf (accessed 15 February 2018). The Total Abstinence Society is not listed in the almanac.

initially not represented on the committee attended the public meeting at which the committee was appointed. At any rate, the committee quickly rectified things, appointing members from the other four groups as well as the editors of each city newspaper (table 4).[13] The initial 28-man organizing committee grew to over 100 individuals by the end of June.[14]

Table 4: Groups not initially on the organizing committee and later invited to join.

Group	Date established in St. John's
St. Andrews Society	1837
Volunteer Phoenix Fire Company	1847
Coopers Society	1855
Total Abstinence Society	1858

Source: Minutes of reception committee, 23 June 1860, 18 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.

The organizing committee's values and alliances can be gleaned from examining which fraternal and benevolent groups and religious denominations did not have a place on the committee. The Newfoundland Natives' Society, established in 1840, had no representation on the committee, nor were they among the groups who met the prince and his entourage on their arrival. Interest in the NNS was dwindling by 1860 so perhaps this accounts for their absence.[15] Political rivalries (as Chapter 2 established, the NNS and BIS were stalwart rivals due to the NNS's disapproval of Bishop Fleming's political activity) might also account for their absence. Several BIS members were on the organizing committee and led subcommittees. Public societies and fraternal and benevolent groups missing from the 1860 proceedings include the Agricultural Society, the Newfoundland Fishermen's Association, the Church of England Asylum for Widows and Orphans, the St. John's Factory, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Grand Division of the

[13] Minutes of reception committee, PANL, MG 631, 12 June 1860.
[14] Ted Rowe, ""Perfectly Enraptured": The Prince of Wales in St. John's, 1860," *Newfoundland Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 41.
[15] Carolyn Lambert, "Emblem of Our Country: The Red, White, and Green Tricolour," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 23, no. 1 (2008): 21. Lambert points out that some historians have incorrectly dated the NNS' demise to the 1840s, but 1862 is the final year it appears in the *Newfoundland Almanac*.

Sons of Temperance, and the Dorcas Society.[16] With the exception of the Agricultural Society, the groups left out were dominated by women or working-class men.[17] Reflecting Mary Ryan's observation that organizers of civic events in the nineteenth-century United States did not recognize women (and their organizations) "as one of the separate groups that comprised the polity," the committee's composition reflected who, based on class and gender, was a public citizen and had a public voice on the matter of the visit.[18]

Throughout British North America, planning local festivities for this visit was generally the task of municipal corporations, but as an unincorporated town, St. John's went about things differently.[19] The group of middle and upper-middle-class types on the organizing committee was drawn from a tight circle of clubmen and senior civil servants. That voluntary societies and charitable organizations populated the committee (rather than members of the house of assembly) illustrates the sway these groups held in civic and public life.[20] There was no way on to the organizing committee without first being involved with a voluntary society or charitable organization. Prolific record-keeper Edward Morris was secretary of the organizing committee, and "quite at home in the duties of his office."[21] (Morris played a significant role in previous chapters of this dissertation as the Benevolent Irish Society's long-time secretary and later

---

[16] *Newfoundland Almanac 1860*, 48-60.
[17] For class associations and the Agricultural Society, see Phillip McCann, "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition: Newfoundland, 1832-1855," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23 (April 1988): 91.
[18] Mary Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 27.
[19] Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 50. Halifax offered a different model, however: the municipality and the colonial treasury split costs and city officials appointed an organizing committee. See Bonnie Huskins, "'A Tale of Two Cities': Boosterism and the Imagination of Community during the Visit of the Prince of Wales to Saint John and Halifax in 1860," *Urban History Review* 28, 1 (1999): 34.
[20] In Newfoundland, the colonial treasury paid for all expenses associated with preparations for the three-day visit, and the legislature voted to approve all spending. The ball was the only event where attendees footed the bill individually. See letter from Governor Bannerman to organizing committee, July 4, 1860, PANL, MG 631; *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 19 May 1860.
[21] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 18 July 1860.

president, and as the keeper of an extensive personal diary.) The group had to work quickly. They had about five weeks to prepare and they met daily in the week leading up to the visit.

The scope of the committee's work is evident in the list of ten subcommittees it spawned: harbour arrangements, groundskeeping and directing public societies, arch building, illuminations and fireworks, arrangements and decorations at the Queen's Wharf, the public ball, decorating the approach to Signal Hill, finances, "cleansing of the town and neighbourhood", and providing flags and banners.[22] Although some places on the North American tour (namely Saint John, New Brunswick) used the visit to highlight their industries and economies, it seems that organizers in St. John's preferred to emphasize natural scenery (Signal Hill, Quidi Vidi Lake, the Waterford River), imperial connections (Government House, the Church of England), and the town's role as a colonial capital (through visits to institutions like the hospital and Colonial Building), without really acknowledging what brought colonists there in the first place – the fishery.[23] Eager to perform the role of respectable residents of an emerging, successful colonial capital, the reception committee set out to make over the streets and harbour in a way that would allow them to play this role.

Concern over the state of the town streets and the harbour (both elements of a modern city) were frequent themes in newspaper articles in the weeks leading up to the visit, with the *Times and General Commercial Gazette* describing the streets as "discreditable to a civilized community."[24] If the streets were bad, the harbour was worse. The committee recognized the harbour's striking natural landscape and wished to highlight Signal Hill and the narrows but were also painfully aware of the harbour's status as a working port, with the attendant sights, smells,

---

[22] *Public Ledger* (St. John's), 19 June 1860; minutes of reception committee, 15 June 1860, PANL, MG 631.
[23] Event organizers in Saint John NB chose to focus on the town's commercial viability as the central pillar of the town's self-presentation during the visit. Huskins, "A Tale of Two Cities."
[24] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 23 June 1860.

and sounds. A letter to the editor sardonically suggested that "our picturesque fish markets should be removed or disguised in some way."[25] When the organizing committee arranged to clean up a beach near the Queen's Wharf, the *Public Ledger* applauded that the work was "so essentially necessary to a healthy condition of that locality."[26]

The harbour was, as discussed in Chapter One, a study in contradictions when it came to how people visualized and described St. John's. It was an impressive natural feature, the locus of the town's economy, its main point of entry, and the reason for the capital city's settlement. The harbour was also a place of work, ringed by stores and wharves, and where in the summer months flakes were piled with salted fish left to dry in the sun and seal oil was rendered in large wooden vats.[27] As Toronto *Globe* correspondent Robert Cellem wrote during the visit, the smell of drying codfish "adds additional noisomeness to the smells of the streets and occasionally bursts upon the olfactory nerves with an intensity which might give rise to the suspicion that the concentrated essence of the billions of codfish murdered by man was stinking in ghostly revenge."[28] Some activities during the visit (the landing, a trip up Signal Hill to take in the view, the departure) used the harbour as their focal point. Yet these activities centred on the harbour's natural scenery rather than any industry associated with it. At the early stages of planning, Governor Bannerman suggested that the prince should see "at least one of our fishing stations," preferably Portugal Cove, but this did not occur.[29]

---

[25] *Public Ledger,* 17 July 1860.
[26] Ibid.
[27] For contemporary descriptions of seal oil vats in St. John's Harbour, see Briton Cooper Busch, *The War Against the Seals: A History of the North American Seal Fishery* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 63; "Seal-Vat," *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, 2nd ed. with supplement, ed. G.M. Story, W.J. Kirwin, and J.D.A. Widdowson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 539.
[28] Robert Cellem, *Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to the British North American provinces and United States in the year 1860* (Toronto: Henry Rowsell, 1861), 19.
[29] Letter from Governor Bannerman to Organizing Committee, 12 June 1860, copied in reception committee minute book entry of 12 June 1860, PANL, MG 631.

It is in discussions about public health, smells, and sanitation that we see the most vivid descriptions of the city's streets and residents' concerns. Specific details and plans for cleaning up the city streets are not available from the committee's minute book, and the subcommittees' minutes, if they ever existed, have not survived. But newspapers provide an indication of what some people, who were not necessarily members of the organizing committee, wanted to see occur in the streets and in the harbour. The *Public Ledger* commended the cleanup work, commenting that "it appears to be the general desire that everything which could offend the eye be removed," but other sources suggest there was still much work to be done.[30] On July 14, nine days before the prince's arrival, *The Times* published a long letter from the grand jury to the magistrates deploring the state of the town streets. Its timing was surely not coincidental. "It becomes *now* still more imperative" to remedy these matters which "bring discredit upon the government and the community in which we live," the grand jury wrote.[31] The grand jury's letter presented a litany of complaints about the city's streetscapes, pointing the finger at property owners and listing a variety of locations, both residential and commercial, that ought to be cleaned up. These included a damaged wall between the courthouse and the Anglican churchyard, the need for a safety wall at the steep west side of the courthouse, "offensive" slaughter-houses on the premises of Edward Flaherty's bake-house and Summers and Scott's mercantile premises, dirty sidewalks near Baine, Johnston & Co., Mr. Richard O'Dwyer's, and Mrs. J. Cusack's and Sons, "filthy" conditions in Gregory's Lane, and manure deposited in several

---

[30] *Public Ledger*, 17 July 1860.

[31] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, July 14, 1860. It was not out of the ordinary for a grand jury to issue pronouncements on non-criminal matters. David Murray writes that in Upper Canada, "given the lack of any representative institutions at the local level, the grand jury presentment was often the only voice of collective district public opinion." David Murray, "Law and British Culture in the Creation of British North America," in *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, ed. Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 70.

town streets. The grand jury elaborated on the problem of animals running at large, including pigs and dangerous dogs, singled out children's behaviour, advising of "the continued practice of throwing stones by boys, and also of a game frequently practiced, especially on Sundays, of throwing an iron short along the public road, more particularly on the Long Pond and Freshwater Roads."[32] Juxtaposed with articles commending the decorations and arches' "pretty effect" and the builders and decorators' "good and substantial" work, the letter stands as a stark reminder of the grimness of the nineteenth-century port town streetscape, where slaughter-houses and roaming pigs coexisted with mercantile premises selling luxury wares.[33]

Further illustrating the grand jury's report, the Subcommittee on Cleaning the Town and Neighbourhood presented a report to the Board of Works, reporting "many dangerous and disgusting nuisances throughout the streets and bylanes," and recommending that three men with horses and carts be employed to keep the streets clean for the duration of the royal visit.[34] Halifax and Saint John, "dirty port cities with open sewers and polluted gutters," enacted similar measures in advance of the royal visit.[35] Halifax went so far as to line certain streets with spruce trees to disguise the dirt (although the trees later had to be removed because they presented a fire hazard).[36] In St. John's, organizers lined Cochrane Street, leading uphill from Government

---

[32] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, July 14, 1860.
[33] Ibid. At least one visiting reporter lauded the city's cleanliness. The Toronto *Globe* reported that the "roads are good… there is plenty of paint upon the houses and very few pigs in the streets. Cows, fowl, and horses, without their owners are never seen in the King-Street of St. John's." *Globe*, quoted in *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 5 September 1860.
[34] Minutes of reception committee, 27 June 1860, PANL, MG 631.
[35] Huskins, "Tale of Two Cities," 36. In St. John's, construction of a municipal water supply began in the spring of 1860 and construction of a sewerage and drainage system would not be implemented until 1888. Until this time, residents threw waste and garbage into surface drains that ran down the slope of the hill to the harbour. See Melvin Baker, "The Politics of Assessment: The Water Supply in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1844-1864," *Acadiensis* 12, no. 1 (Autumn 1982): 68, 71; Melvin Baker, "Disease and Public Health Measures in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1832-1855" *Newfoundland Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (Spring 1983): 26-9, http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~melbaker//disease.htm (accessed 11 January 2018).
[36] Huskins, "Tale of Two Cities," 36.

House to the waterfront, and the main street the prince would follow in his procession from the harbour to Government House, with foliage. One paper described the street as "a forest of evergreens."[37] (If anyone complained about the fire hazard the trees posed, their complaints have not survived.)

The grand jury's letter and the subcommittee's report echo Mary Ryan's description of public streets in nineteenth-century America as "places of promiscuous public sociability" that transported a diverse range of people and goods through a congested environment yet "were not particularly well equipped to ease and enhance these functions." In Ryan's words, the public thoroughfares of North American cities at this time were "simply, a mess."[38] For the most part, people conducted their business and lived their lives in this setting, but as the grand jury's letter reveals, there were moments, such as the royal visit, that prompted them to take stock of affairs. The letter-writers named and shamed people whose properties and behaviour they deemed unpresentable, and the subcommittee implemented temporary measures to make the streets cleaner. The streets received this kind of attention because people associated them with respectability, class, and prosperity.

Readying the Streets: Decorations, Archways, and Displays of Loyalty

Beyond cleaning up waste, garbage, and rounding up roaming animals, inhabitants of nineteenth-century towns "dressed up" their streets for these sorts of occasions. Both the organizing committee (using state funds) and private individuals put up decorations. As Ian Radforth noted, "triumphal arches" featured frequently throughout the tour. Each city on the

---

[37] Minutes of reception committee, 12 July 1860, PANL, MG 631; *Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser* (St. John's), 24 July 1860.

