"I'd rather have a Prayer Book than a shirt": The Printed Word among Methodists and Anglicans in Nineteenth-Century Outport Newfoundland and Labrador

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Charles Taylor, in *A Secular Age*, concludes that the Reformation and the movements leading up to it resulted in an "excarnation" of spirituality. The pre-Reformation Lollards, for instance, "disembodied" worship by making it non-visual and non-physical, getting rid of such religious phenomena as relics, saints, crawling to the cross, shrines, and processions. One Lollard took an image of St. Catherine, chopped it up, and used the wood to cook his supper, and thereby demonstrated that he had disenchanted the whole religious apparatus of Latin Christendom. And this was before Protestantism had even made a beginning. Taylor notes that, as a result, everything pertaining to the spiritual now resided "in the head."[1]

This meant that in Protestantism everything depended on the word — the word written and the word spoken. Methodists and Anglicans in coastal Newfoundland and Labrador were in the full flush of Protestantism in the nineteenth century, and the appeal to their heads and to their hearts was through the power of the word.[2] Here, I will focus on the word written and read, rather than on the high-powered experience of the word spoken through extemporary preaching and prayer, exhortation, storytelling, and testimony. The thesis of this paper is that the printed word was the ever-running spring from which the people, in their oral tradition, drank. Therefore, books, magazines, tracts, and pamphlets, through retelling, had a powerful impact on

Newfoundland and Labrador culture — so powerful, one could say, that the culture was anchored in the printed word.

While conceptions of culture extend from the "artistic and intellectual achievement" of the few to "the whole way of life" of the many, my particular interest here is "the values, customs, beliefs and symbolic practices by which men and women live."[3] "Boats and fish" were all that the Methodist missionary, William Wilson, felt he could talk about with the fishermen of Burin in 1827, but he could have discussed more. This paper will show something of the mental universe of the people, particularly that which was informed by print.[4]

Three groups in England competed to provide the printed word to Protestants in Newfoundland — High Anglicans, evangelical Anglicans, and Methodists — as each endeavoured to convert the settlers to their particular schema of beliefs.[5] This missionary effort in Newfoundland was merely a segment of a huge mission among Anglicans, Methodists, and other Protestant denominations and sects in the United States, in Britain, and throughout the Empire as they competed with each other for converts.[6] In addition, there was a massive pan-Protestant effort to spread the gospel of justification by faith to all and sundry without reference to the peculiar tenets of any particular sect.[7] This transdenominational effort coincided with the Protestant view of an invisible church, a great body of believers who transcended chapels and churches and reached across continents and centuries, not limited to any particular institution of genuine and nominal believers.[8] Candy Brown argues persuasively that through the huge printing effort of books, magazines, tracts, and pamphlets Protestants were able to create "a textual community" within the invisible church.[9] In Newfoundland and Labrador these texts provided what Victor Turner calls "root paradigms" to the culture. These symbolic templates had "reference not only to the current state of social relationships existing or developing between actors, but also to the cultural goals, means, ideas, outlooks, currents of thought, patterns of belief . . . which enter into those relationships, interpret them, and incline them to alliance or divisiveness . . . they go beyond the

cognitive and even the moral to the existential domain . . . reach down to irreducible life stances of individuals, passing beneath conscious prehension to a fiduciary hold on what they sense to be axiomatic values, matters of life and death."[10] In this way people found common fellowship, for they interpreted their lives and spiritual journeys through common "frames of meaning."

In terms of books there was the Bible, and then the Book of Common Prayer, the hymn books, and such periodicals as *Methodist Magazine* and *Missionary Notices* that had their source in the Bible.[11] To take these in reverse order, the Methodists published their magazines monthly, but also bound the 12 issues into annual volumes and sent them out to the Empire. These books had a huge impact, not because everyone was literate, but because they provided the narratives that informed spirituality in a storytelling oral culture where, once heard, they were told and retold in a personal and creative way in kitchens and in stage lofts, and, among a mobile people, in winter houses, on sealing vessels, on the Labrador, and on the western shore.

Biographical narratives that "applied the Word to life experiences" were highly popular.[12] In the *Methodist Magazine* they were found in such items as memorials, missionary notices, and special providences — not the disengaged, instrumental providence of the Deists but the special, personal, interventionist providence of the Methodists, both positive and negative. The special providences in the 1817 volume included "singular, remarkable, and extraordinary" deliverances from a bear, from a pit, from a shark, and from drowning.[13] A negative instance can be found in the 1785 account of the fate of the three men who tarred John Hoskins of Old Perlican. It happened on a vessel at the wharf in Trinity harbour. The merchant and the captain on board made no effort to protect him — did they know? — while the three men held and tarred him. Within the space of five years the three were dead. One fell overboard into St. John's harbour and drowned; another was killed by a fall while sailing to England during the winter; and the third received a death wound going up the Straits and died in great agonies of soul. The captain had a vision. He said "he very

clearly saw Hoskins stand by one of the sailors as he was furling the top gallant, while the one who tarred him was below in the agonies of death, crying for mercy!" This had such an effect on the captain that, when he returned to Newfoundland, that was it for him. He went back to England and went to sea no more.[14]

Through the magazines people also heard of the success of Methodism in other parts of the world. When the missionary, James England, on his 1841 annual fall trip into Placentia Bay from Burin visited Thomas Bugden at Haystack, he noticed that Bugden prized his few issues of *Missionary Notices*, especially the one containing a report from the South Seas about King George preaching the Gospel. The report, included in the 1837 volume, told of the conversion of the King of Tonga and of the success of Methodism in the South Pacific. Through such publications, Thomas Bugden felt connected to the wider world and believed that what he experienced on Long Island, Placentia Bay, was part of a worldwide movement of spirituality. Bugden told England, "it gladdens my heart when I read this, and see what the Lord has done."[15]

Memorials or obituaries also appeared in the *Methodist Magazine*, on rare occasions, of Newfoundlanders. For instance, in the 1824 volume it was noted of Jane Hickson, formerly Jane Garland of Lower Island Cove, that she ably replaced her husband whenever he was away in other parts of his circuit. "She had stored her mind with useful knowledge," and was quite competent "both to feed and guide the flock of Christ . . . the people . . . lost nothing in his absence." Is the writer hinting that they may have gained something? Given the understatement of women's contribution in public ministry in this later phase of Methodism in England, it is noteworthy that the editor of this principal London Methodist publication did not delete from the article her prominence as a preacher. Once written, the news of her preaching travelled wherever and whenever the *Magazine* was read. In Newfoundland in frontier outports, women would be encouraged by her example in their own ministries of exhortation, preaching, and extemporaneous public prayer. And these volumes had a vernacular

audience. Their influence went far beyond clergy and merchants in their private studies and parlours. When John Lewis was becalmed in an open boat on his way from St. John's to be the first Methodist missionary in Burin in 1817, he spent the Sunday reading the *Methodist Magazine* to the crew. Perhaps he had the 1792 volume on board and there he is, off the southern shore on the calm sea reading to the crew the journal of William Black, the Methodist revivalist preacher from Nova Scotia, about his revival at Carbonear and Harbour Grace.[16] At St. John's in the 1820s, the Methodist missionary John Walsh reported that nearly every week at the Monday night prayer meeting an item such as a memoir was read from the *Methodist Magazine*, and a missionary item was read the first Monday of each month, thus enabling them to "unite with our friends in other parts of the world." James Hickson did the same at Bonavista. Thomas Angwin at Grand Bank in 1834 gave his congregation the *Methodist Magazine* for their "useful and profitable reading" while in their winter quarters "far up the Bay." The people of Hant's Harbour could even read about themselves in the 1820 *Methodist Magazine*.[17]

