

# Restoring and retelling the story of Grenfell Gardens

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**RESEARCHING, RESTORING AND RE-TELLING THE STORY OF  
GRENFELL'S GARDENS**



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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Introduction**

Food security is a well-known challenge for northern and coastal regions such as the Great Northern Peninsula. Dr. Grenfell (Sir Wilfred Grenfell) and the International Grenfell Association (IGA) played a significant historical role in the introduction of agriculture to the Great Northern Peninsula region. This included bringing dairy cows, pigs, reindeer, and other livestock to the region for farming and consumption, the development of vegetable gardens, and the construction and maintenance of greenhouses. This project, building on discussions around food security and tourism from *Our Way Forward*, has three objectives: 1) research the history of IGA farming enterprises in St. Anthony and create a research report on the enterprise, 2) with support of regional partners, develop a funding proposal to replicate aspects of the International Grenfell Association enterprise, including the development of a Grenfell “Heritage Garden” as a means to encourage local food security and to serve as a tourism draw, and 3) expand the organizational structure of the proposed Grenfell heritage garden to incorporate locally-generated nutrients from local sources and waste materials (including the composting of community waste and fish waste materials from local fish plants). This research report fulfills the requirements of the first objective, and will hopefully simulate enough interest in the communities at the tip of the Great Northern Peninsula to implement objectives two and three.

### **Scope**

Currently on the tip of the Northern Peninsula, there are dozens of communities with hundreds of personal vegetable gardens that local residents utilize to supplement their diet and improve their food security. Even today, most communities lack full service grocery stores, leaving residents dependent on local convenience stores to buy food, or travel to larger centres. In addition to this, due to the high cost of food, including the cost of transportation of this food from the agricultural regions of the country, many households struggle to afford fresh, healthy food. Some families are dependent upon food banks, or family and friends where emergency food programs are absent.

This research study has delimited the geographic region known as “The Tip of the Northern Peninsula”, and the residents who live and work in the region. Although the Town of St. Anthony is the largest community in the region, and the location of the Grenfell Mission, it has been noted

by local sources that vegetable gardens were evident beside other Grenfell Mission facilities in the region.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **The Grenfell Mission Overview**

Wilfred Grenfell left England in 1892 as a doctor for the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea, and set sail for the Labrador coast on a ship called “The Albert” (Flanagan, 2017; IGA, n.d.; IGA, MG 63.301). The journey across the Atlantic took 12 days (IGA, MG 63.301). He was sent to investigate and report on the working and living conditions of the fishermen and their families who lived in coastal communities along the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland and Labrador (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, n.d.). He would then work on establishing medical care services for these remotely located, poverty-stricken communities (IGA, n.d.; Simms, 1992).

Upon arriving in St. John’s, Newfoundland, they found the city in flames from the Great Fire of 1892. Shortly after this, Grenfell left St. John’s and followed the fishing vessels north, where the fishermen spent the summer fishing in northern Labrador (IGA, MG 63.301). The next year, 1893, Grenfell spent his time raising money independently of the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen in St. John’s, Newfoundland, and in England (Higgins, 2008). The proceeds went towards providing regular medical services to the people of Northern Newfoundland and Labrador (NNL). The Grenfell Mission was established, and it continued to provide medical services in NNL for over 100 years. In 1901, a hospital was opened in St. Anthony, and soon after that, St. Anthony became the Grenfell Mission headquarters (Higgins, 2008).

The Grenfell Mission sought to implement social welfare and community development initiatives which included improving local food security by:

- Introducing livestock e.g., reindeer, sheep, goats and dairy cows
- Encouraging agriculture by developing family and community gardens
- Creating further employment through crafts, timber and sawmills
- Promoting tourism to NNL by establishing an inn in St. Anthony for tourists/visitors (The Rooms, n.d.).

