

## Revisiting *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*

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Figure 1. Former Premier Joseph R. Smallwood at work in the main office of *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* in 1979 (Courtesy Robert Pitt).

### Introduction

*The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador (ENL)* joins a long list of intellectual consummations. The desire to preserve all knowledge and have it at our fingertips has been with humankind since long before the great Musæum (or Mouseion) and Library of Alexandria, the prototype of the modern university, were founded by Ptolemy I or II around 300 BC. Ancient Sumerians commemorated their stories on clay tablets *circa* 2600 BC. Pliny the Elder, who perished in the aftermath of the

eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, sought to commit everything he knew to a collection known as *Naturalis Historia*, which was divided into 37 books on subjects ranging from astronomy to zoology. In tandem with its cousins, dictionaries and biographical gatherings like Plutarch's *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*, dating from the second century AD, encyclopedias have long acquired a ring of authority for anyone seeking a quick answer to a nagging question or a signpost pointing the way towards greater knowledge of a wide range of subjects.

Modern multi-volume megaprojects had their origins in the eighteenth century. John Harris's two-volume *Lexicon Technicum: or, An Universal English Dictionary of Arts and Sciences: Explaining not only the Terms of Art, but the Arts Themselves* (1704, 1710) is generally regarded as the prototype of the modern English encyclopedia. Harris (1666–1719) had solid credentials as an Oxford graduate and clergyman, but he avoided biographical entries, poetry, and religious controversy. Not unlike the *ENL*, readers could not buy a uniform edition until the fifth edition of the first volume and the third edition of the second volume were published together in 1736. This was followed by Ephraim Chambers's more substantial *Cyclopædia: or, An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences*, which first appeared in two folio volumes in 1728. Often reprinted, it was mainly an etymological dictionary with a smattering of miscellaneous entries. Nearly 20 years after his great *Dictionary of the English Language* came out in 1755, Samuel Johnson toyed with the idea of tackling a full recension of Chambers's *Cyclopædia*, admitting to "having a fondness for 'that muddling work' of compiling reference books."<sup>1</sup> Instead, Johnson ended up writing *The Lives of the Poets* (10 vols., 1779–81), an eminently useful source not to be confused with a work of the same name edited by Theophilus Cibber and Robert Shiells, which came out in five volumes in 1753. A French translation of Chambers's *Cyclopædia* served as a model for the *Encyclopédie* (1751–80), edited by Denis Diderot and Jean-Baptiste le Rond d'Alembert.

Such was the rage for acquiring all knowledge in the mid-eighteenth century that Laurence Sterne satirized a father's desire to impart the wisdom of the ages to his son by creating his own

tailor-made encyclopedia. In *Tristram Shandy* (1759/60–1767), Walter Shandy hoped his son would read everything in print from the moment Johannes Gutenberg started the very first printing press in Mainz in the mid-1450s to the present day. Hoping to guide his son through “a North West passage to the intellectual world,” Walter planned his son’s “*Tristra-pædia*,” which soon became so vast as to be unworkable.<sup>2</sup> Therein lay a warning to all obsessive fact-addicts not to get carried away. While Walter Shandy’s ever-expanding curriculum would have taken any student several lifetimes to absorb, there was something fundamentally moving about a father’s overwhelming involvement in his child’s education.

Initially published in 100 instalments, the first *Encyclopædia Britannica* was consolidated into three volumes between 1768 and 1771.<sup>3</sup> This was an Edinburgh initiative at the height of the Scottish Enlightenment, undertaken by Colin Macfarquhar (1745?–1793), a bookseller and printer, and Andrew Bell (1726–1809), an engraver and printer. The entries were largely written by a 28-year-old researcher named Andrew Smellie. *Britannica* initially appealed to both horse owners and a more general arts and science readership. Articles on “Equus,” “Farriery,” and “Horsemanship” were among the longest in the second volume (whereas entries on “Cat” and “Dog” were noticeably shorter. The entry on the largest territory in the British Empire — Canada — barely merited a six-line paragraph; the entry on Newfoundland<sup>4</sup> was granted slightly more wordage (Figure 2):

**NEWFOUNDLAND, a triangular island, three hundred and fifty miles in length from north to south, and two hundred miles in breadth at the base from east to west; situated in North America, between 55° and 61° of west longitude, and between 47° and 52° of north latitude; bounded by the narrow straits of Bellisle on the north, by the Atlantic ocean on the east and south, and by the bay of St. Lawrence on the west. It is subject to England; but the fishing banks on this coast are frequented by most European nations.**

Figure 2. The “Newfoundland” entry in the original *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

Some entries were remarkably unhelpful: the one on “Woman,” for example, simply read: “the female of man.”<sup>5</sup> In spite of its biases, errors, imbalances, omissions, and shortcomings, *Encyclopædia Britannica* saw its eleventh edition by 1910–11, by which time it had grown to 29 volumes. The fifteenth edition of 2010, in 32 volumes, was the last *Britannica* in hardback; like so many reference works, it has adapted to the digital age. Other more nationally focused encyclopedias, such as *Americana* (1829) and *Canadiana* (1959), built on *Britannica*’s merits.

The first substantial gathering to focus primarily on Canada was *An Encyclopædia of the Country* (6 vols., Toronto, 1898–1900), edited by J. Castell Hopkins. This was followed by the more wide-ranging *Encyclopædia of Canada* (6 vols., Toronto, 1935–37), edited by W.S. Wallace. A seventh volume, devoted to Canada’s newest province under the editorship of Robert Blackburn, was added in 1949, the year Newfoundland joined Canada. Then came the *Encyclopedia Canadiana* (Toronto: Grolier, 1957) from an American-based publisher, which swelled to 10 volumes under the editorship of John Robbins.<sup>6</sup> Mel Hurtig undertook the task of publishing the *Canadian Encyclopedia* in three volumes in 1985. Hurtig was fortunate in having on his side then Premier Peter Lougheed who offered full financial support. So successful was this venture — more than 150,000 sets were sold within a year — that an expanded four-volume edition followed in 1988 as well as the *Junior Encyclopedia of Canada* in 1990.

Four years before Hurtig’s major endeavour appeared, another prominent political figure, author, and publisher, also known for grassroots activism, Joseph Roberts Smallwood (1900–1991), was vying to become Canada’s most illustrious encyclopedia salesperson. Not only did he sell volumes from the back of a camper, he oversaw the project from conception to the brink of its difficult fulfillment.<sup>7</sup> An avid collector of all and any information relating to his birthplace, Joey had already established a template for the *ENL* with the six volumes of *The Book of Newfoundland* between 1937 and 1975. For the first two volumes of the prototype, he was helped out

by Chesley Crosbie, who “provided \$20,000 for the project” (*ENL* 5: 211). If anyone was qualified to take on the daunting task of overseeing a project as vast as the *ENL*, it was Joey. While he lacked a university education (as did Hurtig), he certainly had the brains, worldly experience, and passion for his province. A fervent writer, he started his apprenticeship as a printer’s devil at *The Plaindealer* in St. John’s before uprooting to New York City where he worked on *The Call*, a left-leaning newspaper. He wrote his first book, *Coaker of Newfoundland*, during his stay in England over 1926–27. Dr. William Carson (1770–1843), the physician from Edinburgh who went on to become an early St. John’s political firebrand, also proved to be an inspiration to Joey as a biographical subject from 1938.<sup>8</sup> In 1937 he found the perfect vehicle and persona to gather information about Newfoundland. His 15-minute radio broadcasts under the guise of the “Barrelman” were heard in homes across the province for the better part of seven years.<sup>9</sup> *I Chose Canada* (1973) was Joey’s memoir, climaxing with his unequivocal defence of bringing Newfoundland and Labrador into the Canadian fold. So his qualifications were as impeccable as anyone’s to tackle the Herculean labour of overseeing an encyclopedia. If Joey hadn’t taken on the task, then who would have? At Memorial University of Newfoundland — another Smallwood initiative — George Story might have overseen such a vast project, but — in collaboration with William Kirwin and John Wid-dowson — his focus was on the cognate field of lexicography: *The Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, first published by the University of Toronto Press in 1982, was to be the university’s main contribution to the island’s cultural and linguistic identity.