The enormous publishing effort of the Methodists also produced an endless supply of the printed word for popular consumption from the pen of Wesley himself — especially his sermons and tracts. When the missionary was away, the people of Hant's Harbour read Wesley's sermon, "Advice to the People Called Methodist with regard to Dress," and then promptly "put away their ear and other rings, bows of ribbands, and all superfluous apparel."[18] Many individually printed tracts by Wesley gave advice to Methodists on the specifics of living. For instance, William Wilson read *A Word to a Smuggler* to the Methodists of Burin because of his alarm in 1828 that "the practice of Smuggling has become very general."[19] The Wesleyan Tract Society, in its promotion of tract distribution, advertised that "a single tract . . . travels over a vast surface, visits numerous families, awakens a spirit of inquiry, and is thus adapted to convey the word of life." It was especially accessible to the general populace for whom "folios of theology" were not suited, and it was especially useful to attack a specific sin in society, for exam-

ple, profanation of the Sabbath, drunkenness, swearing. A tract, "as the small round stone in David's sling, though a mere nothing to look at, was so forcefully aimed as to bring down the enemy."[20]

Local theological pamphlets, printed in smaller numbers, had a more limited circulation than tracts. They were usually published because of controversy and were used to defend or oppose the whole system of Protestantism rather than promote one of its individual tenets. Such a controversy arose in Newfoundland with the arrival of Bishop Edward Feild. As an arduous advocate of the Tractarian or Oxford Movement with its focus on priest and sacrament, the redoubtable Feild made it his mission to reformulate the largely evangelical Anglicanism of the colony with its focus on the word. In this he faced powerful headwinds.[21] The controversy between the people of Harbour Buffett, Placentia Bay, and Bishop Feild and his local clergyman resulted in the publication of six pamphlets within a two-year period. Three of the pamphlets — two written by Thomas Edwards Collett and another by Governor Ker Baille Hamilton — defended the Protestantism of evangelical Anglicanism. Three by Archdeacon Thomas Finch Hobday Bridge, Bishop Feild, and his clergyman, William Kepple White, protested that they were not offending Protestant values. The controversy came to a head when Church Society dues were made mandatory, for the change was seen as a means to fund the Tractarianism of Bishop Feild.[22] We do not know how widely these pamphlets circulated in Newfoundland and Labrador. White said he was given the first Collett pamphlet in Placentia Bay by a friend, and Thomas E. Gaden, magistrate, postmaster, and sub-collector at Harbour Breton, said that a Collett pamphlet was "in general circulation" in Fortune Bay.[23] Another pamphlet, *The Glorious Title* by John Roberts at Bay de Verde, also extolled the virtues of Protestantism and ended with a sharp rebuke to Bishop Feild's Tractarianism without specifically naming it. Roberts said that he published the pamphlet because "the Protestants of Bay de Verds and Grates Cove" had asked him to put in writing the doctrines he had been preaching and sharing with them in their homes and because "certain causes . . . rendered me

under the necessity," no doubt having to do with Bishop Feild and his Tractarian regimen.[24] Archdeacon Bridge, too, extolled Protestantism in his *Two Religions*, a sermon he published, but then asked what Protestantism was in his *Letter to Peter Winser* when the latter publicly stated that he had converted from Protestantism to Catholicism.[25]

Hymnbooks had an even greater influence on a popular culture hardly defined by "boats and fish." Wesley's *Collection of Hymns for the use of the people called Methodists* was a mainstay of Newfoundland Methodism whether in chapels, winter tilts, sealing vessels, or on the Labrador. With the great revival of 1830 in Conception Bay, Richard Knight had to immediately order 54 copies to meet the demand.[26] It would be difficult to exaggerate the role of hymns in vernacular Methodism in Newfoundland and Labrador. People memorized the lyrics and tunes and sang them in their homes and outdoors during the daily round, and in this way they incarnated Methodism into popular culture. The sacred, not confined to church, sanctified the moments of everyday life.[27] Philip Tocque remembered, for instance, that during the 1830 Carbonear revival, "everywhere you would hear men, women and children singing on the flakes, in the stages; the fishermen in their boats, night and day sing the great revival hymn, 'I am bound for the Kingdom, Will you go to glory with me?'" At Merchantman's Harbour on the Labrador coast, everyone worked at the fish, "some throwing it up on the stage, some throating, some heading, some splitting, others salting, and putting it away. The girls employed in this place . . . continued to sing some of our beautiful hymns whilst engaged in their labor for hours at a time." James Lumsden witnessed the Methodist joy at Random Sound: "At work in the home or in the fields, you will hear their cheerful voices raised in song; and the only songs they know are the best, 'the songs of Zion.' The grand old hymns of Wesley and Watts, to the grand old tunes, in the communities in which I lived, were known by young and old, and sung everywhere." Martin Ivamy of English Harbour, just before he died, in telling James Hickson of his rejoicing in God, stated that he had sung hymns of the Lamb "thousands of times . . . in my boat" and now he was going to Immanuel's

land to sing them forever.[28] The hymns became embedded in popular culture in part because they resonated with the lives of the people. Every time Solomon French sang in a Methodist meeting, "Though waves and storms go o'er my head, though strength, and health, and friends be gone," he was touched anew with the reminder of God's "love and care" for him. He sang it alone throughout the night that his vessel, the *Huntsman*, was shipwrecked, when he was thrown into the waves crashing ashore on Fish Rock near Cape Charles. The hymn forever brought echoes of the providential rescue to his heart and mind.[29]

It was hymns that Methodists resorted to when their own words failed, and only singing could express the joy of their souls. Thus Virtue Vey, daughter of James and Mary Butler of Port de Grave, who was converted during William Black's 1791 visit, confined to her bed by sickness, became "indescribably happy" like never before, and suddenly in the silence of the night sang, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath," a Watts hymn, No. 224 in *Wesley's Collection*.[30] At other times joy came while they were singing. Hannah Goddard at Burin said that while at home with an illness and singing "Great source from whom all blessings flow," the Anglican hymn "brought a ray of light unto my mind. It shone brighter and brighter until I was lost in wonder, love and praise. My soul felt so much of the power of God that I lost all sense of my pain."[31] On Sound Island, Placentia Bay, Eliza Ann Beck at her departure read the Bible and "parts of Wesley's beautiful hymns" and then "she pointed in joy to something which mortal eye could not perceive . . . ecstasy."[32]