[38] Ryan, *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 40. For the effects the lack of sewer and water system had on public health in St. John's, see Baker, "Disease and Public Health Measures."

prince's route was caught up in a frenzy of arch-building. Governments, individuals, businesses, and fraternal and benevolent societies commissioned and built arches of varying sizes and materials, frequently decorating them with spruce boughs, moss, and flowers. Cities competed to see who could raise the most elaborate arches while journalists fanned the flames of competition by describing the arches in detail.[39] When met with news of a royal visitor, officials, organizations, and individuals throughout the nineteenth-century British world embarked upon arch-building as if it were the default and expected response.[40]

In St. John's, this default response culminated with some townspeople seriously entertaining the prospect of erecting an arch over the span of the narrows. This was the brainchild of merchant Stephen March, who with a group of Royal Navy officers had measured the distance between the cliff faces at the harbour's entrance and, according to the *Times*, concluded that building the arch was indeed possible. (The article did not go into specifics on *how* construction would work.)[41] Despite the engineering difficulties this proposal would clearly entail, the idea of a massive decoration dwarfing any other arch constructed in other cities along the prince's route had its appeals. The *Times* enthused that an arch over the narrows "would look extremely brilliant by night when lit with lamps of all colours and beautiful by day dressed with variegated flags."[42]

Civic arch building has a long history, hearkening back to medieval England, Renaissance Italy, early modern France and before that to ancient Rome.[43] Colleen Skidmore suggests that given these ancient associations, arches created an impression of age and stability in North

---

[39] Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 57.
[40] Ibid., 69.
[41] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 19 June 1860.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 68.

American cities, hinting at the transference of ancient traditions to the new world, and fashioned good reputations for their creators, positioning them as “conservative and stable; imaginative and forward-thinking.”[44] The space of the archway itself can be a liminal space where the outsider becomes an insider and ceremonially becomes part of the city. Of course, as Ian Radforth points out, the caveat to all of this is that we cannot know whether people in the crowd were aware of these cultural meanings.[45]

However fantastical it may have been, the plan to put an arch across the narrows supports the interpretation of arches as liminal spaces and speaks to the harbour’s importance as the entry and exit point from the town. If the plan to surmount the narrows could not succeed, the arch erected at the Queen’s Wharf, the prince’s landing site, could also serve as a liminal marker, welcoming the prince to North America and marking the end of the journey across the ocean. Henry Winton Jr.’s support for putting an arch across the narrows suggests he saw it as a liminal space: “it is the custom to choose the entrances or gateways in the way of passage for decoration, [and] it will appear at once very absurd that the first and principal entrance affording scope for the exercise of genius and skill, and taste, too, should be abandoned, in favour of the adornment of a few gateways.”[46] If St. John’s was in fact the seat of the oldest colony, the site where the British Empire was established, as its boosters liked to claim, then its arch had to stand as more than just an entry point to the town. It was the entry point to North America.

Colleen Skidmore suggests that ceremonial arches expressed the host city’s opportunities and prosperity as well as its loyalty, an observation that serves to further explain

---

[44] Colleen Skidmore, “Concordia Salus: Triumphal Arches at Montréal, 1860,” *Journal of Canadian Art History* 19, no. 1 (1998): 89, 102.
[45] Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 39.
[46] *Public Ledger*, 28 June 1860.

why the idea of erecting this enormous arch, rather than something "ordinary" (in Winton's dismissive words) appealed to supporters.[47] Editor Henry Winton Jr. was particularly upset when it was scuppered, calling the rejection

> a very great want of a taste infinitely superior to those very common every-day displays to which the Committee of Reception has confined itself. The raising of arches here and there is doubtless a pretty thing enough in its way, and their ornamentation by means of spruce boughs, calico flowers, and other natural and artificial appliances, may give them a very variegated appearance; but then they are the ordinary methods of welcome, and may be applied where no facilities present themselves for a grander and more unique cast of embellishment.[48]

Winton did not want "common" decorations – he wanted something that would set the town apart! In his view, arches were so commonplace and expected that something else had to be put in place to elevate St. John's status.[49]

The organizing committee did erect other arches throughout the city, the centrepiece of which was at the wharf. This "very neatly designed triumphal arch," was surmounted with the Imperial Arms, beneath which appeared the word "Welcome," with the initials of the Prince on either side and the initials "V.R." and "V.A," greeting the royal party as they disembarked.[50] The prince's crest and the motto "Ich Dien," (I serve) featured on the arch's pillars.[51] More arches

---

[47] Skidmore, "Concordia Salus," 107.
[48] *Public Ledger*, 3 July 1860. *The Times and General Commercial Gazette* also endorsed the arch plan in its issue of 28 April 1860.
[49] Winton even suggested that authorities would have approved the idea if it had originated with a government insider "such as a Kough." *Public Ledger*, 3 July 1860. Builder Patrick Kough, who played a role in chapters two and three of this dissertation, was in charge of the sub-committee on arches and had built several public buildings around the town. He was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1860, served a term as a member of the House of Assembly in 1832, and acted as superintendent of public buildings from 1834 until his death in 1863. Fabian O'Dea, "KOUGH, PATRICK," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 August 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kough_patrick_9E.html.
[50] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.
[51] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 31 July 1860. The Southcott brothers, who won a public bid, built all the public arches except this one. Minutes of reception committee, 4 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.

awaited the procession as it moved towards Government House. The arch at the top of Cochrane Street spanned the road,

> with two small arches over the sidewalks; the whole being supported mainly by two strong turrets each side of the centre arch, all being well covered with evergreen, flags flaunting from the top, and the north and south faces being decorated with the mottoes "Long live the Prince," and "God save the Queen."[52]

Both the *Public Ledger* and the *Times* suggested this arch be maintained in perpetuity as a reminder of the visit.[53] At the Commissariat Building, next to Government House, loomed another arch "surmounted by a Prince of Wales' plume and inscribed on both sides "Ich Dien.""[54] Bunting and evergreens festooned the Commissariat Building and east entrance to Government House, while the entry to Government House sported the prince's initials and motto. In addition to these, the organizing committee erected more five more arches in the west end of the city.[55]

As the place of arrival and a focal point of the visit, the harbour came in for special attention. New rules and regulations applied during the duration of the royal visit; no vessels apart from naval ships could dock at the Queen's Wharf, the harbour pilots were to keep the harbour empty enough that the prince's ships would have "room to swing at their anchors," ship owners were asked to decorate their vessels, and hawsers extended from the East and West sides of the Queen's Wharf to form a barrier preventing marine traffic from interrupting the

---

For more on the Southcotts, whose architectural work came to define much of late nineteenth-century St. John's, see Shane O'Dea, "SOUTHCOTT, JAMES THOMAS," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 18 February 2018, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/southcott_james_thomas_12E.html; Shane O'Dea, *The Domestic Architecture of Old St. John's* (St. John's: Newfoundland Historical Society, 1974).

[52] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.

[53] Ibid.; *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, July 31, 1860.

[54] *Royal Gazette*, 31 July 1860.

[55] Ibid.

barge conveying the prince and his suite from his ship *Hero* to the wharf. Boats were permitted to moor outside of the hawsers, provided they were decorated and had received prior permission to be there, thereby presenting a unique vantage point from which residents could view the pageantry.[56] The harbour was an important space, imbued with symbolic importance and security concerns during the visit.

The reporter from the *New York Herald* remarked on the harbour's centrality in the city and its communications: "The harbor itself appears to be landlocked in the bold promontories on either side. It is rather narrow, so that but one vessel can enter at a time… The lofty position of the city, which is built upon a hill, added to the grandeur of the scene [of the prince's arrival]."[57] The *Herald* described the city as "built in theatrical turns around the harbour, and [rising] with the hills from the water's edge," with the streets taking on a "theatrical form."[58] The town's bowl-shape provided excellent vantage points for those interested in watching the landing: "the streets running lengthways along the shore form a series of terraces, each one of which commands a view of the harbour and there is scarcely an house's roof or upper window from which the ships cannot be seen."[59] The harbour was the town's focal point, the stage upon which the visit's performance and pageantry would begin.

Apart from the waterfront, the Colonial Building and neighbouring Government House were the visit's focal points, and received the most attention from the organizing committee in terms of construction, landscaping, and temporary decorations. They built a wooden pavilion to host a ball adjacent to the Colonial Building, and linked the pavilion and the Colonial Building

---

[56] *Royal Gazette*, 24 July 1860; reception committee minutes, 15 June 1860, PANL, MG 631.
[57] *New York Herald*, 27 July 1860, article copied in *Royal Gazette*, 14 August 1860.
[58] *New York Herald,* 7 August 1860, article copied in *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 25 August 1860.
[59] Toronto *Globe*, article copied in *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 5 September 1860.

with a fabric canopy. The canopy received substantial criticism in local newspapers. *The Times* called it "quite an abortion" and reported with great relief when it was removed. Gone was any "fear of the things finding its likeness in the *Illustrated London News*."[60] The *Public Ledger*'s "Talk about Town," a regular feature summarizing local happenings and gossip, called the canopy and the pavilion "primitive," resembling something erected by "Ojigaways."[61] Besides the insult to indigenous peoples, Winton's use of the word "primitive" shows his own colonial anxieties and insecurities coming to the fore; it reflects his desire to be seen as properly respectable and civilized and for the townspeople to be perceived as colonists planting British ideals of decorum, not jettisoning them on a rocky outcrop.[62] For his part, the Toronto *Globe*'s Robert Cellem described the pavilion in pleasant enough terms, as a "wooden ballroom," set to contain twelve hundred people: "the inside is hung with calico of various colours, the roof is being covered with moss, and a large quantity of artificial flowers…will be arranged in divers [sic] patterns upon the walls and ceiling. The whole will be lighted with gas."[63] Visitors remarked on pretensions to taste and respectability in the decorations.

Although they generally applauded these decorating measures when they were downtown and at the harbour, newspapers admonished the organizing committee for spending time and money on areas the prince was unlikely to see. If the committee's goal was to create a sense of cohesion and loyalty throughout the entire town, involving outlying neighbourhoods was one way to do it. At the request of the Anglican minister at Portugal Cove, the organizing committee agreed to spend money on arches and decorations in the nearby outport, an outlay

---

[60] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 18 July 1860.
[61] *Public Ledger,* 20 July 1860.
[62] Editors seemed so relieved to see the canopy go that they did not comment on the cost of building and then dismantling it immediately afterwards.
[63]Cellem, *Visit of His Royal Highness*, 21-22.

John McCoubrey at the *Times* referred to as “a perfect misapplication of funds intended for quite a different purpose.”[64] McCoubrey suggested that funds allocated to Portugal Cove presented an opportunity for a member of the legislature who was also on the committee to “obtain a name for himself amongst his ‘free and independent’ constituents.”[65] The MHA, suggested *The Times*, should not allow his position “to drive him into extremes which only expose his want of judgement.”[66]

There were more decorations than those envisioned by the organizing committee and financed by the state. Private businesses and homeowners also decorated their premises. The city papers discussed privately and publicly funded decorations, and mentioned certain businesses and individuals by name. For businesses, this was good advertising, for individuals, a show of loyalty. Churches, mercantile premises, numerous private residences, and public buildings were “tastily decorated” with flags, both in the city and “for several miles round” in the country. The LeGallais sisters, who ran the Church of England Academy for Young Ladies and who decorated both the academy and their home, were among the private individuals singled out for praise. *The Times* was “particularly struck by the beautiful display in front of the residence of the Misses LeGallies [sic], directly facing the eastern entrance to Government House.” Emigrants from Jersey, the LeGallais sisters wrote the message “‘Heir of the Norman Isles! Hail! All Hail!’” on a transparency, a feature that “when lit up had a magnificent effect.”[67]

---

[64] *Times and General Commercial Gazette,* 23 June 1860. The committee allocated 25 pounds for decorations at Portugal Cove. Gifford requested additional money to have a trail cleared to a lookout point above the town, serving as “an elegant and interesting memorial” of the royal visit, even were the prince not to visit Portugal Cove. Minutes of reception committee, PANL, MG 631, entries of 26 and 27 June 1860.
[65] *Times and General Commercial Gazette,* 23 June 1860.
[66] Ibid. This is probably a reference to premier John Kent, one of three MHAs for St. John’s East (which included Portugal Cove) and the only one of those three to be involved in the organizing committee.
[67] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 28 July 1860.

The *Public Ledger* remarked on the bunting and evergreens decorating the Academy, noting that "throughout the whole line the display was most excellent and in very good taste."[68]

In the case of women such as the LeGallais sisters whose "beautiful display" drew public attention, this was a chance to enter, however tentatively and in a highly-prescribed way, into the public sphere. The streets might have been gendered male, but the home was a feminine space; what better way for a woman to enter the public conversation than by writing an expression of loyalty on her home? In this manner, the LeGallais sisters were not unlike the women Elsbeth Heaman studies, who, prohibited from public address, used exhibitions in ways that permitted them to act as historical agents, self-fashioning, advertising their economic agency and handiwork, while still adhering to the doctrine of separate spheres.[69] Forays such as this would be the extent of women's influence on the visit. Women were present as icons, allegories, and spectators, as for instance at the arrival ceremony where a special place had been set aside for them.