Ever the ardent promoter, Joey advertised the encyclopedia any way he could, including by way of the time-honoured handbill (Figure 3). There is an air of Barrelman populism — “*THERE ISN’T A NEWFOUNDLANDER ANYWHERE*” in red italic capitals — and grandiosity — “. . . the largest Newfoundland Book ever published” — in this 16-page pamphlet.

**Church Calendar**

**SUNDAY:**  
 Public Worship, 11 a.m., and 7 p.m.  
 Nursery, 11 a.m. in Common Room. Children 2 and 3 years.  
 Sunday School and Bible Classes, 2:30 p.m.  
 Mission Band, third Sunday of each month at morning service.

**MONDAY:**  
 Two Boys at 7:15 p.m. (weekly).  
 Junior Choir at 7:15 p.m. (weekly).  
 Young People's Union at 8 p.m. (weekly).

**TUESDAY:**  
 Two Boys at 7:15 p.m. (weekly).  
 Evening Auxiliary of W.M.S. (first Tuesday in each month) 8 p.m.  
 Senior Auxiliary of the W.M.S., 7:15 p.m. (1st Tuesday each month).  
 Mothers' Auxiliary (3rd Tuesday in the Common Room) 8 p.m.  
 Mission Circle (second Tuesday of the month) 8 p.m.  
 Men's Service Club (2nd Tuesday in each month—October to April)

**WEDNESDAY:**  
 Junior Boys at 7:15 p.m. (weekly).  
 Choir rehearsal, 8 p.m.

**FRIDAY:**  
 Women's Association (once monthly, October to April).  
 Explorers, 1:50 p.m. weekly.  
 C.G.I.T., 6:45 p.m. (weekly).

**CHURCH OFFICIAEY**

Rev. L. A. D. Curtis, B.A., B.D.	Clerk of Session
Mr. D. W. H. Dave, O.C.	Secretary Official Board
Mr. Charles L. Roberts	Treasurer
Rev. Harold Macpherson	Honorary Chairman, Board of Stewards
Dr. H. Roberts	Chairman, Board of Stewards
Mr. E. Knight	Secretary, Board of Stewards
Mr. E. A. Wyatt	Envelope Secretary
Mr. Isaac Bourne	Change Steward
Mr. Walter Goudy	Treasurer M. and M. Fund
Mr. Charles Burden	Stanton

**HEADS OF SOCIETIES**

Honorary Superintendent Sunday School	Mr. W. H. Peters
Superintendent of Sunday School	Mr. Isaac Davis
Senior Auxiliary of W.M.S.	Mrs. Lewis Bartlett
Evening Auxiliary of W.M.S.	Mrs. D. W. H. Dave
Mothers' Auxiliary	Mrs. Eric Burden
Mission Circle	Miss Joyce Bishop
Mission Band Superintendent	Mrs. E. J. West
Baby Band Superintendent	Mrs. E. J. West
Women's Association	Mr. S. Short
Men's Service Club	Mr. Cecil Fisher
Young People's Union	Mrs. S. Burgess
Convener Flower Committee	Mrs. Donald Brett (Dial P.S.S.F.)
Junior Congregation	Mr. A. E. Hasselwood
Trails	Mr. Graham Snow
Signs C	Mr. L. Smith
Two Boys	Mrs. M. Blake
C.G.I.T.	Miss V. Bourne
Explorers	

Change of Address      Newcomers Desires To Union With Church      Envelopes      Special Contributions      Church Fund

Name .....

Address .....

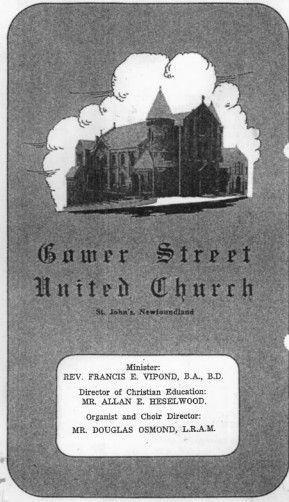


Figure 3. From a pamphlet advertising *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Courtesy of Joan Ritcey, Centre for Newfoundland Studies).

The first two volumes of *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* appeared in 1981 and 1984 respectively, with Smallwood as the honorary editor-in-chief and Robert D.W. Pitt as managing editor. The first volume ran from A–E; the longer second volume covered F–Hoy. The rate of entries per letter was beginning to swell, although early on Joey reckoned the entire *ENL* would take three or four volumes, so the final tally of five wasn't far off the mark. Bound in royal blue with lettering and a pitcher plant logo embossed in gold, volumes stand over a foot tall and nine inches wide (305 x 229 mm.). The initial list price for the first volume, hardback in cloth, was \$39. The second volume jumped to \$69.95, and subsequent volumes rose to \$100 by 1993.<sup>10</sup> The price dropped to \$87 when volume 5 arrived the following year. Table 1 outlines the publishing details of the *ENL*, showing publication year, entries and number of pages, and the editors and publisher for each of the five volumes.

<b>Vol. No. and Publication Year</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>Editors and Publisher</b>	<b>No. of Pages</b>
1:1981	A-E	Hon. editor-in-chief: Joseph R. Smallwood; managing editor: Robert D.W. Pitt; Newfoundland Book Publishers (1967) Limited	914
2:1984	F-Hoy	Hon. editor-in-chief: JRS; managing editors: Catherine Horan, Robert D.W. Pitt, et al.; Newfoundland Book Publishers (1967) Limited	1104
3:1991	Hu-M	Hon. editor-in-chief: JRS; editor-in-chief: Cyril F. Poole; managing editor: Robert H. Cuff; Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation	687
4:1993	N-R	Editor-in-chief: Cyril F. Poole; managing editor: Robert H. Cuff; Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation	680
5:1994	S-Z	Editor-in-chief: Cyril F. Poole; managing editor: Robert H. Cuff; Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation	706
			Total: 4091

The first two volumes were published by Newfoundland Book Publishers (1967) Limited, the last three volumes by the Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation. From a bibliographical perspective,



the *ENL* is an impressive example of late twentieth-century printing and binding. It is well-bound and hand-stitched to last. The 10 endpapers for the five volumes were appropriately selected. The first volume opens with a slightly cropped coloured image of Giacomo Gastaldi's early woodcut map, the original of which was destroyed by fire in 1557, showing a misshapen "Terra de Laborador" and a fragmented "Terra Nuova" inset with images of Indigenous inhabitants, including a bird-hunter. The back endpaper offers up J.N. Bellin's more accurate French map of 1745. The last volume opens with a painting of Signal Hill and the Battery from the South Side Hills and the vibrant cover to the sheet music of *The Ode to Newfoundland* from its first performance in 1902. John Deyell Company of Lindsay, Ontario, did an exemplary job of printing and binding the *ENL* to make it an aesthetically pleasing and durable reference work.<sup>11</sup> To help boost sales, Joey autographed hundreds of volumes (some detractors would say he actually *lowered* their value, but I am glad to have Joey's signature on my set). In his Foreword Joey gave his mission statement for the *Encyclopedia*: it was "to accomplish more carefully and completely, and in more enduring form, what my 'Barrelman' radio broadcasts were trying to do forty years ago." The slogan for Joey's radio program was "to make Newfoundland better known to Newfoundlanders." This he certainly did.