The source of the spirituality infusing these periodicals and hymnbooks was the Bible — the King James Bible. The beauty of its language facilitated its transmission in popular culture. Bishop Feild sold copies of the Bible and the Prayer Book published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) as he sailed the coast each summer. The British and Foreign Bible Society also sold cheap Bibles.[33] There were, no doubt, more Bibles than readers. But there were some readers. Mr. Barrett of Old Perlican, age 103 in 1815, converted since he was 70, read his Bible for 30 years, and without

glasses.[34] Another at Twillingate "read the Psalms of the day to his family, and some portion of the word of God."[35] Many adults learned to read at Newfoundland School Society (NSS) Sunday schools, for instance, at Salvage, and, of course, students read to parents at home, as at Harbour Buffett.[36] Grand Bank fishermen, in their month-long westward trips to such places as Burgeo and Petites, carried their Bibles with them for their Sunday Sabbaths.[37] And some immigrants from England could read. The Methodist missionary, John Brewster, related how prominently the Bible loomed in an immigrant fisherman's life in Twillingate in 1850:

> I had a Bible given me by my Sister "Molly," before I left England, I never read it until God took away my child. He was very young when he died . . . I stood over his dying bed . . . I [had] an alarming dream [and] awoke in great fear. I had recourse immediately to "Molly's" Bible. But, Sir, when I opened it, you might have knocked me down with a feather. I felt such a trembling come over me, when the first words that met my eye were the eleventh verse of the fifth chapter of Isaiah: "Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink" . . . From that time I began to read my Bible more, hoping to get a little comfort. But the more I [did], the more my sorrow increased. At length Mr. Addy came into these parts. "Now," said I, "here is one of the men I have longed to see. I will go and hear him." While I listened, the tears flowed thick and fast from my eyes. . . . I determined . . . that I would set myself to the task of reading the Bible through from Genesis to Revelation. I did it, except those very hard chapters in the middle of the Bible; and, as I knew God knew I was but a poor scholar, I thought he would excuse me slipping by them. I now fancied I was a good man . . . after [Mr. Marshall's] death my conviction returned with double force. My vain confidence broke down under me, and I felt as a man sinking into the sea. In this state of my soul I went

> to hear Mr. Peach preach . . . while the congregation was singing "O God of my salvation, hear," No. 365 [in] *Wesley's Collection of Hymns*, suddenly my heart was lightened of its load; the Spirit of God filled me with joy and gladness. I felt it next to an impossibility to withhold myself from declaring, "I do believe in Jesus! O, Sir, that light and joy of the Spirit were as the morning star to my soul!"[38]

Of course, most people, unlike this man, could not read the Bible. But it still saturated the culture, empowering it with the events, stories, and parables that made up the symbolic universe of its grand narrative. They were easily remembered in an oral culture and were told and retold in testimony and prayer, exhortation and lay preaching, and thereby became the major source empowering popular spirituality.

Having visitors read was a common practice. For instance, Archdeacon Wix in Chaleur Bay on the south coast reported:

> Some . . . of the poor people into whose hands . . . books have fallen, are unable themselves to read, but then they bring out the precious bundle of highly valued tracts from the sanctuary of their house chest, and, unrolling the piece of cotton or cloth in which they are carefully wrapped, they beg any temporary sojourner, or travelling bird of passage, who is a scholar, to read them to their assembled household. They availed themselves thus of my services between the hours of our public devotions; and, as I have frequently been on other occasions, I was pleased to see that they had much feeling. At Chaleur Bay, I had an audience, who gathered their chairs nearer to me, and nearer, as their interest in a beautiful religious narrative, which I was reading, heightened, until one and another lifted the hand, and the corner of the rough apron in silence, to wipe the tear from their sunburnt cheeks; and one woman, at the close of the tale, took up the chord for the rest, and remarked with a striking simplicity; —"It is very feeling, Sir!"[39]

While most could not read the Bible, every Sunday it was read aloud along the coast in a variety of public spaces — on the decks of schooners, in the holds of sealing vessels, in churches, in houses, and in tilts. It guided the culture, empowering people's lives with the events, stories, and parables that made up its grand narrative — Moses parting the sea, Samson and the pillars, the loaves and the fishes on the hillside, Lazarus at the gate — the people remembered these and in their variegated personal dynamic infused popular spirituality with Bible content through their retelling.

Many memorized actual passages from the Bible. For instance, when the Anglican clergyman, Julian Moreton, was about to begin a service in Bonavista North "a very fine old man, from Christchurch in Hampshire . . . rose from his seat," came to the reading desk in front of "the assembling congregation . . . and repeated to me the whole of the Ninetieth Psalm in verse."[40] In that psalm he gave voice to a vernacular spirituality that the Lord was his "dwelling place" not just in the schoolroom, but at home, and out in the fishing boat.

The Anglicans also had their Prayer Books — *The Book of Common Prayer*. Much of its content, the *Jubilate Deo* and the *Nunc Dimittis*, for instance, was ingrained in people's consciousness as salt was ingrained in the floorboards of the stage. Lines were indelibly etched in their memory, such as:

> We have left undone those things which we ought to have done.
> We should not dissemble nor cloke them.
> The Scripture moveth us in sundry places.
> As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be.

Of course, the Methodist Prayer Book had a lot of these lines too. The Carbonear Methodist Church Service Book, 1834, is practically a copy of the Church of England Prayer Book, but it has parts left out, like Quinquegesima Sunday and the saints' days, and has only 25 of the 39 Articles, and some of them are not the same.

Anglicans dearly prized their Prayer Books. In Newfoundland and Labrador a popular evangelical Anglicanism of the word, and not of priest and sacrament, was the impetus for this vernacular spirituality. These were sealers out on the rising and falling sea and heaving ice, not priests in their chancels, who provided for their own mutual communion with God through tracts, sermons, Bible, and *Book of Common Prayer*. The younger sealers had memorized collects and lessons from the Prayer Book while in school, and many had copies in their homes. Robert Dyer, the NSS teacher at Greenspond, ordered 150 from the SPCK in 1846. One boy said to him at school, "I would rather have a Prayer Book than a shirt."[41] About the same time, an 80-year-old at Belleoram asked another teacher for a book. T.B. Polden asked of what use it would be to him since no one in the area could read. He replied, "I'll get someone to read it to me, for our skipper that comes to take fish can read, and I'll get him to read it to me." Polden gave him several tracts. The man said, "I'll get them sewed together, and put in my Prayer Book, where they sha'nt get hurted." "Prayer Book," said I, "Have you got a Prayer Book?" "Yes, I have, sir . . . and I would not part with it for any money, for it was my poor father's, who is dead and gone. I only wish I could read as well as he could."[42]