### *Grenfell's Observations of the Health and Welfare of the Local Residents*

When Grenfell first arrived on the coast of Northern Newfoundland and Labrador, most of the people had never seen a physician before (Grenfell Historic Properties, 1940 – hereafter GHP). There was only one doctor who travelled on the mail vessel and made brief, infrequent visits to some of the larger communities (Simms, 1992). Lack of access to doctors and medical facilities meant that fishermen's injuries and illnesses, as well as their family's went unchecked, resulting in lifelong disabilities. With the family breadwinners unable to fish for sustenance, many of the families lived in poverty and were at risk of starvation, which left them more susceptible to illnesses such as tuberculosis (IGA, MG 63.368). An excerpt from Chapter 4 of the Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage website about life along the Labrador coast described an encounter between Grenfell and a local family:

*“... he [the fisherman] led me to a tiny, sod-covered hovel, compared with which the Irish cabins were palaces. It had one window of odd fragments of glass. The floor was of pebbles from the beach; the earth walls were damp and chilly. There were half a dozen rude wooden bunks built in tiers around the single room, and a group of some six neglected children, frightened by our arrival, were huddled together in one corner. A very sick man was coughing his soul out in the darkness of a lower bunk, while a pitiable covered woman gave him cold water to sip out of a spoon. There was no furniture except a small stove with an iron pipe leading through a hole in the roof. My heart sank as I thought of the little I could do for the sufferer in such surroundings”.*

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, Introduction to Life in Labrador (n.d.)

Although their food was free of preservatives, additives, antibiotics, and other harmful substances, it was limited in quantity, quality and variety (Tucker, 2014). Many people attributed the occurrences of tuberculosis, anemia, and scurvy within their communities to poor nutrition and diets (GHP, 1940). Despite their malnourishment and the fact that midwifery was still rather basic at the time (GHP, 1940), families continued to grow. The diets of the fishermen of Labrador and Northern Newfoundland were similar during the summers and often included “... fish, hard bread, salt pork, black tea and molasses, and a little game when in season.” (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332). However, during the winters, the people of Labrador relied more heavily on meats such as

sea ducks, partridges, porcupines, seals, and rabbits, and preserved foods such as salt meat and fish. Because they lived on the coast, they consumed fewer vegetables than the people in Newfoundland (IGA, MG 63.332; IGA MG 63.368). Most of the people regarded vegetables and greens as “hay”. They preferred white flour because whole-wheat flour was too coarse. The food that they stored for the winter was determined by what the men wanted instead of what was good for them and their children (IGA, MG 63.2207).

During one of his visits to the coast, Grenfell dined at the home of one of the fishermen. He observed that the two older children who sat at the table were “... dull, thin, cadaverous youngsters...” (IGA, MG 63.2207), while the youngest child, who played on the floor, was healthy, active and responsive (IGA, MG 63.2207). The meal consisted of bread, tea, and potatoes. Although there was ample food for everyone, the potato skins were thrown to the youngest child on the floor, while those who sat at the table ate the soft, white flesh of the potatoes. The fisherman and his wife failed to see that their two older children were being deprived of the most nutritious part of the potato, which had caused the youngest child to grow strong (IGA, MG 63.2207).

Grenfell believed that a person’s overall well-being was determined by the quality of “... housing, sanitation, nutrition, education and income,” and the absence of illness (IGA, n.d.). He noted that the three components necessary for combating a disease such as tuberculosis were sunlight, milk, and fresh vegetables (IGA, MG 63.301). He empathized with the health and financial hardships experienced by the people, and he dedicated his life to addressing their welfare needs by encouraging industriousness to empower them to meet their own needs (Flanagan, 2017; IGA, n.d.; IGA, MG 63.301).