Weighing in at close to thirty pounds (13.61 kg), *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* (1981–1994) had one of the more difficult deliveries into the world. It is something of a miracle in our publishing history that Canada's youngest province — yet oldest in terms of European settlement — should have its own encyclopedia before any other member of Confederation. In fact, it came perilously close to never being completed: the project almost ended in bankruptcy. Ontario has an *Encyclopedia*, but it is subtitled *Places in Ontario* (Mika Publishing, 1974–1983). *The Encyclopedia of British Columbia* (Harbour Publishing) came out in 1999. *The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*, under the imprint of the University of Regina Press, followed in 2006. And *The Encyclopedia of Manitoba* is the latest offering in provincial



omniscience (Great Plains Publications, 2017). Touted early on, perhaps somewhat presumptuously, as “Canada’s Only Provincial Encyclopedia,” the *ENL*, like *The Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, is a monument that most other provinces can only aspire to have.<sup>12</sup>

One of the most agonizing things for an editor of any encyclopedia must be the instant out-of-datedness once the project has been committed to print. CODCO was famous enough in 1981 to merit a wait-and-see cross-reference: “CODCO. See THEATRE” (*ENL* 1: 470), but, the reader had to be patient and wait until 1994 for the last volume to offer up the entry, a year after my former colleague, Helen Peters, edited *The Plays of CODCO* (*ENL* 5: 367).<sup>13</sup> The desire to stop the presses with every new development, every change in government policy, every news item is strong but has to be resisted. In the case of the *ENL*, between volume 1, published in 1981, and volume 5, published in 1994, there were radical changes in, for example, education, a complex matter in a province that then had three separate school boards. Shrewd cross-referencing became necessary; in the first volume the entry had not been completed by the press deadline, so the reader was presented with “EDUCATION. See SCHOOLS.” Patient encyclopedia owners, investors, and users had to wait more than a dozen years for the entry, which duly noted changes to the educational system in the interval: “In 1981–82 the Province adopted a reorganized high school program, and implemented Grade XII in order to bring Newfoundland in line with the other provinces.” In fact, Ontario still had Grade 13 (or XIII, as the *ENL* would have had it). The effects of this change were momentous for students who would have gone to Memorial in 1983, but now had to complete the added year of high school. Memorial suffered a drought of first-year students that year, but had to hire a dozen full-time English professors in the fall of 1984 to accommodate the double cohort, two years rolled into one, who all had to complete their mandatory first-year literature courses. The long-awaited entry on “SCHOOLS” in the fifth and final volume ends in a state of flux: “As of 1994 the government and the churches had not resolved their differences” (5: 106). The photographs can be rewarding yet sometimes

perplexing. The caption to the first one in this entry simply reads “*An early school group*” (no date, no location), one boy holding a hat that looks twice the size of his head. The “*Schoolhouse at Pool’s Island*” looks far too big for the inhabitants standing out front; “Rigolet school” offers a haunting image of schoolgirls holding hands in a ring in front of the school as fog seems to descend, nary a face to be seen. “*Classroom at Grand Falls, early 1950s*” shows an interior, boys at the back, girls up front, with one standing in a petite nurse’s uniform. The two compilers of this article, RHC (Robert Cuff) and Melvin Baker, had more than their hands full trying to compress the ever malleable topic of schools into a few pages.

Photographs provided an added enticement to patrons to buy the volume. It goes without saying that pictures helped sell the *ENL*, which was also amply loaded with maps, drawings, and other graphics. Tracking down picture credits alone must have been a full-time job, but it helped that Joey collected photographs from his early days and that Harry Cuff had built up a substantial archive for *The Newfoundland Quarterly*. Images like those of the passengers on the arrival and departure of the very first Trans-Canada Air Lines flights on 1 May 1942 along with the old Torbay Airport are certainly worth preserving (*ENL* 1: 21).

For a rich and complex entry like “DIALECTS, Social Versus Regional Dialects,” it is good to know that Harold Paddock, who dedicated his career to the subject in the Linguistics Department at Memorial, composed the entry, which drew on the expertise of colleagues like Sandra Clarke, William Kirwin, and George Story. The *ENL* gets it right most of the time, but in any massive project like this, errors, howlers, and omissions are bound to occur. For example, there is no separate entry for “Residential Schools,” a topic that remains controversial in 2017, especially in this province that was not included in the apology made in 2008 by then Prime Minister Stephen Harper. More than 800 former students of residential schools in Newfoundland and Labrador finally received a settlement of \$50 million after a class-action lawsuit in 2016.

## **Objectivity vs. Impartiality: Selection of Entries and Who to Write Them?**

One potential risk was that the entire work might be regarded as a monumental piece of vanity publishing. Joey was never shy about naming favourites and harbouring grudges against apparent traitors, but he avoided blatant charges of favouritism in the selection of entries by allowing Robert Pitt, then a newly minted MA who had studied at Queen's University (having already attended Memorial), to take responsibility for the organization and documentation. Pitt's father, David, was head of the English Department at Memorial in which his wife, Marion, also worked. Both appear in the list of contributors. Dr. Pitt did the definitive biography of Newfoundland's best-known poet, E.J. (Edwin John) Pratt,<sup>14</sup> so it would have been strange for the son *not* to ask his father to do the entry on the poet for the *ENL*. While it might strike some as odd to have one's parents, children, and relatives involved as assistants, consultants, or researchers, it is quite in keeping with Newfoundland and Labrador custom to collaborate with those nearest (and in some cases ablest) at hand.<sup>15</sup>

Biographers can also become fitting biographees. The entry on Dr. John Olds (1906–1985) (*ENL* 4: 166–67) was done by Gary Saunders, who wrote a full-fledged biography of the Johns Hopkins-trained medical doctor in 1997.<sup>16</sup> Dr. Olds presided over Notre Dame Bay Memorial Hospital in Twillingate from 1934. An artist and author of several books, the Clarke's Head-born Saunders, in turn, received a paragraph in the *ENL* 5: 89 by "LBM," Laura B. Morgan. When does a subject become famous enough to warrant encyclopedic coverage? While Anita Best did not have a separate entry in the first volume in 1981, she is mentioned in the entries on Figgy Duff in the *ENL* 2: 62 (by Kathy-Jane Elton) and on her long-time singing partner, Pamela Morgan, in the *ENL* 3 (by Joan Sullivan, the current editor of *The Newfoundland Quarterly*). As sonorous as ever, Anita was accompanied by Sandy Morris — another *ENL*-worthy talent whose guitar arrangements are a distinct part of

our province's soundscape — at the Writers' Festival in Woody Point in August 2017.

One test of impartiality behind the *ENL* would be entries on Joey's detractors. How would the opposition fare? In the case of Ray Guy (1939–2013), the *ENL* seems to record the sort of information a reader new to the province's best-known journalist and satirist needs. The *ENL* might simply have excluded Guy, but such a snub would not have gone unnoticed. Or the entry might have been limited to a few basic details in an already overcrowded volume, but it goes beyond the bare facts. Entry-writer Eugene P. Kennedy included a quotation from *Time* (23 Aug. 1971) that pulled no punches, calling Guy "the best known citizen of the newest province, excluding, of course, his arch-enemy [Premier] Joseph R. Smallwood" (*ENL* 2: 768).<sup>17</sup> Too late for the entry were such accomplishments as Guy's play, *Young Triffie's Been Made Aaway With* (which opened at the LSPU [Longshoremen's Protective Union] Hall in 1985 and was later to be adapted into a feature film in 2006), and his later armchair rants on CBC TV.

Readers have an expectation of objectivity when it comes to encyclopedias, but such an ideal seldom gels with reality. Take the answer to such a seemingly easy question as: is St. John's the oldest city in North America? A sign once proclaimed to anyone passing the entrance to the airport in Torbay that this was so. This apparent fact became particularly prominent in the buildup to the quincentennial celebrations of the voyage made by John Cabot in 1497. Yet over the past few decades, more recognition has been paid to the fact that Indigenous peoples had settled in many places throughout North America for thousands of years.