And not just the Methodists had special providences. An Anglican instance, not surprisingly, had to do with the Prayer Book. A man told Robert Dyer that he had been out on a sealing vessel that was lost, along with their bundles of clothes, but they themselves were saved. One man had wrapped a Prayer Book in the middle of his clothes. The bundle was "beating about in the sea for a month" before it "was picked up 30 miles from the place where the vessel was wrecked." And maybe in a variation of the Gideon miracles of the fleece, when the Prayer Book was taken out of the saturated clothes it "was perfectly dry." He said it was the only copy they had for 40–50 men.[43]

Thomas Legge prized his Prayer Book at Crabbes Barachois on the west coast. He had come out to Newfoundland from Milton Abbas, Dorset, in 1815 and in the 1870s he asked the missionary, Frederic Hall, to pass on a message to the incumbent of Milton Abbey Church:

> "Tell him I've got eleven children and thirty-nine grandchildren; and bless the Lord, not one has been lost to me. If there are any young people who would like to come out they will do well. I've been here fifty year and have never wanted bit nor sup; have twenty tons of hay, keep a horse, a few sheep and hogs, and winter thirteen or fourteen head o' cattle. So you see that old Tom Legge, tho' money he's got none, is rich in money's worth, bless the Lord!"

And his "bless the Lord" was not just a filler for his speech. Hall, writing a year or so later, said that when he hoisted the flag in Crabbes:

> within a quarter of an hour from the time the bunting has unfurled itself in the breeze, you will see boats making their way across the harbour or along the shore to some landing-place near, and scattered twos and threes of men and women, with their little ones, wending their way. . . . Foremost among the latter you will, at such a time, see the bowed figure of an old man assisting his slow steps with a stick. Under his arm he carries an old and well-thumbed but carefully preserved Prayer-book, given him many years ago by his good bishop. . . . His responses, which come out as readily as his old "aye, aye, sir," and his reverentially slow but somewhat curious rendering of the words, as he leads his fellow worshippers in the responses, would be sadly missed in the little church at Crabbes Barachoix. But it is when he leads off the Magnificat to the tune which he sang in Milton Abbey Church, in Dorset, sixty years since, that Mr. Legge shines forth in all his glory. . . . "All pe-a-pul that on arth du dwell," often rings in my ears. . . . His devotion, his undoubted fervour, only filled me with admiring love and veneration.[44]

John Paine at Rocky Harbour was no stranger to the Prayer Book either. When Bishop Feild stood in front of John Paine for the first

time there at the entrance to Bonne Bay he was in greater wonderment than when he first beheld the magnificent mountains of the Bay of Islands. Bishop Feild noticed that his Prayer Book was "well used," as was his *New Manual of Devotions.* As a matter of fact, the latter was so "well used" that Paine wanted another to replace it. The *New Manual* was for those who went beyond the Prayer Book with their devotion. It included prayers for each day of the week, morning and evening, for one's family, for self-examination, for the sick, for the conversion of a sinner, and for a multitude of specific circumstances of life such as times of travel, war, poverty, temptation, storm, and debt.[45]

A prime characteristic of the Prayer Book was its portability, and Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were a people on the move, whether to La Poile, to Musgrave Harbour, to Change Islands or to Labrador for the summer fishery, or "up the bay" to winter houses in the fall, or out on sealing vessels in the spring. One man was sick at the time for going up the bay for the winter. He came to Robert Dyer for a Prayer Book, telling him that he thought "he may never return" and "he wished to have some prayers to prepare him for his hour of death." John Hollett at Sound Island had a Prayer Book sent to him in 1834 by a clergyman from Essex. A servant in Essex, whose brother was a fishermen in inner Placentia Bay who attended Hollett's services on Sound Island, and possibly at Piper's Hole during the winter, had mentioned him to his clergyman at Essex.[46]

Methodists and evangelical Anglicans were part of a giant pan-Protestant publishing effort for evangelism and spiritual encouragement and nurture, churning out an astounding supply of books, tracts, pamphlets, and magazines. In referencing the request for tracts from Joseph Baggs, their teacher at Salvage, the NSS estimated in the 1840s that the Religious Tract Society alone had given out half a million tracts.[47] The Tract Society saw it as its mission to promote the "evangelical principles of the Reformation." Its printed material was to contain "nothing to recommend one denomination," but rather to focus on the Gospel. The Society's aim was that "every tract" it published should contain "some account of the way of a sinner's salvation."

It should show "the method of a sinner's recovery . . . by the atonement and grace of the Redeemer" that the reader "might plainly perceive . . . he must be born again of the Spirit, justified by faith."[48] For example, Tract no. 238 of the Religious Tract Society is titled *The Newfoundland Fishermen*. It speaks of a ship approaching the Narrows, under sail with a nice breeze of wind on, when it struck a small fishing boat out of St. John's. The whole event is then wound round to tell the message of the Gospel.[49] In 1835 William Meek received 190 volumes of such items from the Society for a loan library at Bonavista, and in 1850 Thomas Dunn received 300 volumes at St. John's.[50]

Such tracts and books were in great demand in Newfoundland, especially in the fall when people were moving up the bay to their "winter quarters." Next to fish, wood was the most important commodity in the daily life of a Newfoundlander and it was usually acquired in the winter — "in the woods." Families moved off the headlands and islands to be nearer to the shelter and ready fuel supply of the forest. But this was only a part of the reason for this annual migration. Since cash was in short supply due to the truck system,[51] most everything that families used was made of wood, which was abundant and free "in the bay." Fishermen cut from the forest all the wood needed to build their houses, stores, wharves, and stages, and chopped and sawed it into sills, studs, boards, and shingles. Not to speak of furniture, flakes, and fences. They did the same with timbers and planks and built their boats on site in winter. Then there were implements for fishing, mostly of wood, such as oars, gaffs, slob haulers, tholepins, and spudgels, breadboxes, buoys, and killicks. They made from wood a hundred other necessary items such as sleds, handbars, wheelbarrows, buckets, clothesline posts, and poles. In addition, working tools, such as planes, mallets, bucksaw frames, and handles for sundry items such as chisels, hammers, malls, and prongs, all were made of wood. But winter had many hours too dark for work outside. It was the time especially for telling stories, reflecting — and often reading. Hence the demand for books and tracts in late October and November, noted, for instance, by Robert Dyer. Often, only the children in the family were literate, and they would read the tracts and

books to their parents "during the winter in the woods." The focus of this material was to encourage people to "embrace and ever hold fast to the blessed hope of everlasting life" through Jesus Christ, as Elizabeth Wallbridge of the Isle of Wight did in *The Dairyman's Daughter*. This tract, which Dyer had on hand, had enormous appeal. Written in 1810, four million copies of the conversion by a Methodist preacher of Elizabeth Wallbridge on the Isle of Wight had been printed by 1828.[52]