He also believed in research to document the health status of the people in the region, but to also find better ways of improving their health status and treating any possible illness. During the summer of 1929, Grenfell requested that Dr. Helen Mitchell, the director of the Nutrition Laboratory of Battle Creek Sanatorium, visit Labrador to observe and determine the solution to the food problems in the region (IGA, MG 63.2207). She carefully surveyed various families’ food supplies for the year along the coast, and she noted that the communities that had few or no gardens and livestock (e.g., goats, hens, sheep, cattle) had the worst health conditions (IGA, MG 63.2207). The people from these poorer communities were unable to purchase farm produce when it was available. She noted that “... few families [had] a shortage of total calories. The protein, fat and starches were in reasonable proportion. The nutritive shortages were chiefly evident among the minerals and

vitamins.” (IGA, MG 63.2207). Beriberi was one of the illnesses that was caused by a diet which lacked essential vitamins (IGA, MG 63.332).

### *Economic Conditions of the Local Residents*



Image 1: IGA 12-47 A Labrador fisherman 1926-1937

Grenfell observed and understood that the fishermen were deeply embedded in the “truck” system of economics. The annual cycle of economic exchange involved “During the winter months, the people hunted, and trapped animals inland, and then moved to the coast during the summer, where they fished and traded animal pelts” (Simms, 1992). In the summers, the fishermen began their days at four o’clock in the morning and fished all day long (Tucker, 2014). Dr. Leslie Webber noted in his descriptions from 1919 that “Here the fishermen get all their supplies from [the fish merchants], charge everything and at the end of the season after all their fish are caught and sold, pay their bill. If they make a poor voyage all bets are off and [the fisherman’s family] lose because no debts are extended over the winter”. “But, that is the custom of the coast” (L.T. Webber, 1919, p. 23).

During the winters, they were completely reliant upon their own supplies and food gathering, as no one could come to them with essential supplies for as long as eight months or longer (IGA, MG 63.342). And occasionally the cash economy served to be no benefit to the fisherman. One year, a trader traveled to the coast, bought all the fish, gave the fishermen cash, and promised to send supplies. However, no supplies ever came, thus, the fishermen began to beg for food saying, “We cannot eat money.” (IGA, MG 63.342). Risk of starvation caused one man to (reportedly) eat his only dog as his last meal, while another man shot himself and his three children (Simms, 1992).

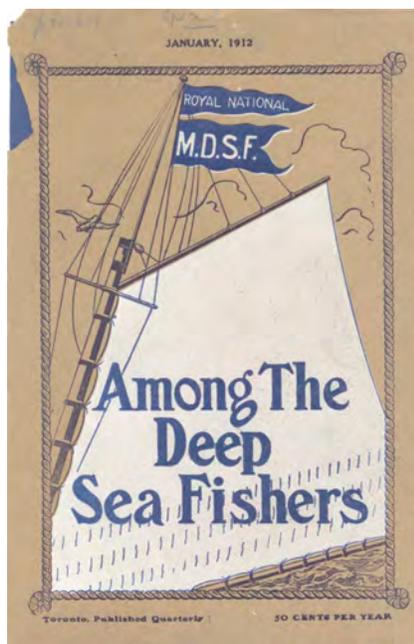


Image 2: Cover of Among the Deep Fishers (1912)

The desperate conditions of the fishing families along the coast of Northern Newfoundland spurred Grenfell to create an international organization under the auspices of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen, but in 1914 a separate mission, the International Grenfell Association (IGA) was formed by Dr. Grenfell. The International Grenfell Association and its communication vehicle was created to attempt to lessen the desperation and to help families become healthy and prosperous. The Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen served as the journal of the IGA, and it was published as “Among the Deep Sea Fishers” from 1903-1981.

### *The Grenfell Cooperative Society*

As noted earlier, when the young British doctor arrived on the northern coast of Newfoundland he took notice of the abusive [truck] economic system that was particularly unfair to the fishermen of the area. It was a system the merchants could easily exploit to their advantage. Merchants could set the price of goods they gave out on credit at the end of the fishing season, keeping their own profits high while the fisherman was left unaware of the real value of his labour and what he was actually owed. Grenfell was set on challenging this exploitative system, and he began organizing cooperatives along the coast of the Northern Peninsula and Southern Labrador. He set up a cooperative store in Red Bay in 1896, a cooperative lumber mill in 1901, the Grenfell Industrial (Grenfell Handicrafts) in 1906, and another cooperative store in Flowers Cove in 1919.

