THE GREENSPOND LETTER

Volume 3, Number 2 April 1996

A Windy Spring Day at the Puffin Island Lighthouse

Photograph courtesy of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Memorial University of Newfoundland

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Lots of Photos!

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The Greenspond Letter — *a journal of the history of Greenspond through poetry, prose, photographs, and interviews.*

Greenspond is an island situated on the northwest side of Bonavista Bay. It was first settled over three centuries ago in the late 1690s, by people from the West Country of England. Greenspond is one of the oldest continuously inhabited outports in Newfoundland. In 1698 Greenspond was inhabited by 13 men, women and children. By 1810, the population was 600 and by 1901 the population had risen to 1,726. Greenspond was one of the major settlements in Newfoundland. It was an important fishing, shipping and commercial centre and was called "The Capital of the North".

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the April 1996 issue of **The Greenspond Letter** which I am sorry to say is a little late in coming out. The main feature this month is a story by Lockyer Carter recalling his days in Greenspond. Lockyer wrote his memoirs in 1988 and had it bound and printed and gave copies to his friends and family. Lockyer has graciously given **The Greenspond Letter** permission to reprint parts of his story here.

The Lions Club in Greenspond is looking for information on sealing captains from Greenspond. So far I have gathered information on the following: Darius Blandford, James Blandford, Alexander Carter, Alfred Burgess, John Dominey, and Augustus Carter. If any reader knows of other sealing captains please let me or Eric Burry know.

Linda Hayley Bath of Bonavista is writing a book on the lighthouse and lighthouse keepers of King's Cove. She has gathered some wonderful information and photographs. David Batterton who lives in King's Cove has written a short paper on the lighthouse for a school project. According to David, the first lighthouse keeper in King's Cove was James Batterton from Greenspond. James was the brother of Phillip Batterton who lived in Pond Head and died April 17, 1926 at the age of 85. The first lighthouse in King's Cove was built in 1893. And according to **The Evening Telegram** for that time period, James Batterton got the job of lighthouse keeper in King's Cove through his connections with Darius Blandford, a well-known Greenspond captain, who had influence with the government. When James Batterton moved from Greenspond to King's Cove he built a small dwelling house near the lighthouse in which to live. Batterton was the lighthouse keeper until his death in 1902. The second lighthouse keeper was Philip Batterton, the son of James. He remained there until August 1933 when he moved to St. John's. And the third keeper was James Batterton who held the post until his death in 1955. Would any of the readers of **The Greenspond Letter** have any more information on the Battertons? Apparently Phillip and James Batterton had two sisters. Does anyone know their names? Did the Battertons come from Greenspond or from another island up the Bay? What is the connection with Batterton Island, near Greenspond?

It has been brought to my attention that there was a James B.

The ***Humoresque*** *was built by Ned Carter of Pond Head and was owned by Ralph Wright. This photograph which hangs in the Greenspond Museum was probably taken in the 1920s.*

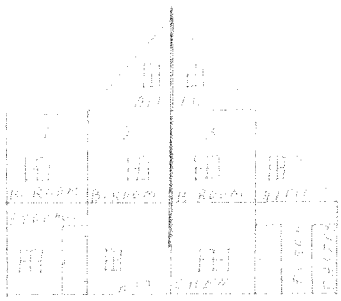
Blandford, Jr., from Greenspond, who was an American emissary to Nationalist China a few years after the Second World War. During Franklin Roosevelt's presidency (1932-1944), Blandford was appointed general manager of the land reclamation and food control project called the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). He also served as chairman of the Central Housing Committee of the United States. Does any reader have any information on this James Blandford?

A new subscriber, Preston Brooking, is looking for information on the Brooking family who had business interests in Greenspond. His great grandfather, Edward Brooking, who was a bookkeeper, lived in Greenspond and was married to Jane Stroud. They had four children. Edward Brooking drowned in 1877 and subsequently his wife and family moved to Lynn, Massachussetts. Again if anyone has information to pass on please let know.

I would like to thank all those who help me with the publication and distribution of **The Greenspond Letter**, especially Weldon Bonnell, Ivy White-Tong, Pearl Dyke, and Edith Burry. Several photographs in this month's issue were provided by Tom Hunt, Mary Hunt, and Albert Peckford. Copies of all the photographs with negatives are held in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

My Memoirs
by Lockyer Carter

Lockyer Carter lives with his wife, Gladys, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. In October 1988 Lockyer wrote his memoirs and it was published and printed by Crosby Press in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. There was a limited number of copies printed and given to family members. Lockyer has kindly given permission to reprint part of his story here.



The home of Gertrude and Edward Carter, Ship Island. Sketch drawn by Locyker Carter.

I was born here in room number one on September 4th, 1917; one of eleven children to Edward and Gertrude (Burry) Carter. But only six of the eleven reached adulthood– five died at birth or from childhood diseases.

I can remember my grandfather; he died in 1920 at the age of 74. My grandmother died in childbirth when my father was born. Her maiden name was Louisa Saunders, from Saunders Cove. My father sold the land in the mid-1930s to Alex Genge for a mere eighty-five dollars. The land consisted of 4–5 acre lot and water on both sides of the point. Eighty five dollars in those days was a lot of money to help run the household. Mother was also a big help. She was a seamstress and used to take orders to make ladies' coats for $2.50 each. Sometimes this payment would be given on installments, and other times Mother didn't get paid at all. But whatever she could collect from sewing was a help to the family funds.

Now I can't remember my Grandfather Burry and Grandmother Burry died in the early 1930s.

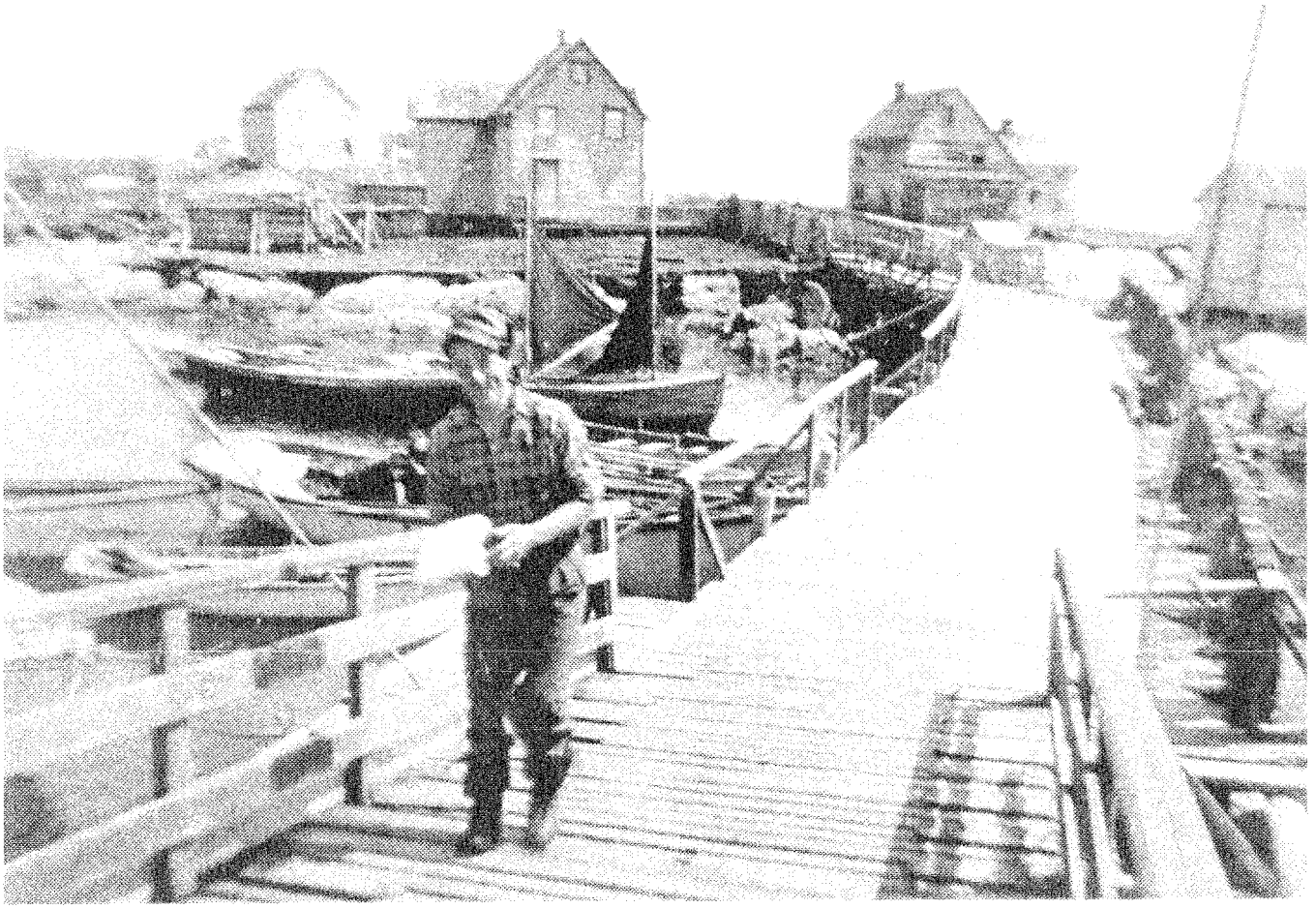
I was six years old when I started school. Because we lived on Ship Island we had to take the ferry to Greenspond which was about eighty feet away. The ferry operator used to pull the ferry over by cable. He had a little house on the wharf, what they called the "galley". If there were any boats going in or out we would have to wait so that the operator could drop the cable in the water so the boats could cross over, because in those days nearly all the boats had masts and sails.

When I went to school there weren't any scribblers in the four lower grades. We had slates instead; so therefore we had to take a small bottle of water and a piece of cloth to clean out slates off. At night, we would gather around the kitchen table doing our home work with a kerosene oil lamp in the centre.

Lockyer Carter, 1946, photo courtesy of Linda White.