Dyer said he also distributed annually in late February and early March as many as 800 tracts to up to 25 vessels going to the ice from Greenspond and Pool's Island. Neither was he an unwelcome guest. As he said, "not one leaves without them." Sealers told him they were "delighted" to read the tracts. One sealer was exceptionally keen. Andrew Dunn visited Dyer in August to obtain a tract that he had heard read while out sealing and he wanted to read it to others. He found it so interesting that "he could repeat a great portion of it." The young sealers who were graduates from the NSS school generally took the lead spiritually on the vessels. In addition to tracts, they requested books before departure so that on Sundays they could read "the Church prayers and a Sermon to the crew on board."[53] A sealer at Trinity, while requesting a book from Joseph Baggs, commented, "I like always to take a book with me to the ice."[54] One sealing captain practically turned his vessel into a floating chapel. He requested "tracts, a bible, some Evangelical work of theology, and a volume of sermons." He had always had service on Sundays, but in 1855 he intended to add "family prayers daily, night and morning."[55]

Similarly, the Congregationalist missionary at Salmon Bay and Bonne Esperance, Charles Carpenter, boarded the many fishing schooners in the area giving out books and tracts. He travelled the southern Labrador coast as far as Henley Harbour in 1858 giving out books and tracts.[56] His custom also was to send packages of these via vessels travelling along the coast. For instance, a Newfoundland Methodist family came to Salmon Bay to fish in 1861, visited on Sundays, and he sent packages with them on their return home, as he did with American fishermen who were going along the coast of Labrador on

the way north to finish loading their vessels. Carpenter also said that the several families from Burgeo and West Point, La Poile, who decided to remain in Harrington Harbour, were "influenced and benefitted very much by anything said, written, or done in the fatherland — and an old English paper or periodical is esteemed a prize."[57]

There were other books on the Labrador. Ulric Rule joined George Hutchinson, the Church of England clergyman at Battle Harbour in 1863, and spent some time with the nephew of Wordsworth. Rule said that Hutchinson "was himself of a very poetic mind, and often recited to me bits of Wordsworth's . . . poetry," and Rule included a verse from the poem "Yarrow Revisited" in his *Reminiscences of My Life*. Hutchinson enjoyed his time with Rule and wrote home to his sisters that Rule "takes in a 'bit of poetry very quickly.'" So there they are in Battle Harbour, probably with a book or two of Wordsworth, and likely John Keble's *Christian Year*, since they mention his poetry also. But this is to stray down the path of the literati, and one must get back to books in popular spirituality.[58]

Wix noted that John Hollett on Sound Island, Placentia Bay, annually received from England "a packet of books . . . for some time." This is a reminder that, of course, there were other books in the outports. When Wix continued his 1835 trek along the eastern side of the Burin Peninsula and came to Bay de l'Eau, just past Great Gallows Harbour, he met a family from Oderin wintering there. His host told him that she was "fond of church books" and, he said, "begged me to send her some books."[59] Many women read more extensively than men about issues relating to their spirituality. For instance, Mrs. Lucas, probably the wife of John G. Lucas, the lay preacher and new subcollector at Fogo, was given *Popular Objections to Methodism Considered and Answered* in 1864 by the Methodist missionary, Joseph Gaetz, assistant missionary at St. John's. Sarah Ann Collins of St. John's was given *The Happiness of the Blessed* by Archdeacon Bridge. Charlotte Percey, probably of Brigus or Cupids, owned a copy of Coughlan's *Account of the Work of God in Newfoundland*, given to her by her mother, a volume in which women are prominent.[60] Perhaps it is not coincidental

that Julian Moreton's complaint was not of the Uncle Azariahs in Bonavista North, but of the Aunt Rachels, who cited Scripture to him contesting his Tractarian theology. He noted that "Not one of the little communities in my mission was free from them."[61]

At Twillingate in 1799 John Hillyard said that there were many books in the harbour, but he still ordered more. He asked that Samuel Greathead, a dissenting minister in England, send him some tracts and books from the Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge (SPRK). Specifically, he wanted James Janeway's *A Token for Children*, Matthew Henry's *The Pleasure of Being Religious*, John Shower's *Serious Reflections on Time and Eternity*, John Reynolds's *Compassionate Address to the Christian World*, Joseph Alleine's *Alarm to the Unconverted*, and Richard Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*.[62] The SPRK, founded in 1750, the first evangelical tract society in England, published such items as these for the poor "to bring them acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus, and render them wise to Salvation."[63] Isabel Rivers, who has studied the SPRK, noted that it was founded because the SPCK, founded in 1698, was hostile to dissenters and "ignored what they regarded as the essential doctrines of the gospel." The SPRK, which consisted of Congregationalists, Baptists, evangelical Anglicans, and others, largely Calvinist, published established classics for distribution to the poor. According to its 1795 report, the items requested by Hillyard shortly after his arrival in Twillingate were among the most commonly sought after from the society, apart from copies of Scripture and of hymns by Isaac Watts.[64]

Richard Newman, agent at Twillingate for Thomas Colbourne, also participated in a variety of theological views through books. An Anglican, he had his children baptized by the local clergyman and bought a half-pew in St. Peter's Church. He was also confirmed by John Inglis, calling him "the Bishop of Halifax" when he happened to come by in 1827.[65] This did not mean that he was limited to all things Anglican in his reading, for he was a member of a wider Protestant ecumenism. He owned a copy of *Sketch of the Denominations* by John Evans that grouped the sects according to their views of the person

of Christ, predestination, forms of church government, and then added a catch-all bag that included Quakers, Moravians, Methodists, and Millenarians. The purpose of the book was to promote charity among the various sects of Christianity, among which he included the Church of England, by giving "a more just knowledge of each other's tenets." Evans, a Baptist minister in London, edged up against this aim when he spoke of the Methodists, saying "certain persons" among them at revival meetings, an instance of which he witnessed at Nottingham, who "under the influence of a religious phrenzy, occasion by their groanings and vociferations, an uncommon degree of tumult and confusion." But the "more sensible Methodists" were not into "such fanaticism."[66] Newman sent a copy of the book to his sister Martha in England and wondered "which sect" she considered "most agreeable to the scripture."[67] He also asked his brother to have copies of the *Evangelical Rambler* bound and sent to him. Each volume, edited by the Congregationalist Timothy East, minister at Ebenezer Chapel, Birmingham, was a series of tracts that provided an apologetic in narrative and essay form for that conversion to Jesus Christ which was common to all evangelical Protestants. It defended evangelicals against such terms of opprobrium as "Methodist" and "fanatic" and called for Anglican ministers to preach conversion in the Church of England instead of having parishioners believe that adherence to the rites of the church would alone effect salvation.[68]