The St. Anthony Cooperative was established in 1908, and incorporated in 1913 as the “Spot Cash Cooperative Ltd.” though it was known as the “Candy Shop” up until Grenfell’s death in 1940. The St. Anthony Cooperative was first set up at the town’s harbour, now commonly called Co-op Point. The harvesters now had an outlet to sell their salmon and get actual money in return. The Cooperative would also purchase ice the fishers gathered from icebergs. This got Grenfell into quite a bit of disfavour with the merchants of St. John’s as he was essentially undermining the barter system they had going. However, much to Grenfell’s purpose, it gave the people of the area an

opportunity to have cash and manage their own financial destiny. (<https://www.thetelegram.com/business/a-look-back-at-the-history-and-legacy-of-the-grenfell-memorial-co-op-184071/>)

## CHAPTER 3

### The Grenfell Mission Agricultural Activities

#### *Introduction to the Grenfell Mission Agricultural Activities*

For over 40 years Sir Wilfred Grenfell worked to maintain and improve the health of the local people in Northern Newfoundland and Labrador. His “social enterprise<sup>1</sup>” philosophy included building hospitals and medical clinics throughout the region, but also helping ward off hunger and malnutrition of the local people by creating working cooperatives, handicraft work, and agricultural initiatives. The broadening of agriculture in a region where most families lived off fish, hard tack and salted meats was, in the mind-set of Dr. Grenfell, a major advance in improving community health. Grenfell knew that improved nutrition was the single-most important factor in the low health status of the local population, and he was determined to improve this status through the development of agriculture. He also knew that improved health status would lessen the need for more medical services on the coast. From the introduction of reindeer as a source of fresh meat, milk and as a work animal, to the construction of sophisticated greenhouse facilities, to the development of a successful and productive dairy operation, Grenfell’s vision was a change force in Northern Newfoundland and Labrador.

Some important dates related to the IGA agricultural initiatives are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1: Important dates in the history of the Grenfell Mission agricultural activities (adapted from “Important dates in the history of the Grenfell Mission) (IGA, MG 63.49):

Year	Activity
1908	Introduction of reindeer
1910	Animal husbandry started at St. Anthony with small herd of pigs
1916	Northwest River gardens and chicken houses started

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_enterprise](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_enterprise)

1924	St. Anthony sheep herd started
1925	Northwest River cattle farm started
1928	St. Anthony greenhouses opened
1931	Wholesale preservation of food by pressure-cookers
1932	Northwest River greenhouses built
1934-35	Greenhouse donated and built in Cartwright
1938	New barn built at St. Anthony
1940	Dr. Grenfell passes away
1965	St. Anthony farm and livestock transferred to Dr. Budgell
1967	Jimmy Tucker retires from IGA
1977	Retirement of Uriah Patey- St. Anthony foreman for 50 years



Image 3: VA 92-52 Sir Wilfred Grenfell and nurses Mary Weir and Effie Mansfield weeding garden beds 1932

### Challenges of growing vegetables in the area

When Grenfell first arrived in St. Anthony, he stated that just by looking at the children, he could tell which families had gardens and which ones did not. The children whose families had gardens were “... fine, healthy and rosy.” (Paton, 1934). In Labrador, the fishermen and their families did not believe that it was possible to have gardens. Vegetables such as artichokes, cabbages, and other green vegetables did not grow on the coast, which was described as “... ”

inhospitable and impossible,” and lacked suitable soil for gardens (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332). Professor Fred Sears of the Agricultural Department of Massachusetts State College visited Labrador during the summer of 1929 to investigate opportunities for agriculture in the area (IGA, MG 63.2207). He reported that, “Universally [the soil] is sour but can be made good by ploughing into it in the autumn fish, kelp, ashes, or lime. Drainage is a necessity. Club-root disease is a menace. The choice of crops must be limited, and though produce will never compete with the export markets of the world, it will go far to supply the people with the vegetables they so badly need.” (IGA, MG 63.2207). In small settlements along Northern Newfoundland and Labrador the soil was described as black and sour, and the primeval rock lay only one foot below the surface of the ground (IGA, MG 63.368).

