Travel and Trial: An Examination of the Establishment of an Anglican Community in the First Church of England Missions of Southern Labrador, 1848–1876

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In 1848, Bishop Edward Feild, the second Anglican Bishop of Newfoundland, travelled to the coast of Labrador for the first time aboard the church ship the Hawk. After meeting the local people and touring 26 coastal communities and many small fishing places, Feild wrote the Society of the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) pleading for support. In asserting the need for establishing the missions, Feild wrote, “But the wolves are among them, not sparing the flock; and soon, we may expect of their own selves will men arise, &c. All the merchants and their agents are well disposed towards us. The harvest is indeed ripe: where can the labourers be found?” Following his plea, with support from the SPG the missions to the scattered people of southern Labrador began when Feild, in the summer of 1849, dropped Rev. Algernon Gifford off at the fishing hub of Forteau. The narrative of the early letters from the first Anglican Labrador missions of Battle Harbour and Forteau is one of struggle to travel to meet the needs of their flock. Of the eight missionaries studied here, all were zealous in their efforts to build up the apostolic Anglican Church, and their zeal shaped their depictions of their own actions, and especially their representations of people who held different religious views. This study is an examination of the previously unexplored correspondence of the Anglican missionaries held at the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archive at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford. These records offer insight into
a neglected area of Labrador history where other sources are scant. Yet, given that the corpus contains only the missionaries’ perspective, the history presented here must be read with the source limitations in mind.

The Battle Harbour and Forteau missions administered to distant small satellite communities and fishing places. While missionaries had parsonages at their mission centres, the people were dispersed and migrated seasonally to various communities to participate in the extraction of resources. The southern Labrador population also swelled in the late spring and summer with the fishery, and as such missionaries had to travel to service their mobile congregations. In response to this environment, missionaries connected with their flock through constant travel to and from the many communities of their missions, including additional communities that existed only in the summer or winter. By being mobile, missionaries shared similar life experiences with their congregations and formed social bonds. The nature of the Anglican religious community thereby created was shaped by the Anglican missionaries’ religious convictions and the mobile, seasonal-based colonial economy of southern Labrador. Missionary activity in southern Labrador was aimed at fulfilling the colonial role of the Church of England, i.e., providing certain elements of social infrastructure and services, which in this case was influenced by the Tractarian theology of Bishop Field, the seemingly Anglo-Catholic religiosity of the missionaries, and the competitive nature of the Church of England in Newfoundland at this time. To address the issue of wolves — the itinerant missionaries of other denominations — the Anglican missionaries adapted to the nature of their Labrador missions and travelled extensively. Through this travel they created a fragile Anglican community along the coast of southern Labrador.

COMMUNITIES AND COLONIAL RESOURCE EXPLOITATION IN SOUTHERN LABRADOR

From the beginning, European settlement in Labrador was shaped by seasonal migration aimed at resource exploitation. Labrador was politically not a colony. It was a territory or, more accurately, a colonial locale governed through two other colonies, Newfoundland and Quebec. After the Treaty of Paris in 1763, Labrador remained firmly under British control as a territory attached either to Quebec (1774–1809) or Newfoundland (1763–73, 1809–present). The inhabitants of the geographic area that became Labrador were originally the Aboriginal peoples, the Innu, who were commonly referred to as the
Mountaineers, and the Inuit. Merchant employment brought much of the male population from Europe to Labrador, where they lived in a scattered settlement pattern based around merchant interests and intermarried with Aboriginal women, and some limited numbers of settler women. This created a dynamic mixed population that still exists today, although its early roots and character are difficult to discern due to a scant source base. Early European settlers followed the Inuit’s seasonal rounds, exploiting fish, seals, whales, and furs for profit, in contrast to what had been the subsistence economy of the original inhabitants. Eventually the French developed a pattern of exploitation, connected in part to knowledge gained from Aboriginal peoples, which influenced settlers and merchants in the post-Treaty of Paris era. Reportedly, early settlers and explorers stayed in Labrador primarily for the summer fishing season, establishing rocky trade relationships with the Aboriginal population and other trading posts, which often resulted in violence. According to John C. Kennedy, the lives, economy, and communities of Labrador’s inhabitants were shaped by seasonal transhumance, a pattern of life where people migrated with seasonal resources. People had to travel from inland to the coast during the spring and summer to take advantage of resources. Indeed, the development of mobile communities in southern Labrador during the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century is well documented by John C. Kennedy and Patricia Thornton. Important in relation to this notion is Kennedy’s understanding that mobility was caused by dependence on outside economic factors as well as Labrador’s geography and cyclical availability of resources. This pattern of mobility, combined with the development of trading posts, created multiple small communities based on seasonal economic activities.

Battle Harbour, Forteau, and their surrounding communities fit Kennedy’s economic model for Labrador well. An 1826 record of the fisheries in the Strait of Belle Isle indicates that many of the communities included in the missions had posts connected to merchant firms located in Great Britain and Newfoundland. These communities were organized around an economic model and grew because of increased economic development fuelled by investment from European and Newfoundland merchant firms. Battle Harbour and Forteau were chosen for the location of the first Church of England missions in Labrador because they were economic centres with merchant firms willing to provide some support. Literature about the history of Battle Harbour hardly discusses the presence of the Church of England during the second half of the nineteenth century. The only historical source without a pure economic focus is Bishop Feild’s account of the poverty and neglect in Labrador. The preoccupation
with economic history shows that the people of Battle Harbour lived in a context totally dependent on and shaped by outside economic forces. The case of Forteau was similar to Battle Harbour. In the literature, Forteau was reportedly well known for its fishery and was host to many competitive merchant firms, and notably, like Battle Harbour, its population swelled in the summer with visiting fishers and increasing economic competition. Yet, despite being centres of commercial activity these larger communities did not possess a colonial infrastructure. Rather, inhabitants who lived there permanently and those who dwelled on a seasonal basis relied heavily on merchants to provide them with employment or any aid needed — merchants, however, did not always provide aid in times of crisis. Aid would become the key area where the colonial role of the Church of England as a provider of social services and infrastructure would shape the nature of the southern Labrador missions and the missionaries’ travel practices.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND COLONIAL COMMUNITIES

The power this colonial community model had over shaping missionary conduct was connected to the envisioned role of Church of England missionaries in the nineteenth century, and especially to the specific influence of Bishop Edward Feild. The Church of England, from the beginning of colonialism in British North America, was interested in converting and civilizing “heathens.” It also saw itself as being in competition with other forms of Christianity. Literature promoting colonialism in Newfoundland envisioned the Church of England as an important provider of a social infrastructure. The Church of England, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, with a few itinerant missionaries and eventually SPG support, began to provide social and religious services, churches, and schools in colonial North America. To understand the concept of the Church of England as an organizational force in nineteenth-century British society, it is important to establish two points. First, at this time Christianity was seen as the guiding force for society’s morals in England. Second, the status of the Church of England gave it a prominent and influential social role, which, as it became increasingly entrenched, influenced many people to join and contribute financially to building up the Church.