And John Bunyan was a favourite — as everywhere. For instance, the Anglican clergyman Martin Blackmore gave lectures on the *Pilgrim's Progress* at Burgeo in the 1840s.[69] And Anglican lay readers and NSS teachers, since they were not allowed to preach, read books of sermons everywhere every Sunday. Those read by NSS teachers were evangelical. For instance, Robert Dyer, before he was ordained, read sermons of John Harding on Swain's Island and Pool's Island. Harding's theme was salvation — "the joy of salvation, a salvation all full and free, pardon, justification, acceptance, everlasting life, all given, given now in Christ, this joy it is that fills the heart."[70] When John Addy, the Methodist missionary, made his first visit to Little Harbour

on South Twillingate Island in 1841 he found a person there who "assembles his neighbours every Lord's Day and reads one of Burder's *Village Sermons*." Jasper Dowland, a local preacher who had been converted "in a remarkable manner," read a service each Sunday, but it is not known which service he read — Anglican, Congregationalist, or Methodist. George Burder was a Congregationalist minister who was also Secretary to the London Missionary Society. *Village Sermons* was an evangelical appeal to a pan-Protestant evangelical populace focusing on such subjects as redemption, regeneration, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the new heart. As Secretary to the London Missionary Society, Burder was primarily interested in the publication of the Gospel, whether, as he said, the preachers were "Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Baptist, or Independent."[71]

The Methodist missionary, John Reay, noted that Jasper Dowland could bring portions of Scripture with surprising readiness and suitability "to point a moral or adorn a tale." He said that Dowland had "a great knowledge of the Scriptures, and continued to minister with books of sermons and Bible up to 1873":

> Jasper's Sabbath rest was usually spent in the summer time as follows: Prayer meeting at Little Harbor at 7 a.m., Sunday School at 9.30, preaching at 11. Immediately after dinner, he would get into his little punt and cross the Main Tickle, either to Merritt's Harbor or to Friday's Bay, and preach there, and visit anybody who was sick. . . . He got back in time for "a dish of tea," after which there was preaching at 6.30, followed by a prayer meeting. At his preaching service he usually read a sermon, but made comments, and gave explanations, and emphasized admonitions and appeals as he went along. . . . During the winter he used to go to all the outlying places to hold religious meetings. He went often to Crow Head, travelling in the snow all the distance . . . seven or eight miles . . . He lost his way when returning home once, and was out all night, but he said he just trod a path for himself, and walked

> back and forth praying and singing hymns, and repeating portions of God's Word till the morning.[72]

Yes, Newfoundland and Labrador in the nineteenth century was an oral culture, but it was the printed word that informed the narrative of people's lives in that culture. Specifically, they interpreted their lives through the Bible and Prayer Book. Their spiritual source was the Bible experienced — an impetus of the massive publishing enterprise of the tract societies whose tracts were continually distributed to communities, sealing vessels, and fishing schooners. It was also an impulse of the enormous Methodist publishing endeavour of magazines, missionary notices, Wesley hymns and sermons, and tracts and pamphlets. In this way the Bible was repeatedly translated into people's lives. The influence of the Prayer Book was also huge. Anglicans were so steeped in it that it was not just in their hearts, but in their bones. The Methodist Service Book copied it. Thus, Methodists had a second spiritual source in the Prayer Book that they appealed to as they related to their fellow Anglicans. The prominence of these two books as a spiritual source elevated the printed word in the culture — the two volumes themselves, and also the myriad hymn books, volumes of sermons, magazines, tracts, and pamphlets that further expatiated its grand narrative. In brief, then, the printed word provided the horizon of popular spirituality. This is not to say that there was no variation within the Protestant culture; rather, the printed word, and particularly this genre, proved to be a vector to it.[73] It is the case that ordinary people in their creativity reinterpret "the messages beamed at them," so much so that "one group adopts and adapts, or converts, inverts, subverts the vocabulary of another."[74] However, in Newfoundland and Labrador the vernacular response of converting, inverting, and subverting still maintained a Protestant symbolic universe. The popular engagement and leadership on the frontier provide considerable evidence that the grand narrative of the Bible equipped the people's mental universe, was the anchor to their souls, and gave their lives its centre. Thus its personal and creative retelling in kitchens, stages, net lofts, and schooners.

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Notes

1 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press 2007), 74, 554, 613–14.

2 Of course, it was Bishop Edward Feild's mission to attempt to reinstate the visual in Newfoundland and Labrador with his Tractarian Anglicanism of Oxford.

3 Terry Eagleton, *Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 1. To quote Clifford Geertz, culture "denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life." Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures, Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89. Or, as he put it more succinctly, "the frames of meaning within which people live and form their convictions, their selves, and their solidarities." Clifford Geertz, *Available Light: Anthropological Reflections on Philosophical Topics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 246. See also William H. Sewell Jr., *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), "The Concept(s) of Culture," 152–74.

4 Wilson remarked, "Boats and fish are the only subject on which they can converse." Rooms Provincial Archives (RPA), Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS), MG 597, reel 20, 1826–27, William Wilson, Burin, 2 Nov. 1827.

5 For the particular milieu of Protestantism in nineteenth-century Newfoundland, see Calvin Hollett, *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy: The Growth of Methodism in Newfoundland, 1774–1884* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 37–54.

6 For British missionary societies, see Hilary M. Carey, *God's Empire: Religion and Colonialism in the British World, c. 1801–1908* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

7 Candy Gunther Brown, *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1789–1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 46–78.

8 Frank M. Turner, *John Henry Newman: The Challenge to Evangelical Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 41-43.

9 Brown, *The Word in the World*, 9–14, 133–34, 218–19.

10 Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 64.

11 See Hollett, *Shouting, Embracing, and Dancing with Ecstasy*, 102–10.

12 Brown, *The Word in the World*, 89.

13 *Methodist Magazine* (1817), 450, 599–601, 682–83.

14 *Arminian Magazine* (1785), letters of John Hoskins, 143–44, 629.

15 Archives of the United Church of Canada, Newfoundland, "A Journal kept by James England," 16 Oct. 1841; *Missionary Notices* 8 (Mar. 1837): 425–39.

16 *Methodist Magazine* (1817), letter of John Lewis, 872; *Arminian Magazine* (1792), "The Journal of Mr. William Black, in his visit to Newfoundland," 120–23, 176–81, 233–37.

17 RPA, WMMS, MG 597, reel 35, 1823–55, Minutes of Newfoundland District Annual Meetings, 1823, John Walsh, St. John's Circuit Report; reel 18, 1822–23, James Hickson, Bonavista, 22 Dec. 1823; School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, WMMS, box 5, 1833/34–37/38, file 206, Thomas Angwin, Island Cove, 24 June 1834; *Methodist Magazine* (1820), extract from James Hickson's journal, 954. [WMMS reel references are from RPA; WMMS box references are from SOAS.] These are all instances of reading as both a social and a sacred activity. See Robert Darnton, "History of Reading," in Peter Burke, *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 150–53.