To add to the soil deficiency problem, most fishermen moved away from their homes before the start of the planting season, which coincided with the salmon fishing season. Thus, it was very important for the women to take charge of the gardens, while the men fished (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332). However, the women faced many challenges to develop a productive garden. Firstly, the harsh summer frost often undid weeks of hard work in just one night (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.368). The journey to the IGA greenhouses to get transplants was a great distance, which they traveled to by boat in the summers (IGA, MG 63.301). Seeds were often transported from 500 miles away. They lacked adequate farming equipment, sometimes used a broken boat hook as a hoe (IGA, MG 63.368). The fences had to be secured to prevent animals from breaking in and eating or destroying the crops. And the weeds also had to be removed to prevent them from choking up the small plants (IGA, MG 63.301).

Most of the families collected sufficient soil to farm small kitchen gardens in which they grew cabbages and other greens. Between Henley Harbour and Forteau where people settled in the same place throughout the year, the favourable climate allowed families to farm and grow sufficient vegetables for personal use (IGA, MG 63.332).

Much earlier, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Moravian missionaries had made efforts to teach agriculture to the Naskapi and the Inuit of Labrador. They had hoped to use agriculture to improve their diets. Unfortunately, they failed because the local people were not accustomed to vegetables and greens, and the techniques that the Moravians used were generally unsuitable for the Labrador climate (Omohundro, 1994). Grenfell believed that “... people must have vegetables”, thus, he worked hard to train the fishermen to become “fishermen-gardeners” by growing their own fresh produce (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.311; IGA, MG 63.368; IGA, n.d.). The Grenfell Mission

had a more realistic focus on manageable kitchen gardens which enabled both settlers and natives to establish a more balanced diet, and have less dependence on the merchants (Omohundro, 1994). Each Mission nursing station (St. Anthony, Northwest River, Cartwright, Flowers Cove, Nain, Forteau, St. Mary's River) was equipped with at least a small garden (IGA, MG 63.368).



Image 4: VA 92-79 Corner of garden at St. Anthony, “Jimmy” Tucker 1932

### St. Anthony

St. Anthony was regarded as the “experimental centre” of the Grenfell Mission’s agricultural activities, and plants and seeds were dispensed from St. Anthony to other parts of the country (IGA, MG 63.2207).

St. Anthony experienced very warm summers, which were conducive to the growth of exceptional crops of hay and green vegetables (IGA, MG 63.2185). Although not everyone in St. Anthony had a garden, there was a trained man and an experimental community farm from which surplus produce from the garden at the end of the season was set aside for the winter (Paton, 1934). Most of the vegetables that were grown there were supplied to the St. Anthony Hospital (IGA, MG 63.368).

The Mission barns were also in excellent condition and they ran very efficiently (IGA, MG 63.2188). The hospital, children’s home (orphanage), and the staff houses, received fresh meat and milk from the Mission barn (IGA, MG 63.368).

Northwest River



Image 5: IGA 23-139 Northwest River garden, before 1949

The Northwest River gardens and chicken houses were started in 1916. Jack Watts was the outside foreman at the Northwest River station, and the gardens were well cared for and neatly fenced (IGA, MG 63.2185). The locals also had well-kept gardens. The Northwest River station garden grew large amounts of vegetables very rapidly due to the community's northern location, and the long hours of sunlight it receives. Due to its inland location, the summer months in Northwest River are also very warm (IGA, MG 63.368). The fresh vegetables grown in the community supplied the local hospital and school, as well local people (IGA, MG 63.2188; IGA, MG 63.368). Surplus vegetables were also sent to the Cartwright station., and by the early 1940s, the agricultural department in Northwest River had made commendable progress, including the establishment of an agricultural fair in the fall of 1940 (IGA, MG 63.2185).