In 1839, Newfoundland became the Diocese of Newfoundland and Bermuda, with George Aubrey Spencer, former missionary of Trinity, Newfoundland, as the first bishop. Spencer was an Evangelical Anglican who inherited
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a diocese wherein the Church of England was not the official established church and the law proscribed religious toleration for Roman Catholics and other Protestant denominations. This, combined with the Church of England’s theological identity as the apostolic church, led Anglicans to compete with other denominations, namely Methodists and Roman Catholics. Spencer also disliked Tractarian Anglicans because he considered them to be too close in some of their practices to Roman Catholics. One practice in particular that he disliked was the Tractarians’ tendency to turn their backs to the congregation during the service, a practice Spencer saw as Roman Catholic and disrespectful to the congregation. He also greatly disliked their focus on tradition and ritual as opposed to teaching from the Bible. In the nineteenth century, Evangelicals and members of the Oxford Movement — known initially as Tractarians, and later referred to as Anglo-Catholics — were the two dominant groups within the Church of England. Evangelicals favoured Georgian architecture, a departure from the Oxford Movement, which preferred Gothic architecture with altars at the front that thereby put the focus on the sacraments. In an Evangelical Anglican church the pulpit would likely be more centred and could obstruct the view of the altar. While an important part of the Church of England, the “Low Church” Evangelicals differed from the “High Church” Tractarians in relation to what the Church should emphasize. For example, they focused on the Bible over the sacraments and ritual. As a group, they were more co-operative with other denominations than were the Tractarians. Yet, like the Tractarians, they were also highly motivated to build missions and formed the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Spencer, while an Evangelical, was concerned with putting Anglicans first, and under his influence the Newfoundland School Society excluded Methodists from positions of authority. To develop the training of clergy locally, Spencer established a theological school in St. John’s. Spencer left Feild a diocese that was growing but also facing immense competition for congregants, and it was wanting for clergy, churches, schools, and finances.

Bishop Feild attended University of Oxford, Queen’s College, and was an early member of the Oxford Movement. Feild’s intentions for his colonial diocese were shaped by his Tractarian ideals, notably the Church’s constitutional independence from government, economic self-sufficiency, commitment to a Gothic-style church architecture where the altar was front and centre, and, most importantly, the Tractarian conception of the Church of England’s apostolic identity. Prior to his appointment as second bishop of Newfoundland and Bermuda, Feild was ordained and served as an inspector of schools. His educational
background and experience in setting up and running schools proved relevant for Newfoundland. Feild's diocesan goals and his Tractarian theology are explored in the graduate work of Sherri Sanderson and Frederick Jones, and both highlight Feild's commitment to Tractarian principles. The Tractarian movement sought to articulate its theological convictions in architecture, liturgy, and pastoral conduct as well as evangelization and church expansion.

The competitive dimension of the early Tractarian movement — a characteristic shared by later Anglo-Catholic Anglicans — led to a lack of cooperation between the Church of England and other religious groups. The unwillingness to co-operate with other Christian denominations contrasted Feild significantly with his predecessor, Spencer. Feild's mindset was that his diocese was located in a British colony and that the Church of England, as a British expansion of a divinely instituted apostolic institution, was the right religion for its inhabitants. Feild understood his political and religious duty to build up his diocese and expand Anglicanism. His concern for the wolves among the sheep was connected to his position as a colonial bishop. Feild used this term often throughout his writing, referencing preachers of other denominations and potential members of his congregation. This concern with wolves caused many controversies related to education and the distribution of money in Newfoundland.

Further indicative of Feild's Tractarian colonial ambitions was his expansion of Queen's College, the theological institution in St. John's first established by Bishop Spencer in 1841. Frederick Jones characterizes Queen's College, under Feild, as "a remarkable example of Tractarian semi-monastic ideals applied in a missionary situation." Out of the eight missionaries discussed here, six — Bishop, Botwood, Dobie, Gifford, Johnson, and Wilson — attended Queen's College, receiving instruction in Tractarian religiosity and architecture. The only two not educated there were Reverends Disney and Hutchinson, who came to Labrador from Ireland and England, respectively, upon hearing Feild's call. Bishop Feild needed men ready for mission duty who were hardy and not "sticks," so that they could handle physically demanding missions like the ones in southern Labrador. In 1848, Feild wrote:

I must now ask whether the Society will be able, as I am satisfied they will be disposed, to provide means to assist in conveying and securing to these poor people the blessings of our holy religion. I hope and believe that, with the blessing of God, 50 l. yearly given by the Society to each of the Missions at Forteau and Sandwich Bays, and 100 l. a-year to Battle Harbour, (200 l. a-year in all,) would be found sufficient to
support, with the assistance of the people and merchants, the required staff in each place. But what I crave and cry for is, the right man for each place. I feel sure, if any man will have faith, and come, a decent maintenance, more than food and raiment, will be provided. But if you send men with 500 l. a-year, without faith and good courage, of what use would they be on the Labrador? The climate is healthy, fish abundant, the merchants and their agents all well-disposed, and the people sadly in need of teaching, and most willing to be taught; and as yet there is no opposition.26

It was important for Feild and for the Church of England to send missionaries to Labrador to try to convert these people and establish the Church of England. Labrador’s status as a British colonial possession meant that its inhabitants were British subjects, and thus a part of England’s official religious community. But perhaps more importantly, southern Labrador was a frontier wherein the Church of England could, Feild hoped, establish itself first, without competition from other denominations, and thus institute an Anglican hegemony. The community organization of southern Labradorians and the missionaries’ religious identities as members of the colonial Church of England are the factors that shaped the travel patterns taken up by the Labrador missionaries. However, before carrying out an analysis of the travel habits of these missionaries and the nature of life in the missions, it is necessary to provide a brief outline of the history of the first Anglican Labrador missions during the period of this study.

**TIMELINE OF THE FORTEAU AND BATTLE HARBOUR MISSIONS**

On Friday, 17 August 1849, with a carpet bag in hand,27 Rev. Algernon Gifford,28 after having been introduced to many communities by Bishop Feild, was dropped off by the church ship, the Hawk, on the shore of Forteau Bay to begin his missionary duties.29 The Forteau mission was technically called “Mission of the Strait of Belle Isle.” It encompassed approximately 70 miles on the Labrador coast and several more on the Newfoundland side. Missionaries struggled to visit this part of the mission, often only managing a few visits during the short summer season. Rev. Robert T. Dobie in his letters from the 1870s indicated that the Newfoundland side should become its own mission. Later in the nineteenth century, over the course of the 1870s, Flower’s Cove on the Newfoundland side became the headquarters of the Strait of Belle Isle Anglican mission.30
Gifford had been educated at Queen's College, St. John's, under Field prior to his beginning the Forteau mission. In his first year and a half he stayed with an agent of the Bird mercantile establishment, a Mr. George Davis. During 1849, a parsonage was built and construction on St. Peter's Church, English Point, Forteau Bay, was commenced. Work on the church, designed by Rev. William Grey, Field's diocesan architect, was finished by 1856 and consecrated in 1857. In the winter of 1850, Gifford travelled to England and returned to Labrador with his new bride, Annie, and his sister, Mary. He left Forteau in the spring of 1858 and was succeeded by Reginald Johnson, who along with his wife stayed for only part of the summer and fall of 1859. Rev. Johnson was not a full priest and so he did not perform Holy Communion at St. Peter's. He expressed optimism that a church could be built at Red Bay, a topic of frequent discussion during Gifford's time. Rev. Edward Botwood, former assistant to Rev. George Hutchinson in the Battle Harbour mission, succeeded Johnson, arriving late in the winter of 1860 with his wife and children. In his first report, Botwood noted that Rev. Wainright, a Quebec missionary, knowing the mission was vacant, had been paying visits to the people living there.