## Volume 1

Volume 1 covered A through E and filled 914 pages. The last actual entry — "EYE OPENER," a short-lived newspaper (1964–65), mainly written, edited, and published by Ron Pumphrey — is found on page 798. The remaining 114 pages, under the heading of "ECONOMY,"

are advertisements and endorsements from, for example, Bill Davis, the long-standing Premier of Ontario. When it came to finding sponsors, Joey didn't mind giving them value for their money. Yet, these notices are now historic records in themselves: there is a photograph of Dorothy Wyatt wearing her robes and chain of office as Mayor of St. John's, another of Trepassey's Town Council from 1977–81, businesses from the past that were household names like Ayre's, Bowring's, and Gerald S. Doyle. The remaining volumes had no such added notices. Volume 1 of the *ENL* started with a cross-reference, "A FOR APPLE," but referred the reader to "WAR MEASURES." The patience of the investor in 1981 was rewarded in 1994 when the entry on "WAR MEASURES" appeared as promised. But the phrase occupies one sentence — "The message 'A for Apple . . . N for Nuts' was broadcast daily during VONF newscasts (presumably meaning 'All Normal!')" — so it probably didn't merit its own entry in the first place. But plans change over time. The second entry reads: "ABANDONED SETTLEMENTS. See RESETTLEMENT." As "Resettlement" is probably the first place readers, many of whom may have been personally affected by this government policy, would likely think to look for such an entry, they might have wondered at the dangling of articles that might not see print for several years. Yet back in 1981, the last volume perhaps seemed much more of a real prospect than it did in 1987 when the *ENL* was in serious financial trouble. Perhaps Joey felt that loading earlier volumes with cross-references to later volumes would help expedite their publication. All encyclopedists must start with their finish in mind.

With the third entry, "ABATTOIRS," we finally get some cold, hard facts without cross-referencing: the province had 51 of them in 1979. The abattoir in St. John's slaughtered 1,000,051 chickens in 1979, while the one establishment in Corner Brook processed even more. Yet, strangely, the 49 others, designated as "domestic" abattoirs, handled "an average of one animal a week," which hardly seems sustainable. The first Newfoundlander to be entered in the *ENL* is Beaton J. Abbott (1903–). (Gaps after dashes in parenthesized dates could be inserted in case death came to the subject before the volume went to

press; or readers could always pen them in.) Born in Musgrave Harbour, Beaton Abbott was a teacher for 13 years and a magistrate for 21 years in Twillingate, Grand Bank, and Grand Falls. He was elected as MHA for Gander in 1956 and for Bonavista North in 1966. His biography had already been entered in *Newfoundland and Labrador's Who's Who Centennial Edition* in 1968, and he was interviewed in 1979. The next Abbott, Carl, was 10 years younger and also from Musgrave Harbour, but the reader cannot tell from the entry whether they are brothers (parents' names aren't given). Carl Abbott flew 50 bombing missions over France and was shot down more than once and hidden by the Resistance for 70 days. Black-and-white photographs appear for three Abbotts, the first two of whom are also listed as *ENL* consultants. The nearly 1,000 named writers, contributors, and consultants (something akin to a list of subscribers) would have felt some obligation towards the continuation of this venerable project.

The initial reception was positive, if not overly enthusiastic. Pat Lotz thought the first volume was “a wonderful, slightly wacky work that tempts you to read more every time you open it.”<sup>18</sup> Taking issue with the notion that “Every person or event that touched or even came close to the province appears to rate an entry,” Lotz questioned the inclusion of James Audubon (*ENL* 1: 89), who surely deserves his brief paragraph and small image for documenting 36 species of birds in St. George's.<sup>19</sup> In his review of the flagship volume, published in *The Newfoundland Quarterly*, G.M. Story touched on some of the difficulties any overseer would likely encounter in planning such a venture:

The problems faced by an undertaking of this kind — of what to include, of scale and balance, of cross-references, of general and particular editorial and technical policy — are formidable, not least because so many of the topics treated have as yet been inadequately studied: there are in many cases no readily available and assured sources or definitive studies for the editors to resort to; and if the execution of this first volume occasionally fails to satisfy the rigorous

demands of specialists, this is a problem inherent both in the state of the subject and the constraints of time, staff and money which a work of this magnitude involves, for this is a work normally undertaken by scholarly academies or learned presses.<sup>20</sup>

The bibliographer in him gave Story concern over the verifiability of some sources, which led to entries by well-meaning but inexperienced amateurs. Some entries were not ready for the kind of codification inclusion in an encyclopedia bestows simply because not enough research had been conducted, and consequently Story suggested that the project ought to have been based at Memorial University rather than in Joey's study. The phrase "occasionally fails to satisfy the rigorous demands of specialists" might have sunk the second volume, but Story, the Oxford graduate who started out on the South Side Hills, ended his brief review with a solid "townie" rather than "gownie" endorsement: "That said, this book is not only brave, it is successful and it should be a prized possession of every public and school library in Newfoundland and Labrador; for them, as for the rest of us, this volume and its successors are likely to become a prompt court of appeal on the broad array of subjects treated."<sup>21</sup> When asked about some of the quirkier items that were ultimately rejected, the original managing editor, Robert Pitt, pointed out the entry on "Bad Back" as the most frequently offered reason for absence from work. One of the more playful entries that survived the cut was "ACROSTIC, CELEBRATED," which will be discussed below.

## **Volume 2**

The second volume of the *ENL* arrived in 1984, more than a year later than planned, but delays in a project like this are certainly not unheard of.<sup>22</sup> This instalment, covering F–Hoy, was nearly 200 pages longer than the first volume. Clearly, an imbalance was creeping in, the first volume covering five letters, the second one the better part of three letters. At such an exponential rate of growth, most letters would threaten



to take up a single volume.<sup>23</sup> The temptation to include current or ongoing developments had to be curbed at some point. After the time of publication of volume 2 of the *ENL*, a number of items were crying out for inclusion or ruminating for revision: *Come By Chance*, *Cucumbers*, *Double Daylight Saving Time*, *Hibernia*, and many more.

Newfoundland is full of small stories, and the *ENL* attempted to tap at least part of the anecdotal tradition. Joey kept his vision of the *ENL* alive over 20 years, writing countless items and notes. Some of his original entries were more eccentric than others. On the more serious side, the *ENL* translates the province's veneration of learning into a monumental work. While a full bibliography is appended to the last volume (*ENL* 5: 657–706), volume 1 contains a critical apparatus allowing the reader to locate the entry-writer's sources, and longer articles are well documented. While some minor figures might better have been left to slumber in archives or been attached to entries of better-knowns, others deserve the lustre of broader biography.

### **A Country Gentleman Helps to Save the ENL**

Long before he ushered Newfoundland and Labrador into Confederation in 1949 and became Premier of Canada's newest province, Joey Smallwood plied the book trade from all angles, as a printer, typesetter, writer, journalist, and publisher. In fact, he has been known to have claimed that politics was a sideline and that he really hoped to be remembered for the stack of books he published. If his economics were skewed, his vision and persistence were admirable. Few individuals have the mixture of ambition, dedication, industry, and quixoticism required to see such a project through from inception to completion. Poor health and then death got in the way; in a larger sense, however, this vast project bore Joey's indelible stamp from beginning to end.

*The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* very nearly suffered the same fate as the revised *Biographia Britannica* (1778–93), which stalled at “Foster.”<sup>24</sup> The *ENL* very nearly collapsed at “Hoy.”

In January 1987, the *ENL* went on life-support when a sheriff showed up at the former Premier's home in Roache's Line and issued, in front of a television camera, a writ for an unpaid printer's bill in the amount of \$176,000. The last surviving Father of Confederation had suffered a debilitating stroke in 1984 and looked exceedingly frail when he opened his door to the officer. Joey had expected the first two volumes to sell at a loss, but the printer still needed to be paid. For a time it seemed that volume 3, not to mention volumes 4 and 5, would never see the light of day. The man who merged his country with Canada faced personal liability for investing in his dream. An incomplete *ENL* might have become yet another national joke at Newfoundland's expense.