My first teacher was Miss King. She taught primer to grade four with probably 70-80 students in her room. The other room had grade five to grade eleven and it had 50-60 students under the direction of Mr. Crummey. He was the teacher for 38 years and had the distinction of having taught the first woman lawyer in Newfoundland whose name was Maude Saunders. Mr. Crummey was very strict. He had a leather strap as well as a birch whip but when we would see him taking out the piece of rope with a big "figure

Mr. Crummey was very strict. He had a leather strap as well as a birch whip but when we would see him taking out the piece of rope with a big "figure eight" knot in it: then we would know he was really mad.



Tom Hunt walking across the drawbridge that was built in 1931. Ship Island is in the background. Photo courtesy of Albert Pickford.

eight" knot in it; then we would know he was really mad. Nevertheless, he was looked on as a good teacher. In his time he turned out a lot of good students who went on to be lawyers, doctors, and ministers which was quite an accomplishment in those days. No doubt today though, with Mr. Crummey's teachings methods, he would be behind bars.

In the month of November the ferry that we took to get to school would stop operating so a catwalk bridge would be put across for the winter. It had no railing but when, in early 1920, a man by the name of Jim Dommey fell over the bridge and drowned, they then put a railing on the catwalk. This bridge existed between 1920 and 1931. All this changed in late 1931 when a drawbridge was put across connecting Ship Island and Greenspond and they did away with the ferry.

There were thirty families on Ship Island at that time and over one hundred children were going to school at Greenspond altogether. There were five schools, two Anglican, two Methodists, and

one Salvation Army.

It was all hard work, even to get drinking water. We would catch rain water off the house for drinking and there were two or three surface wells on the island with water just used for washing. We also had to go over to Greenspond for water because they had a water line running from the reservoir down to the Anglican Church. There we would get our water from they called the "Dog's Head". In the winter, we had to walk way up to the reservoir, cut a hole in the ice and get our water that way. If it was a really cold winter, the reservoir itself would freeze solid. When this happened, we would take an axe, chop out the ice, and bring it home and melt it.

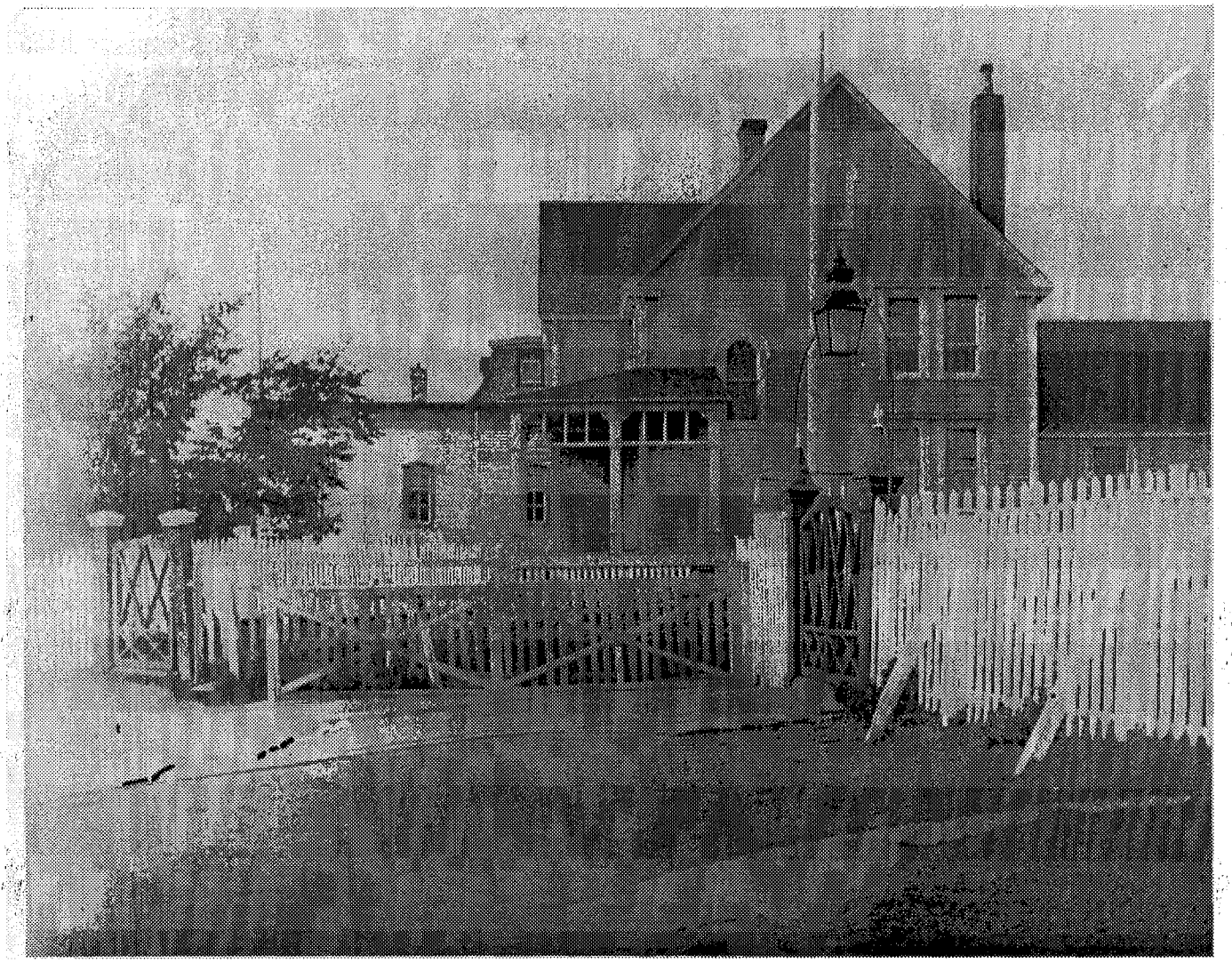
Now getting firewood was another chore ... we had to go to the mainland anywhere from five to twenty miles away to get a boatload of wood. Sometimes we would have to stay overnight. In the fall after fishing was over, we would go in the bay with the schooner and maybe get enough wood to last the winter. Other times, when the tickle between the Island and the mainland was frozen over in the winter, we would leave home before daylight with a sleigh or as we called it a catamaran, walk five or six miles across ice and land, cut a few sticks of wood, pull them back on the catamaran, returning home between three and four o' clock in the afternoon. Now there was coal to be bought, but Father used to say "I don't like burning money" and I must say that money was very scarce then.

we had to go to the mainland anywhere from five to twenty miles away to get a boatload of wood.

I can think back now about going to bed during the cold winter nights ... we had what were called "birch junks", about eighteen inches long and six inches in diameter. Mother or Father would put them in the oven about an hour before bedtime to make them good and hot. They would then roll them over the sheets. We would get into the bed and Mother would put blankets and even floor mats on top of us! This felt so good; but when we woke in the morning it was just like looking at the stars! The heat from the bed was gone and the room was cold. This made frost on the nailheads in the ceiling and they sparkled like stars. The chamber pot would be frozen solid. We had only one stove located in the kitchen.

when we woke in the morning it was just like looking at the stars! The heat from the bed was gone and the room was cold. This made frost on the nailheads in the ceiling and they sparkled like stars.

Now the next thing is vegetables ... there was little spare land on Ship Island, however there was land on Newell's Island one quarter mile away which had plenty of good soil; so we had our gardens over there. About ten or twelve families lived on Newell's Island and they had a school as well as a ferry service. So when we wanted to go over to our gardens, we would go down on the wharf put up a flag,



The Church of England parsonage, c.1905. Now the home of Frances and Tom Bragg. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

and the ferry man would come and get us. We always had to take the paddles and help him row but we thought that was fun. I knew my Mother didn't think so though, because she didn't like boats or water. But she went along with it anyway, knowing this was the only way we would have our vegetable supply for winter.

There was one good thing about living on Ship Island and that was the fact that we were very near the water, especially where our house was located, we could go out on the bridge and throw a bucket of water in the North Atlantic. We could also bring a boat-load of wood right to the door.

Now I can certainly remember the first money I earned. It must have been the month of June, the year 1928, when I was eleven years old. This is when they used to fix up the road around the island after the winter snow and the spring wash-outs. Uncle Son [Ethelred]

Carter, as he was called, used to get money from the government and he in turn would employ us. He would get the boys between ten and twelve years of age to do the road work as all the men would have been away to the Labrador fishery. We would get small buckets or cans, go down on the shore, scrape up gravel and take it up and fix the road. Old Mr. Son would be looking on to make sure we filled all the holes and at the end of the day would give us each fifty cents. I would take my pay home, give Mother forty-five cents and keep five cents for myself. In those days, five cents was a lot of money, certainly the cost of living wasn't like today's. We would go to the shop and buy an apple the size of a grapefruit for two cents, buy five peppermint knobs for one cent and have money left over for the next day.

We considered my Mother's Aunt Jane Chaytor to be well-off. She had a hand wringer on her washtub and when she washed her blankets in the spring, Mother would send me over to turn the wringer for her. Aunt Jane would give me a meal and while there I would dig up her garden for her; I was paid fifty cents.

Education wasn't a top priority in those days. If there was something else to be done we were kept out of school. As my Father and older brother, Charlie, were away fishing, I had chores such as getting water, wood, and running errands. The work was alright by me as I didn't care too much about school anyway.

So in 1931, I quit school and got a berth on a schooner going to the Labrador trap fishery. My Father was second hand (mate). We left home the 15th of June and eight or ten days later we arrived at Indian Harbour where the fish were plentiful. We got nine hundred quintals before the fish slacked off (112 lb = 1 quintal). After a couple of weeks we moved farther north to a place called Holton. There we finished our load, which was 1,212 quintals. We then left for home and arrived back on August 20th. Everyone was quite happy with the trip, even though fish at that time was only $1.20 a quintal. However, the weather was very hot on our return trip home and the skipper decided not to take the fish out of the schooner until after September 1st. He thought it might get sun-burned. Unfortunately, September was just as hot as August so we went to Deer Island to get our fish "made" or cured. Deer Island is eight miles in the bay from Greenspond; the folks there were glad to get the fish to "make" even though we paid them only twenty cents a quintal for their work. When we returned to Deer Island about three weeks later to

We left home the 15th of June and eight or ten days later we arrived at Indian Harbour where the fish were plentiful.