Botwood's reports in particular expressed a great struggle with Methodism in Red Bay. It appears that Methodist preachers may have occasionally visited Labrador, especially since in the late 1850s the framework for a “Wesleyan Meeting House” was erected in Red Bay. The Anglican missionaries did not report any details about Methodist missionaries in Labrador directly. But Methodists did visit Labrador and had an interest in establishing a mission there among the Aboriginal population in the early 1820s. Methodist preachers Thomas Hickson and Richard Knight reportedly made visits. According to Nabboth Winsor, there were also visits in 1844 and 1845 by a Rev. J.S. Addy of Brigus and another unnamed missionary from Harbour Grace. However, after those early efforts Labrador was neglected by Methodists until after the period under consideration. In the late 1850s someone was reported regularly visiting each summer, and Winsor also mentions that chapels were built at several unnamed places and at Red Bay during that time. Winsor also indicates that Red Bay in 1878 and Hamilton Inlet in 1884 became Methodist mission centres.
missionaries do not mention them directly, after 1867 Roman Catholic missionaries reportedly were at the Hudson's Bay Company post at North West River. By 1861, Botwood succeeded in having an Anglican church built at Red Bay; its bells rang for the first time on 2 June 1861. Botwood's wife, Catherine Hall, was from a prominent Quebec family, but by 1862 two of their young children had died in Labrador and she returned to Quebec. Botwood remained in the mission alone until 1865. Later, in 1894, he became Archdeacon of Newfoundland. Rev. Robert T. Dobie was appointed in 1865 and, being eager to begin his work, paid for his and his family's passage to Labrador, arriving there in the fall of 1866. Dobie and his family found the parsonage dilapidated and the people neglected. In prose overflowing with joy, Dobie noted in a letter, dated 17 September 1866, that Rev. Wainright, his "Brother missionary," had been visiting the parishioners of the Forteau mission from his post in Quebec. Wainright, at Dobie's request, took part in the first service held at St. Peter's by Dobie. Wainright read to the people Dobie's official appointment to the mission and introduced him to many important people of the parish. Dobie's letters depict a great struggle, often discussed by other Forteau missionaries, to minister to the Newfoundland side of the mission. It was under Dobie that a building meant as a small chapel, but serving as a school during summer visits, was built at Flower's Cove by 1869. Dobie noted that in 1871 there were plans to expand it. He remained at the Forteau mission until the end of the period of this study.

The Battle Harbour mission was started a year later than that of Forteau. It began in the fall of 1850 when Rev. Henry P. Disney, an Irish missionary from the Diocese of Armagh, after hearing that Bishop Feild was struggling to find men willing to go to Labrador, gave up his parish to come to Labrador. Disney spent the winters of 1850 and 1851 in Newfoundland, in the mission of Harbour Grace, Newfoundland. While there, he raised funds for the churches that were to be built at Battle Harbour (St. James, consecrated under Hutchinson, in 1857 and designed by Rev. William Grey) and at St. Francis Harbour. The church at St. Francis Harbour was the first Anglican church to be consecrated in Labrador. It was consecrated during Bishop Feild's 1853 visit and received the name St. John the Baptist. During 1851 he also began construction on a number of small houses at Henley Harbour, Cape Charles, Cape Spear, Seal Island, and Venison Island to serve as schoolhouses, as places to stay for the missionary instead of the small tilts of local people, and as places to hold church services. Disney remained in Battle Harbour until 1853, at which time he returned to Ireland. His interest and passion for Labrador, however, did not fade for many years. In 1853 he again resigned his parish in Ireland and
intended to come back with Rev. George Hutchinson — who was to be the new missionary at Battle Harbour — and start the mission at Sandwich Bay. This, however, did not happen, and a note passed on through a letter by Disney from the merchant firm of Hunt indicated that a mission was not financially feasible, i.e., neither the Hunt firm nor the local population would be able to provide support for establishing and sustaining a missionary. Hutchinson spent over 14 years in the Battle Harbour mission, with only short breaks spent in Newfoundland. He showed great passion for his mission, establishing a school at Battle Harbour, which by 1866 employed a Mr. Skinner — whose full name is not given — as a full-time schoolmaster. Hutchinson also played the key role in establishing schools at Cape Charles (late 1850s–1876) and Venison Island, and in finishing the churches at Battle Harbour and Seal Island. During his time, he was also teacher and mentor to three catechists from Queen’s College, Feild’s theological school in St. John’s: E. Botwood (1858–59), who later became missionary at Forteau; W. Edwards, a man with a medical background (July 1860–62); and U.Z. Rule, later missionary at Bay of Islands. Notably, Rule described Hutchinson as a great lover of the works of his uncle, William Wordsworth, and those of Tractarian theologian John Keble.

In 1867, Hutchinson fell ill and was replaced in 1868 by W.E. Wilson. Rev. Wilson was the first to bring a family to Battle Harbour. He preached and taught in the mission until 1869, and according to the annual report of 1869, he and his young wife broke down due to the hardships of the “dreary and thinly peopled” mission with approximately 55 small communities. Wilson had an aptitude for geography and, like his predecessor Hutchison, left a manuscript map of the mission. He also used his map-making skills to add geography to the subjects of mathematics, reading, and religious instruction taught in the school.

The last missionary this study is concerned with is Rev. George Bishop. He arrived in 1871 and remained until 1878. Bishop’s letters indicate that being a missionary in Labrador was still very much a struggle against poverty and the competition of other denominations. Bishop highlighted tensions with Methodists and other religious opponents (the other group he refers to were people who came with the Newfoundland fishers). He specifically described summer visitors from Newfoundland, who conducted “prayer meetings” in Battle Harbour when he was absent due to having to travel to service the other communities of his mission. He indicated that there was still a day school at Battle Harbour and another at Cape Charles, which he visited when he could. A letter from 1876 describes him as being in good health and working hard to
carry out his spiritual labours. He described the people as poor and desiring access to Holy Communion more often. He also noted that numbers at services were gradually improving, though nominal allegiance to the Anglican faith was still a critical and continuing issue.\textsuperscript{52}

\textbf{BY FOOT, DOG SLED, BOAT, AND RACKETS: EXPLORING MISSIONARY MOBILITY AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION IN SOUTHERN LABRADOR}

Missionary travel, which dominated the lives of the early Anglican missionaries, was necessary, frequent, and occasionally dangerous. The only major deterrents to travel were stormy and freezing weather, and bad health. There are frequent stories of missionaries getting caught in winter storms. For example, in a story published in \textit{Mission Field} in 1861, Rev. Botwood recounted getting caught in a fierce storm with George Lilly, Frederick Butt, and Hector Snow when leaving Riverhead for Red Bay via komatik (a sled pulled by dogs). Despite a blinding blizzard, the dogs were able to pull the missionary and his companions through. Botwood recounted their survival as an act of providence, a common theme in the missionaries’ writings.\textsuperscript{53} Hutchinson frequently recorded that he spent only a few weeks in Battle Harbour during the late winter, spring, summer, and early fall of the year.\textsuperscript{54} Travel dominated Hutchinson’s life in Labrador, so much so that after 14 years his health was broken and he left. In 1876, Battle Harbour missionary Rev. George Bishop wrote, “No one can have any idea of what Labrador mission life is from reading. Experience is the only perfect instructor. The manners and customs of the people; their way of living; their houses as they call them, their teams and carts; dogs, snowshoes; all affect the missionary more or less.”\textsuperscript{55} Bishop described travel as the main part of missionary life in Labrador. It was a constant necessity that was harsh and very trying for a missionary’s spirit, and especially for his health.