Arrival

The flurry of preparation was still ongoing when the prince and his suite arrived a day earlier than anticipated, entering the narrows on July 23 after a crossing of ten days. The *Royal Gazette* described the burst of activity when the party of vessels appeared on the horizon: "Flags, banners, streamers and mottoes were displayed as if by magic and the town soon wore a holiday appearance."[70] Robert Cellem of the Toronto *Globe* had some fun at the expense of the not-quite-prepared townspeople: "Of course the Prince won't land. Why our windows are not washed yet, and the arches are not completed – and the candles are not cut – and our flags are

---

[68] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.
[69] Elsbeth Heaman, *The Inglorious Arts of Peace: Exhibitions in Canadian Society during the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 259.
[70] *Royal Gazette*, 24 July 1860.

not up – and a thousand reasons of equal importance render it impossible that the Prince should land to-night."[71]

Rain had turned the town into a muddy mess and caused the landing on the morning of July 24 to be delayed by several hours, but the spectacle began to unfurl at the harbourfront at noon. Some women watched the landing from a special gallery built at Governor Bannerman's suggestion: "they will like to look at the Prince, and I have no doubt he will like to see them."[72] At the Queen's Wharf, accommodation for approximately 450 women had been made, but by the time various governmental, religious, and military figures had been allotted places, only 266 seats remained for women.[73] Tickets to access this space sold well; by mid-July only 16 of the women's tickets remained.[74] Given the Toronto *Globe*'s comment that "if 450 people are to sit there, crinoline will have to be prohibited," it is possible that these numbers are exaggerated. Who were these "beautiful and fashionably attired ladies" who "waved their spotless handkerchiefs" while watching events on the Queen's Wharf?[75] The ticketing process was obviously strict, and designed to guarantee the respectability of attendees. The *Herald* pointed out that "no lady (even the best dressed) could be admitted without a formal ticket, signed and countersigned in an official fashion."[76] Requests for tickets went through Edward Morris, secretary to the organizing committee, who would submit them for the wider body's approval.[77] Morris and other committee members would then vet the suitability of women who wished to claim prime royal-watching real estate on the Queen's Wharf. The rules were stringent and

---

[71] Cellem, *Visit of His Royal Highness*, 29.
[72] Bannerman to reception committee, 12 June 1860, PANL, MG 631.
[73] Minutes of reception committee, 12 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.
[74] *Public Ledger*, 24 July 1860.
[75] *Globe*, reprinted in *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 1 September 1860. *New York Herald*, 27 July 1860, reprinted in *Royal Gazette*, 14 August 1860.
[76] *New York Herald*, 27 July 1860, reprinted in *Royal Gazette*, 14 August 1860.
[77] Minutes of reception committee, 18 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.

publicity was high: carriages were to drop spectators off no later than half an hour before the prince's arrival, and newspapers published the names of the men who would accompany women to their assigned seats.

The Prince's first steps on the shore prompted Henry Winton Jr. to muse on the collective reaction the women in the stands must have experienced, suggesting that "to them must have occurred the thought that they were assembled to see the son of a female who was an honour to her sex."[78] Winton's sentiment reveals public attitudes towards femininity and motherhood. Queen Victoria, he wrote, was a women to whom "the slightest affront offered… would cause thousands of devoted hearts to spring as one man in her defence, not the more that she is their sovereign, but as combined therewith she is looked upon as the paragon of female excellence…"[79] While her royal duties necessitated her being a public figure, Winton described Queen Victoria as in need of protection and worthy of the loyalty and protection the men of the nation offered her. The presence of the women in the gallery and the rules for accessing the space tell us about the men who directed the ceremony and who were showing off their home. The women in the gallery could revel in the presence of the "paragon's" son and he could watch them, proof of the respectable womanhood cultivated on this rocky outcrop. In her study of women's participation at public events in nineteenth-century America, it was outpourings of sentiment such as this one that led Mary Ryan to conclude that "the actual physical presence of women during these early ceremonies was small and largely passive but nonetheless highly visible."[80] The sight of women watching the prince was enough to set off

---

[78] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Mary Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 25.

commentators' thoughts on womanhood, respectability, and women's place in public and in the town.

Women were indeed constrained to watching during the visit and had no role in organizing festivities. By the time the people of St. John's marked Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897, planning the special events was still men's province, but a women's committee fundraising for a new hospital wing commemorating Victoria's reign held auxiliary events in support of their cause.[81] Women did not hold this autonomy in 1860, and their role was relegated to that of spectator. Journalists focussed on the men of the planning committee, while women themselves made, in the words of Mary Ryan, referring to similar events in the United States, "only a phantom appearance at public ceremonies. They were not so much absent as present in disguise and marked for political exclusion."[82] As a portrait of the people, urban ceremony had its limits.

The women's gallery overlooked the Queen's Wharf. It was those gathered on the wharf for the landing who really represented a map of who held power and prestige in the town. While municipal officials usually would have greeted the prince on arrival, in the absence of the city having any municipal government, Governor Bannerman invited representatives from the military, politics, and the clergy to attend the landing (table 5). The *Public Ledger* found fault with an early version of this list, as only the Anglican and Catholic churches were represented, so the Governor issued a *Royal Gazette Extraordinary* with invitations also issued to the Church of Scotland, Wesleyan, Free Kirk, and Congregational ministers.[83] Even then the order of precedence was not to everyone's liking: because the Governor had not specified the order of

---

[81] Jiri Smrz, "Cabot 400: The 1897 St. John's Celebrations," *Newfoundland Studies* 12, no. 1 (1996): 23.
[82] Ryan, *Women in Public*, 67.
[83] *Public Ledger*, 20 July 1860; 24 July 1860.

precedence among the clergy, the *Globe* correspondent wondered facetiously whether "the Episcopalian [bishop would] walk *pari passu* with his brother of Rome? Will the disciples of John Knox, John Wesley, and John Whitfield settle the matter between them, without the aid of ecclesiastical blows and knocks?"[84] (In the procession itself, the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops marched at the front, while Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian leaders were well behind, with several other parties separating the clerics.) Foreign consuls also complained that they should have been placed higher on the list.[85]

Table 5: Parties invited to attend the Prince of Wales' landing at the Queen's Wharf, 1860.

The Bishops
The Chief Justice (Frances Brady, also chair of the Organizing Committee)
Assistant Judges
President and members of the Executive Council
The Master in Chancery
Members of the Legislative Council
Speaker of the House of Assembly
Members of the House of Assembly
Commander of the garrison
Officers of the garrison
Garrison chaplains
The Archdeacon
Foreign consuls
The Clerk of the House of Assembly
Police Magistrates of St. John's
Ministers of the Church of Scotland, Wesleyan, Free Kirk, and Congregational churches*

*= not included in earlier published announcement
Source: *Public Ledger*, 20 July 1860.

Jockeying over precedence was not limited to the small number of delegates invited to attend the landing at the Queen's Wharf. Voluntary and benevolent societies were invited to line the streets along the route to Government House, and then to fall in line two by two as the royal party passed them.[86] The organizing committee asked groups to march in order of longest-

---

[84] *Globe*, quoted in Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 90-91.
[85] Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 91.
[86] *The Royal Gazette*, 24 July 1860.

established to most recently established. But the groups could not agree on who among them was the oldest. The order of precedence the organizing committee submitted to the *Royal Gazette* had the Freemasons at the front of the line, but the Benevolent Irish Society, established in St. John's in 1806, argued that while Freemasonry might have existed elsewhere around the world in 1806, it had not yet arrived in St. John's, making the BIS the oldest voluntary society in the town. A "long and animated discussion" in which some slighted individuals proposed withdrawing from the event altogether ensued at the BIS hall. Edward Morris won the rattled party over with an appeal to their duty to civil society. Morris "pointed out to the Society the responsibility it would incur by declining to walk in the procession," arguing that withdrawing from the parade would lead to "disunion and dissension" among the other societies and in the "public mind."[87] Like the Ontario fraternal societies and organizations Andrew Holman studies, and as Chapter Two showed, the BIS were concerned that their public profile reflect loyalty, unity, and respectability above all else.[88] Marching second in the procession was vastly preferable to not marching at all. On parade day, the groups struck a compromise to march side by side, with the Masons on one side of the street and the BIS on the other.[89] The *Public Ledger* had a little fun at both groups' expense, observing "Benevolence is pretty far back in theory; but bricks and mortar were stock materials with the polyglot builders of Babel. The talk is, Trowel takes the lead."[90]

[87] BIS minutes, 22 July 1860, PANL, MG 612, reel 75.
[88] Andrew C. Holman, *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 97-100.
[89] *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's, Newfoundland 1806-1906* (Cork: Guy and Company, [1906?]), 109.
[90] *Public Ledger*, 24 July 1860.

Radforth observes that these kinds of mild skirmishes were par for the course at every town and city along the route.[91] As Chapters Two and Three both demonstrated, groups used parading as an instrument to demonstrate their respectability, and their right to occupy space in the town and in society. Now these same groups were quibbling over who was the *most* respectable or had the longest lasting claim to the town streets. Groups held the chance to be in proximity to the prince in high importance; like the individuals Bruce Curtis examined in his study of Lord Durham's 1840 tour of the Canadas, these men took part in rituals that reproduced relations of domination through their temporary denial. Wharfside pageantry was a ritual in which "the aristocratic and the democratic were blended in an effort to affirm and legitimate rule."[92] The state and the monarchy legitimized themselves through these ceremonies, and the clubmen wished to do the same, gleaning power through proximity. Figure 8 depicts the division of space and ranks at the scene of the landing. Notice the women's gallery to the right of the arch and the fence separating the landing area from the public street.

---

[91] Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 91.

[92] Bruce Curtis, "'The Most Splendid Pageant Ever Seen': Grandeur, Condescension and the Domestic in Lord Durham's Political Theatre," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 1 (2008): 72. Phillip McCann offers a similar perspective on the state legitimising itself, reinforcing or reproducing its power through public events in "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition."

Figure 8. E. Walker, The Landing and Reception of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales at St. John's Newfoundland on the 24th July 1860.
Notice the women's gallery to the right of the arch. Ink on paper – Lithography. McCord Museum M14589 http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/large.php?Lang=1&accessnumber=M14589&idImage=193342. Shared under Creative Commons License (CC BY-NC-ND 2.5 CA).

The procession (its participants are listed in table 6) covered about one kilometre, moving from the Queen's Wharf up Cochrane Street, circling St. Thomas' Church through what was known as the "Ordnance corner" and then arriving on the lawn at Government House. Gentle reminders to maintain decorum peppered the newspapers, reminding the crowd to "spread themselves as much as possible over the Lawn, to avoid cursing and confusion."[93]

Table 6: Order of the Procession to Government House, following the Prince of Wales' arrival in St. John's, 1860.

the Bishops (Anglican and Roman Catholic)
the Chief Justice and Assistant Judges
President and Members of the Executive Council and the Master in Chancery

[93] *Royal Gazette*, 24 July 1860. Another version of the program of arrangements suggests the crowd avoid "crushing and confusion," not "cursing." Minutes of reception committee, 18 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.

Members of the Legislative Council, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, the Members of the House of Assembly
Major Grant, Officers of the Garrison
Chaplains, the Archdeacon
The Clerk of the House of Assembly
The Police Magistrates of St. John's
the Presbyterian minister, the chairman of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Minister of the Free Kirk, the Congregational Minister
a guard of honour
Freemasons
Benevolent Irish Society
Mechanics' Society
St. Andrew's Society
Newfoundland British Society
St. George's Society
Phoenix Volunteer Fire Company
Coopers' Society
Total Abstinence Society

Source: *Royal Gazette*, 31 July 1860.

Activities

The activities for the two days of the visit were typical royal tour events, highlighting the town's churches, public buildings, and recreational sites as evidence of its respectability and progress. It is unclear how much of the itinerary was set by the organizing committee and how much was determined in advance by communication between Governor Bannerman and Henry Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, an advisor to the prince. Bannerman frequently relayed information on royal protocol and suggestions for the visit and decorations to the organizing committee. On day one of the visit, a levee and a presentation of addresses (table 7) immediately followed the procession to Government House. Several of the men presented appeared in earlier chapters of this dissertation: Bishops Feild and Mullock were the first two in line. Other individuals featured elsewhere in this dissertation included James Rogerson (nephew of mercantile clerk Samuel Rogerson whose correspondence with family members featured in Chapter One), Edward Morris, builder and MHA Patrick Kough, and newspaper editor Henry Winton Jr. In the

afternoon, the prince and his entourage rode four miles through town as far west as Waterford Bridge, visiting the hospital and mental asylum along the way.

Table 7: Groups and individuals who presented addresses to the Prince of Wales during his 1860 visit to St. John's

The Lord Bishop of Newfoundland, and his Clergy, presented by the Lord Bishop[Edward Feild]
The Catholic Bishop and Clergy of St. John's, presented by Right Rev. Dr. Mullock
inhabitants of St. John's, presented by Sir Francis Brady, as Chairman of General Committee
Executive Council, presented by Hon. L. O'Brien, President
Legislative Council, presented by Hon. L. O'Brien, President
Masonic Society, presented by P. Tasker, Esq., D.G.P.M.
Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's, presented by Hon. E. Morris, Pres.
Benevolent Irish Society of Conception Bay, presented by John Fitzgerald, Esq., President
Saint Andrews Society, presented by T.R. Smith, Esq., President
inhabitants of Harbour Grace, presented by T.H. Ridley, Esq.
Phoenix Volunteer Fire Company, presented by Francis Boggin, Esq., Director
Mechanics' Society, presented by John Maher, Esq., President
Coopers' Society, presented by George Geary, Esq., President
Total Abstinence Society, presented by Charles Kickham, Esq, President
members of the Medical Profession in St. John's, presented by Dr. Stabb

Source: *Royal Gazette*, 31 July 1860.