18 WMMS, box 2, 1819/20-23/25, file 51, James Hickson, Island Cove, to Committee, 5 July 1820. For Wesley's sermon, "Advice to the People Called Methodist with regard to Dress," see Wesley, *Works*, 11: 466–78. See also his sermon, "On Dress," 7: 15–26. The reference to

dress was curiously omitted from Hickson's account printed in the *Methodist Magazine* (1820), 954, possibly because the editor did not want to offend many Methodists in the homeland who were on their way to respectability and were no longer heeding Wesley's advice.

19 WMMS, MG 597, reel 21, 1828–31, William Wilson, Burin, 5 Nov. 1828.

20 *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* (1856), 448, 449, 453, "Value of Tracts in Upholding the Sanctity of the Lord's Day," 443–53.

21 See Calvin Hollett, *Beating against the Wind: Popular Opposition to Bishop Feild and Tractarianism in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1844–1876* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016). For Tractarianism, see Owen Chadwick, *The Mind of the Oxford Movement* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1960); Peter Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship, 1760–1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); James Pereiro, *'Ethos' and the Oxford Movement: At the Heart of Tractarianism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Turner, *John Henry Newman*.

22 The six pamphlets are Thomas F.H. Bridge, *A Statement of Some Recent Proceedings of the Committee of the Newfoundland Church Society in a Letter to the Lord Bishop of the Diocese* (St. John's: J.T. Burton, 1854); Thomas E. Collett, *The Church of England in Newfoundland*: *As Indicated in a Correspondence between Thomas E. Collett, Esq., J.P., and the Lord Bishop of Newfoundland and the Rev. W.K. White, a Missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Beaufet, in Placentia Bay. Also: Some Evidence in Proof of the Statements: with a Few Additional Facts from Various Sources Shewing the Tractarian Tendencies of Some of the Missionaries of the Society under the Countenance of the Ecclesiastical Authorities* (St. John's: Joseph Woods, 1853); Thomas E. Collett, *The Church of England in Newfoundland, No. 2. Containing a Statement and Reply of Thomas E. Collett, Esq., J.P, A Brief Review of Proceedings connected with the Clergy and Church in this Diocese, During the Past Few Years, and Observations and Additional Evidence in Confirmation of the Former Statements and in Refutation of the Attacks Upon Them* (St. John's: Joseph Woods, 1854); Bishop [Edward Feild], *An Address on the System of the Church Society in Newfoundland*

Submitted to Members of the Church in England (St. John's: J.C. Withers, 1854); [Ker Baille Hamilton], *Comments upon a Recent Resolution of the Committee of the Newfoundland Church Society, in a Letter to a Member of Her Majesty's Council of That Colony* (St. John's: J.C. Withers, [1854]); [William Kepple White], *Published Under the Direction of the Committee of the Newfoundland Church Society in Conformity with a Resolution Passed the 17th October, 1853* (St. John's: J.T. Burton, 1853). For how the controversy played out, see Hollett, *Beating against the Wind*, chapter 6.

23 RPA, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), MG 598, A216, White to the Newfoundland Church Society, 4 Oct. 1853; RPA, GN 2/2, 1856, box 45, Thomas E. Gaden to John Kent, 22 May 1856.

24 John Roberts, *The Glorious Title: A Tract* (St. John's: W.J. Ward, 1847), preface, 55. Roberts calls it a tract; I am placing it in the pamphlet controversy category.

25 T.F.H. Bridge, *The Two Religions; Or, The Question Settled, Which is the Oldest Church, The Anglican or the Romish?* (London: Gilbert and Rivington, 1841); *A Letter to Peter Winser, Sen., Esq., (of Aquaforte) In Reply to His Reasons for Leaving the Church of His Fathers and of His Baptism* (St. John's: J.W. M'Coubrey, [1847]); *Patriot*, 31 May 1847, Peter Winser, letter to editor; *Patriot*, 25 May, 1 June 1850, Peter Winser, "Letters in Reply to the Rev. T.F.H. Bridge."

26 WMMS, box 4, 1828/29-33/34, file 175, Richard Knight, Blackhead, 25 June 1830. Extracts printed in *Methodist Magazine* (1831), 62–63.

27 Brown, *The Word in the World*, 23, 192, 200.

28 *Methodist Monthly Greeting* (Dec. 1899), 10, "Historic Methodism" by Philip Tocque; WMMS, MG 597, reel 32, 1858–64, Thomas Fox, Catalina, 13 Nov. 1860, Journal of voyage to Labrador; James Lumsden, *The Skipper Parson on the Bays and Barrens of Newfoundland* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1906), 72; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* (1827), 139, obituary of Martin Ivamy, English Harbour, Trinity Bay, by John Corlett.

29 George J. Bond, "The Castaway of Fish Rock," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 33 (Jan.–June 1891): 502, 504; Hymn 189, "Now I Have Found the Ground Wherein Sure My Soul's Anchor May Remain," in

John Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* (London: J. Parramore, 1780).

30 *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* (1845), 11: 1052–57, "Memoir of Mrs. Virtue Vey of St. John's, Newfoundland."

31 WMMS, box 1, 1791–1819/20, file 48, Hannah Goddard, Burin, to Joshua Bryan, 5 June 1819.

32 *Wesleyan*, 17 Mar. 1877, obituary of Eliza Ann Beck of Newtown, Sound Island, by H.C. Hatcher, Sound Island, 12 Jan. 1877.

33 Leslie Howsam, "The Nineteenth-Century Bible Society and 'The Evil of Gratuitous Distribution'," in James Raven, ed., *Free Print and Non-Commercial Publishing since 1700* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate Publishing, 2000), 119, 121–22, 131.

34 WMMS, box 1, 1791–1819/20, file 18, John Lewis, Adam's Cove, to Thomas Blanshard, 26 May 1815.

35 *SPG Quarterly Paper* 98 (Oct. 1856): 4, Thomas Boone, Twillingate.

36 Newfoundland School Society (NSS), *Proceedings of the Newfoundland and British North American Society for Educating the Poor, Twenty-First Year, 1843–1844* (London: Moyes and Barclay, 1844), 23; NSS, *Proceedings of the Church of England Society for Newfoundland and the Colonies, 1848–49* (London: George Barclay, 1849),17.

37 WMMS, box 5, 1833/34–37/38, file 206, Thomas Angwin, Island Cove, 24 June 1834.

38 *Wesleyan Notices Newspaper*, 27 Feb. 1851, Missions in British America, Newfoundland, extract of a letter from John Brewster, Twillingate, Green Bay, 4 Sept. 1850.

39 [Edward Wix], *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary's Journal from February to August, 1835* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1836), 130–31.

40 Julian Moreton, *Life and Work in Newfoundland* (London: Rivingtons, 1863), 57.

41 Linda White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 22 Nov. 1845; Report for May 1846 (draft manuscript copy in preparation for publishing by Linda White; original at the Anglican General Synod Archives, Toronto).

42 NSS, *Proceedings, 1843–1844*, 20–21.

43 White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 3 Oct. 1847.

44 *Mission Life* 4 (1873): 485–87, F.G. Hall, "Reminiscences."