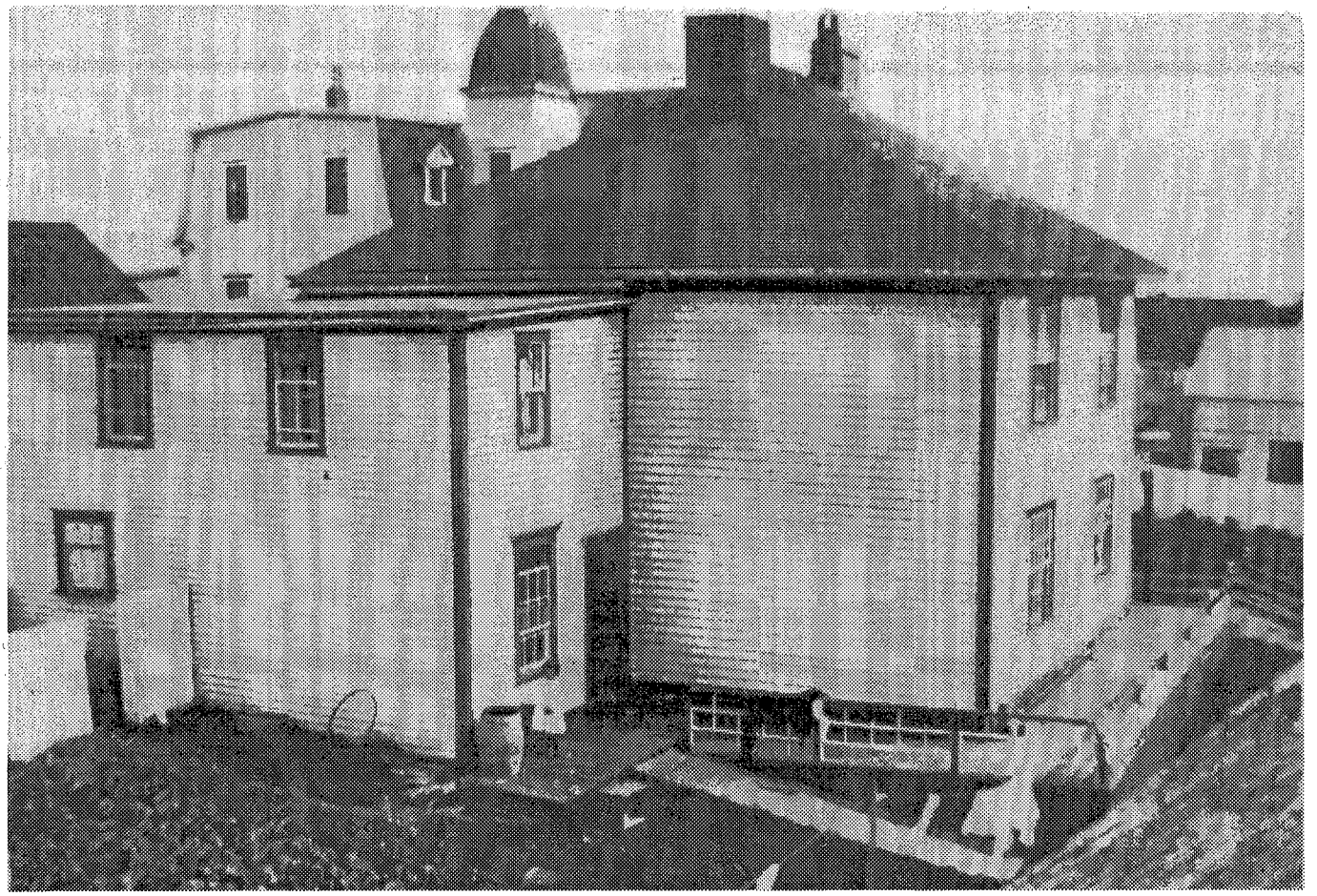
Children lined up on the wharf watching the dignitaries go by, c. 1900. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

pick up our fish, half of it was indeed sunburned. We took it to St. John's to the merchant, A. H. Murray, but it was turned down as inferior. So we only got $1.20 a quintal for some of the fish and 75 cents for the rest. Our crew made seventy-five dollars each for their share of the trip, but as I was only a thirteen year old boy, I received ¼ share (eighteen dollars). This was how the skippers got cheap labour; by hiring boys to do a man's work when at the fish, but not paying a man's share until you reached sixteen years of age. If we started at thirteen, we had to work our way up ... ¼ share, ½ share, ¾ share until finally full share.

From the eighteen dollars I made that first summer I bought myself a suit of clothes for $9.49, gave Father enough for two barrels of flour and kept a couple of dollars for myself. In those days flour came in 196 lb barrels, sugar in 300 lb barrels, butter in 10 lb , 22 lb, and 32 lb tubs and tea in 5 lb and 10 lb boxes. We would also buy a good pair of shoes for $2.50 or a winter cap for $1.50. We never had to buy braces, socks, handkerchiefs or shoelaces as the storekeeper would give the customer these items when a suit of clothes or shoes were bought.

Fish was certainly plentiful "on the Labrador" in those years. In 1938 we went to Cape Harrigan, just north of Hopedale and the harbour was full of fish. It was so plentiful that one fellow got down aboard the trap boat with a 5 foot handled fish fork and forked the fish right out of the harbour. Then we set a cod trap at the harbour entrance for about fifteen minutes, pulled it up and had two boatloads of fish which is forty quintals. That summer we had loaded the schooner—which was over 1,800 quintals—and we still didn't make even $400. Spent nine summers going to the Labrador trap fishery and never got up to $400 a year.

We never had many sports but the boys used to play baseball in the winter. This was not the type of ball played today. We would play in a field when it was levelled off with snow or on the harbour ice



The Magistrate's House with the dome of the Court House peaking out just behind, c. 1900. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

when it would freeze over. We had to make our own bat and ball. There were three bases and when the batter hit the ball the person who caught it would throw it at the guy going to base. If the runner got hit with the ball; he was out.

We also played football but there were only a couple of balls on the island which created a problem. Whoever owned the ball would charge us two cents to get into the yard where we played. I was lucky because I had my own football. Just before Christmas Father used to kill one of our pigs. He would take the bladder, put it in pickle to toughen it up and make a canvas case for it. It was six inches in diameter and the ball would last all winter. Today they call it soccer.

We also played a game called "pippy". You dig a hole in the ground, put a short stick (about 12 inches) across the hole, and play with a longer stick (3 feet). With this longer stick the player would flick the small stick from the hole and if the team opposite caught it, you were out. If they didn't catch it you counted your points from where the stick landed.

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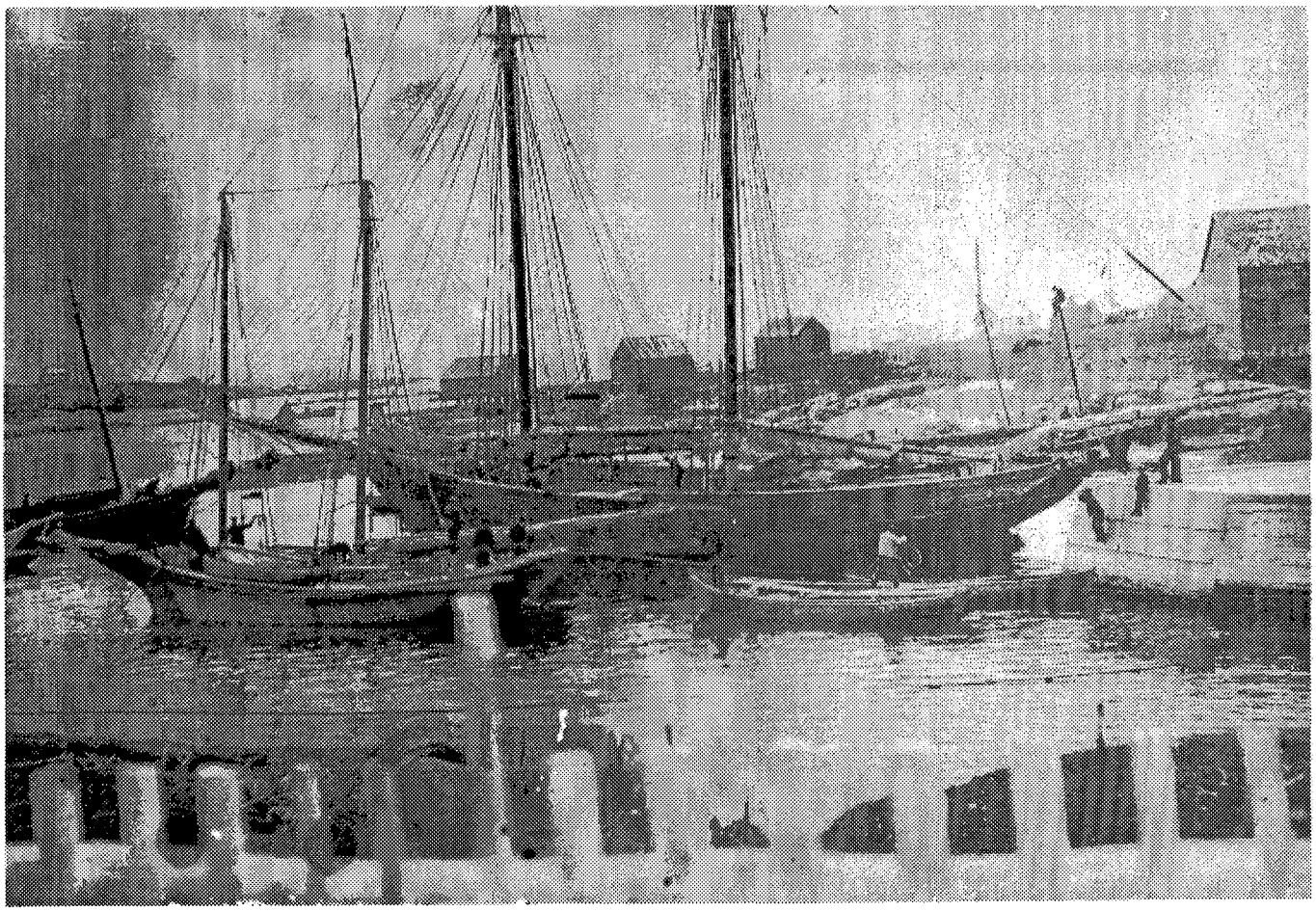
The main road in Greenspond, c. 1905. On the left hand side is James Baird's premises now Eric Burry's pub, The High Tide. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

There was another game called "ducky". We would get a beach rock about six inches in diameter and place it on a bigger rock. We would then stand back about twenty or twenty-five feet and throw smaller rocks to see if we could knock off the beach rock.