Battle Harbour and English Point, Forteau Bay, were the home bases of the missions, but many other communities were also frequently mentioned. In the case of the Forteau mission, the key communities visited were Red Bay, Blanc Sablon, L’Anse au Loup, Bradore, L’Anse aux Cortard, Flower’s Cove (Newfoundland side of the Strait of Belle Isle), and L’Anse Amour. For Battle Harbour, the main outlying missions were St. Francis Harbour, Ship Harbour, Hawk’s Bay (located on an island at the mouth of Hawk Bay, it was also referred to as Hawk’s Harbour), Bolten’s Rock, Spear Harbour, Seal Islands, Cape
Charles, Chateau Bay, Shoal Harbour, Henley Harbour, and Venison Island—all of which appear to have existed year-round, though many, such as St. Francis Harbour, were reportedly somewhat empty during the winter. Depending on the season, the number of communities and small fishing places shifted. For example, during the winter many residents migrated to small fishing stations in St. Lewis Bay (the winter residence reportedly for the bulk of Battle Harbour’s population), Hawk’s Bay, St. Michael’s Bay, Alexis Bay, and Gilbert Bay.56 All of these communities, as well as other small fishing places, were visited several times a year. Like the inhabitants of their missions, missionaries migrated, following the people (including the summer fishers from Newfoundland and possibly the United States) of Labrador. The frequency of travel on the part of missionaries demonstrates that mobility was essential to a Labrador missionary’s life and work. Travel was also prescribed by Bishop Feild, who himself travelled frequently throughout his diocese.

The mission of Battle Harbour was made up of approximately 100 miles of coastline; however, this does not give an accurate image of how much ground a missionary had to cover. In the spring of 1862, Hutchinson reported that he had travelled over 400 miles during that quarter alone (March–June), and that a quarter of his journey had been over ice. During this period, he held 57 services in 29 settlements, preaching a sermon at each service.57 The extent of travel that Battle Harbour missionaries carried out is illustrated by Rev. Wilson’s 1869 map.58 In the Battle Harbour mission, a missionary would travel in a zigzagging pattern over lakes and land, and used dog teams and “rackets” (a Labrador word for snowshoes) in the winter. In the summer, missionaries often travelled by boat. Rev. Disney is the first reported missionary to own his own small whaleboat.59 The Battle Harbour missionaries used this boat after Disney had left.60 Missionaries at Battle Harbour also travelled outside their mission. Hutchinson made at least three recorded trips to Sandwich Bay, the first one in 1861. Sandwich Bay is approximately 100 miles north of Seal Island, the northern end of the Battle Harbour mission.61 Travel simply dominated the Battle Harbour missionaries’ letters. For example, in the last report from Bishop included in this study, the missionary described travel as a constant necessity and implied that the experience of missionary travel was the defining characteristic of missionary life. In fact, his first comment in the 1876 report was that he was grateful that his health had held so he was able to serve his congregation for another season. Missionaries travelled hundreds of miles each year.62

Bishop Feild described the mission of Forteau as being 70 miles of coastline. Gifford, the first missionary there, described his life as one of constant
travel, and in 1853 he wrote that his mission had increased to 36 settlements, all of which he tried to visit at least twice a year. Gifford noted the severe complications of winter travel, and that he had to travel inland with dogs and by snowshoes because there was no access to boats. At times he travelled up to 100 miles to carry out visits.

Missionary travel was a necessity because of the highly mobile southern Labrador population. Although missionaries wanted people to come and attend services, Botwood in particular agonized over church attendance in the winter, so much so that he wondered whether a barge could be built or better moorings made for people journeying from the Newfoundland side. He also considered whether a bridge could be built across the river dividing Forteau, so that all people could come to service during the winter. None of the suggestions for improving church attendance was ever carried out, and all of the Forteau missionaries frequently expressed frustration at not being able to hold regular services with their whole congregation at St. Peter’s Church. Forteau missionaries greatly struggled to visit the several miles of Newfoundland coastline included in their mission, often only being able to do so during the good weather of summer months. Dobie, in his letters from the 1870s, indicated that the Newfoundland side should become its own mission. Like his predecessors, he felt that travel troubles and demands in Labrador meant that he could not fully serve that part of his flock. Getting the whole population of a community to attend services was a great struggle in winter, which reflects the missionaries’ understanding that for the Labradorians to fully become Anglicans required their consistent attendance at religious services. In the reports wherein the missionaries’ reported their inability to travel because of sudden bad weather, the tone is overwhelmingly apologetic, and both frustration and sadness are expressed. Travel was necessary because inhabitants, due to their economic activities and limited means, could not come to the mission centres.

Health was another factor that prevented missionaries from travelling throughout their mission. In 1862, Bishop Feild thought that three years of uninterrupted service on the Labrador coast was too much for a missionary, and asked Hutchinson to come to St. John’s for the summer and remain during the winter. Hutchinson expressed great reluctance at leaving his mission without a replacement for eight months or more and delayed coming until October. Interconnected with health concerns was the anxiety missionaries expressed over the hardships faced by their congregations. During the winter of 1863, after a failed fall fishery the people of Hutchinson’s mission ended up facing an impending famine. The people, after travelling to Forteau, were aided by
merchants through the intervention of Rev. Botwood. Hutchinson had been anxious over leaving his flock without his support for the winter, but expressed great joy that Botwood had been able to help them in his absence. Another example of missionaries dealing with local hardships can be inferred from an 1856 report by Rev. Gifford. The priest wrote, “You cannot feed the whole parish.” Gifford was quoting a young officer of the British navy who visited the parish at English Point, Forteau. Prior to the officer's visit, many people were accustomed to coming to the parsonage after Sunday service for supper. Gifford served them boiled potatoes, a luxury for Labrador; however, in the winter the stores tended to run low. The officer made a point of coming to dinner two Sundays in a row to deter the inhabitants from their practice of eating at the parsonage after service. According to Gifford, the officer's efforts stopped the practice, possibly through direct or indirect intimidation. This story at first seems very odd; however, it is connected to anxiety expressed by Hutchinson. Gifford struggled, as did many of the missionaries, with the hardships experienced by Labradorians, and the limited help that the missionaries could provide at times appears to have caused much anxiety and sadness. That being said, Gifford also wrote that people often thoughtlessly took advantage of people's hospitality for longer than appropriate, behaved poorly when visiting or lodging, and were reportedly sometimes rude or demanding of their host during a service he was holding. All the missionaries recorded stories of personal struggle and the toll that this reportedly took on them in trying to provide for their fragile and frequently troublesome flock. Hutchinson eventually left Labrador after 14 years of service because of his health. Similarly, the health of Rev. Wilson and his wife was reportedly broken during their time at Battle Harbour. Rev. George Bishop recounted that Hutchinson was fondly remembered on the coast and that his zealosity for his missionary duty led to his failing health. These missions were difficult and harsh, and were very demanding on the missionaries' spirit and health.

The people of Labrador reportedly had expectations of their missionaries and expressed a desire for religious and medical services. To accommodate the requests, missionaries travelled to provide these services. Gifford, for example, recorded numerous encounters with Roman Catholics throughout his travels in his mission, many of which were sick calls. In 1856, for example, he wrote that he visited a sick man at L’Anse au Loup. The man was from a “Romanist” family, and the people were reportedly very hostile to him. In that letter, the priest greatly lamented his inability to serve the family religiously and medically.
roles were inseparable. One of the clearest examples of how these roles were intertwined is illustrated in the death of Mrs. Gibbons, an Aboriginal woman who had become the partner of an English man after being abandoned. These two could not marry as the man had a wife he was long separated from back in England, which caused Mrs. Gibbons great anxiety. Gifford and his wife Annie prayed with Mrs. Gibbons, and taught her about the Church's teachings in her final moments before she died. Gifford was both doctor and spiritual adviser in her final moments. The story is written to be moving and to honour Mrs. Gibbons's conversion. Is it, however, also a self-serving narrative that shows Gifford as an ideal pastor and his wife as a compassionate and devout woman?72

All the Labrador missionaries recorded their responses to requests for visits, including from people wanting marriages officiated, baptisms and burials performed, medical attention paid to minor issues, surgery performed, care for serious long-term conditions, and deathbed assistance. Their mobility was shaped by the economic exploitation that influenced patterns of settlement and migration. Because mobility was the way of life for Labradorians, it became the means through which missionaries carried out their religious duty and became part of their communities, establishing a fragile and tenuous communal Anglican identity for the inhabitants of southern Labrador.