Help came from an unexpected source. Moved by media coverage, Tommy Hunter, known as Canada's Country Gentleman on account of his musical variety showcase, came to Joey's rescue. *The Tommy Hunter Show* ran on CBC TV from 1965 to 1992, then the country's longest-running weekly program. He mounted benefit concerts to help raise money and awareness of the plight of the former Premier who also happened to be the only living Father of Confederation. In the wake of Band Aid for Ethiopian famine relief in 1984 and Farm Aid, which started in 1985, Tommy Hunter organized "Encyclopedia Aid."<sup>25</sup> In the Foreword to the long-awaited third volume, Paul Johnson and M.O. Morgan, as co-chairmen of the Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation Inc., assured the book-buying public that completion of the project, with the help from a \$2.5 million fundraising campaign, was now viable: "With existing funds, commitments-in-progress, and proceeds of the sale of the volumes remaining it is now a certainty that volume four will appear in early 1993, and the final one, volume five, in late 1994" (*ENL* 3: xi). While "certainty" may have conjured up the proverbial warning about death and taxes, the *ENL* finished according to this revised schedule. With Tommy Hunter's valiant assistance and financial solvency, Joey's dream finally reached "Zoar," the last entry in the last volume.<sup>26</sup>

### Volumes 3, 4, and 5

The second volume ended at “HOYLESTOWN (MAGGOTY COVE),” which succinctly and frustratingly states: “See St. John’s.” This would become the heftiest and lengthiest volume of the lot, extending to over 1100 pages, which may partly explain why the third volume, which appeared seven years later, had the serendipitous spine reading: Hu–M. Yet those latter H entrants were well worth the wait. The HUB, which is still in operation, starts off volume 3, followed by Leonidas Hubbard, Jr., the American adventurer who died on a Labrador expedition in 1903, and his widow, Mina Hubbard, who retraced her husband’s trek in 1905 and whose journals have since been published.<sup>27</sup> The Hughes Inquiry over the Mount Cashel scandal, which submitted its report in May 1991, takes up one column. Here, too, we find A.C. Hunter, one of the first three scholars to arrive at the new Memorial University College in 1925, as Head of English Language and Literature and first Dean of Arts and Sciences. He was a strong supporter of public libraries, his name honoured in the library housed in the Arts and Culture Centre in St. John’s (the fear in early 2017 that “Culture” was being dropped as a government portfolio seems to have been quelled for the time being). The last of the H’s is singer-songwriter Ron Hynes, best known for his widely recorded and analyzed “Sonny’s Dream,” whose last day of life, 19 November 2015, can now be entered. His entry was done by my old student, James Wade, who also sadly passed away at too young an age. Ron’s nephew, Joel Thomas Hynes, has extended the family talent pool as a multi-talented actor, novelist, recording artist, screenwriter, and songwriter.

Canada’s youngest and easternmost province has this country’s oldest history, stretching well beyond Cabot’s voyage of 1497 and the Vikings who visited 500 years earlier. The fourth volume of the *ENL* extends this quixotic province’s account from Nachvak (a northern Labrador fishing station) to Shannon Ryan, a historian who has specialized in the seal fishery (which has struggled to recover ever since French actress Brigitte Bardot made baby seals a *cause célèbre*).

As with all encyclopedias, organization may sometimes appear odd to the uninitiated. "Prehistory," for example, warrants a single page of text while the entry on "postage stamps" sticks it out for 14 pages. However, as Cyril Poole's introduction tells us, further information on prehistoric Newfoundland is given under "Native Peoples," "Palaeo-Eskimo Tradition," "Palaeo-Indian Tradition," and "Paleontology." Although the province has not been a propitious place for heavy industry, nonetheless there are entries on poultry farming, printing, and publishing. The recording industry starts with a 1904 aria in Milan by opera star Marie Toulinguet (originally Georgina Sterling of Twillingate), continues with Art Scammell's 1943 "Squid-Jiggin' Ground," and thrives today with the talented voices of the likes of Amelia Curran, Alan Doyle, and the Shallaway Choir.

From the University of Alberta, R. Gordon Moyles gave the third volume of the *ENL* a positive vetting, tempered with a cautionary note about the arrival of the final volumes (which, in fact, ended up being published on time):

Though Joey Smallwood is dead and gone, his spirit still presides over this vast enterprise and is making sure that his dream of compiling a comprehensive encyclopedia of Newfoundland affairs will not die. This, the third volume, will, we are assured, be followed in 1993 by Vol. 4 and in 1994 by the final volume. The dedication of the Smallwoodites who have worked on this project is to be commended; the whole venture is indeed worthwhile and is a true compendium of Newfoundland history and culture. Like the first two volumes, this one has wit and charm, mainly because the entries are prepared by individuals who enjoyed their work and love their island. It has a thoroughly professional look, because its editors have taken care to be comprehensive and accurate; and there is an abundance of illustration to make it appealing to even the unwilling reader. From Newfoundland's participation in the "Imperial War Cabinet," to a description of

“Kaipokok Bay,” to an overview of Newfoundland “Literature,” to a sketch of “Farley Mowat,” this volume takes the reader on an alphabetical journey (from Hu to M) through Newfoundland’s past — a journey that may be taken in brief consultative spurts or as a prolonged and more enjoyable excursion. Either way, it is a journey well worth the money.<sup>28</sup>

Michael Staveley gave the *ENL* 3 a more extensive vetting in *The Newfoundland Quarterly*:

A good starting point is to examine the philosophy of the makers of the *ENL*, and here we are fortunate in finding a statement both pithy and poetic from the Editor-in-Chief: “this”, says the doughty son of Bumblebee Bight, “is more than a book of facts. The *Encyclopedia* represents the soul of Newfoundland and Labrador”. . . . What the Editor-in-Chief is here stating, of course, is that the art of encyclopedia making goes way beyond the depiction and juxtaposition of factual material. An encyclopedia, as currently understood, is a moral as well as an informational entity.<sup>29</sup>

A geographer and then Dean of Arts, Staveley commended Leslie Harris’s entry on the “Labrador Boundary Dispute” as a “commanding and lucid disquisition on this unique contribution to Canada’s political landscape” and asked with regard to Patrick O’Flaherty’s entry on “Literature in Newfoundland”: “Where else, in Canada, would one find for the general reader such an authoritative statement which reaches through regional lineaments to contribute to a national cultural identity?”<sup>30</sup> The editors and contributors to the *Encyclopédie* would no doubt have agreed on the moral agency of such endeavours in the advent of French Revolution.

Volume 4 covers the main religions — Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Protestant, Roman Catholic — which were at the time of publication

locked in a dispute over proposed changes to the education system, with Protestants tending to favour the government's plans to provide a more efficient one-school-fits-all approach and the others crying heresy. *ENL* dippers want the significant leavened with the trivial. If there's one thing this province is known for it's being jam-packed with all kinds of interesting folk. There's Eleanor Power, believed to be the first woman to be hanged in British North America, and John Rut (fl. 1512–1528), who was sent by Henry VIII to search for the elusive Northwest Passage in 1527. Forced by heavy ice to turn south, Rut made his way down the Labrador coast, finally arriving in the harbour at St. John's where he counted 14 fishing vessels from France and Portugal.

Aside from the large historical and dramatic accounts, there are countless wonderful small stories that otherwise might have been lost, such as Gerhard Bassler's account of Otto Oppelt (1883–?) — “Chauffeur; athlete” — which offers another example of otherwise forgotten notables. Oppelt, a Bavarian, merits inclusion not only for driving one of the first cars in Newfoundland — a Fiat — but also for introducing professional wrestling to the island. In 1905 he defeated the amateur world champion in St. Louis. In 1907 he was the first to conquer the steep incline of Blackhead Road by car. Oppelt is on record for receiving one of Newfoundland's first speeding tickets. He also merged one form of modern technology with another by wrapping his car around a telephone pole.