The itinerary for day two consisted of visits to the Anglican Cathedral, the Anglican bishop's residence, and the Roman Catholic Cathedral and episcopal residence. The prince visited all the buildings associated with established institutions in the town. The prince also visited a regatta at Quidi Vidi Lake and went up Signal Hill to take in the view of the town below. The itinerary covered the typical assortment of institutions, religion, and recreation. In St. John's all the buildings the prince visited were relatively new, and they highlighted the town's establishment as a colonial capital. Unlike in Saint John, New Brunswick (where tradesmen met the prince on his arrival), Ottawa (where a welcome archway made of lumber greeted the prince), or Toronto (where an arch made of harvest materials spoke to agriculture's importance to the city's prosperity) there was no emphasis on local industry during the visit to St. John's.[94]

[94] Huskins, "Tale of Two Cities"; Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 64-66.

Although industry may have been overlooked, working-class leisure activities were not. The regatta, for instance, was a working-class activity. Phillip McCann explains that the annual regatta at Quidi Vidi Lake was the only non-commercial event in the city that was open to all, and spectators of all social classes flocked in the hundreds.[95] Outdoors, free of charge, and open to the public, it was an event that in the words of one contemporary observer, interested "high and low, rich and poor equally."[96] They packed picnics and watched the races. Meanwhile, the town's social elite took in the spectacle from tents erected on the north shore of the lake. Like the public feasts in Victorian Halifax and Saint John that Bonnie Huskins analyses, the attendant rituals associated with the regatta expressed hierarchy and defined the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.[97] The regatta was therefore an ideal place for the Prince to be put on display to one and all.

The ball at the Colonial Building took place in the evening of July 25, day two of the visit. Admission tickets for the ball were on sale at the Lash premises (bakers who were catering the event) and in the town's bookstores. Although the Lashes often catered high-profile events, these locations do not seem to be enforcing any kind of a class boundary. The cost of a ticket (twenty shillings for men and seven and 6 pence for women) itself was its own sort of boundary, however.[98] The *Royal Gazette* called the ball "brilliant" but the ball only merited a paragraph out of its two full pages of coverage of the visit. Personal sources recounting the ball are hard to find. In his diary, 25-year-old John Howley, a clerk in the House of Assembly, observed that the

---

[95] Phillip McCann, *Island in an Empire: Education, Religion, and Social Life in Newfoundland, 1800-1855* (Portugal Cove-St. Philip's NL: Boulder Publications, 2016), 207, 236-237.
[96] Undated memoir (ca. 1914-1918) written by Bishop Michael Francis Howley, MUN Archives, Collection 262, file 9.14.003.
[97] Bonnie Huskins, "From 'Haute Cuisine' to Ox Roasts: Public Feasting and the Negotiation of Class in mid-19th-Century Saint John and Halifax," *Labour/Le Travail* 37 (1996): 9-36.
[98] Huskins also makes this point regarding tickets, calling the prices their own form of "screening." Huskins, "From 'Haute Cuisine' to Ox Roasts," 31.

ball “went off with grand éclat” but devoted most of the space in his single entry for the month of July 1860 to one of his favourite pastimes, hunting for partridge.[99] Even the prolific diarist Edward Morris, who usually had a few lines to spare for dinners, balls, and other social occasions, silenced his pen for most of 1860, perhaps occupied by his duties as BIS president and secretary of the organizing committee for the royal visit. No primary sources detailing the visit from a woman’s perspective remain.

Local newspaper coverage revealed how the people who attended and organized events for the visit imagined themselves. Throughout the visit there was much talk of Newfoundland’s position as Britain’s oldest colonial possession. Winton’s *Public Ledger* proudly claimed that Newfoundland was “the oldest colonial soil of Great Britain.”[100] Likewise, the addresses from both the Anglican and Catholic clergy referred to Newfoundland as “the most ancient portion” of the British Empire and in his reply to addresses the Prince referred to Newfoundland as “the earliest colonial possession of the British Crown.”[101] The organizing committee presented the prince with a Newfoundland dog named “Cabot.”[102] On being told the dog’s name, the prince, according to one account, responded that “to that navigator must be attributed what you justly claim Newfoundland to be – a most ancient dependency of the British Crown.”[103] The dog’s name is another piece of how both the organizing committee and the local press used the visit to hearken back to the Age of Discovery while touting their home’s political, economic, and social development since its days as a seasonal fishing post. They also touted the colony’s role as

---

[99] John Joseph Howley Diaries, entry for July 1860, MUN Archives, Collection 262, File 6.01.005.
[100] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.
[101] *Royal Gazette*, 31 July 1860.
[102] Minutes of reception committee, PANL, MG 631, July 23, 1860. Local newspapers (*Public Ledger,* 31 July 1860; *Royal Gazette*, 31 July 1860) claimed the prince chose the name Cabot for the dog, but the minutes (written the afternoon of the arrival) make it clear that the organizing committee chose the name.
[103] *Royal Gazette*, 31 July 1860.

a communications hub (and expressed similar sentiments during the visit of the Catholic prelates for the Cathedral's consecration in 1855, as detailed in Chapter Three). Papers proudly pointed out that the Duke of Newcastle had sent a telegram to New York from near Cape Race, thus providing "an opportunity of testing the value of our position as a medium of communication with the rest of the world."[104] This technological advancement combined with the language of loyalty and Newfoundland's long history as a colony instilled pride and boosterism. For instance, the *Public Ledger* predicted that after the visit, the "highest authorities at home" would no longer see St. John's "as little, if anything, better than a fishing village."[105] Henry Winton Jr. felt confident in pronouncing that Newfoundland had represented itself so well that senior members of the Prince's suite must surely have "let in upon their minds such a gush of light as they never dreamed of."[106] The satisfaction would not last long, however. Although the visit was a chance for the townspeople to show off, visitors gleaned what they would from it. As the next section shows, the organizers could not control how visiting writers received their carefully orchestrated set pieces.

---

[104] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860. This claim is probably not as exciting as the newspaper makes it out to be. Given that ship-to-shore telegraphy was not operable until much later, it is likely that the Prince dropped a message in a water-tight canister from the ship, which was then retrieved by employees of the Cape Race telegraph station and sent on to New York via the submarine telegraph cable that linked Newfoundland and Cape Breton (completed in 1856). According to D.W. Prowse in 1895, dropping off news in this manner was common practice for vessels passing by Cape Race on the way to the North American mainland. Prowse, *History of Newfoundland*, 641, footnote 2.
[105] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.
[106] *Public Ledger*, 31 July 1860.

Departure and aftermath: A summer of comparisons

Figure 9. The Embarkation of the Prince of Wales at the Queen's Wharf, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1860. *The Illustrated London News,* September 1, 1860. As was the case in many points along the tour route, local men unhitched the horses from the prince's carriage and drew it to the departure point.

After three nights in Newfoundland, the prince and entourage departed (figure 9). The departure drew a crowd, much as the landing did, with fraternal societies following the prince's carriage as it exited Government House. This first portion of the prince's North American tour concluded, the St. John's newspapers turned their attention to reporting on and comparing their own reception of the prince to that offered in other locations on the tour. Throughout that summer and fall, the city's editors devoured details about where, when, and how the prince had been met in other places. They reprinted full coverage from British North American, American,

and British newspapers discussing the prince's reception in Newfoundland. The city got its collective shackles up when several American and British journals commented with derision on the city of St. John's itself and the relative mannerlessness of its inhabitants. This was par for the course; as Alan Gordon wryly observes in a review of Ian Radforth's *Royal Spectacle, "*It turns out that journalists depicted the same events with the same crowds differently, depending on how they were disposed to see these events."[107]

But in each disparate location, these same conversations also raised questions of identity and home, of the type of society that existed in each of the British North American colonies and how members of these societies perceived themselves and the empire. The *New York Herald* confused some elements of the prince's reception in Halifax with those of St. John's, leading to exasperation on *The Royal Gazette's* part when recounting the story: "the reporter drew slightly on his imagination… According to this account we have a 'Highland Society,' a 'Halifax Catholic Total Abstinence Society,' 'Volunteer Artillery Companies,' and an '*African Society'*; also a 'Mayor and Corporation.'" St. John's did not have these things, and some of its residents rankled at the suggestion they did. For all the effort organizers had put into placing their own civic associations and identities front and centre, they were annoyed to see them conflated with those of another town. Then again, given the monotony and repetition of these visits, how much could people in St. John's have really expected people from outside the town to know or care?[108]

As coverage of the Newfoundland portion of the tour began to trickle in from other newspapers throughout British North America and the United States, anxiety and outrage

---

[107] Alan Gordon, review of *Royal Spectacle* by Ian Radforth, *Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (March 2006): 117-118.
[108] Bonnie Huskins makes a similar point about civic boosters who hoped the visit would dispel popular misconceptions about the colonies. Huskins, "Tale of Two Cities," 35.

brimmed in the city's press. Could it be that the very event that was designed to show Newfoundland's progress had painted it as a provincial backwater? Winton Jr. observed that "it seems to be a standing order of misfortune with us that in proportion as we are warm and hearty in our reception of strangers, so their contempt for us appears to be all the deeper."[109] The dispatch from the *Metropolitan Record* from New York City was particularly hurtful since its masthead declared it was the "official organ of most Rev. Archbishop of New York," an individual who five years earlier had been among the honoured visitors at the consecration of the Catholic cathedral. The *Metropolitan Record* referred to St. John's as "that great fish city" and claimed that watching a molasses roll eating contest and greased pole race were among the activities the prince had taken part in.[110]

Sometimes writers invented set pieces that did not actually occur, as when a Toronto *Globe* reporter erroneously claimed that the prince had visited a fishing room, and taken in a demonstration of fish cleaning, splitting, salting, and drying. This event does not seem to have actually occurred: no other printed report of the visit, including local newspapers or the organizing committee's minute book makes reference to it. The prince, claimed the Toronto reporter, avoided "the usual boot oiling that accompanies a visit to these 'rooms,' but some of his followers were not so fortunate and were obliged to pay a douceur for the privilege of having a greasy hand smeared across their patent leathers."[111] The *New York Herald* was similarly dismissive and devoted considerable space in an already lengthy article to lampooning the manners of attendees at the ball. Because the ball was public (public in the sense that

---

[109] *Public Ledger*, 28 August 1860.
[110] *Metropolitan Record*, 4 August 1860, quoted in *Public Ledger*, 28 August 1860. A greasy pole race was a tradition at the Quidi Vidi Regatta, and a tradition that exists in several variations around the world, so the reporter's comment was not totally a propos of nothing. See *Royal St. John's Regatta*, Canada's Digital Collections, http://regatta.nlpl.ca/sites/culture/concessions.php (accessed 18 March 2018).
[111] Cellem, *Visit of His Royal Highness*, 38-39.

anyone who could come up the money could buy a ticket) reporter Kinehan Cornwallis remarked on the presence of "representatives of all classes and conditions." He continued: "Regarded as the best that the Newfoundlanders could do, it was certainly deserving of every praise; but regarded comparatively and on its merits, it was equal to the most ridiculous scene that ever Rabelais, Cervantes, Smollett, or Dickens imagined in their merriest moods."[112] Cornwallis's snide remarks on bad manners and provincial pretensions became his calling card as he followed the tour, but as the first city to receive his barbs, the residents of St. John's were deeply put out.[113] Cornwallis hit where it hurt, attacking the class pretensions and gentility the St. John's reception committee had so strenuously attempted to cultivate.[114] (Despite this criticism, St. John's *Royal Gazette* conceded that the lengthy report was on the whole "a very good one" and "must have cost a nice little sum for its passage over the wires."[115]) Winton Jr. at the *Public Ledger* ran an excerpt from the *Herald*'s piece, and gave as good as he got, referring to the article as an "indecent narrative," gleefully relaying that Cornwallis had been obliged to "borrow some of the clothing which he wore at the Ball, his own wardrobe being no more than would tie in a small cotton handkerchief."[116]

Cornwallis's jabs were hurtful because the whole exercise of planning for the visit was supposed to demonstrate Newfoundland's respectability and progress, as demonstrated by the middle-class individuals who had the time and leisure and interest to devote to its preparations. That a visiting journalist would compare it to something from a satirical novel was biting. Balls

---

[112] Kinahan Cornwallis, *Royalty in the New World, or, the Prince of Wales in America* (New York: M. Doolady, 1860), 30-31.
[113] For examples, see Radforth, *Royal Spectacle*, 100, 137, 159, 160, 298, and 332.
[114] H.V. Nelles uses the same terms to interpret a satirical cartoon portraying dour and and overweight attendees of the 1908 Quebec tercentenary ball. The drawing was "particularly wicked" because it "struck at anxieties and vulnerable vanities." Its satire clashed with how the Canadian people imagined themselves to be: fashionable and beautiful. Nelles, *Art of Nation-Building*, 235.
[115] Article copied from *Newfoundlander*, *Royal Gazette*, 14 August 1860.
[116] *Public Ledger*, 21 August 1860.

were places where the middle class and elite tightened their social circles. They were exclusive spaces whose etiquette and structure placed them, in Bonnie Huskins's words, as "weapons of respectability."[117] Visiting reporters may not have appreciated the distinction, disappointing some of the men and women who placed such stock in these performances, but the performances still resonated with local audiences and local press. The back-and-forth between towns occupied North American newspaper writers for much of the summer. J.W. McCoubrey of *The Times* reassured readers not to worry about unflattering American coverage for "the hearts and minds of our population were manifestly in the good work" they did, and the prince and his suite, who "have acknowledged that this 'land of fish and fog' (as a Republican skunk would call Newfoundland) far, very far exceeded their expectations."[118] For McCoubrey and others, the visit had proven Newfoundland's loyalty to the crown, and no American publication or town could match that.