TRAVEL, TEAMWORK, AND ANSWERING THE CALL: EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MISSIONARIES AND THEIR CONGREGATIONS IN PROVIDING RELIGIOUS SERVICES

The reports and letters of the missionaries contain many accounts of individual sojourns; however, they are predominantly filled with narratives of travel undertaken with companions and chance offers of free passage on ships. The people of Labrador travelled constantly to harvest seasonal resources and to visit relations. Also, during the spring and summer especially, people travelled via ship up and down the coast participating in seasonal fisheries. In an 1871 report, Dobie indicated that he had received ample free travel along and across the Straits. Similarly, Bishop noted that he had received much assistance from the inhabitants, especially in the winter. There are instances of paid travel, though they are few. Bishop, for example, wrote that he had paid over a £100 for passages on boats, but he did not indicate over what period of time he had spent this money. Also, throughout their reports and letters, missionaries often are unclear about travel companions and only by chance include mention
of a travelling companion when discussing their arrival in a community. For instance, in Gifford's reports it is nearly impossible to tell how often his wife and/or sister travelled with him. Social bonds were formed between inhabitants and missionaries, and are evident through missionaries’ receptions upon arrival in communities and in the responses to requests to visit places. Sadly, the missionaries rarely noted the ethnicity of their travel companions or people sending for them, and thus their relationships with Inuit or Innu are difficult to discern. The formation of social bonds, which happened through missionary travel, was instrumental in the integration of missionaries and the Church of England into the larger community network of southern Labrador.

The most dramatic example of a travel narrative is the printed story of Rev. Edward Botwood and his companions becoming lost in a storm in 1860. When Botwood and three other men set out to visit Red Bay, they saw another man ahead of them; however, poor weather set in and soon all were lost in a blinding storm. They were saved only by George Lilly’s decision to turn around, the sled dogs’ skill and strength, and, as accounted by Botwood, divine providence. The local people anxiously awaited their return and that of the other man, as well as two boys thought to be lost in the woods. The people greeted them with joy and formulated plans to go and look for the others who were missing in the storm. This narrative typifies missionary travel: setting out with men who owned dogs, who were walking, or, in the summer season, who owned a boat that was sailing in the direction the missionary intended to travel. Local people often travelled in groups for safety and company. The other element of Botwood’s narrative is the response of joy at the men’s return on the part of the people at Riverhead, and the subsequent communal expression of hope and worry for the others out in the storm. Botwood’s narrative shows social bonds and demonstrates how local people assisted missionary travel by becoming companions who provided access to dogsleds. Without aid, missionaries would not have been able to travel as extensively or as safely. Therefore, inhabitants, through their assistance, played a key role in aiding missionaries in their pastoral activities and in facilitating religious services.

Parishioners also encouraged religious services throughout southern Labrador by requesting missionary visits and services, and by providing accommodations to missionaries when they visited. It is unclear whether Disney’s campaign to build small houses in several communities as schoolhouses and for church services and missionary stopovers was completed, although in 1851 he indicated that these projects were nearly finished. The struggle to build these structures possibly established a communal sense of identification with
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the Church on the part of the local populations. Requests to visit places were not limited to inhabitants but came from Bishop Feild as well, who asked missionaries to visit certain communities as well as their fellow missionaries in the Labrador mission field. Specific requests for strictly religious services like marriages or baptisms and limited religious instruction for confirmation preparation and general education often came directly from interested parties. For instance, Rev. Gifford, much to his regret, once missed a schooner sent from Red Bay to pick him up to perform a marriage. In relation to specific requests from Inuit, the one clear recorded instance is Disney’s 1851 comment, “I found the Eskimaux women and children, — many of whom had been baptized by the Bishop and the Clergymen who attended his Lordship two years ago to Labrador, — more anxious to receive instruction.” The general indication is that these Inuit women were intermarried with settler men. Disney stated he established an itinerant Sunday school, writing that “On each Wednesday and Friday, during my stay at St. Francis’ Harbour, I kept school, and the Eskimaux women and children attended it, some of them coming from a considerable distance. They showed the greatest anxiety to learn to speak and read English.” Further, in relation to education, this is an area where the Labrador missionaries would struggle. In fact, only Battle Harbour would establish a day school, and while there were other itinerant schools, they depended on charity and minimal support from the Newfoundland government. Overall, these schools, aside from the one at Battle Harbour, lacked consistent existence, and their formation and maintenance were haphazard. The Forteau mission would never establish a full-time day school during the period of this study, despite extensive efforts on the part of missionaries.

Labradorians played a key role in bringing missionaries out into the expanses of their missions and linking them with their wider parish. Travel and visiting is what formed relationships. Bishop Feild himself visited Labrador six times, and the Quebec missionary Wainright visited Forteau, Labrador, when Newfoundland missionaries were unable to. The emphasis on travel in the narratives left by the Labrador missionaries reflects the influence of the economic and geographical context of Labrador. It also shows the interdependent relationships that developed between missionaries and inhabitants. The people of southern Labrador travelled extensively at the behest of merchants to extract resources or to visit family in different communities, and often missionaries travelled with groups for safety, companionship, and to save money. The mobility of the missionaries in connection to the colonial economic context of southern Labrador shows that, out of necessity and with much help and
encouragement from their flocks, they were adapting to an already existing framework of mobility.

**TRAVEL AS THE EXPRESSION OF THE RELIGIOSITY OF THE LABRADOR MISSIONARIES**

Besides demand and necessity, missionary travel also seems to have been driven by Anglo-Catholic convictions that focused on the duty to build up the apostolic church in colonial dioceses. In fact, to inculcate the conviction of duty, Bishop Feild taught his students at Queen's College to pursue an ascetic lifestyle that prepared them for ministering in the mission field of Newfoundland and Labrador. The extensive travel of the Labrador missionaries is indicative of their Anglo-Catholic religiosity and ethos; Evangelicals had a similar ethos, rooted in a different theological outlook, that produced a similar missionary spirit. Contained within the missionary travel narratives are interactions with inhabitants that show the missionaries’ religious convictions. These narratives, several of which will be discussed below, show that travel was a response to fulfilling their religious obligations to serve people and uphold and be faithful to the teachings of the apostolic church throughout their missions. While the actions of the missionaries and their motives for travel can be seen as similar to the Evangelical Anglican movement, the correspondence of the missionaries reveals an emphasis on travelling as a means to ensure and aid in the building of proper Gothic churches, the development of the sacramental life of their flock, and education in Church ritual and teachings. This emphasis shows that the missionaries’ motives and religious identities were seemingly in line with the principles of the Tractarian religiosity encouraged by Feild and taught at Queen's College. That being said, their actions can be seen as reflecting the ideals of the contemporary Anglican Evangelical movement. These missionaries did not declare themselves to be specifically Anglo-Catholic or Evangelical, and as such their conduct demonstrates that these movements had much in common and that lines of division were often less clear in the day-to-day lives of Anglican missionaries and their flocks. The missionaries’ need to travel was part of their religious expectations and ethos.