Gordon Pinsent stands out as one of the most successful Newfoundlanders to make a go of it in Upalong. A high school dropout from Grand Falls, he landed his first television role on *The Forest Rangers* in 1962 and starred in his own CBC series, *Quentin Durgens, M.P.* (1964–69), before starring in his own film, *The Rowdyman* (1971), and publishing the novel by the same name in 1973. He came back to give us that delightfully mad image of a dancer on a floating house in the 1987 film, *John and the Missus*, about an aging Rowdyman versus Resettlement — a prospect that still lingers today as the population in some communities dwindles to single digits.

The entry on Brian Peckford in volume 4 (1993), written by the publisher Harry Cuff, leans heavily towards a best possible interpretation, glossing over some of the more spectacular scandals like the Sprung Greenhouse affair, which sucked up \$22 million for a season's crop of spindly, overpriced cucumbers. There is no entry on "Sprung" in volume 5, but Philip Sprung gets a mention in volume 3 under "HYDROPONICS," which hit the news in 1990 in time for Peter Scott's entry, which diplomatically mentions that his "greenhouse experienced numerous difficulties and the enterprise was abandoned in 1990" (*ENL* 3: 14–15). I'm not sure what artists and writers made of the declaration that "in 1988, Peckford presided at the official opening of the School of Fine Arts at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College — an indication of his keen interest in literature and the fine arts . . . ." When he retired from provincial political life, the leader who inspired Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with such rhetorical flourishes as "one day the sun will shine and have-not will be no more" moved about as far away from his roots as he could while still remaining on Canadian soil: Vancouver Island. Peckford knew when to leave politics: his successor, Tom Rideout, went down in flames in the 1989 provincial election. Entries on later premiers, including Clyde Wells, Kathy Dunderdale, and Dwight Ball, await revision or creation in a future form of the *ENL*.

The *ENL* offers a mosaic of modern history. Under "ORPHAN-AGES" is an expansive photograph of the now-demolished Mount Cashel. Under "PAPAL VISIT" (*ENL* 4: 207) is a record of the brief visit in September 1984 by Pope John Paul II, who was greeted by Archbishop Alphonsus Penney. Under "PENNEY, ALPHONSUS LIGUORI" is the sad story of the Archbishop of St. John's whose own special commission concluded that he knew about the Mount Cashel allegations as early as 1975. The entry on "HICKEY, REV. JAMES JOSEPH," the priest who greeted His Holiness on his visit and was later convicted of committing sexual offences, cannot be read in the present day the same way as when it first stated, in 1984, "Hickey was involved in many youth-oriented activities" (*ENL* 2: 933).



Unfortunately, many of the entries on outports must now seem like preparations for eulogies.<sup>31</sup> Many places, such as Penguin Arm (population in 1966: one), now exist in name only. With the collapse of the cod fishery in 1992, their *raison d'être* vanished. Yet Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have resisted despair. A Methodist preacher at the end of the Napoleonic Wars declared, "I fear Sir that Newfoundland is almost ruined."<sup>32</sup> Newfoundland's history seems to reel from one disaster to the next. If history is mainly to be had from headlines, then our province of Newfoundland and Labrador exists in a perpetual state of being "almost ruined."

Sadly, Joey did not live long enough to see the fulfillment of his final megaproject. The stress following the second volume was thought to have shortened his life. The fifth and final volume was published in November 1994, three years after the death of its progenitor, who passed away a week shy of his ninety-first birthday on 17 December 1991. I shook the man's frail hand in the Colonial Building on his last visit there. The eminent lexicographer, George M. Story, whose death on 9 May 1994 must have been one of the final sad revisions to the last volume, was chairman of the editorial board made up of Gordon Handcock, Michael Harrington, Joan Ritcey, and Shannon Ryan.

### **Pricing and Print Runs**

According to Joan Ritcey, an article in the *Evening Telegram* from August 1982 reported that 7,000 copies of volume 1 were printed; another account from the *Newfoundland Herald* of 24 May 1986 stated that 9,600 copies (presumably of volumes 1 and 2) had been sold and that 9,000 copies were still available. If these figures are accurate, there might be a lot of incomplete sets, as the *Evening Telegram* of 27 May 1993 said that 5,000 copies of volume 4 had been printed, although first editions might have gone to second printings. According to Dale Russell FitzPatrick, Joey's granddaughter who managed the Smallwood Foundation, a print run of 5,000 copies of the final volume was ordered, 3,000 copies of which had been sold by the end of December

1994. Renewed interest was such that full sets of the regular edition were in steady demand at a retail price of \$437.<sup>33</sup> An order form date-stamped 1994 for volume 5 (Figure 4) gave 30 September as the deadline for the get-in-early price: \$100 (\$103.74 if shipped), and from 1 October the price became \$112.35 (\$116.10 if shipped). Prices are also listed for the other four volumes: \$96.30 (\$100.05 if shipped) (vols. 1–3) and, for volume 4, \$107.00 (\$110.75 if shipped). At the same time, you could order the complete set for \$467.60 (\$486.30 if shipped). The price of a full set dropped to \$437 early in 1995.

ORDER FORM (Please Print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ 90 1994

Cheque or money order enclosed  or paid by:

Visa  Master Card  Expiry Date: / / \_\_\_\_\_

No. [ ]

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to or drop in: Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation Inc.  
 2nd Floor, 25 Argyle Street, P.O. Box 8685, St. John's, NF A1B 3T1  
 Tel: 709-739-5530 Fax: 709-739-1000

Check approx. box: Shipped  Pick Up

**Volume 5:**  
 (Available Oct.) (Prices include 7% GST)  
 Before Sept. 30/94 \$ 103.74  \$100.00   
 After Sept. 30/94 116.10  112.35

**Volumes 1 to 4:**

Volume 1	100.05 <input type="checkbox"/>	96.30 <input type="checkbox"/>
Volume 2	100.05 <input type="checkbox"/>	96.30 <input type="checkbox"/>
Volume 3	100.05 <input type="checkbox"/>	96.30 <input type="checkbox"/>
Volume 4	110.75 <input type="checkbox"/>	107.00 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Complete Set:**  
 Volumes 1 to 5 486.30  467.60

**Deluxe Edition:**  
 Volumes 1 to 5 1083.40  1064.70   
 Leatherbound (incl. box)  
 Limited to 225 sets.

Figure 4. Order form for *The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, 1994 (Courtesy of Joan Ritcey, Centre for Newfoundland Studies).

By the fall of 1999 most of the volumes had reportedly been scooped up.<sup>34</sup> A print run of 5,000 copies seems both a little and a lot: roughly 1 per cent of the population, a drop in the bucket after schools, government offices, and provincial libraries completed their sets; but a hefty loss if one of the grandest publishing ventures in the history of the province ended up failing.<sup>35</sup> By the end of the millennium, all copies of the first three volumes had sold out. So, too, had all 225 box sets of the deluxe edition bound in red leather, with a hefty price of \$1,064.70 (or \$1,083.40, including 7 per cent GST, if shipped).<sup>36</sup> The remaining two volumes of the regular edition eventually found sets to complete. At the end of 1997 the Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation,<sup>37</sup> which had been established to oversee the final three volumes, transferred the remaining assets to the newly established J.R. Smallwood Centre for Newfoundland Studies

at Memorial University. At long last, Joey's privately funded enterprise received formal assistance and recognition from the University.

## **The Electronic ENL**

*The Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* has been available since May 2009 through the Centre for Newfoundland Studies at Memorial's Queen Elizabeth II Library in an online version that includes both image and text. It was an ambitious undertaking: more than 4,100 pages of text and images (covers, endpapers, maps) were scanned in what appears to be high resolution. The covers are included in full royal blue with gold embossing, and even the shade of the paper stock seems to have been preserved. Thumbnails are provided to help guide the reader through the content page by page. Using the "View Image & Text" function, we are also able to view images of the original text alongside an e-text version.