Greenspond was the capital of Bonavista North for over two hundred years with a population of 1800 ... Greenspond was a busy place back in the 18th and 19th centuries; foreign vessels came to load fish. As a matter of fact, my great great grandmother on my Mother's side came to Greenspond from England as a stowaway on a vessel. A family by the name of Stratton took her in and raised her.

Things I can remember of Greenspond ... there were six merchants on the waterfront: Oakley, Wright, Boorne, White (later known as James Baird's), Hutchins, and Dominey which in later years was owned by the Fishermen Union Trading Company. Today White's Store is the pub owned by Eric Burry, a very historic building. All these stores, except Hutchins, bought and exported fish. There was a blacksmith, two tinsmiths, and three cooper shops. All stores and



Schooners in Greenspond harbour with Ship Island in the background, c. 1905. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

workshops were very busy. The waterfront was also very busy with seven or eight schooners ranging in size from 35 tons up to 150 tons. They all went to the Labrador trap fishery but because there weren't enough men in Greenspond to fill the berths, the skippers had to go "in the bay" to the other islands and get more men. The harbour was so busy that you could walk from one fish flake to the other. This is all gone now because of the fresh fish industry. In the busy years, if you saw a schooner with a broom on the top of its mast, it meant that the vessel was for sale.

We had four churches in Greenspond: Anglican, Methodist, Salvation Army, and Roman Catholic. In my time there were only two Catholics: Philip Batterton and Hannah Kennedy. There was a Roman Catholic chapel and cemetery up in Pond Head. When Phillip Batterton died in the mid-1920s the priest came down from St. Brendan's to bury him. The Roman Catholic chapel was an old building and there was such a large crowd at his funeral that the floor gave away. No one was hurt. Shortly after that the chapel was

torn down. Hannah Kennedy who died in the 1940s was the last Catholic in Greenspond. There was only one Protestant on St. Brendan's and he was called "Protestant Mike".

In Greenspond we had a doctor, magistrate, policeman, customs officer, and jailer. We also had a bank and a post office. The post office was always a busy place, especially the one day a week when the mail arrived. Other than that, we would go over to the post office once a day to read the news that would come in on the telegraph key. The Postmaster would write up the news in a ledger and put the ledger out in the entry of the post office for everyone to read. The busiest time was in the spring during the seal hunt. Everyone was interested in news as the ships had wireless that went through to St. John's and then back to Greenspond. This was the only means of communication we had back then. We had a telegraph communication by way of underwater cable from Jockey's Cove on the mainland of Newfoundland to the island of Greenspond. I must also say that during the 1930s we used to get some of the condemned wire, cut it up in two and three inch lengths and use it as nails for fencing.

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It wasn't until the middle 1930s before there was a radio in Greenspond. A merchant by the name of Jesse Boorne had it, but it took a long time to convince people that they could really hear someone talking in St. John's. Mr. Boorne used to put a loud speaker out through his window on Sunday mornings so people could hear the service from Wesley Church in St. John's. There were only eight or ten radios in Greenspond when I left in 1940 and they were all battery operated. But before radio we got our news through the post office or if someone had a relative in St. John's who happened to send a newspaper a couple of times during the winter; it would get passed around for everyone to read.

There was no such thing as a weather report back then but people had pretty good judgment. If the sun came up bright red in the morning there would be rain or snow within 24 hours, or as they used to say "falling weather". If there was a ring around the moon, the same thing applied. If the seagulls were flying high that was the sign of a storm. As we lived on the north side of the bay, if at night we could see the light on Cape Bonavista (which was 28 miles away), it was a sure sign the wind would be south the next day. Father would go outside before going to bed, look at the sky, come in and say "we won't get out anywhere tomorrow morning" and quite of-

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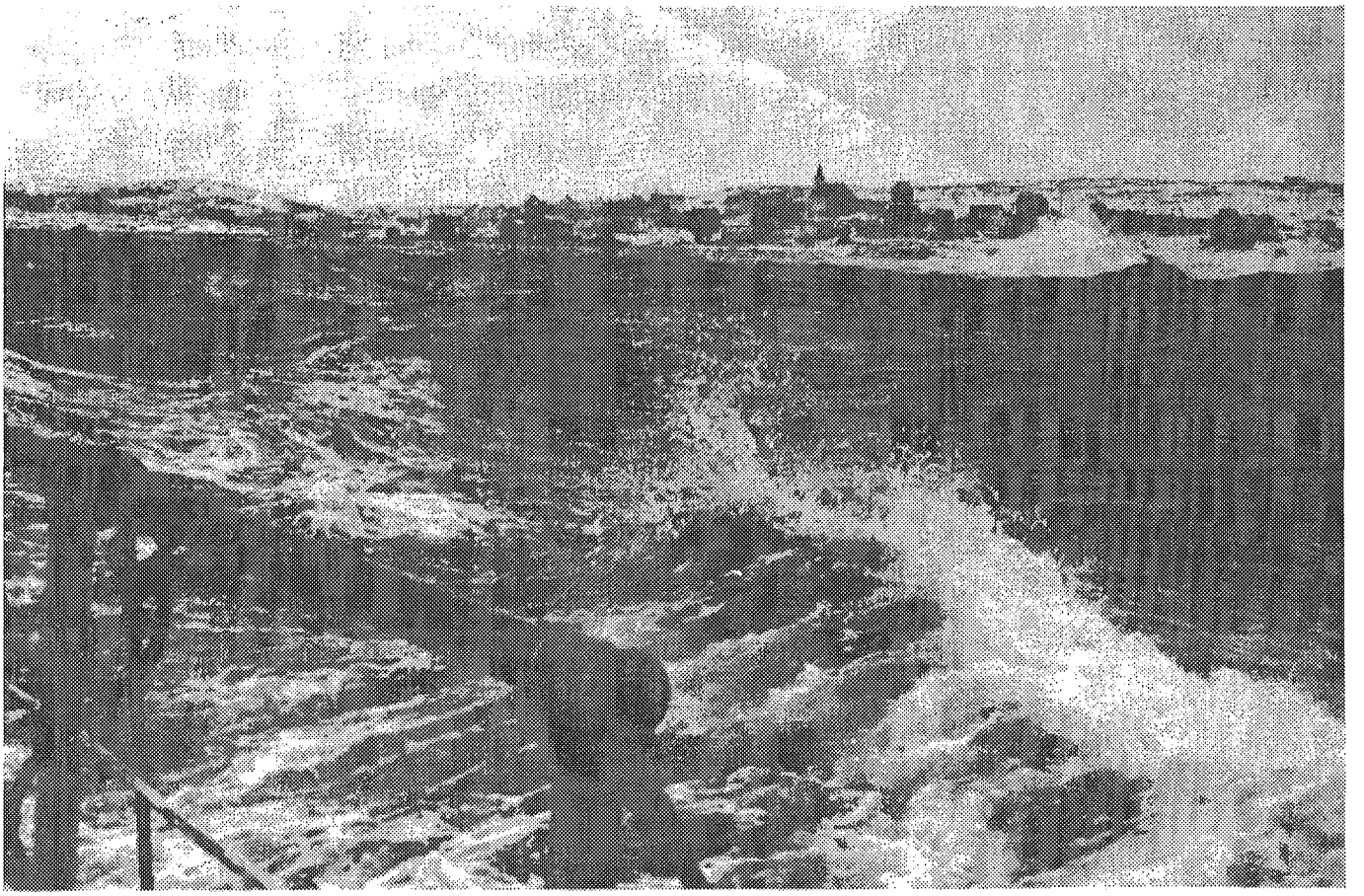

Coming into Greenspond on the Ferry. Courtesy of The Rounder, *Gander, March 1978*

ten he was right. Every day during the winter, if the weather was fine, we were out in boat hunting birds or seals as that was our fresh meat supply. One thing we always got in the fall of the year was our gunpowder, shot, and guncaps because nearly all the guns were muzzle loaders.

And this takes me back to weddings which means the firing of guns. Twenty, thirty, or maybe fifty people would line up outside the church waiting for the bride and groom to come out. Then the guns would fire and the newlyweds would be followed to the home or hall wherever the reception was being held. There was always a dance afterwards, and nine chances out of ten there would be a fight. If the evening didn't end with a fight it was said to be a quiet wedding.

I never had much of a teenage life because I started work at the age of thirteen and for the next forty-nine years I worked on the land for only one month. It was tough going in the 1930s. They used to say "there were more mealtimes than meals".