Rev. Gifford recorded in his summer report of 1855 two stories: one a marriage and baptismal narrative, the other a narrative about questionable marriage practices. In the first story, Gifford recounted how a couple — from Seal Cove or Anchor Point — that had a child out of wedlock and were living
together were brought to a public confession. Gifford read their confession during the service to the community, after which the whole congregation knelt for the Nicene Creed. This confession included an apology for inflicting their sin upon the community. Gifford then recited a prayer of forgiveness with the congregation. Next followed a proper marriage and baptismal service in the morning and afternoon. The second narrative described a blacksmith from L'Anse aux Cortard who was performing marriages. Gifford was deeply troubled by this man’s activities. In fact, the missionary was particularly upset upon hearing about the marriage of an underage girl performed by this man without the consent of her parents. He wrote that he was constantly trying to respond quickly to people’s requests for performing marriages and to news about this man performing marriages. “I found it prudent in each case,” Gifford wrote, “to obey the call to keep the blacksmith — who by this time is called the Western Parson — if possible from presuming to pronounce the church’s sanction and blessing.”

The significance of these two narratives lies in Gifford’s conception about the sanctity of marriage and the importance of baptism. For the priest, these activities were sacred, and their practice was important for the individual’s and the community’s religious identity. The couple that had a child out of wedlock is perhaps the clearest example of how the Church of England articulated identity and the cultural norms through which people were included into communities. This couple desired to enter into wedlock, and Gifford facilitated this by making them fully aware of how their unmarried state differed from marriage, while including the community in the process. The case of the “Western Parson” demonstrates the sanctity and proper sacramental dimension of marriage. For Gifford, as for the other Labrador missionaries, marriage and baptism were essential markers of social and religious status and identity. Sacramental practice represented an active part of building up the Church of England’s communal role. The focus on ensuring proper sacramental practices also demonstrated the pastoral role in which priests of the Church of England were cast.

Rev. Disney’s comments on baptism and guardianship were especially instructive.

I feel that baptizing without taking pains afterwards to teach children is entering into the most solemn engagement or covenant with almighty God and not afterwards taking care to discharge our part of the conditions — the three-fold security provided by the Divine
Providence by the Church visit, the parents, the minister, the sponsors — is as far as Labrador is concerned left to depend solely upon the ministers.90

This responsibility of the Labrador missionaries was rooted in their notion of duty. Disney, in the same letter, explains further, stating that missionaries must be responsible for the religious instruction of the inhabitants because their lack of formal education had left portions of the population largely illiterate and unfamiliar with the Anglican Church. The narratives of Disney and Gifford demonstrate their efforts to create conformity with the required sacramental practices that they considered imperative for Labradorians. Feild was deeply concerned with public baptism and the inclusion of the community, as well as following the proper Church rubric, including baptizing on Sundays and holy days and at what time in the service it was appropriate to perform baptism. Feild was also concerned, like Disney, with following up on educating children through organized catechism — that is, instruction of the initiates — in preparation for confirmation.91 While Disney came from Ireland, where the Tractarian movement was not as influential, his conduct at Battle Harbour and desire to return in 1853 to begin the Sandwich Bay mission reflects a dedication to Feild’s goals for the development of Anglicanism in Labrador.

From the missionaries’ travel narratives it is also evident that “dissenters” — Methodists, Roman Catholics, and seemingly irreligious persons — were present in southern Labrador.92 The letters of the missionaries depict engagements with people from such groups. These encounters reflect tensions over lack of religious cohesion and proper religious education among the people in the missions. Numerous Roman Catholics lived throughout the Labrador missions. One recorded encounter was between Rev. Botwood and a woman who was converted to Catholicism from Methodism.93 This unnamed woman expressed much devotion to the Virgin Mary, and Botwood argued with her about her Roman Catholicism. He also wrote that he expressed to her that he thought Roman Catholic priests were dubious persons who frequently abused their authority and could make her destroy her Bible. Botwood complained in one instance about a group of Mountaineers (Innu) who appeared to be Catholic and possessed a “Romanist bible” and who could not be dissuaded from their “superstitious” practices.94 These Innu people are depicted first as Catholics, and no consideration is given to their Aboriginal identity. Catholics are often depicted as frustrating the Anglican missionaries because they would not convert to Anglicanism. There are, occasionally, positive depictions of Catholics.
Rev. Hutchinson, for instance, wrote of a Roman Catholic man to whom he gave books. For approximately 10 years at the small fishing place of Chimney Tickle — sometimes referred to as Chimney — this man had instructed in a night school where some people had learned to read. Overall, the narratives about Roman Catholics, the majority of which come from Rev. Botwood, tell a story of religious diversity and inner tension on the part of the missionary to convert the person of a different faith and perform Anglican rituals.

Similar stories filled with anxiety over non-specified religious groups and Methodists can be found. These narratives depict religious conflict and the diversity of religions in the population of southern Labrador. The descriptions of irreligious persons usually referred to French-speaking people or merchants — sometimes there is also mention of hostile merchants, who are designated as being of Jersey origin. These men are depicted as being uncivil troublemakers who do not keep the Sabbath and either refuse to support the missionaries’ efforts or actively undermine them by making people work on the Sabbath. Two narratives about religious conflict with “dissenters” that show the missionaries’ Anglican religiosity are Rev. George Bishop’s encounter with a prayer group from Newfoundland and Rev. Botwood’s struggle to ensure that a church and not a meeting house be built at Red Bay. Bishop recounted that during the summer fishing season there were a number of visiting fishers from Newfoundland who, whenever he travelled outside of Battle Harbour, held questionable prayer meetings. Bishop framed the story of these uncontrollable people with the conversion narrative of one man who returned to the church and who reportedly admitted that the prayer meetings were no real worship.

Methodism in Red Bay was well documented by the Forteau missionaries. They mentioned frequently that Methodists attended their services. Conflict with Methodists, however, was only discussed when the attempt to build a church in Red Bay was threatened with the erection of the framework for a Wesleyan meeting house. Calvin Hollett, in *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland, 1774–1874*, has noted that competition between Methodists and Anglicans was common in Newfoundland. Methodist preachers and laity were often critical of Anglican efforts to take back converts and the sometimes hostile way the Anglicans acted towards Methodist clergy and lay adherents. While lay people in communities often exhibited fluid religious identities based on which denomination was available, they also adhered to their own principles without support of clergy and opposed Anglican evangelization. Like many of his fellow Newfoundland Anglican priests, Botwood responded to the Methodists’ inroads at Red Bay.
with great zeal, working hard to halt the community’s development of ties to the Methodist faith. Botwood personally took on the building of a church — which had been an ambition of Gifford — and ensured that a proper Anglican church was built. Travelling to Red Bay several times that winter, Botwood recounted that he personally dug the timber out of the snow, and encouraged residents to help him so as to hasten the start of construction; he continued to work throughout the winter, helping with putting on siding and finishing work. Churches in Labrador were built in co-operation with local people and merchants from Newfoundland and Labrador, and the SPG, and with aid from other colonial dioceses such as Nova Scotia and Quebec. Building proper Gothic churches was a preoccupation of all the Forteau missionaries, and of Disney and Hutchinson. Five churches were built in the larger communities of Battle Harbour, St. Francis Harbour, Seal Island, Forteau, and Red Bay, all according to William Grey’s Tractarian architectural principles. Churches were built to be centres that enhanced the missionaries’ as well as inhabitants’ sense of community, encouraged frequent participation in Anglican rituals and sacramental life, and resulted in greater religious cohesion. For instance, in 1851 Gifford wrote:

But I think, in respect of this Mission and its neighbourhood, there is a peculiar necessity of hastening the full development of its resources. The more suddenly churches and schools arise to attest the reality and permanency of the undertaking, the more strength shall we retain and the more gain. For these outward things avail much in nourishing zeal and good will, which multiply and increase in preservation.