Herein lies the main drawback: the e-text has not yet weeded out much of the gobbledygook so often found in optically scanned texts. In optical character recognition (OCR), gaps between words are not always recognized, "rn" is often mistaken for "m," and hyphenated words at the ends of lines show up with a "¬" (a not sign used in propositional logic, HTML and XSLT), so that, for example, we find that Hans Eduard Melis was "employed as the Govern¬ ment of Newfoundland Sculptor." Corner Brook appears as "Comer" Brook 15 times in the first volume, so any thorough search on the subject using the e-text search function has to be done with much care and a good dose of lateral thinking. This problem attaches not only to the online *ENL*: it is common among a multitude of scanned texts that have not been properly vetted by trained editors and are scattered throughout the Google universe.

One of Joey's follies, the entry on "ACROSTIC, CELEBRATED," loses its satirical meaning in the translation from page to e-text by missing letters and losing line breaks:

A Farewell! The prayers of countless thousands sent //eav-  
 enwards to speed thy safe return, Ennobled as thou art  
 with duty well performed, bringing peace, security and  
 joy y4mong the peoples of this New Found Land. So sad-  
 dened and depressed until your presence Taught us discern  
 and help decide what's best for ^11 on whom fortune had  
 not smiled. /Remember if you will the kindness and the  
 love Devotion and the respect that we the people have for  
 Thee — Farewell! (italics added). JRS

“Italics” refers to the original setting of the opening letter of each line in *ENL* 1, which is lost in the e-text. When read vertically in the original, the left-hand side of the poem spells out “THE BASTARD.” But readers wouldn’t be able to get the joke reading from the e-text. The “H” in “Heavenwards,” and the “A” from “Among” and “All,” are missing; and the “B” is lowercase. Taken from the *Evening Telegram* of 8 March 1949, the acrostic was an ironic farewell to the last Governor of Newfoundland, Sir Gordon MacDonald, who was suspected of “trying to push Newfoundland into Confederation with Canada” (*ENL* 1: 3). The addition of Joey’s initials at the end could be read either as an editorial note or a sly admission that he was the author of the acrostic, a literary ploy with a centuries-long lineage. These are just a few of the reasons why readers will continue to need to consult actual, physical, original texts rather than their electronic versions.

In such cases finding out information via word-searching can be tricky. A correctable and updatable *Encyclopedia* along the lines of (dare I mention it) Wikipedia — only with named and bona fide contributors with university credentials or other well-established keepers of provincial knowledge — would make the *ENL* even more valuable as a key resource for future generations. The blank place in “(1939– )” in the entry on Patrick O’Flaherty can now, sadly, be filled in after he drowned in Barbour’s Pond near Keels, Bonavista Bay, on 16 August 2017. The entry published in 1993 is necessarily incomplete (as any entry on a living subject is): in Dr. O’Flaherty’s

case, he continued to publish creative and scholarly works — including a three-volume history of our province — up until the time of his death.<sup>38</sup>

In 2017 our provincial government announced its plan to save roughly a million dollars by closing 54 libraries across the province, an amount less than the payout to one departing chief executive at the time.<sup>39</sup> Rather than casting future artists, authors, thinkers, knowledge-seekers, and even politicians back into the dark ages, our current government would do well to encourage ways of utilizing libraries more effectively. Joey and his surviving keepers of the flame saw to it the *ENL* was well distributed throughout the province. It would be something if libraries across the province could become centres for future encyclopedic endeavours. At a time when our province still maintains the lowest rate of literacy in the country, the provincial government also imposed a 10 per cent tax on books. Clearly, we live in the best of times and the worst of times. From what I have seen in over three decades of living in this province, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians take as much (if not more) interest in their history and what goes on in their province as any other Canadians.

I'd like to propose an online updatable extension of the *ENL* to record not only significant developments within our province, but also to note stories relevant to us beyond provincial boundaries: the Fort McMurray fire of 2016; the Broadway opening in 2017 of *Come from Away*, the musical about Gander during the 9/11 crisis written by mainlanders Irene Sankoff and David Hein; the anticipated national airing of Joel Thomas Hynes's television series, *Little Dog*, in 2018. The *ENL* is one of our most valuable resources and should remain a matter of provincial pride rather than a dust-gathering relic. It would be a monstrous waste to see tomes of knowledge sold off for fake shelf display or recycled into pulp. Nowhere else in the annals of publishing history have I come across a story quite as remarkable as the making of the *ENL*. Only in Newfoundland and Labrador will you find such eccentricity in scholarship mixed with the foot-stomping support of human kindness.<sup>40</sup>

### Acknowledgements

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### Notes

- 1 Pat Rogers, entry on Samuel Johnson, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (cited below as *ODNB*; online 2004–).
- 2 Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 9 vols. (London: Dodsley, 1759/60–1767); quoted in Connie Robertson, ed., *Wordsworth Dictionary of Quotations* (Ware, Hertfordshire, UK: Wordsworth Reference, 1998), 411.
- 3 For more background on the first major encyclopedia in English, see, for example, Clifton Fadiman, ed., and Daniel J. Boorstin, pref., *The Treasury of the Encyclopædia Britannica* (New York: Viking, 1992); Frank A. Kafker and Jeff Loveland, ed. and introd., *The Early Britannica: The Growth of an Outstanding Encyclopedia* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2009).
- 4 *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: A. Bell and C. Macfarquhar, 1768–71), 3: 399.
- 5 Entries in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* could be less than objective on occasion. The Earl of Pembroke, who is credited with writing the entry on “horsemanship,” chose to censure current veterinary practices en masse.
- 6 James Marsh, editor-in-chief of *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (1985), “uncovered the papers of John Robbins, who had been the editor of Grolier’s *Canadiana* in the 1950s, from the back rooms of the National Library. I learned very little of how Robbins organized his

- encyclopedia (it was in fact copied from Grolier's) but I noted his frustration with the editorial interference of Grolier's head office in New York. *Canadiana* was in most ways a 'branch-plant' publication." <http://www.jameshmarsh.com/2011/11/brief-history-of-the-canadian-encyclopedia/> (accessed 15 Sept. 2017).
- 7 Another early *ENL* salesman, Smallwood's protégé and eventual rival, John Crosbie, likened the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, which in 2017 the present Trump administration in the United States is threatening to terminate) to the encyclopedias he once sold insofar as he never read either of them all the way through. I can't find a printed source for this, but recall Crosbie saying words to this effect during an interview around the time NAFTA was signed in 1994.
  - 8 See Joseph R. Smallwood, *Dr. William Carson: The Great Newfoundland Reformer, His Life, Letters and Speeches* (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1978). While Joey provided a substantial preface, this volume is a preparation for a biography that gathers much of Carson's own writings.
  - 9 For more on Joey's radio persona, see Jeff A. Webb, *The Voice of Newfoundland: A Social History of the Broadcasting Corporation of Newfoundland, 1939–1949* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).
  - 10 Walter C. Sellars, review of *ENL* 4, *The Newfoundland Quarterly* (1994): 44.
  - 11 In his review, Sellars devoted a paragraph to the manufacturing aspects: "Also as an example of good book-binding this Encyclopedia rates high, according to an authority whom I consulted. She lovingly examined the covers and end-papers, commented on the fact that the sections were well-sewn, showed me that it lies decently flat when opened, and said with utter conviction, 'I like it! It will stand the wear and tear of such reference treasures.'" *Ibid.*, 45.
  - 12 See, for example, *Quill & Quire*, "Canada's Only Provincial Encyclopedia," 62 (1996): 51.
  - 13 Helen Peters, ed., *The Plays of CODCO* (New York: Peter Lang, 1993).
  - 14 See David G. Pitt's magisterial two-volume biography, *E.J. Pratt: The Truant Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press; and St. John's:



- Jespersion Press, 1984) and *E.J. Pratt: The Master Years 1927–1964* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press; and St. John's: Jespersion Press, 1987).
- 15 For a vivid first-hand account of what it was like to work on the *ENL* with Joey Smallwood, see Robert D. Pitt, "The Great Encyclopedia Factory," in James R. Thoms, ed., *Call Me Joey* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1990), 175–83; reprinted in *The Newfoundland Quarterly* 87, 1 (Fall 1991–Winter 1992): 9–13.
  - 16 Of the multitude of babies Dr. Olds brought into the world, the present writer is one. My father, Dr. Walter Wingate Nichol, who completed his MD at McGill after World War II, did an internship under Dr. Olds at Notre Dame Bay Memorial Hospital in the early 1950s and sailed to remote communities on the *Bonnie Nell* to deliver health care to patients who might otherwise not receive medical attention. Dr. Olds was a member of the family that gave America the Oldsmobile. I thought I was the only eighteenth-century buff from Twillingate — but the *ENL* shows me that Kevin Noble, the actor who toured in *Joey*, made his debut in *Tom Jones*, based on the 1749 novel by Henry Fielding.
  - 17 The *Time* article is referred to in Lisa De Leon, *Writers of Newfoundland and Labrador: Twentieth Century* (St. John's: Jespersion Press, 1985), 291.
  - 18 Pat Lotz, "A Beach Bag of Books for Summer," *Atlantic Insight* (June 1982): 49.
  - 19 William A. Montevocchi and Leslie M. Tuck, *Newfoundland Birds: Exploitation, Study, Conservation*, Nuttall Ornithological Club, no. 21 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987).
  - 20 George M. Story, review of *ENL* 1 and 2, *The Newfoundland Quarterly* (1984): 44.
  - 21 *Ibid.*
  - 22 One notable example of delay: Samuel Johnson signed a contract guaranteeing delivery of the final draft of his *Dictionary* (1755) to his booksellers within three years, but it took him nine years to complete the task (Rogers, entry on Samuel Johnson, *ODNB*).
  - 23 Such proportionality is reminiscent of the distribution of letters in the original *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1768), which went from A to B (vol.

- 1), C to L (vol. 2), and M to Z (vol. 3). The top-heaviness of the first two letters in the first volume presumably led to a decision to scale down, which resulted in the much thinner spread of the 10 letters covered in the second volume and the remaining 14 in the third. Following typesetters' convention during the hand-press period, U's and V's were interchangeable, so that, for example, the entry on "Viviparous" preceded the one on "Ukrain" (words beginning with U and V were also lumped together in Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary*, which, unlike *Encyclopædia Britannica*, had no entries under X).
- 24 The revised *Biographia Britannica* (1778–93) ended not long after its overly ambitious editor, Andrew Kippis, died in 1795 in the attempt to update William Oldys's earlier (and complete) *Biographia Britannica* (1747–66). Part one of volume 6 ending at "Foster" was published in 1795. Dr. George Gregory, who contributed the preface, planned to succeed Kippis, but the publication was delayed and the impression was destroyed in the February 1808 fire of John Nichols's printing shop, effectively ending the 30-year-old project. These were the forerunners to *The Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*), which gathered more than 30,000 entries over 63 volumes (first series, 1885–1900), now the online *Oxford DNB*, which was launched in 2004. According to its website, "The *Oxford DNB* was first published in 2004 in print (60 vols.) and online. Since 2005 online updates have extended the Dictionary's coverage in three annual updates, published every January, May, and September. The *Oxford DNB* now includes biographies of 60,061 men and women who died in or before the year 2012—plus 536 'Theme' articles for reference and research." <http://global.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/> (accessed 1 Sept. 2017).
- 25 According to a newspaper account, Tommy Hunter raised \$10,000 at one sold-out benefit concert in "a ritzy arts centre." Bill Smallwood settled the lawsuit with a \$90,000 payment. Then Lieutenant-Governor James McGrath announced at a Government House press conference that with the national campaign to raise \$2.5 million to realize Joey's dream, "we will now be able to pay back our debt to him." Stephen Ward, "Former Newfoundland Premier: Age, Health Mellow Joey," *Prince George Citizen*, 13 Oct. 1988, 24. For more on

- how the financial turmoil over the *ENL* affected the Smallwoods, see Ray Argyle, *Joey Smallwood: Schemer and Dreamer* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2012), 155–56.
- 26 The story of Tommy Hunter’s “Encyclopedia Aid” was picked up by the national media. See, for example, “Hunter Offers Help to Joey Smallwood,” *Lethbridge Herald Newspaper Archives*, 15 Jan. 1987, 19; Mike Goodenough, “Stars Plan ‘Encyclopedia Aid’ for Ex-Premier of Newfoundland,” *Sun Sentinel*, 18 Jan. 1987: “Performers by the score are joining up to help Joey Smallwood. The 86-year-old former premier of Newfoundland is being sued for \$176,000 by an Ontario firm that he hired to publish his *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* because he is unable to finish it. Smallwood had a stroke in 1984 that left him almost unable to speak or write; he is living on an old-age pension. So actors, singers and writers, led by country-and-western singer Tommy Hunter are uniting for ‘Encyclopedia Aid’ to raise funds for him.” <http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/keyword/newfoundland-and-labrador>.
- 27 Roberta Buchanan, Anne Hart, and Bryan Andre Greene, eds., *The Woman Who Mapped Labrador: The Life and Expedition Diary of Mina Hubbard* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005).
- 28 R. Gordon Moyles, review of *ENL* 3, *Canadian Book Review Annual Online*, [http://www.cbraonline.com/member/search/index.php?action=details&page=0&sort\\_col=TITLE&sort\\_dir=ASC&book\\_id=11802](http://www.cbraonline.com/member/search/index.php?action=details&page=0&sort_col=TITLE&sort_dir=ASC&book_id=11802). The list price then was \$90.
- 29 Michael Staveley, review article of *ENL* 3, *The Newfoundland Quarterly* (1994), 4–5.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 31 For an important recent study of outport life, see Jeff A. Webb, *Observing the Outports: Describing Newfoundland Culture, 1950–1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).
- 32 Quoted in C. Grant Head, *Eighteenth-Century Newfoundland: A Geographer’s Perspective* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1976), 238.
- 33 Janet McNaughton, “Newfoundland Encyclopedia Done,” *Quill & Quire* 61, 2 (Feb. 1995): 22.

- 34 *The Bulletin* (Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association), 43, 2 (Oct.–Nov. 1999), [http://files.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/public/documents/bulletins/bultn\\_oct\\_nov99.pdf](http://files.nlta.nl.ca/wp-content/uploads/public/documents/bulletins/bultn_oct_nov99.pdf).
- 35 By comparison, 150,000 sets of the *Canadian Encyclopedia* were sold by Christmas 1985.
- 36 Don White, "Canada's Only Provincial Encyclopedia," *The Downboomer* (n.d.). This figure was confirmed by Joan Ritcey. Information from the *ENL* vertical file in CNS.
- 37 The J. R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation was based on the second floor of 25 Argyle Street in St. John's.
- 38 A founding co-editor of *Newfoundland Studies* (now *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*), Dr. O'Flaherty remained prolific long after retirement. See, for example, *Old Newfoundland: A History to 1843* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 1999); *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland 1843–1933* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 2005); *Leaving the Past Behind: Newfoundland History from 1934* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 2011). Also, based on his 1963 Ph.D. thesis at University College London: *Scotland's Pariah: The Life and Work of John Pinkerton, 1758–1826* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).
- 39 As of 2017, the provincial government is still keeping librarians and library users across the province in suspense over the fate of their beloved institutions. See, for example, Ashley Fitzpatrick's page-one feature, "Book Bind: Municipalities Can't All Afford Cash for Libraries," *The Telegram*, 20 May 2017, A1, A4.
- 40 For a new slant following a geographical (rather than the traditional alphabetical) ordering, see Pam Hall, *Towards an Encyclopedia of Local Knowledge: Excerpts from Chapters I and II* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 2017), and the review by Joan Sullivan in *The Telegram*, 12 Aug. 2017, B11.