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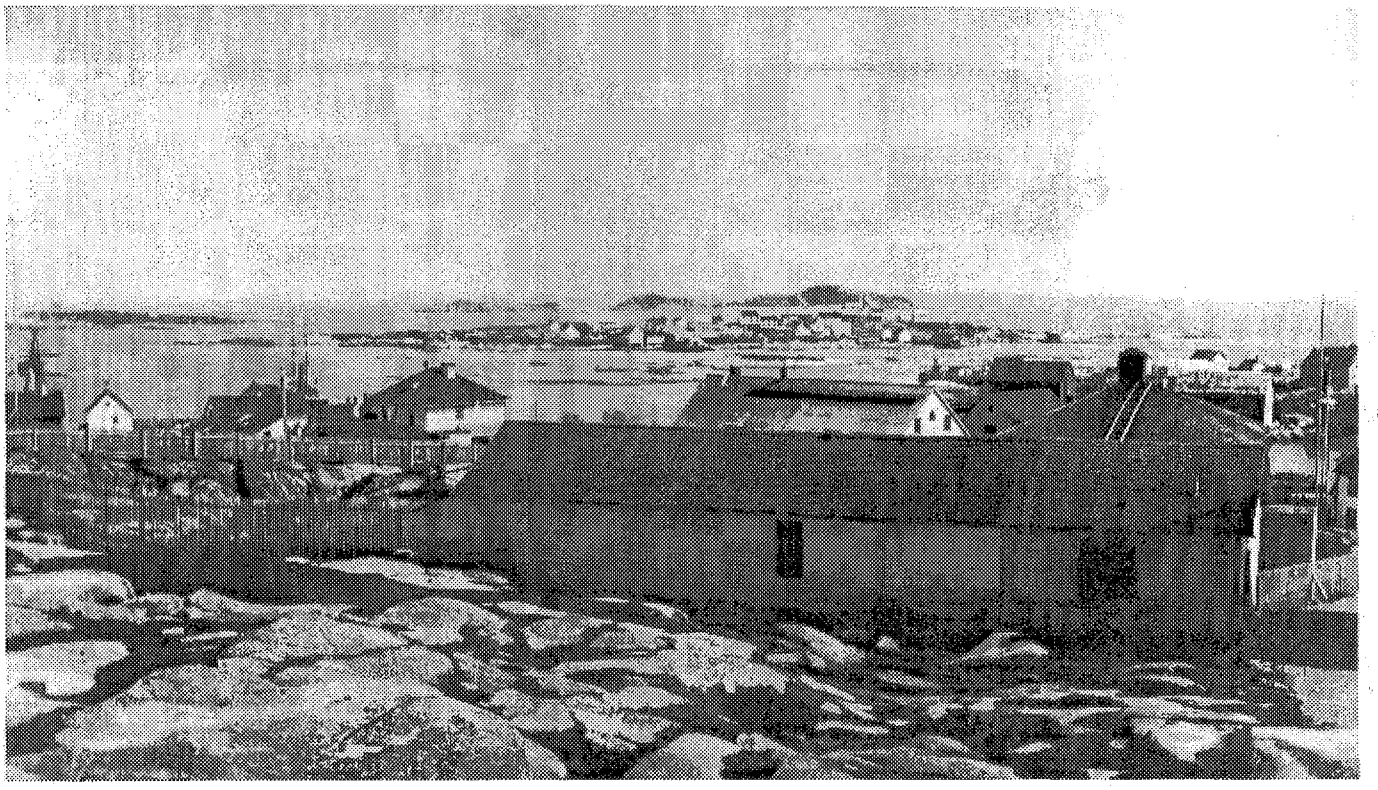
In March 1940 I left for Halifax. The distance to the nearest

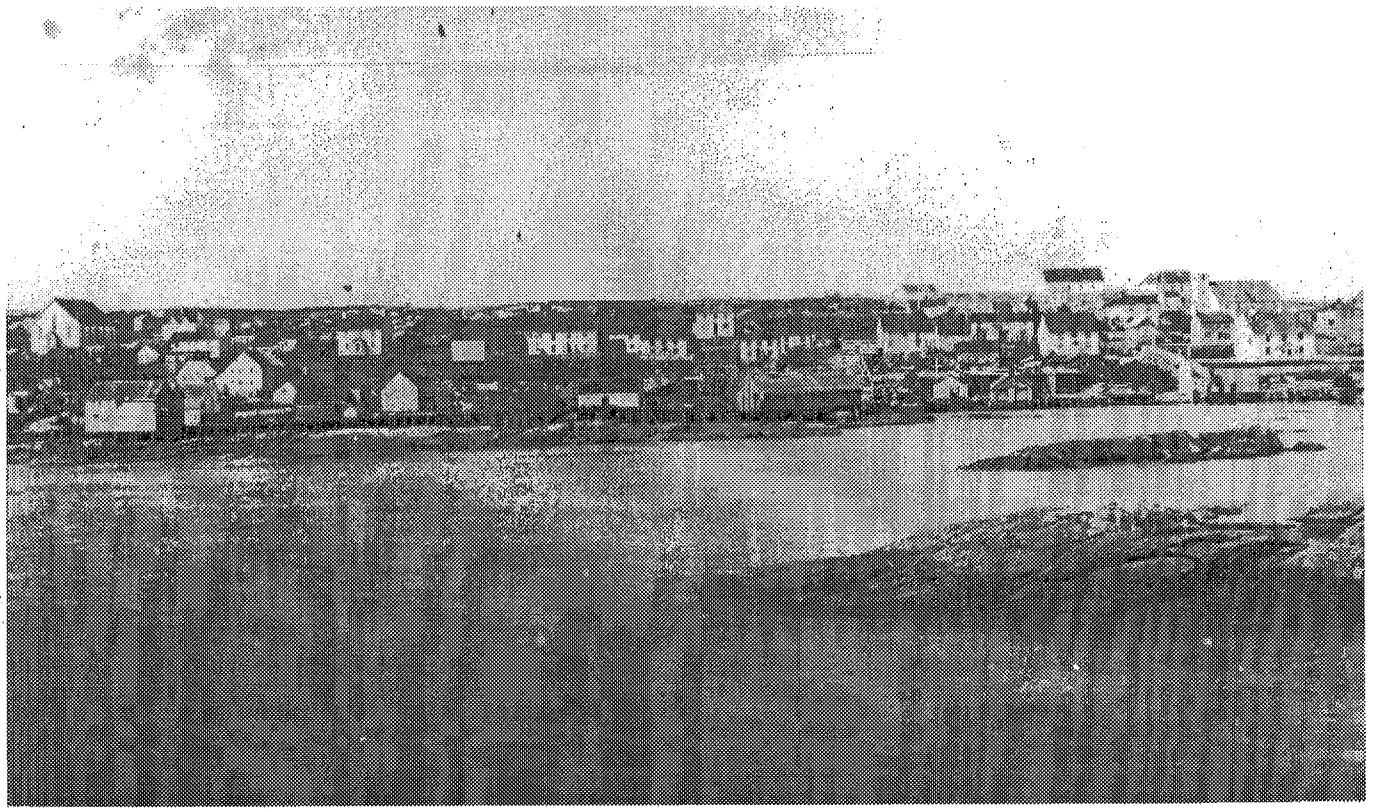


Looking towards Newell's Island, c. 1885. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Joseph Lawrence Collection.

train at Gambo was 60 miles by foot or 28 miles by boat. At that time of the year the weather was very unpredictable. There were six of us heading for Gambo; the other five were continuing on to St. John's. We left Greenspond in the early morning in a motorboat with just a cuddy for shelter. We got as far as a place called Turnip Cove which wasn't half way to Gambo. By that time the wind had changed to the east and the snow came with it. The boat owner thought he might get stuck in the ice, but he did get in close enough to put us out on the firm ice. We began to walk. We knew there was another cove six or seven miles in the bay that had an old saw mill so we decided to try and reach that before dark. It was rough terrain and the snow was starting to build up. One of our gang was a man in his 60's and he began to get tired, so the younger fellows went on ahead to try and break a path.

Just before dark we reached the cove. The old saw mill was barred up so we broke open the door. There was an old oil drum for a stove that we managed to get a fire going in, but it wasn't much good for heat because there were holes in the walls of the mill and the roof leaked. We had a little shelter though, but no sleep.

The next morning the snow had stopped but a lot had fallen overnight. We ate a lunch from our knapsacks and started out. We



A view of Greenpond from Ship Island, c.1885. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Joseph Lawrence Collection.

were breaking a path all the way through the woods, but yet trying to keep near the shoreline with the hope of finding the bay ice firm enough to walk on.

That afternoon about 2 o'clock we reached the community of Trinity. We went into a home there and had a lunch. No matter how poor a family was they would always offer a cup of tea. The two older fellows in our group decided to stay in Trinity for the night, get rested up, and maybe get a chance to Gambo the next day by dogteam. We four younger fellows left for Gambo by foot, arriving there about 10 p.m.

We went to the railway station. The station master wouldn't sell us train tickets until an hour before the train arrived, which would be 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. The fire in the potbelly stove was just about gone out, so we asked the station master for some coal. He said "no" because he was going home at 11 o'clock. So to keep the fire going we broke up our slides which we had used to drag our suitcases or clothes bags on. This kept the fire going for two or three hours ... I was some glad when the train finally came, and, I had never been on a train before in my life.

I will go back now to my first summer "on the Labrador". Of

course I had to have a mattress. Father bought a piece of pine board about ten feet long. At that time it was two cents a foot. He planed it into shavings, then sewed a couple of burlap bags together, filled them with the shavings, and that was my mattress. It was nice and soft the first night but after that it got harder. I couldn't shake it up either because the fellow in the bunk below would get blinded with dust! Anyway, once we started fishing it didn't matter, because we were so tired we could have slept on a clothesline.

He planed it into shavings, then sewed a couple of burlap bags together, filled them with the shavings, and that was my mattress.

We worked six days a week from daylight to dark. It didn't get dark in Labrador in the summer months until 11 o'clock and then we were up at 2 a.m. to start another day. We never fished on Sunday which was a day of rest. If it was a fine day, we would be up on deck singing hymns. Sometimes there were maybe eight or ten schooners in the harbour and the men on board the ships would all join in singing. With the high land on the Labrador coast the echo of the singing would repeat in the hills.