In this letter, Gifford expressed a great desire to build many churches in Labrador, and also lamented how, out of necessity, he had to hold services in people’s homes, which affected his ability to hold a proper service. Despite success in building five churches, all of the missionaries’ noted that they struggled to hold services frequently in these churches, and often lamented their lack of consistent use. While the missionaries’ church building activities are demonstrative of the influence of Tractarianism and a commitment to building up the colonial Church of England in their missions, the narratives about churches also reflect the strained efforts of the missionaries to create an Anglican community.

These narratives reflect four characteristics of missionary work in southern Labrador: the diversity of the population; that the convictions and practices of the missionaries occasionally competed with settler and Aboriginal convictions and
practices; the Labrador missionaries were not entirely successful in getting all people to be faithful to the Church; missionary travel greatly motivated a sense of duty to build up the apostolic Anglican Church. These motivating factors informed the world view of the Labrador missionaries, and so they worked throughout the years to build an Anglican community on the cold and harsh shores of southern Labrador.

DUTY, STRUGGLE, AND INTERDEPENDENCY IN THE TRAVEL NARRATIVES OF THE LABRADOR MISSIONARIES

Three factors necessitated travel in the southern Labrador missions: the mobility and scattered nature of the population, the wants and needs of the people, and the effort to establish the apostolic church and its sacramental life along the lines of a normative colonial Anglicanism. Scholars of Anglicanism in the British Empire — Peter Nockles, Stewart Brown, and Rowan Strong — argue that colonial Anglo-Catholic Anglicanism had a strong sense of duty and conviction about its apostolicity. In the case of southern Labrador, this conviction translated into a strong sense of missionary obligation and impetus. Rev. Botwood, at the beginning of his missionary activity, wrote in relation to the falling away of people from the Church: “it taught me a lesson in such a forcible way that it cannot be forgotten, that a missionary [is] not only to sow his seed, but also to weed and to water.” The missionaries felt they had an obligation to their congregation to ensure that they grew into members of the apostolic Anglican Church and were protected from the influence of other denominations. These convictions were strongly held by Bishop Edward Feild and were manifested in the education of Labrador missionaries at Queen’s College and in the missionaries’ conduct throughout southern Labrador.

The instances of the “Western Parson,” George Bishop’s trouble with Newfoundland summer fishers, Botwood’s drive to ensure a proper Anglican church was built before a Methodist meeting house in Red Bay, Gifford’s and Disney’s representations of the importance of the sacrament of baptism and ecclesiastically sanctioned marriages, and William Grey’s Tractarian neo-Gothic churches show the influence of Feild’s Tractarianism and the seeming adherence to Anglo-Catholic principles on the part of the missionaries. Overall, however, the community they established was fragile, and nominalism continued to be a critical issue. Rev. George Bishop, one of the last missionaries during the period of this study, wrote in his 1872–73 annual report, “Tho many are
born Wesleyan and probably would be Wesleyans if convenient,” indicating his ongoing struggle with the presence of Methodism in southern Labrador.\textsuperscript{105} The religious diversity of southern Labrador was a source of tension, and this is seen in the missionaries’ struggle to convert the population and the Anglo-Catholic religious answers they provided. Given the Battle Harbour mission’s 55 and Forteau’s seasonally fluctuating 36-plus settlements, travel was the defining characteristic of this period of the southern Labrador missions. In an effort to build an Anglican community, the missionaries zealously adapted to the colonial context of southern Labrador, travelling constantly to service their scattered flock and to enlarge it through the conversion of others.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the Institute for Social and Economic Research, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and the Community University Research Association project — “Understanding the Past to Build the Future” — held by Dr. Lisa Rankin for supporting this research. I express my gratitude to the helpful staff at the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archive, and would also like to thank Dr. Hans Rollmann for his guidance in the course of my research. Last, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the insightful and helpful comments of the three anonymous reviewers, which helped improve this article.

NOTES


Kennedy, *People of the Bays*, 74.

“Report of the Fisheries carried on in the Gulf of St Laurence on the Islands therein also on the coast of Labrador and in the Straits of Bell Isle visited by 100 Tun Brig Contest between the 22nd of August and the 2nd of October 1826,” P4/17 Misc. Box 17, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL). Firms were engaged in many small communities and often in multiple communities simultaneously. Some examples include Slade, who had posts at Battle Harbour, Hawk’s Bay, and Venison Island (inferred from missionary letters); Hunt had posts at St. Francis Harbour and L’Anse aux Loup. Also, many small communities hosted multiple firms: Chimney Tickle hosted Saul Gooden from Newfoundland and Josh Hancock; at Battau, John Dawe and Bonnell were both from Brugu, Newfoundland. This pattern is also evident in earlier materials. “(Gosling papers) handwritten copy of a report or letter from an officer of Governor Sulphum’s Squadron in 1773, describing the Northern part of the Coast of Labrador: undated,” PANL, Patrick Thomas McGrath Fonds, MG. 8.130. In relation to Forteau, there was the DeQuetteville (Jersey) and Joseph Bird Firm, later known as Ellis Firm (Dorset), and Da Hume and Janvers (Jersey). Also, according to Heather Whareham there were nine small merchant firms at Forteau. Heather Wareham, *A Guide to the Chancery in the Maritime History Archive*, MHA, F.A. #28, 24 July 1989, Appendix A; Peter Browne, *Where the Fishers Go: The Story of Labrador* (New York: Cochrane Publishing, 1909), 221–23; MHA, “Inventory and Account Books, 1838–1844, Letterbook, 1836–1844,” Bird Collection, vol. 69, 2-5-4-8; MHA, Bird Collection, “Miscellaneous, 1838–1844,” vol. 70, 2-5-4-9; MHA, Bird Collection, “Inventory and Account Book, 1824–1844,” vol. 71, 2-4-5-10. Bird conducted its operations in Labrador out of Forteau, but the firm also had operations at Seal Island (Battle Harbour mission) and Anchor Point; Janet E. Miller Pitt, “Forteau,” in *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, vol. 2, 333–37.


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Kennedy, People of the Bays, 24–46. While it is important to understand the inhabitants’ dependence on employers, it is also important to understand that in the context of a harsh environment disorganized and sometimes violent economic competition made worker retention and recruitment a difficult matter that at times undermined and bankrupted merchant firms.


Henry Thompson, Into All Lands: The History of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts 1701–1950 (London: Billing Ltd., Guildford and Esher, 1951). In fact, the Bishop of London was initially responsible for overseeing the expansion of missionary activity and Anglicanism in the British colonies prior to the establishment of the SPG.


Michael Howley, Ecclesiastical History of Newfoundland, vol. 1 (Belleville, Ont.: Mika Publishing, 1979), 337–426. Howley’s history, which at times resembles hagiography, shows the growth of Roman Catholicism and its strong connection to Irish immigrants. The activities of Michael Anthony Fleming, the first bishop, and John Mullock, the second, were a source of tension and a threat to colonial stability. In his history, Howley,
a former Roman Catholic bishop, clearly demonstrates the historical tensions that existed between the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, Feild and Mullock. These tensions were rooted in religious, political, and social differences.