As papers dissected the events, eagerly reprinted articles from foreign periodicals praising the city's handling of the visit, disdainfully reproached those who portrayed the city as an isolated backwater whose locals bungled the etiquette and niceties necessary to host a prince, and offered their own commentary on later events as the prince and his entourage moved through North America, they both defended and defined their city and its character. The *Times* reported proudly on a "more experienced" member of the royal suite who had "expressed agreeable surprise at the general appearance of St. John's and its vicinity, which [had once] been considered as a mere 'fishing station' exhibiting no signs of mercantile operations or enterprise beyond the necessary requirements for the prosecution of the fishery."[119] Many of

---

[117] Huskins, "From Haute Cuisine to Ox Roasts," 17.
[118] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 18 August 1860.
[119] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 4 August 1860.

the foreign newspapers embraced the narrative of transformation and improvement. Toronto's *Globe* bought in to the idea, observing that "a few years since, it was an offence for a man to repair a chimney or to build a house in the place – the imperial government did everything they could to discourage settlement upon the shores of Newfoundland... [yet] in spite of the opposition that has pressed so heavily upon it, St. John's has at length risen to riches and greatness. It is now a growing and exceedingly promising city."[120] With this narrative, city boosters explained away the town's shortcomings and turned a spotlight towards the characteristics they wished to illuminate about themselves: resilience and hard work in the face of imperial neglect had, in their view, thus fostered a respectable and loyal population.

As Chapter Three established, this narrative has deep roots and considerable sticking power. The extent to which their narrative was true or not mattered little to the civic boosters who promoted it – they wanted to create a narrative that justified the colony's perceived shortcomings in comparison to other North American locales. Often, in the same breath that they remarked on St. John's relatively short history as a centre of government or a year-round settlement, town boosters would refer to Newfoundland as "ancient" or refer to Cabot's landfall and create an image of state-sponsored settlement and governance at Newfoundland that extended much further into the past than it truly did. By mid-century, a distinct sense of civic and colonial identity and a series of invented traditions concerning the colony's origins had emerged in St. John's, trending in line with Eric Hobsbawm's observation that the nineteenth century was the era of mass production of national symbols across Europe and North America.

---

[120] *Globe*, quoted in *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 5 September 1860.

Those who held power consciously and deliberately forged traditions, events, and festivals that resonated with the public in order to establish loyalty and structure social relations.[121]

From both the top down and the bottom up, the interactive process of producing and manipulating symbols forged national communities.[122] In Newfoundland, the choice of symbols (Tudor and Elizabethan explorers, language that described the island as the "oldest colony") attempted to give the colony a special place within the Empire, positioning it as a springboard to North America and a special link to Europe.[123] Both Jiri Smrz and J.K. Hiller date the proliferation of rhetoric about Newfoundland as "ancient and loyal" to the late nineteenth century, but the rhetoric swirling at the time of the Prince of Wales' 1860 visit shows that similar themes were percolating by mid-century and were an important component of how some St. John's residents perceived their home.[124] For many city boosters, the "oldest colony" talk was a way to save face, appealing to a murky past to assert importance and hope for the future.

Conclusion

In three short days the bustle was over. As the arches and pavilion came down and things returned to normal in the town, the organizing committee met to wrap up final business. They agreed to pay fifteen pounds each to two carpenters injured while building temporary structures for the visit.[125] Souvenir-seekers were enticed to attend an auction of greenhouse

---

[121] Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914," in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 263-264.
[122] Nelles, *Art of Nation-Building*, 171.
[123] James Hiller, "Robert Bond and the Pink, White and Green: Newfoundland Nationalism in Perspective," *Acadiensis* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 120. This is much like the late nineteenth-century public events commemorating John Cabot, which allowed St. John's urban elites to cast the island as a distinct place, emphasize its people's moral and physical qualities, and pursue political aims that worked in Newfoundland's interest while also paying lip service to its imperial connection, detailed in Smrz, "Cabot 400."
[124] Hiller, "Robert Bond and the Pink, White, and Green," 120-121; Smrz, "Cabot 400," 27.
[125] Minutes of reception committee, 28 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.

plants, used to decorate the prince's apartments at Government House.[126] Another souvenir appeared in the form of a lithographic plate depicting the prince's landing at the Queen's Wharf.[127] The photographer donated a copy of the lithograph to the Legislative Council, who placed it upon the wall of the council chamber.[128] In August, Speaker of the House of Assembly Ambrose Shea received and declined a (rather late) invitation from the government of the United Canadas to attend festivities involving Prince of Wales, and in December the House of Assembly sent an address to the Queen, congratulating her on the prince's safe arrival home.[129] The organizing committee requested that the legislature erect a memorial to commemorate the visit, but nothing ever came of that.[130]

By autumn *The Times* was lamenting that the cleanliness measures instituted in honour of the prince's visit had largely fallen by the wayside, with "noxious and disease-inducing vapours" disturbing residents and the police unwilling to tell inhabitants to keep their property in order. The editor put forth that there was no better way to honour the visit's legacy than to maintain the cleanliness of the streets.[131] The town had put on its best (if temporary) face for a couple of days that summer. The changes were never intended to be permanent. Rather, they were a projection of the values and ideals that the organizing committee wished to shine a spotlight on for a brief time: the town's "arrival" as a colonial capital, and the respectability and loyalty of its people. If the cosmetic changes were temporary, the themes and language of the town that these men used to describe the colony, their home, and its history were not. Albert Edward's visit was perhaps not the first time stories about early forbidden settlement, "ancient"

---

[126] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 28 July 1860.
[127] *The Royal Gazette*, 11 December 1860.
[128] *The Royal Gazette*, 18 December 1860.
[129] *Public Ledger*, 28 August 1860, and *Royal Gazette*, 18 December 1860.
[130] Minutes of reception committee, 30 July 1860, PANL, MG 631.
[131] *Times and General Commercial Gazette*, 13 October 1860.

settlement, technological promise, and a desire to make up for lost time vis a vis the other British North American colonies were told in St. John's, but as a case study, the royal visit depicts a distinct local identity crystallizing in the summer of 1860.

Although from their minutes it appears that the organizing committee mostly deferred to Governor Bannerman's suggestions, their endeavours reveal an imagined landscape of the town's points of interest. These men's activities provide a prism through which to understand public life and identity in a particular colonial society at a particular time. Primary sources like the organizing committee's minute book and local newspapers reveal how middle-class men used the royal visit to challenge and construct self-perceptions. The local press's delight in taking shots at other towns, hyperbole regarding their own town, and the roster of activities on offer in St. John's were not much different from those on display in other places along the route that summer and fall. But as a chapter in a study about a place, how people interacted with and moved through that place's physical geography and built environment, and how inhabitants created that place in their minds, the preceding pages have shown how a certain swath of St. John's population took advantage of the prince's visit to reinforce a narrative for the town and its people and for themselves. To do so, they delineated certain areas of the city with heightened significance and built set dressing to underscore the importance of such locations as the harbour, Signal Hill, Quidi Vidi Lake, the route to Government House, the Waterford Valley, and Portugal Cove. In the lead-up to, during, and aftermath of those three days in July 1860, there had been more written and argued about the city's streets, what they looked like, and how people used them, than for any other event or period covered in this study.

Newspaper editors and civic boosters in nineteenth-century St. John's showed off the home they had made, creating a series of invented traditions and mythologies concerning the city's past to explain its contemporary state. To have a role in organizing or attending events

such as those associated with the royal tour was an opportunity to assert one's respectability and right to a place in the public sphere. Organizers shaped a civic narrative influenced by St. John's physical and perceived location in the North American and British imperial worlds. They both defined and defended their city and their society.

Conclusion: Places Beyond the Pages

The preceding pages detailed how some of the people who found themselves in St. John's in the early to mid-nineteenth century thought about the place, both locally and in relation to the wider world.[1] It detailed how they gradually made a home for themselves: attempting to recreate elements of social life in Britain, defining themselves in opposition and in comparison to the people around them, attempting to reinvent themselves in the process. They did this with an eye to developments in other colonies, constructing buildings and amenities (or opposing further development and amenities), debating what the town should look like and who should take up space on its streets. In doing so, they performed identities, etching meanings not only on the streets but upon their lives, meanings that they recorded in their letters, diaries, travel writing, and newspapers. These observations can be made of any colonial society, but by focussing on performance, identity, and making selves in one town, "Making Home" takes an in-depth look at these processes in one place as it shifted from trade outpost to colonial capital. This was a town that was deeply influenced by its connections to the British world and to transatlantic trade, at the same time as it was geographically isolated from Europe, mainland North America, and much of the rest of the colony of which it was the capital. If the men and women whose surviving writings and recollections fill its pages are the central characters in this study, the city's geography and landscape are the setting, the stage upon which they moved and the set dressing that shaped and informed their movements.

---

[1] Much of this conclusion is adapted from Angela Duffett, "Making Home, Writing Home: Letters, Diaries, and Self-Fashioning," *Borealia*, November 30, 2015, https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2015/11/30/making-home-writing-home-letters-diaries-and-self-fashioning/ (accessed 21 August 2018).

St. John's is different from many other colonial North American towns and capitals, just as Newfoundland is different from other settler colonies. As Elizabeth Mancke points out, Newfoundland differs from the intentionally planned settler colonies of the North Atlantic seaboard, where "settlements with local governments that became the basis of new societies – were the normal European spaces."[2] As Shane O'Dea has observed, dating back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there was a difference between what in Newfoundland would be a "resident" and in New England a "settler" who was determined to establish self-sufficiency through agriculture.[3] In St. John's, for much of its history, it was taken for granted that one's stay there would be temporary. "Making Home" charts a period in the early to mid-nineteenth century when this became less and less the case, but the town's built landscape reveals its origins as a different kind of place from other colonial settlements. The legacy of the transatlantic migratory fishery affected more than architecture and city planning – it affected attitudes towards how a society should function, and what amenities and institutions should even exist there in the first place.

The characters in this study were individuals who were firmly rooted in a British world. The experience of emigration had a profound impact on how they imagined social spaces.[4] They followed developments and events in other English-speaking colonies and created a shared sense of identity through their networks. Rooted as they were in a British world, local circumstances like climate, geography, and the economy ensured that these characters, like

---

[2] Elizabeth Mancke, "Spaces of Power in the Early Modern Northeast" in *New England and the Maritime Provinces*, ed., Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 33.
[3] Shane O'Dea, "Newfoundland: The Development of Culture on the Margin," *Newfoundland Studies* 10, 1 (1994): 73-81.
[4] Kent Federowich and Andrew S. Thompson, "Mapping the Contours of the British World: Empire, Migration and Identity," in *Empire, Migration and Identity in the British World*, ed. Kent Fedorowich and Andrew Thompson, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 15.

most denizens of the British world, would experience emigration and settlement in their own uniquely local manner.

"Making Home" is local history in an Atlantic context. As Kurt Korneski explains, local history provides a useful focal point for interrogating transatlantic phenomena. Studying episodes in local history allows historians to "identify and tease out the foundations of long-term if ultimately contingent constellations of institutions, identities, and economic and ecological relations integral to the 'structures of feeling' we call 'place.'"[5] Without attention to particular sites and stories located within a network, transnational history can have a flattening effect, obscuring demographically smaller regions.[6] Local studies that are informed by transnational sources represent a way forward. They shine a light on smaller, more overlooked regions that do not necessarily represent the dominant patterns in Atlantic history. St. John's, with its lack of local government, small and mobile middle class, and curious relationship with the island beyond the city, represents a unique site in Atlantic history. St. John's was and remains, as political scientists Christopher Dunn and Cecily Pantin observe, "a city apart from the rest of the province, and indeed from the rest of the country, in its history, its pattern of municipal development, its jurisdiction" and in policy areas such as infrastructure and image building.[7] "Making Home" has illuminated the historical roots of some of these areas.