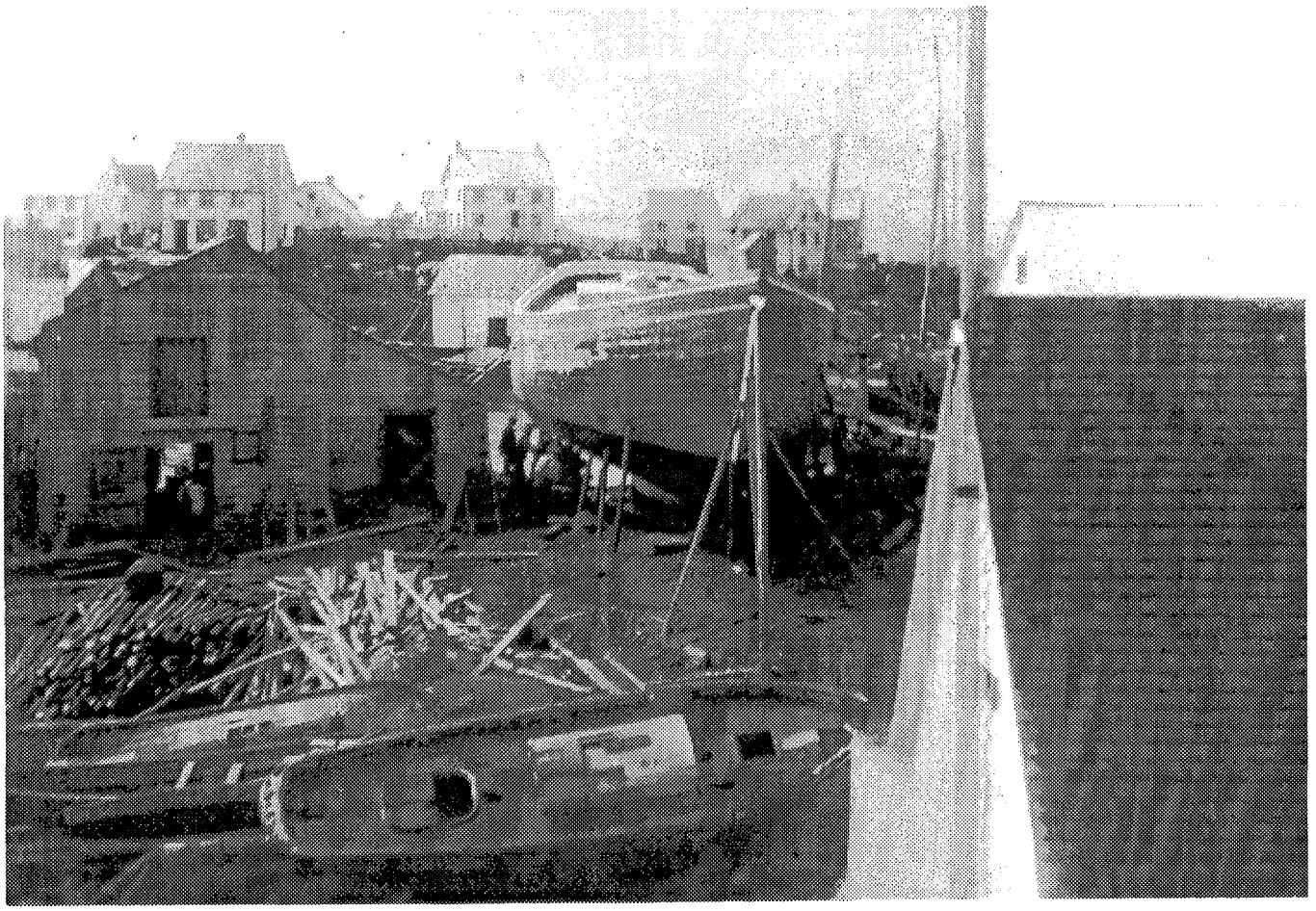
Nearly every schooner's crew had an accordian. We had one and we also had two bugles. Two of our crew members used to play in the brass band of the Orange Lodge's twenty-piece band. So we had our entertainment on board.

When I think back now, I wonder why we weren't all poisoned with the water we drank, which wasn't too good at times. There were a lot of good brooks but there was one place we used to go to—on an island—called Dumplin. They called this water the "Skipper's Water". It was really brown. The skipper would tell the cook to ease up on the tea because the water was brown anyway. We would have milk in our tea just at Sunday night supper. The skipper would bring one can of milk to the forecastle and punch one hole in it. If you shook the can more than twice he would give you a hard look.

We never fished on Sunday which was a day of rest. If it was a fine day, we would be up on deck singing hymns.

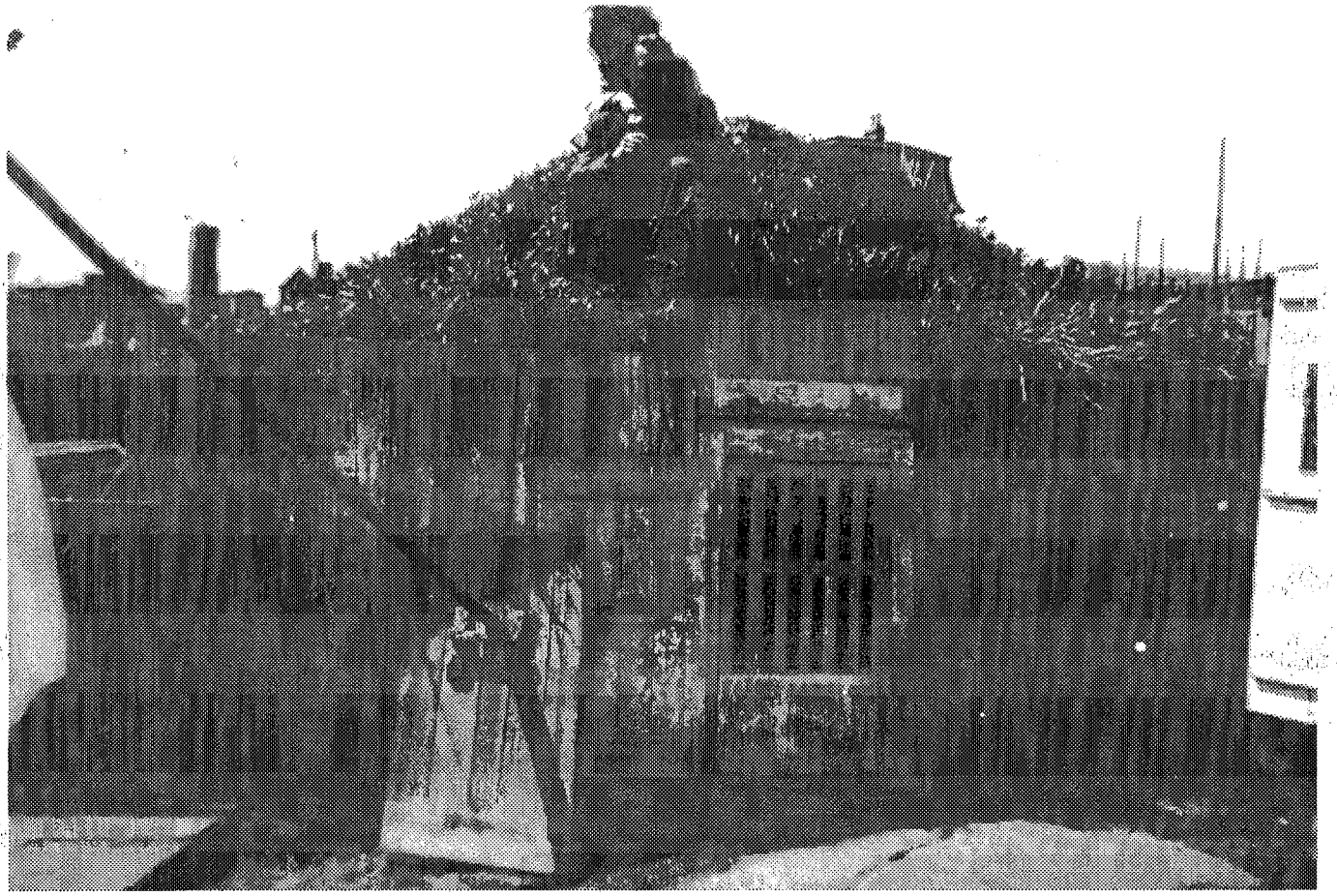
The only fresh meat would be the occasional sea bird. Otherwise, it would be salt beef, salt pork boiled dinners, or corned beef and cabbage. For dessert, there would be figgy pudding and molasses sauce. Sunday morning breakfast consisted of fish and brewis. Saturday dinner was pea soup. Then there were the boiled beans, and in between, hash. The cooks we had weren't first class by any means. We had one young fellow who every morning prepared only tea to drink for breakfast. Someone remarked that they would like to have coffee for breakfast ... the next morning we had both ... all in the same pot!

During the Depression years nearly everyone did their own



Building a schooner. Ship Island in the background, c. 1900. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

building or repairs. My Father's cousin, Peter Carter, was a boatbuilder as well as the undertaker, so we got a lot of practice helping him. He died in 1934 and a couple of years after that Father said: "I think we will try to build a boat ourselves." We went in the bay to cut logs for the plank and timber. That winter, we started sawing out the timber with a handsaw and shaping it with an axe. Then there was the plank ... I had never used a pit-saw before; that's where you mark off or strike off the log with a chaulk line to the thickness required. You then put the log over an opening in the loft about 7 or 8 feet from the floor. Father was on top standing on the log, keeping the saw on the line. I was at the bottom, trying to do the same; only I had a screen over my face to keep the sawdust out of my eyes, and trying to see the line at the same time. The saw was about eight feet long and the only warning I ever got from Father was to "keep the tail-end of that saw away from your nose." Anyway we had the boat finished by April and that spring we killed ten or fifteen seals, sold the pelts and made enough money to pay for the nails and paint for



Root cellar, Pond Head. Photo courtesy of Albert Peckford.

the boat. So the story goes, "if it didn't cost money, hard work didn't count."

Helping each other was another thing ... if someone on the island had a roof to shingle, everyone would help and in three and four hours the job would be finished.