45 [Edward Feild], *Journal of a Voyage of Visitation, 1849* (London: SPCK, 1850), 56–57.

46 White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859,"12 Nov. 1847; [Wix], *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary's Journal*, 47–48.

47 NSS, *Proceedings, 1843–1844,* 23–24.

48 *Proceedings of the First Twenty Years of the Religious Tract Society* (London: Benjamin Bensley, 1820), cover, 14.

49 Charlotte Elizabeth, *The Newfoundland Fishermen*, was also published as Tract no. 17 by the American Tract Society, New York. A revision was published by D.P. Kidder (New York: Carlton & Phillips, 1853).

50 NSS, *Occasional Paper* 8 (Aug. 1836), William Meek, Bonavista; NSS, *Proceedings of the Church of England School Society for Newfoundland and the Colonies, Twenty-Seventh Year, 1849–50* (London: George Barclay, 1850), 4–5. The NSS teacher Samuel Thurman distributed 300–400 tracts in one year at Salvage. NSS, *The Annual Report of the Colonial Church and School Society, for the year 1855–56* (London: Society's Offices, 1856), 80.

51 "Instead of paying wages the merchant paid 'truck' — that is, he provided the gear for the fishery, along with provisions on credit, against repayment in fish at the end of the season." Rosemary E. Ommer, *From Outpost to Outport: A Structural Analysis of the Jersey–Gaspé Cod Fishery, 1767–1886* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 36. See also Rosemary E. Ommer, ed., *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective* (Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1990).

52 White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 6 Nov. 1845, 7 Nov. 1846, 21 Apr. 1848, 30 Oct. 1852; Legh Richmond, *The Dairyman's Daughter, An Authentic Narrative* (New York: American Tract Society); Cynthia S. Hamilton, "Spreading the Word: The American Tract Society, The Dairyman's Daughter, and Mass Publishing," *Book History* 14 (2011): 26, 28.

53 White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 8 Aug. 1845; Report for 1846; 27 Feb. 1851, 27 Feb. 1855, 27 Feb. 1856, 27 Feb. 1858. The NSS teacher John Haddon also distributed tracts to sealers at Bonavista, as did John Collis at Trinity. NSS, *The Annual Report of the Colonial*

Church and School Society, 1851 (London: Society's Offices, 1851), 32; NSS, *The Annual Report, 1855–56*, 79–80.

54 NSS, *Proceedings, 1849–50,* 17.

55 White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 27 Feb. 1855.

56 Samuel R. Butler, *The Labrador Mission* (Montreal: Witness Printing House, 1878), 7–8.

57 Canada Foreign Mission Society (CFMS), *The Fourth Annual Report of the Canada Foreign Missionary Society, 1861* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1862), 11–12; *The Fifth Annual Report of the Canada Foreign Missionary Society, 1862* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1863), 17–18; *The Seventh Annual Report of the Canada Foreign Missionary Society, 1865* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1865), "Annual Report of the Labrador Mission for 1865," 7.

58 Ulric Rule, *Reminiscences of My Life* (St. John's: Dicks & Co., 1927), 10–11.

59 [Wix], *Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary's Journal*, 59–61.

60 Laurence Coughlan, *An Account of the Work of God in Newfoundland, North America* (London: W. Gilbert, 1776); Richard Mant, *The Happiness of the Blessed* (New York: Stanford and Swords, 1848); Daniel Wise, *Popular Objections to Methodism Considered and Answered* (Boston: J.P. Magee, 1859); *The Newfoundland Almanack . . . 1864* (St. John's: Joseph Woods, 1863), 19; D.W. Johnson, *History of Methodism in Eastern British America* (Sackville, NB: Tribune Printing Co., n.d.), 258. The Charlotte Percey copy is in the United Church Archive, St. John's, Newfoundland. The Lucas and Collins copies are in the author's possession.

61 Moreton, *Life and Work*, 46.

62 *Missionary Magazine* 44 (Jan. 1800): 40–41, John Hillyard, Twillingate, to Samuel Greathead, 17 Oct. 1799.

63 Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor (SPRK), *An Account of the Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor* (London: Thomas Field, 1799), 4–5.

64 Isabel Rivers, "The First Evangelical Tract Society," *Historical Journal* 50 (Mar. 2007): 2–3, 6, 21–22.

65 RPA, "Richard Newman Letters," Twillingate, 1816-31, nl.canadagenweb.org/newman55letters.htm, Richard Newman, Twillingate, to John

Hall, 18 June 1827; Richard Newman, Twillingate, to John Newman, 10 July 1827; Richard Newman, Twillingate, to Martha Newman, 13 Aug. 1828; Richard Newman, Twillingate, to Harry Newman, 30 June 1829.

66 John Evans, *Sketch of the Denominations of the Christian World, Accompanied with a Persuasive to Religious Moderation* (London: B. Crosby, 1804), xxii, 174.

67 RPA, "Richard Newman Letters," Richard Newman, Twillingate, to Martha Newman, 13 Aug. 1828; Richard Newman, Twillingate, to John Newman, 17 Dec. 1827.

68 Timothy East, *Evangelical Rambler* (London: Francis Westley, 1824), tracts 37, 38, 40.

69 Martin Blackmore, "Journal of Rev. Martin Blackmore (1845–1848 at Burgeo)," http://ngb.chebucto.org/Articles/blackmore.shtml, 26 Nov., 31 Dec. 1845, 14, 28 Jan. 1846; White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 21 Apr. 1848; WMMS, MG 597, reel 28, 1846–48, S.W. Sprague, Burin, 14 Dec. 1846.

70 White, "Robert Dyer Diary, 1841–1859," 16 Nov. 1845, 6 Dec. 1846; John Harding, *Sermons Preached in the Church of the United Parishes of St. Andrew by the Wardrobe, and St. Ann, Blackfriars* (London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, 1841), 125.

71 WMMS, MG 597, reel 26, 1841–1842, John S. Addy, Trinity, 9 Nov. 1841, extracts from journal; Henry Forster Burder, *Memoir of the Rev. George Burder* (London: F. Wesley and A.H. Davis, 1833), 345. George Burder, *Village Sermons* (Philadelphia: W.W. Woodward, 1818). The Newfoundland School Society "received sixteen sets of [his] *Sea* and *Cottage Sermons* and *Sermons to the Aged*, for the use of catechists on the island" (RPA, SPG, MG 598, A193, Archdeacon Wix to Archdeacon Hamilton, St. John's, 8 Aug. 1831).

72 *Methodist Monthly Greeting,* Sept. 1898, 135, "A Short Account of Two Church Members," John Reay.

73 See William Kelly's critique of the "monolithic 'peasant syncretism'" that he sees in Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*. William W. Kelly, *Journal of Peasant Studies* 11, 1 (Oct. 1983): 120.

74 Peter Burke, *History and Social Theory* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 97–98.