The choice to emphasize local history in "Making Home" also stems from the author's desire to create something that would resonate with a local audience. Space and landscape are

---

[5] Kurt Korneski, *Conflicted Colony: Critical Episodes in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland and Labrador* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), 11.
[6] Jerry Bannister, "Atlantic Canada in an Atlantic World? Northeastern North America in the Long 18th Century," *Acadiensis* 43, 2 (Summer 2014): 23.
[7] Christopher Dunn and Cecily Pantin, "St. John's, A City Apart: An Essay in Urban Exceptionalism," in *Sites of Governance: Multilevel Governance and Policy Making in Canada's Big Cities*, ed. Martin Horak and Robert Young (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 198.

political topics. Studying how people moved through a space reveals its power dynamics, as does studying how people built spaces that emphasized certain characteristics and values over others. Landscapes throughout the colonial towns and cities of British North America can be read and interpreted with an eye to patterns of power relations in settlement, work, class relations, religion, and ethnicity. These divisions, established in the early nineteenth century, are still reflected in patterns of land use, in real estate, and in historic preservation. It is impossible to navigate the current-day landscape of downtown St. John's without re-enacting, to some degree, the patterns of these first and second-generation immigrants and officials who divided, labelled, and categorized the town. Although much has changed, the same slippery hills in winter, imposing cliff faces at the narrows, ice choking the harbour in winter, and general sightlines oriented towards the harbour remain. We cannot explain why the city looks the way it looks now or why it has the collective identity and public memory it does without understanding some of the earlier story this dissertation uncovers, and exploring the meanings contemporaries attached to their environment. As Rhys Isaac writes, "in order to recover the realities of a remote past and appreciate its ethos, we have to transcend our romantic views of the terrain and strive to recover something of the sense of it that its possessors had, each in its own generation."[8] "Making Home" takes the reader back to a beginning (not "the" beginning, because as in anything, there are many possible beginnings to choose from) in order to examine how the city got to where it is today.

In some small way, I hope that "Making Home" can inform local needs in heritage planning or public history and can encourage its readers to consider how and why the province's capital city is the way it is. Through its chapters on writing and landscape, fraternal and

[8] Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 12.

benevolent organizations, cathedral building and rivalries, and the 1860 visit of the Prince of Wales, "Making Home" has detailed a few select episodes illuminating values and decisions that still inform the cultural and physical landscape of downtown St. John's. The city described in the letters, diaries, and travel writing considered here lies beneath the current townscape, and "Making Home" helps us better understand its current iteration.

A sense of place is deeply embedded in the sources consulted throughout this project, whether it is the place the creator left or the place they found themselves in. In newspapers, travel writing, letters, diaries, through their fraternal and benevolent organizations, and at their places of worship, these characters created places that were meaningful to them. In one illustrative example, on being offered a glass of whiskey punch at a hotel, Edward Morris observed that he "liked [it] all the more because it was Irish. As long as I have been expatriated I still cling to everything that brings a recollection of that old dear Island of Saints."[9]

Around the same time as a proffered glass of whiskey triggered Morris's memories of Ireland, his seventeen-year-old brother in law Richard Howley, born in Newfoundland, was en route to Ireland for the first time, bound for the seminary and keeping a shipboard journal chronicling the Atlantic passage. It is unclear who Richard Howley intended as the audience for his writing, but he frequently addressed the reader as "you," as in this passage acknowledging the voyage's monotony: "You may perhaps expect more variety in this Journal especially as it is written in a situation so new to me, but it appears to me that there is a great sameness in a sea voyage… I just write everything as it happens and this is a true and exact account of my passage."[10] A "true and exact account" indeed. "Making Home" has stressed the unique

[9] Edward Morris Diaries and Journals, 5 November 1853, Maritime History Archive (MHA), Memorial University of Newfoundland, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).
[10] Richard Howley diary, 5 August 1853. Memorial University of Newfoundland Archives, Collection 262, file 7.01.001.

challenges that sources like letters, diaries, travel writing, and newspapers present for historians. Self-censorship, self-aggrandizement, omissions, and exaggerations pepper their pages. These sources provide tantalizing glimpses into how people lived their lives, bringing details and the odd secret to the fore. But these sources just as often focus on the quotidian: what the weather was like, what a person had for dinner, what vessels entered and exited the harbour, when the potatoes in a kitchen garden were ready for harvest. Edward Morris's extensive diaries are a prime example. As a researcher turns the pages, absorbing ordinary detail after ordinary detail, a picture moves into focus: for historians concerned with place and space, these sources provide crucial depictions of how places looked, sounded and smelled, and of how individuals interacted with and moved through the landscape: both their local surroundings and their transatlantic connections and imaginations.

By determining which elements of life merited inclusion on the page (whether in a diary, chosen to record events for one's own memories, in a letter or travel writing written with a view to what the recipient should or would like to hear about, or in a newspaper attempting to shape the public conversation) people gave meaning and definition to their lives, chose what was important, and engaged in place-making. They created a world in their written accounts, and researchers who pry into those accounts generations later find themselves caught up in the writer's triumphs and travails, eager observers of their affairs. Through their fraternal and benevolent organizations, churches, newspapers, and personal writings, the men and women profiled in this thesis invented a story about who they were and what their town and colony were about. By mid-century they often used language like "the oldest colony" to describe Newfoundland and drew pride in a perceived sense of connection to the metropole, even though their own colony, the supposed "oldest", was sorely lacking in infrastructure compared to some of its "younger" siblings. In some ways "Making Home" is the story of change over time

as a trading post transitioned to a colonial capital, grew in population and power, and attracted settlers who brought capital and built institutions. Yet "Making Home" also reflects on what makes St. John's different from other colonial towns, with its bizarre system of municipal governance, late establishment of responsible government, odd relationship with the rest of the colony, and religious and ethnic rivalries.

As for young Richard Howley, caught between places, the crossing may have been a liminal experience but the world of his written account most often reflected shipboard boredom. He passed the time learning the names of knots and writing detailed descriptions of birds and whales. He provided rather uncharitable descriptions of his fellow passengers, particularly the ship's cook, who had previously plied his trade on sealing vessels off Newfoundland's northeast coast. "Nowhere else could he acquire such perfection in the culinary art" noted Howley drily.[11] The days may have been monotonous, but Howley was keenly aware that he was leaving a familiar life for a place about which he had heard much but never seen, and when not terse and bratty, his writing reflects his suspension between the place he had left and the place he was bound for. On the first sight of land at Ireland, Howley was ecstatic: "On me it had the same effect as if I had inhaled laughing gass… There was I, who was never before 10 miles from St. John's, after crossing the great Atlantic and now looking on the land of Saints, of poets, of patriots, it appeared to me like a dream." Arriving in Ireland was, for Howley, a moment of transition and departure: "I could hardly for the moment satisfy myself of my own identity, but the reality soon forced itself on me and, strange as it seemed I was obliged to allow that I was <u>myself</u> and was <u>awake</u>."[12] The older generations of Richard's family, like his much older brother-in-law Edward Morris, whose diaries frequently reference Ireland, Irish culture,

---

[11] Richard Howley diary, 6 August 1853. MUN, Coll 262, file 7.01.001.
[12] Richard Howley diary, 12 August 1853. MUN, Coll 262, file 7.01.001.

homesickness, and attempts to recreate elements of Ireland in Newfoundland, had instilled in him an ineluctable feeling of connection and identification with Ireland. It was probably not only family conversations and connections that made Richard feel this way however: by the 1850s, Irishness was baked into the built landscape of the city. There were echoes of Ireland in the cathedral he attended and whose construction would have been ongoing throughout his childhood, and in the Benevolent Irish Society Hall which stood across the street from the cathedral.

Howley's diary concludes abruptly upon his arrival in Ireland. Yet his writing, coupled with the extensive writings of his brother-in-law, and those of other diarists and letter-writers featured in "Making Home" reveals that transatlantic connections that many residents of St. John's maintained. Edward Morris never returned to Ireland after emigrating to Newfoundland. He remained in St. John's, immersed in an Irish diaspora and instrumental in shaping his world, chronicling changes in the landscape like the construction of the rival cathedrals, the comings and goings of his social circle, and the activities of the fraternal and voluntary organizations of which he was an enthusiastic participant, including the reception committee for the Prince of Wales's 1860 visit. Never a leading light in politics or business in Newfoundland, Edward Morris was nonetheless present on the sidelines for a good many of the changes and events that shaped the colony in the nineteenth century. He chronicled developments in politics, religion, and business with the same careful attention he gave to events within his household and among his family.

Meanwhile, Richard Howley's diary, like many shipboard diaries, concludes abruptly upon arrival. What became of this bright and sometimes snarky boy? Edward Morris occasionally wrote proudly of Howley's achievements, and Howley wrote Morris from Rome in 1859 to congratulate him on his appointment to the Legislative Council. He encouraged Morris

to write him more frequently: "I hope also to be able to write to you more regularly for the future though when I write to Kate, or indeed any of my family, I always rest satisfied in that I have virtually written to you."[13] Indeed, writing "virtually" to multiple family members was a common sentiment among transatlantic letter-writers. When younger brother Tom Howley arrived in Dublin in 1859 to study medicine, Richard noted that "It is a great comfort to me to have him here. He is the first member of our family I have seen for eight years."[14]

Later records reveal further elements of Richard Howley's adult life. By the 1880s he was permanently back in North America, shuffling between a number of parishes in Newfoundland and the United States. An undated letter between his brothers Tom and James hints at his having a drinking problem. They talk about other siblings who have shut Richard out, and Tom writes "I do not believe in treating him harshly, what's the use of it, he can't be accountable… the end of it will be he will be off again some day to Canada or the States or so on. It is a sad business."[15] Richard died in New York State in 1912. The Richard Howley in the journal comes off as endearing albeit somewhat haughty, an eager observer of the world around him, writing with wonder about porpoises, whales, and his first glimpse of Ireland. For young Richard Howley, the transatlantic crossing from St. John's to Ireland was a threshold – he left St. John's a boy, to train for the priesthood in his father's homeland. For three and a half weeks he recorded his observations. Who was he between those weeks on the ship and the letters that passed between his brothers many years later?

And here is where letters and diaries are at their most frustrating. The rest of the story – the family left in Newfoundland (many of whom were prolific diarists themselves), the

---

[13] Richard Howley to Edward Morris, 28 April 1859. MUN, Coll 262, file 7.01.003.
[14] Richard Howley to Catherine Morris, n.d. MUN Coll 262, file 7.01.002.
[15] Tom Howley to James Howley, n.d. MUN, Coll 262, file 7.01.007.1.

education, praise, and turmoil that awaited him – can be fleetingly sketched. But when the ship docks, he puts his pen aside. The curtain goes down and the lights dim. The performers are no longer visible, and we are left to ponder the brief performance their words recreate. “Making Home” has relied on letters, diaries, travel writing, and newspapers to portray how people in nineteenth-century St. John’s reacted to the town’s built and physical landscape, how they attempted to change the landscape through building churches and halls, and how they participated in parades and processions to make statements about ethnicity and identity. These characters created not only a self but a world in their writing, but for all that they reveal, there is much that remains unsaid. In both their lives and the landscapes they described, we can only speculate on the person and the place that existed beyond the page margins.

Bibliography

Archival Sources

Archives of the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador (AADENL).
Collection 100.43 – Bishop Feild

City of St. John's Archives
MG 30. William R. Noad, *Map of St. John's, Newfoundland from Actual Survey*, 1852.

Liverpool Record Office
Collection 380 BOW, C.T. Bowring and Co. Ltd.

Memorial University of Newfoundland Archives
MF 279, Ann Morris Collection.
COLL-262, Howley Family Collection
MF-369, Rennie Family Papers

Maritime History Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Edward Morris Diaries and Journals, Reels 1-3-3-(1-3).

National Records of Scotland
GD1/620. Rogerson family in Russia, Newfoundland, and Scotland.

Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador
MG 204. John Thomas Duckworth collection.
MG 612. Benevolent Irish Society fonds.
MG 631. Arrangements for the Reception of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales.

Published primary sources

A Sketch of the State of Affairs in Newfoundland by a Late Resident in that Colony. London: Saunders and Otley, 1841.

Anspach, Lewis A. *A history of the island of Newfoundland: containing a description of the island, the Banks, the fisheries and trade of Newfoundland and the coast of Labrador*. London, 1819.

Banks, Joseph. *Joseph Banks in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1766: His Diary, Manuscripts, and Collections*. Edited by A.M. Lysaght. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

Benevolent Irish Society (St. John's, NL). *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society, February 17, 1806*. St. John's: John Ryan and Son, 1807.

___. *Rules and Constitution of the Benevolent Irish Society of Newfoundland, February 17th, 1806*. St. John's: J. Woods, Gower Street, printer, 1847.

___. *Centenary Volume of the Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's, Newfoundland 1806-1906.* Cork: Guy and Company, [1906?].

Bonnycastle, Richard. *Newfoundland in 1842.* 2 vols. London: H. Colburn, 1842.

Carson, William. *A Letter to the Members of Parliament.* Greenock: W. Scott, printer, 1812.

Cellem, Robert. *Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to the British North American provinces and the United States in the year 1860.* Toronto: Henry Rowsell, 1861.

Chappell, Edward. *Voyage of His Majesty's ship Rosamond to Newfoundland and the Southern coast of Labrador, of which countries no account has been published by any British traveller since the reign of Queen Elizabeth.* London: Printed for J. Mawman, 1818.

Collett, Thomas F. *The Church of England in Newfoundland, no. 2*. St. John's: Joseph Wood, 1854. https://archive.org/details/cihm_93141 (accessed 26 November 2017).