That brings to mind another thing that everyone would help with. In the spring of the year, the schooners would be prepared for their trips to the Labrador; the vessel's bottom had to be scraped and painted. In those days it cost too much money to put them in St. John's dry-dock and the only other place was St. Anthony which had a slipway. We went to St. Anthony one year because we were late getting started, but other than that, we used to "Heave them down." We would put block and tackle—one on each masthead—and fasten them to the wharf. Then we would have between 50 and 70 men, women, and children to lend a hand. The children would be there just for the fun of it! We would always sing a couple of songs, which they called "the heaving-down songs." One was:

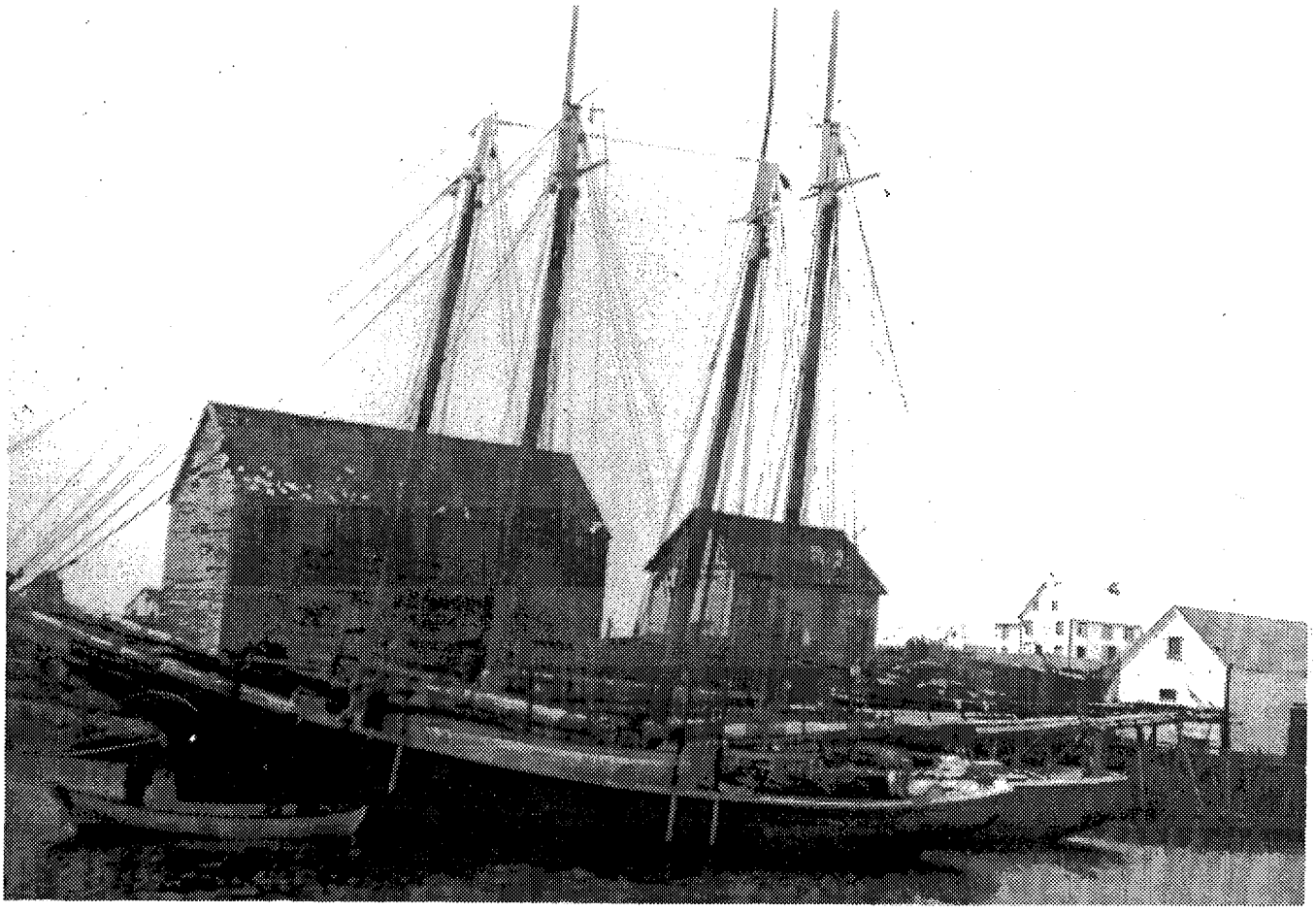
Hutchins' premises, c. 1905. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

Haul on the bow-line
Haul and burst the bow-line
Haul on the bow-line
Haul, boys, haul.

The other heaving-down song was:

And it's to my Johnny poker
We will haul and pull together
And it's to my Johnny poker
Haul ...

We would heave the schooner down until her keel was out of the water, clean her off, and paint her. Then we would put her back on even keel, turn her around, heave her down and do the other side. It would be a full day's work like most other things in those days.



Schooners in front of David Smallwood's store (the grandfather of J.R. Smallwood), Ship Island, c.1900. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

I can recall the passenger boats—steamers, as they were called—there was the **Dundee, Susu, Malakoff, Home** and **Prospero**. They would all, except for the **Prospero**, come in to the Government Wharf at Greenspond. The **Prospero** anchored in outer harbour. The **Malakoff** ran from Port Blandford to Wesleyville and came to Greenspond on Monday afternoons. The **Home** ran from St. John's to Fogo; she came in to Greenspond on Wednesday nights at 10 p.m. At this time the Wharf would always be full of people: the **Home's** arrival being the big event of the week.

When you walk up the Government Wharf toward the road, facing you is the War Memorial, erected in 1928 or '29. I worked on its construction. My Father's cousin who was a carpenter was foreman of the project. The cement in those days came in barrels and he told me to come over to the site, open the barrels, and dip the cement out. My pay was not cash, but rather the emptied cement barrels for splits.

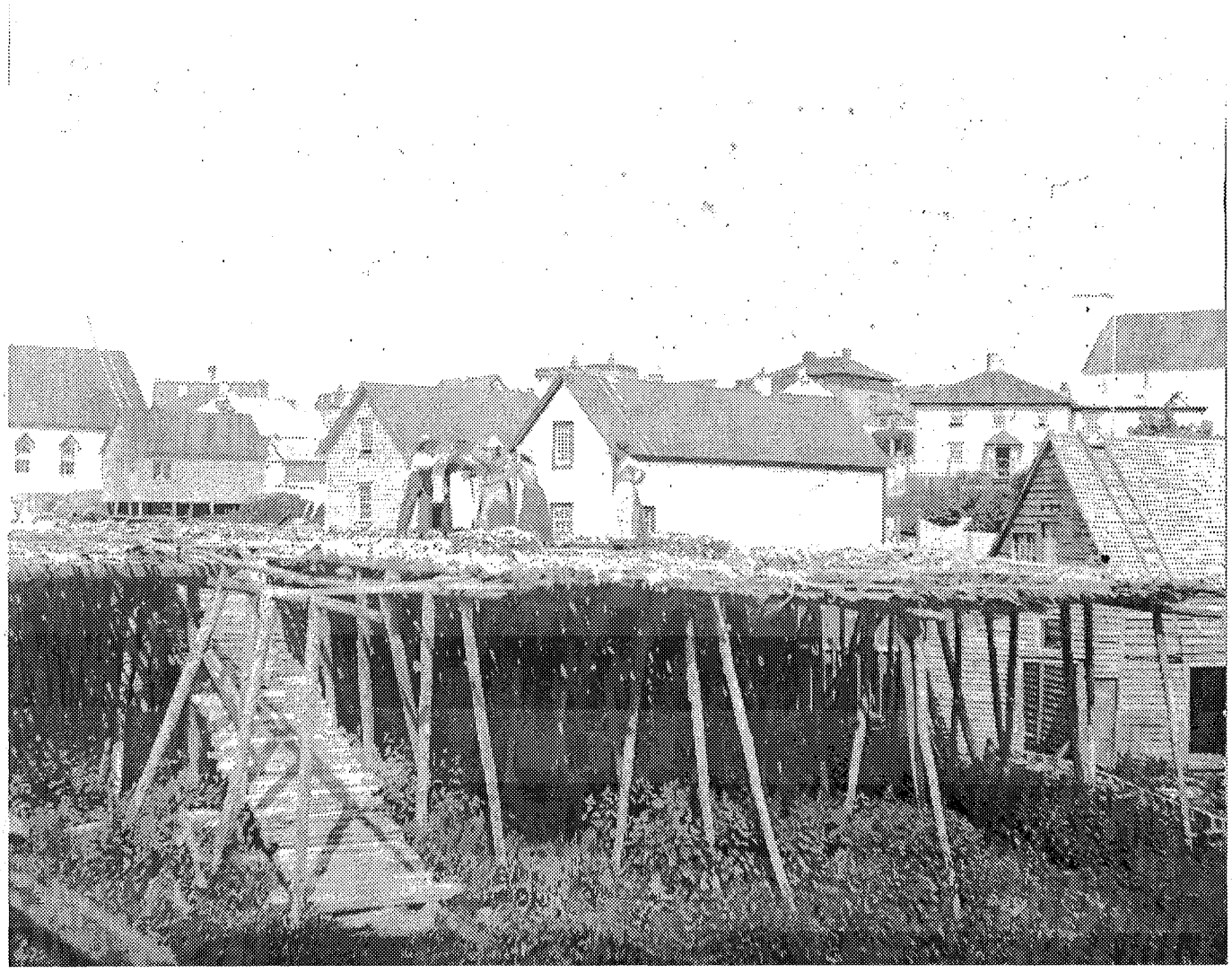
Looking towards Puffin Island, c. 1900. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

Going back to the trip we made to the Labrador in 1931 when we caught plenty of fish and sold it in St. John's but our merchant wouldn't accept the inferior (sunburned) fish. We ended up selling it to the grocery stores in town. One store in particular, by the name of Jackman and Greene, comes to mind. They sold the fish for two cents a pound. We got 75 cents a quintal for that fish.

Now I will go back a few more years. Father used to tell us that back when he was a boy, in the 19th century, they had street lights—actually road lights—in Greenspond. A man by the name of Dewey went along the road at dusk lighting the lamps. Of course, the community had a name for him; he was "Lampy Dewey".

A man by the name of Dewey went along the road at dusk lighting the lamps.

I've often been asked over the years where I got my name from. Well, when I was born, nearly all the baby boys were called either Lloyd or George, after Britain's Prime Minister. My aunt, who at that time was a school teacher in Port de Grave was acquainted with



Women makin fish, c. 1900. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

the Methodist minister by the name of Lockyer Spracklin ... and that's where my name came from. Anyway, it was a big change from the Lloyds, Georges, as well as all the Jims. You see, my grandfather's name was James. He was called by all as "Uncle Jim". There was also Paper Jim, Ladder Jim, Navy Jim, Lofty Jim, Skipper Jim, and Young Jim. Along the same vein, there were three Mary Carters. So to distinguish one from the other, they were called Mary John, Mary Gus, and Mary Frank.