26 Feild, “A Visit to Labrador.”

27 Feild, “A Journal of a Visitation in the ‘Hawk.”’


29 SPG, “Notes of the Work of Missionaries,” Mission Field (London: Bell and Daldy, 1870), 59. Here, Flower’s Cove is listed as the mission headquarters.


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33 This particular church was very permeable to snow: multiple times throughout Gifford’s tenure he opened the doors after a blizzard to a pure white and later wet church. Gifford, “Annual Report, 1856, 16pg, E1,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports, 4–5.


37 Buckle, *The Anglican Church in Labrador*, 20–21.


41 Robert Dobie, “Report Sept. 17th 1866, 7pg, E22,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports; Dobie, “Report Sept. 22nd 1867, 6pg, E22,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports; R. Dobie, “Report Oct. 11th 1870, 7pg, E25A,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports; Dobie, “Report Nov. 17th 1871, 6pg, E26A,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports. This study ends with the year 1876; however, the missionary appointed in 1876, a Rev. Jefferys, left no letters or reports to be found for his short tenure in the mission. Therefore he will not be discussed.


43 Hutchinson does not mention these buildings. When travelling, he often did not indicate where he spent the night, so it is quite possible that some or all of these projects initiated by Disney were indeed completed and used. See Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. Sept. 19th 1851, 2pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received.

44 Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. May 6th, 1853, 4pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received; Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. June 1st, 1853, 4pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters
Received. In this letter Disney quoted from the Hunt firm, which was the main merchant firm at Sandwich Bay.

Nobel Lewis, *After Icebergs with a Painter: A Summer Voyage to Labrador and around Newfoundland* (London: Sampson Low, 1861). Hutchinson was also passionate about Labrador and its beauty. Lewis’s book recounts his adventure with an American painter who was interested in icebergs. Lewis described how they were able to sail to Labrador with Hutchinson and his catechist, Botwood. He also described numerous instances of their meeting with Hutchinson and his love of poetry and the landscape of Labrador. Lewis, like Hutchinson’s student Rule, describes Hutchinson as a lover of the works of his uncle William Wordsworth and those of John Keble. Rule even describes Hutchinson as being a poet himself, quoting a short piece of his work in his own book. Ulric Rule, *Reminiscences of My Life* (St. John’s: Dicks, 1927), 12–19.


SPG, *Annual Report* (London: Richard Clay, 1869), 40; W.E. Wilson, “Report June 19th 1869, 5pg including 2 maps, E24,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports. It is interesting to note that Wilson’s map, unlike that of Hutchinson, has an outline of his journey with different colours for winter and summer. He also indicated places where he held services and celebrated Holy Communion. Wilson’s map lists 55 communities and fishing places and marks the majority as visited in both summer and winter.


Ibid; Bishop, “Report, Nov. 6th 1876, E31,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports.


Bishop, “Report, Nov. 6th 1876, E31,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports. In this report Bishop spends three full pages narrating the typical seasonal travel of a Battle Harbour missionary.

Wilson, “Report June 19th 1869.” Often it is not clear what communities are winter stations, as they are not listed as such or identified on the maps, although Wilson’s charted journey makes it clear that many existed in the above bays and on islands and the coast.


Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. Sept. 19th 1851, 2pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received; Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. April 8th 1852, 2pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received. Disney lost his first boat in an accident, and the funds for the second boat were raised by the Diocese of Armagh.

Bishop, “Report, Nov. 6th 1876, 5pg, E31,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports. Bishop also indicated that, at times, he had his own driver for his boat.


Bishop, “Report, Nov. 6th 1876, E31,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports.

Gifford, “Annual Return to the S.P.G. Christmas, 1855, 4pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN/NFL, Box 8, 316, 2.


A. Gifford, “Assorted printed documents and image of proposed church at Indian Harbour, 6pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN/NFL, Box 8, 316; Gifford, “The Labrador Mission,” 8–17.

SPG, Annual Report, 40.

Bishop, “Report, Nov. 6th 1876, 5pg, E31,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports. 4. Hutchinson also revisited Labrador with Bishop Kelly in 1872 and was reportedly greeted warmly by the people he had served for so many years. James Kelly, “Extracts from the Journal of a Voyage to the Labrador in the Church Ship ‘Lavrock’ in 1872,” Mission Life 4 (1873): 68–77.

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Botwood told a similar story of encountering and trying to convert a Catholic man who came to get his child baptized. He wrote that he argued that Roman Catholicism was flawed and had empty rituals and superstitions. In this case Botwood was successful and reported that the man promised not to have anything more to do with the Catholic Church and its rituals. Botwood on another occasion accused a man he described explicitly as Romanist, who requested Botwood to visit his sick wife, of being arrogant and a bad sled driver. Botwood, “Annual Report, Sept. 1860–June 1861,” 50.


Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. Sept. 19th 1851, 2pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received.

Hutchinson, “Quarterly Report Ending June 30th 1864, 2pg, E16,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports. Feild requested that Hutchinson visit Sandwich Bay and his brother missionary in Forteau.


Ibid.


Hutchinson, “Quarterly Report, Sept. 30th, 1862, 3pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series 27, Original Letters Received; Bishop, “Report, Nov. 6th 1876, 5pg, E31,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports, 1–4. In this report, Bishop described the typical missionary travel during winter and summer, telling of visitations and receptions.

85 Ralph, “Community and the Colonial Church,” 97–99.
86 Gifford, “Quarterly Report Ending Mid-Summer, 1855, 4pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN/NFL, Box 8, 316.
87 Gifford, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. June 10th, 1855, 4pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN/NFL, Box 8, 316. In this letter, Gifford takes great pains to explain that he did not wish to clearly indicate people’s names or places of dwelling. He worried that identifying people, if content should be printed or circulated, could end up in the hands of people who would use the information in some malicious way.
89 Gifford, “Annual Return to the S.P.G. Christmas, 1855, 4pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN/NFL, Box 8, 316, 4. In this report, Gifford recounted another baptism narrative with a Roman Catholic man whom he made promise not to have the child rebaptized.
90 Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. Nov. 11th 1851, 10pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received, 6. Disney also indicated that baptism became a part of a controversy as people spread a rumour that he was charging for baptism, which he stated is in complete opposition to the Church of England’s practice. H. Disney, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. Nov. 11th 1851, 14pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received, 14.
91 Sanderson, “How High Was He?” 80–82.
92 It is important to note that the missionary writings, which serve as the basis for this study, do not discuss Aboriginal, Inuit, or Inuu/Mountaineer religion.
94 Ibid., 58.
96 Gifford, “Quarterly Report Ending Lady Day, 1855, 3pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN/NFL, Box 8, 316, 2–3; Botwood, “Annual Report, Sept. 6th 1860, E8, 43pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports, 13; Dobie, “Report Sept. 17th 1866, 7pg, E22,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, E Series Missionary Reports, 6. These sources also record amicable relations with unspecified persons from Jersey. For example, the firm DeQuetteville, a Jersey firm, was on very friendly and co-operative terms with the Church of England. DeQuetteville, “Letter to Secretary of the S.P.G. April 10th 1850, 2pg,” USPG Archive, C/CAN, D Series, 9A, Original Letters Received.
98 Gifford, “Quarterly Report Ending Mid-Summer, 1855.” In this report Gifford commented that his services at Red Bay are frequently attended by Methodists and have been for a while.
99 Calvin Hollett, *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism*


101 Ralph, “Community and the Colonial Church,” 83–91; Grey, “The Ecclesiology of Newfoundland.”

102 Gifford, “The Labrador Mission.”