Cormack, William. "Report of Mr. W.E. Cormack's journey in search of the Red Indians in Newfoundland: read before the Beothick Institution of St. John's, Newfoundland." S.l. : s.n., 1828? http://eco.canadiana.ca/view/oocihm.61101/3?r=0&s=1

Cornwallis, Kinahan. *Royalty in the New World, or, the Prince of Wales in America.* New York: M. Doolady, 1860.

Curling, James Joseph and Charles Knapp. *Historical Notes Concerning Queen's College, St. John's, diocese of Newfoundland, 1842-1897.* London?: s.n, 1898. https://archive.org/details/cihm_13166 (accessed 18 October 2017).

Feild, Edward. *Newfoundland Journal of a Voyage of Visitation in the "Hawk" Church Ship, on the Coast of Labrador and Round the Whole Island of Newfoundland in 1849.* London: Printed for the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel, 1850.

___. *The Diary of Bishop Edward Feild in 1844.* Edited by Ronald Rompkey. St. John's, NL: ISER Books, 2010.

Fleming, Michael Anthony. *Letters on the state of religion in Newfoundland. Addressed to the very Rev. Dr. A. O'Connell, P.P., by the Right Rev. Dr. Fleming.* Dublin: James Duffy, 1844. http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/ref/collection/cns/id/22544

Howley, James P. *The Beothucks, or Red Indians*, *the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Newfoundland.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915.

Jukes, Joseph Beete. *Jukes' excursions : being a revised edition of Joseph Beete Jukes' "Excursions in and about Newfoundland in the years 1839 and 1840."* Edited by Robert Cuff and Derek Wilton. St. John's: H. Cuff, 1993.

___. *Letters and extracts from the addresses and occasional writings of J. Beete Jukes, M.A. F.R.S. F.G.S.* Edited by C.A. Browne. London: Chapman and Hall, 1871.

Keir, David. *The Bowring Story*. London: The Bodley Head, 1962.

MacGregor, John. *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of the Maritime Colonies of British America*. London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Browne, and Greene, 1828.

McCrea, R.B. Excerpt from *Lost Amid the Fogs: Sketches of Life in Newfoundland*. In *"Complaints is Many and Various but the Odd Divil Likes It": Nineteenth Century Views of Newfoundland*, edited by R.G. Moyles, 21-24. Toronto: Peter Martin Associations, 1977.

Prowse, D. W. *A History of Newfoundland*, 2nd ed. Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, NL: Boulder Publications, 2007.

Spencer, Aubrey George. "The Church of God: a sermon Acts XX. 28., preached in the Parish Church of St. John's, Newfoundland on Good Friday, 1842." St. John's: J.W. McCoubrey, 1842.

Steele, Robert. *A Tour Through Part of the Atlantic; or: Recollections from Madeira, the Azores, and Newfoundland… Visited in the Summer of 1809.* London: J.J. Stockdale, 1810.

Taylor, Bayard. Excerpt from *At Home and Abroad: A Sketch of Life, Scenery, and Men*. In *"Complaints is Many and Various but the Odd Divil Likes It": Nineteenth Century Views of Newfoundland*, edited by R.G. Moyles, 16-19. Toronto: Peter Martin Associations, 1977.

Tocque, Philip. *Wandering Thoughts or Solitary Hours.* London: T. Richardson, 1846.

Wardle, Arthur C. *Benjamin Bowring and His Descendants: A Record of Mercantile Achievement.* 2nd ed. London: Hodder and Staughton, 1940.

Wix, Edward. *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary's Journal.* London: Smith, 1836.

Woods, Joseph, editor. *Newfoundland Almanac for the Year of Our Lord 1860*. St. John's: Joseph Woods, 1859. http://collections.mun.ca/PDFs/cns_almanac/Almanac1860.pdf (accessed 15 February 2018).

Newspapers

The Newfoundlander
The Public Ledger and Newfoundland General Advertiser
Royal Gazette and Newfoundland Advertiser
Times and General Commercial Gazette

Dictionary of Canadian Biography Entries

Armstrong, Frederick H. "HAY, WILLIAM," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of
Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-. Accessed 24 June 2018.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hay_william_11E.html.

Baker, Melvin. "BOWRING, BENJAMIN," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 25 August 2016.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/bowring_benjamin_7E.html.

Bruce, Pamela. "Hoyles, Newman Wright," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Universite Laval, 2003-. Accessed 2 September 2018.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hoyles_newman_wright_1777_18407E.html.

Devereux, E.J. "McCOUBREY, JOHN WILLIAMS," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 2 September 2017. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mccoubrey_john_williams_10E.html.

Hiller, J.K. "MORRIS, EDWARD," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 15 September 2018.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/morris_edward_11E.html.

———."SHEA, Sir AMBROSE," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 11 October 2017.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shea_ambrose_13E.html.

———. "SHEA, Sir EDWARD DALTON," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 11 October 2017.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shea_edward_dalton_14E.html

Lahey, Raymond J. "FLEMING, MICHAEL ANTHONY," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 2 October 2017.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/fleming_michael_anthony_7E.html.

———. "SCALLAN, THOMAS," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-. Accessed 4 December 2017.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scallan_thomas_6E.html.

Mannion, John. "MORRIS, PATRICK," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 7, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 23 July 2017.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/morris_patrick_7E.html.

———, "SHEA, HENRY," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 13 July 2017.
http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/shea_henry_6E.html.

Matthews, Keith. “MacBRAIRE, JAMES,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 6, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 25 August 2016. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/macbraire_james_6E.html.

O’Dea, Fabian. “KOUGH, PATRICK,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 25 August 2016. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kough_patrick_9E.html.

O’Dea, Shane. “PURCELL, JAMES,” *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-. Accessed 21 November 2016. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/purcell_james_8E.html.

___. SOUTHCOTT, JAMES THOMAS,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 28 February 2018. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/southcott_james_thomas_12E.html

O’Flaherty, Patrick. “KIELLEY, EDWARD,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 22 July 2017. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kielley_edward_8E.html.

———. “WINTON, HENRY DAVID,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 8, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 22 July 2017. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/winton_henry_david_8E.html.

Story, G.M. “CORMACK, WILLIAM EPPES,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of
Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 6 August 2018. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cormack_william_eppes_9E.html.

Thomas, C.E. “SPENCER, AUBREY GEORGE,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 8 August 2018. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/spencer_aubrey_george_10E.html.

Waite, P.B. “KENT, JOHN,” in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–. Accessed 4 October 2017. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/kent_john_10E.html.

Secondary sources

Acheson, T.W. *Saint John: The Making of A Colonial Urban Community*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* Revised edition. London: Verso, 2006.

Baker, Melvin. “The Government of St. John’s, Newfoundland, 1800-1921.” PhD thesis, The University of Western Ontario, 1981.

———. "The Politics of Assessment: The Water Supply in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1844-1864." *Acadiensis* 12, no. 1 (Autumn 1982): 59-72.

———. "Disease and Public Health Measures in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1832-1855." *Newfoundland Quarterly* 78, no. 4 (Spring 1983): 26-29. Accessed 11 January 2018. http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~melbaker//disease.htm.

———. "The Great St. John's Fire of 1846." *Newfoundland Quarterly* 79, no. 1 (1983): 31-34.

———. "Absentee Landlordism and Municipal Government in Nineteenth-Century St. John's." *Urban History Review* 15, no. 2 (October 1986): 164-171.

———. "Voluntarism and the Fire Service in Nineteenth-Century St. John's, Newfoundland." *Newfoundland Quarterly* 77, nos. 1 and 2 (Spring and Summer 1992). Accessed 11 February 2018. http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~melbaker/firedept.htm.

Bannet, Eve Tavor. *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Bannister, Jerry. "The Campaign for Representative Government in Newfoundland." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 5 (1994): 19-40.

———. "A Species of Vassalage: The Issue of Class in the Writing of Newfoundland History." *Acadiensis* 24, no. 1 (Fall 1994): 134-144.

———. "Convict Transportation and the Colonial State in Newfoundland, 1789." *Acadiensis* 37, no. 4 (Spring 1998): 95-123.

———. "Whigs and Nationalists: The Legacy of Judge Prowse's *History of Newfoundland*." *Acadiensis* 32, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 84-109.

———. *The Rule of the Admirals: Law, Custom, and Naval Government in Newfoundland, 1699-1832*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

———, and Liam Riordan. "Preface." In *The Loyal Atlantic: Remaking the British Atlantic in the Revolutionary Era*, edited by Jerry Bannister and Liam Riordan, ix-iviii. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012.

———. "Atlantic Canada in an Atlantic World? Northeastern North America in the Long 18th Century." *Acadiensis* 43, no. 2 (Summer 2014): 3-30.

Bridge, Carl and Kent Fedorowich. "Mapping the British World." In *The British World: Culture, Diaspora, Identity*, edited by Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, 1-15. London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003.

Brown, Shirley Ann. "The 'Late Gothic' Stained Glass Windows in the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in St. John's, Newfoundland." *Journal of the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada* 28, nos. 3, 4 (2003): 21-30.

Blumin, Stuart M. *The Emergence of the Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Busch, Briton Cooper. *The War Against the Seals: A History of the North American Seal Fishery.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990.

Bushman, Richard. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Knopf, 1992.

Cadigan, Sean. "The Role of the Fishing Ships' Rooms Controversy in the Rise of a Local Bourgeoisie: St. John's, Newfoundland, 1775-1812." Paper presented to the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, 1992.

———. *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

———*. Newfoundland and Labrador: A History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

Candow, James. *The Lookout: A History of Signal Hill.* St. John's: Creative Publishers, 2011.

Chiasson, Paulette M. "As Others Saw Us: Nova Scotia Travel Literature from the 1770s to the 1860s." *The Nova Scotia Historical Review* 2, no. 2 (1982): 9-24.

Christie, Nancy. "'In These Times of Democratic Rage and Delusion': Popular Religion and the Challenge to the Established Order, 1760-1815." In *The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760 to 1990*, edited by G.A. Rawlyk, 9-47. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994.

———. "'The Plague of Servants': Female Household Labour and the Making of Classes in Upper Canada." In *Transatlantic Subjects: Ideas, Institutions and Social Experience in Post-Revolutionary British North America*, edited by Nancy Christie, 83-132. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008.

Codignola, Luca. "How Wide is the Atlantic Ocean? Larger and Larger." *Acadiensis* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 74-80.

Coffman, Peter. *Newfoundland Gothic.* Quebec City: Éditions multimonde, 2008.

Cottrell, Michael. "St. Patrick's Day Parades in Nineteenth-Century Toronto: A Study of Immigrant Adjustment and Elite Control." *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 25, no. 49 (May 1992): 57-73.

Courage, John. "Parliamentary Privilege in Newfoundland: The Strange Case of Keilly vs. Carson." *Canadian Parliamentary Review* 4, no. 3 (1981): 10-12.

Cullum Linda, and Marilyn Porter, eds. *Creating this Place: Women, Family, and Class in St. John's, 1900-1950*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014.

Curtis, Bruce. *Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871.* Barcombe, England and Philadelphia: Falmer Press, 1988.

———. "The 'Most Splendid Pageant Ever Seen': Grandeur, Condescension, and the Domestic in Lord Durham's Political Theatre." *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 1 (June 2008): 55-88.

Davidoff, Leonore and Catherine Hall. *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850.* Revised edition. London: Routledge, 2002.

Dening, Greg. "Introduction: In Search of a Metaphor." In *Through A Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*, edited by Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobal, and Frederika J. Teute, 1-6. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Dierks, Konstantine. *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

Dunn, Christopher, and Cecily Pantin. "St. John's, A City Apart: An Essay in Urban Exceptionalism." In *Sites of Governance: Multilevel Governance and Policy Making in Canada's Big Cities*, edited by Martin Horak and Robert Young, 198-217. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012.

Earle, Nancy. "Introduction: The Life of John T. Mullock." In *The Finest Room in the Colony: The Library of John Thomas Mullock*, edited by Ágnes Juhász-Ormsby and Nancy Earle, 1-14. St. John's: Memorial University Libraries, 2016.

English, Leona M. "Teaching the 'Morally and Economically Destitute': 19th-Century Adult Education Efforts in Newfoundland." *Acadiensis* 41, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2012): 66-88.

Errington, Elizabeth Jane. *Wives and Mothers, Schoolmistresses and Scullery Maids: Working Women in Upper Canada, 1790-1840*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995.

———. *Emigrant Worlds and Transatlantic Communities: Migration to Upper Canada in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007.

———. "Webs of Affection and Obligation: Glimpse into Families and Nineteenth Century Transatlantic Communities." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 19, no. 1, 2008: 1-26.

Fahey, Curtis. *In His Name: The Anglican Experience in Upper Canada, 1791-1854*. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1991.

Federowich, Kent and Andrew S. Thompson. "Introduction: Mapping the Contours of the British World: Empire, Migration and Identity." In *Empire, Migration and Identity in the British World*,

edited by Kent Federowich and Andrew S. Thompson, 1-41. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.

FitzGerald, John E. "Conflict and Culture in Newfoundland Catholicism." PhD thesis, University of Ottawa, 1997.

———. "The Year of Joy and Centenary Renovations to the Cathedral, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1953-55." Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies* 64 (2002). Accessed 13 November 2017. http://www.umanitoba.ca/colleges/st_pauls/ccha/Back%20Issues/CCHA2002/FitzGerald.htm#.