Even though there were hard times while I was growing up we always managed to have lots of laughs. For instance, there was the time with the goats ...

In Greenspond, the fishermen would hang their nets on the fences to dry. Nearly everyone owned a goat or two, and quite often a goat would get caught in a net, maybe even two or three times a

day. Some old fellow said: "the God damned Rangle Tangles". And this name stuck as the name for goats.

Some years later a man and his family with the surname of House moved from Greenspond to Catalina, leaving two goats behind on Greenspond with his brother Ken until they got settled in Catalina. When the time came he telegraphed Ken to send the goats with these instructions: kill one, put the other in a crate, and ship them both. Ken followed his brother's directions and his message back read as follows:

Rangle Tangle half dead and alive
Shipped by Susu. Signed Ken.

There was another occasion when Ken was involved in a message. On its way home from Labrador, the vessel Ken was on called into Ironbound Harbour, as some men wanted to send a message home. So Ken sent one to his wife that read:

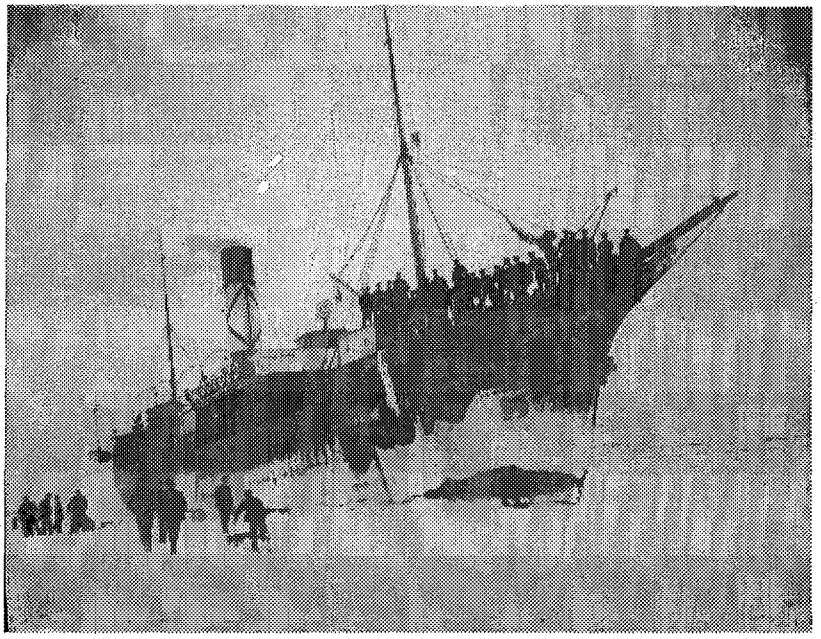
Arrived Ironbound, homeward bound
Hardbound. Signed Ken.

Hard times we had plenty of, but through it all, we still managed to have lots of fun and laughter.

The Earl of Devon *gone aground off Ship Island. Newell's Island in the background. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.*

Lockyer Carter was married to the late Louise Parsons of Greenspond. They had three children: Eileen, Tony and Susan.

In addition to Lockyer, Edward and Gertrude Carter's were Charles, Louise, Lucy, Joyce, and Sam. Sam Carter lives today on Ship Island.



S.S. Prospero

The ships of Bowring Brothers' steamship fleet in the late night nineteenth century were given the names of Shakespearean characters and this tradition extended to the **S.S. Prospero**, named after a character in *The Tempest*. The coastal boat **Prospero** was the third Bowring vessel to carry the name. The first was a 257 ton cargo ship of Bridport, England, wrecked in 1854, two years after its launching; the second was a slightly larger ship built in Bristol in 1856–7 and lost in 1863. The third **Prospero**, along with its sister ship, **Portia**, was built at the yard of Murdock and Murray, Glasgow, in 1904. After the Bowring firm secured a contract to provide a steamship service around Newfoundland and the **Prospero** became well known as a cargo and passenger carrier ... Despite it long service the **Prospero** had few mishaps. Its grounding in Bonavista Bay in 1924 caused little damage. The **Prospero** acted as a rescue ship on several occasions, bringing in survivors of the wrecks **Florizel, Viking** and **Stella Maris**. Other ships of the Red Cross Line were seasonally converted for use as sealers, but the **Prospero** made only one trip to the ice, in 1925. This followed the ship's acquisition by the Newfoundland Government upon the termination of a 20 year lease. It returned to cargo and mail service after the spring of 1925. The **Prospero** was sold by the Railway Commission in 1937 after the acquisition of a new coastal boat, **Northern Ranger.**

Taken from the Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador

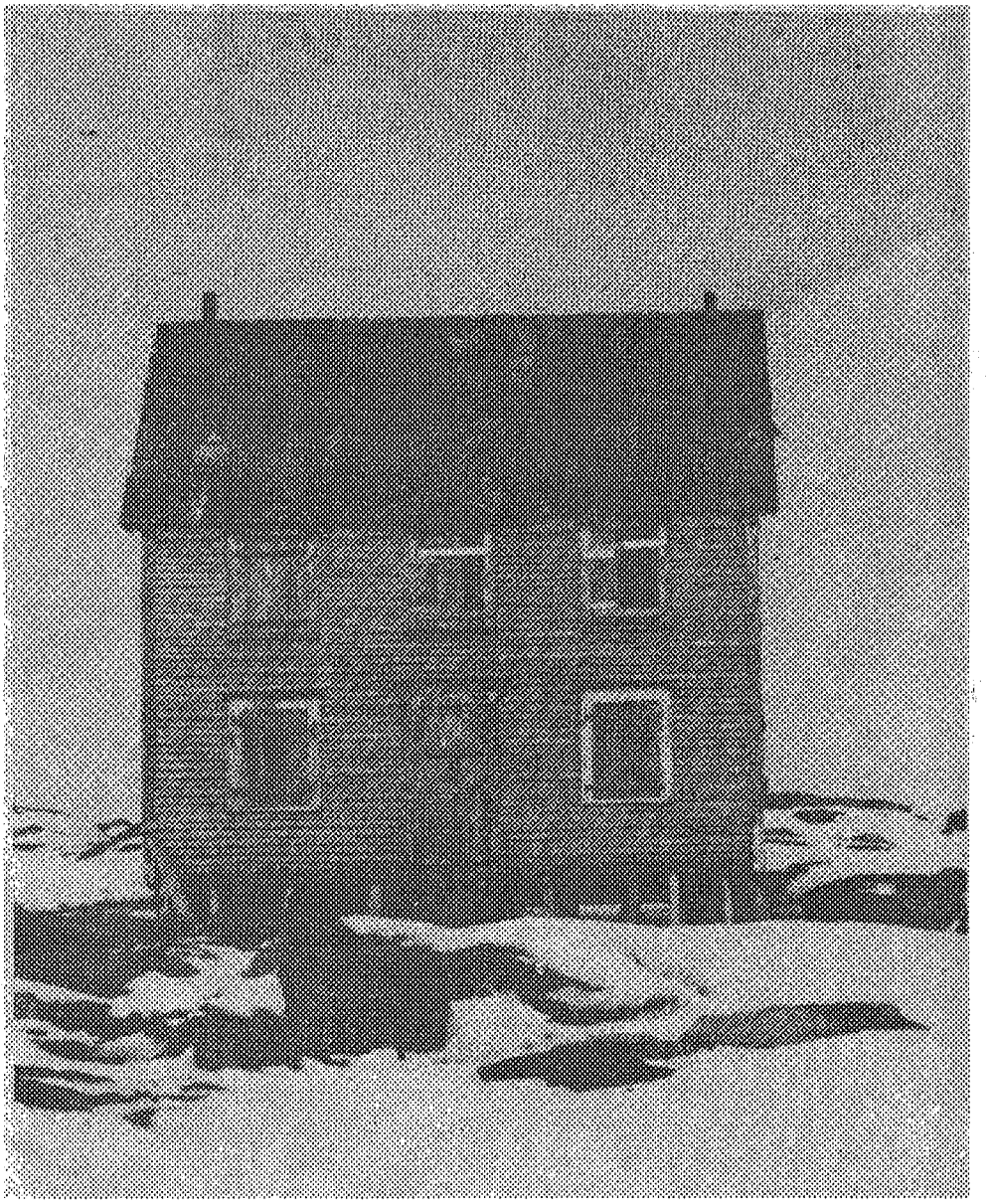
The Gambo Hotel, c. 1907. Photo courtesy of CNS Archives, the Greenspond Collection.

John Joseph Murphy
1849–1938

Born St. John's, son of James and Alice Murphy. Married Margaret Walsh. As a young man Murphy managed the Greenspond branch of the firm Ridley and Sons. In 1871 he purchased Ridley's premises, the firm having gone bankrupt, and operated a fishery and general supplies firm. After a succession of poor fisheries he left Greenspond and in 1876 started a sawmill at Mint Brook, near Gambo, developing it into one of the largest lumber operations in Newfoundland. In the course of 28 years in sawmilling in the area he acquired the nickname "Gambo Jack". In 1893 he built a hotel at Gambo in the hope of attracting sportsmen and tourists to the area. The hotel also served as station depot for the railway line then being constructed across Newfoundland. He sold his mill and logging rights to Newfoundland Timber Estates L^{td} in 1904 and appears to have invested the proceeds in his growing interests in "electrification", particularly the United Towns Electric Company. which had been formed in 1902 ... By 1914 he was the company's major shareholder ... and in 1919 he formed the Avalon Telephone Company ... Murphy was elected MHA for Harbour Main in 1908 as a supported of Edward P. Morris and the People's Party ... [He died] on August 4, 1938.

Taken from the Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador

"Standing nobly on its granite base, this house epitomizes the tenacity of the people of Greenspond. With its high gable roof, it serves as a reminder of the plight of many of Newfoundland's outports which have been deserted because of the relocation program of the 1960s". Courtesy of The Rounder, *Gander, March 1978*



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