Fingard, Judith. "The Relief of the Unemployed Poor in Saint John, Halifax, and St. John's, 1815-1860." *Acadiensis* 5, no. 1 (Autumn 1975): 32-54.

Fraser, Joy. "Performing Tradition and Ethnicity at the Newfoundland St. Andrew's Society Burns Supper." *Ethnologies* 30, no. 2 (2008): 181-200.

Gerber, David A. *Authors of Their Lives: The Personal Correspondence of British Immigrants to North America in the Nineteenth Century*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2006.

Gibson, Sarah Katherine. "Self-Reflection in the Consolidation of Scottish Identity: A Case Study in Family Correspondence, 1805-50." In *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, edited by Philip Buckner and R.D. Francis, 29-44. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006.

Goheen, Peter G. "Symbols in the Streets: Parades in Victorian Urban Canada." *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine* 18, no. 3 (February 1990): 237-243.

———. "Negotiating Access to Public Space in Mid-Nineteenth Century Toronto." *Journal of Historical Geography* 20, no. 4 (1994): 430-449.

Gordon, Alan. Review of *Royal Spectacle: The 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States* by Ian Radforth. *Canadian Historical Review* 87, no. 1 (March 2006): 117-119.

Greene, John P. *Between Damnation and Starvation: Priests and Merchants in Newfoundland Politics, 1745-1855*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000.

Gunn, Gertrude. *The Political History of Newfoundland, 1832-1864*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966.

Hall, Catherine and Sonya O. Rose. "Introduction: being at home with the Empire." In *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, edited by Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, 1-31. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Handcock, W. Gordon. *"Soe Longe as there Comes Noe Women": Origins of English Settlement in Newfoundland*. St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1989.

Heaman, Elsbeth. *The Inglorious Arts of Peace: Exhibitions in Canadian Society during the Nineteenth Century.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Heron, Craig, and Steve Penfold. "The Craftsmen's Spectacle: Labour Day Parades in Canada, the Early Years." *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 29, no. 58 (November 1996): 357-390.

Hiller, James K. and Peter Neary, editors. *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

Hiller, James K. "Robert Bond and the Pink, White and Green: Newfoundland Nationalism in Perspective." *Acadiensis* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 113-133.

———. Review of *Newfoundland Gothic*, by Peter Coffman. *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 24, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 159-160.
Hobsbawm, Eric. "Introduction: Inventing Traditions." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence, Ranger, 1-14. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

———. "Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 263-308. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Hogan, Mary Patricia. "The Role of Mary in the History of the Church in Newfoundland." Master's thesis, University of Ottawa, 1957.

Hollett, Calvin. *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland, 1774-1874*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010.

———. Beating Against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1844-1876. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016.

Holman, Andrew C. *A Sense of Their Duty: Middle-Class Formation in Victorian Ontario Towns*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000.

Houston, Susan E and Alison Prentice. *Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario.* Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988.

Huskins, Bonnie. "Public Celebrations in Victorian Saint John and Halifax." PhD thesis, Dalhousie University, 1991.

———. "From 'Haute Cuisine' to Ox Roasts: Public Feasting and the Negotiation of Class in mid-19th-Century Saint John and Halifax." *Labour/Le Travail* 37 (1996): 9-36.

———. "'A Tale of Two Cities': Boosterism and the Imagination of Community during the Visit of the Prince of Wales to Saint John and Halifax in 1860." *Urban History Review* 28, no. 1 (October 1999): 31-46.

Isaac, Rhys. *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982.

———. "Stories and Constructions of Identity: Folk Tellings and Diary Inscriptions in Revolutionary Virginia." In *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*, edited by Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobel, and Frederika J. Teute, 206-237. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

Jones, Frederick. "Bishops in Politics: Roman Catholic vs. Protestant in Newfoundland, 1860-2." *Canadian Historical Review* 55, no. 4 (December 1974): 408-421.

———. "The Great Fire of 1846 and the Coming of Responsible Government in Newfoundland." *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* VI:2/VII:1 (Autumn, 1983): 61-69.

Katz, Michael. *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century City.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Keough, Willeen. "Contested Terrains: Ethnic and Gendered Space in the Harbour Grace Affray." *The Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (March 2009): 29-70.

———. *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Korneski, Kurt. *Conflicted Colony: Critical Episodes in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland and Labrador*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009.

Lambert, Carolyn. "Emblem of our Country: The Red, White, and Green Tricolour." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 23, 1 (2008): 21-43.

———. "Far from the Homes of their Fathers: Irish-Catholics in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1840-86." PhD thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2010.

———. "No Choice but to Look Elsewhere: Attracting Immigrants to Newfoundland, 1840-1890." *Acadiensis* 41, no. 2 (Summer/Autumn 2012): 89-108.

Lockridge, Kenneth. "Colonial Self-Fashioning: Paradoxes and Pathologies in the Construction of Genteel Identity in Eighteenth-Century America." In *Through A Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America*, edited by Ronald Hoffman, Mechal Sobal, and Frederika J. Teute, 274-339. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.

MacKinnon, Robert. "The Agricultural Fringe of St. John's." In *Four Centuries and the City: Perspectives on the Historical Geography of St. John's*, edited by Alan MacPherson, 53-81. St. John's: Department of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2005.

Mcleod, Roderick. "The Road to Terrace Bank: Land Capitalization, Public Space, and the Redpath Family Home, 1837-1861." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 14, no. 1 (2003): 165-192.

McNairn, Jeffrey L. *The Capacity to Judge: Public Opinion and Deliberative Democracy in Upper Canada, 1791-1854.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.

———. Everything was new yet familiar': British Travellers, Halifax, and the Ambiguities of Empire." *Acadiensis* 36, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 28-54.

MacNutt, W.S. *The Atlantic Provinces: Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965.

MacPherson, Alan. "The People of Newfoundland: A Longue Durée in Historical Geography." In *A Social Geography of Canada*, edited by Guy M. Robinson, 373-392. Toronto and Oxford: Dundurn Press, 1991.

———. "The Demographic History of St. John's, 1627-2001." In *Four Centuries and the City: Perspectives on the Historical Geography of St. John's*, edited by Alan MacPherson, 1-18. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, Department of Geography, 2005.

Mancke, Elizabeth. "Spaces of Power in the Early Modern Northeast." In *New England and the Maritime Provinces: Connections and Comparisons*, edited by Stephen J. Hornsby and John G. Reid, 32-49. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.

Mannion, John, editor. *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography*. St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1977.

Marland, Alex and Lisa Moore. "How the Democracy Cookbook came together." In *The Democracy Cookbook: Recipes to Renew Governance in Newfoundland and Labrador*, edited by Alex Marland and Lisa Moore, 21-31. St. John's: ISER Books, 2017.

Matthews, Keith. "The Class of '32: St. John's Reformers on the Eve of Representative Government." *Acadiensis* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 80-94.

———. "Profiles of Water Street Merchants." Unpublished manuscript, 1980. Mimeograph.

———. "Historical Fence Building: A Critique of the Historiography of Newfoundland." *Newfoundland Studies* 17, no. 2 (October 2001): 143-165. Originally published in *The Newfoundland Quarterly* in 1978.

McCann, Phillip. "Culture, State Formation, and the Invention of Tradition: Newfoundland, 1832-1855." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, (April 1988): 86-103.

———. *Island in an Empire: Education, Religion, and Social Life in Newfoundland, 1800-1855.* Portugal Cove-St. Philip's, NL: Boulder Publications, 2016.

McKenna, Katherine. *A Life of Propriety: Anne Murray Powell and Her Family, 1755-1849*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994.

Middleton, Simon and Billy G. Smith. “Class and Early America: An Introduction.” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (April 2006): 211-220.

Mills, David B. “The Development of Folk Architecture in Trinity Bay, Newfoundland.” In *The Peopling of Newfoundland: Essays in Historical Geography*, edited by John Mannion, 77-101. St. John’s: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1977.

Murphy, Michael P. *The Story of the Colonial Building: Seat of Parliament from 1850 to 1960, now the home of the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Archives.* St. John’s: Ministry of Provincial Affairs, 1972.

Murphy, Paula. *Nineteenth-Century Irish Sculpture: Native Genius Reaffirmed*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.

Murray, David. “Law and British Culture in the Creation of British North America.” In *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity*, edited by Phillip Buckner and R. Douglas Francis, 64-75. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006.

Nelles, H.V. *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec’s Tercentenary*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Nielson, Carmen J. *Private Women and the Public Good: Charity and State Formation in Hamilton, Ontario, 1846-93.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014.

Noel, S.J.R. *Politics in Newfoundland*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.

O’Dea, Shane. *The Domestic Architecture of Old St. John’s.* St. John’s: Newfoundland Historical Society, 1974.

———. “Newfoundland: The Development of Culture on the Margin.” *Newfoundland Studies* 10, no. 1 (1994): 73-81.

O’Flaherty, Patrick. *The Rock Observed: Studies in the Literature of Newfoundland.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

Ommer, Rosemary, editor. *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective*. Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1990.

———. *From Outpost to Outport: A Structural Analysis of the Jersey-Gaspé Fishery, 1767-1886.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990.

———. “The 1830s: Adapting their Institutions to their Desires.” In *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History*, edited by Phillip A. Buckner and John G. Reid, 284-306. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Opp, James, and John C. Walsh. "Introduction: Local Acts of Placing and Remembering." In *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, edited by James Opp and John C. Walsh, 3-24. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010.

Pearsall, Sarah M.S. *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century*. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2008.

Podruchny, Carolyn. *Making the Voyageur World: Travellers and Traders in the North American Fur Trade.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Polack, Fiona. "Reading Shanawdithit's Drawings: Transcultural texts in the North American colonial world." *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 14, no. 3 (Winter 2013), accessed 6 August 2018, https://muse.jhu.edu/.

Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation.* 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Radforth, Ian. *Royal Spectacle: the 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Reid, John G. "How Wide is the Atlantic Ocean? Not Wide Enough!" *Acadiensis* 34, no. 3 (Spring 2005): 81-87.

Roberts, Julia. *In Mixed Company: Taverns and Public Life in Upper Canada.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009.

Rowe, C. Francis. *In Fields Afar: A Review of the Establishment of the Anglican Parish of St. John's and its Cathedral.* St. John's: SeaWise Enterprises, 1989.

Rowe, Ted. "'Perfectly Enraptured': The Prince of Wales in St. John's, 1860." *Newfoundland Quarterly* 106, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 39-47.

Ryan, Mary P. *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

———. *Civic Wars: Democracy and Public Life in the American City during the Nineteenth Century.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

Russell-Corbett, Jane. "'The Ecclesiologist' and Anglican Church Architecture in the Colonies." *Study for the Society of Architecture Bulletin* 21, no. 4 (1996): 89-94.

Ryan, Shannon. "The Newfoundland Salt Cod Trade in the Nineteenth Century." In *Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation*, edited by James Hiller and Peter Neary, 40-66. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

———. "Fishery to Colony: A Newfoundland Watershed, 1793-1815." *Acadiensis* 12, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 34-52.

Schwartz, Joan. “Complicating the Picture: Place and Memory between Representation and Reflection.” In *Placing Memory and Remembering Place*, edited by James Opp and John C. Walsh, 293-312. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010.

Skidmore, Colleen. “Concordia Salus: Triumphal Arches at Montréal, 1860.” *Journal of Canadian Art History* 19, no. 1 (1998): 86-112.

Smrz, Jiri. “Cabot 400: The 1897 St. John’s Celebrations.” *Newfoundland Studies* 12, no. 1 (1996): 6-31.

Steele, Ian K. *The English Atlantic, 1675-1740: An Exploration of Communication and Community*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Story, G.M., W.J. Kirwin, and J.D.A. Widdowson. *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*. Second edition with supplement. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.

Sutherland, David. “Voluntary Societies and the Process of Middle-Class Formation in Early-Victorian Halifax, Nova Scotia.” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 5, no. 1 (1994): 237-263.

———. “1810-1820: War and Peace.” In *The Atlantic Region to Confederation*, edited by Philip Buckner and John G. Reid, 234-262. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Tosh, John. *A Man’s Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.

Trigger, Rosalyn. “Irish Politics on Parade: The Clergy, National Societies, and St. Patrick’s Day Processions in Nineteenth-Century Montreal and Toronto.” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 37, no. 74 (November 2004): 159-200.

Van Die, Marguerite. “A ‘Christian Businessman’ in the Eastern Townships: The Convergence of Precept and Practice in Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Gender Construction.” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 10, no. 1 (1999): 103-127.

Vickery, Amanda. *The Gentleman’s Daughter: Women’s Lives in Georgian England*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1998.

Webb, Jeff. “Revisiting Fence Building: Keith Matthews and Newfoundland Historiography.” *The Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 315-338.

———. “William Knox and the 18th-Century Newfoundland Fishery.” *Acadiensis* 44, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2015): 112-122.

———. “A Few Fabulous Fragments: Historical Methods in James P. Howley’s *The Beothucks*.” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 50, no. 101 (May 2017): 89-111.

Westfall, William. *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989.

Whelan, Maudie. "The Newspaper Press in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland: Politics, Religion, and Personal Journalism." PhD thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2002.