Cartwright

In comparison to Northwest River, the agricultural work in Cartwright was less successful (IGA, MG 63.368). The garden experienced delays in crop growth because of the shorter season

and cold winds from the Atlantic. However, green vegetables were still grown during the summer (IGA, MG 63.2187; IGA, MG 63.368). Initially, peat moss was used as the topsoil, but it was eventually replaced with compost (IGA, MG 63.2185).

In 1934 Cartwright received a greenhouse, donated and shipped to Labrador by two sisters in England as a memorial to their father. Although delayed arriving in Labrador, and delayed being erected due to weather, the greenhouse was finally erected in Fall 1934. A plaque was fixed to the greenhouse in memory of the father, the verse being “As a remembrance of J.J.S.: May the happy gift of green fingers that he had be also theirs who tend the plants therein” (IGA MG 63.233).

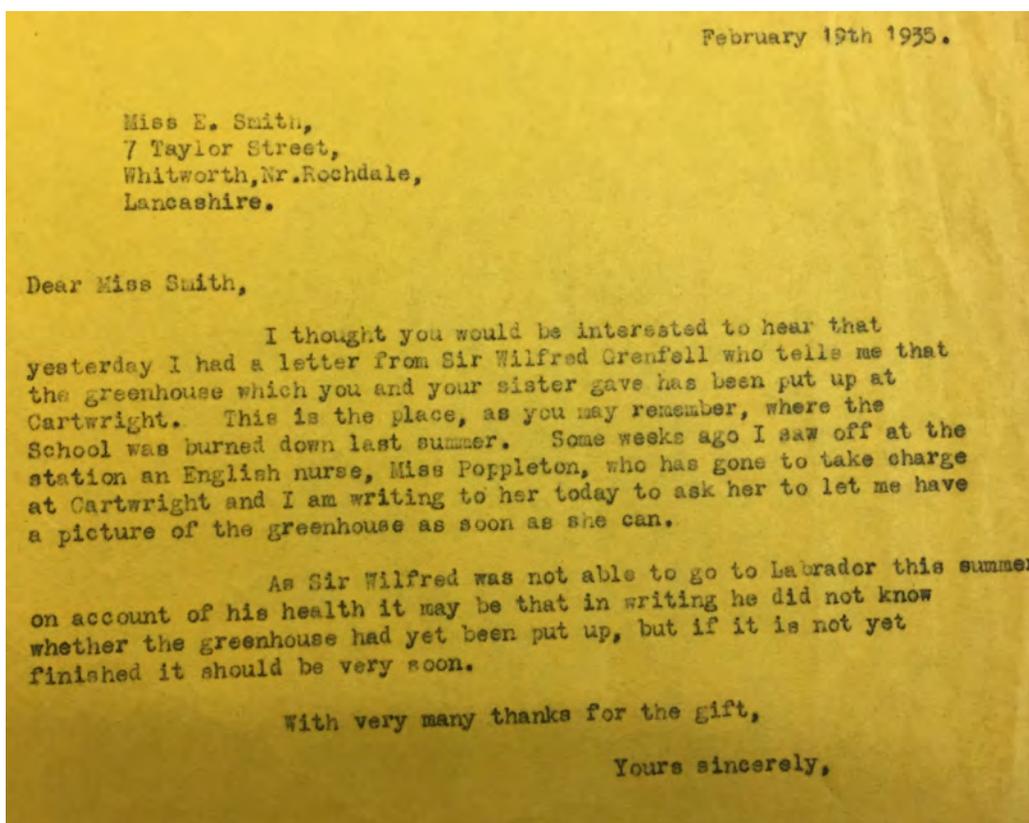


Image 6: Letter (1935) to Miss E. Smith in regard to the completion of the greenhouse that they donated to the Grenfell Mission in Cartwright, Labrador.

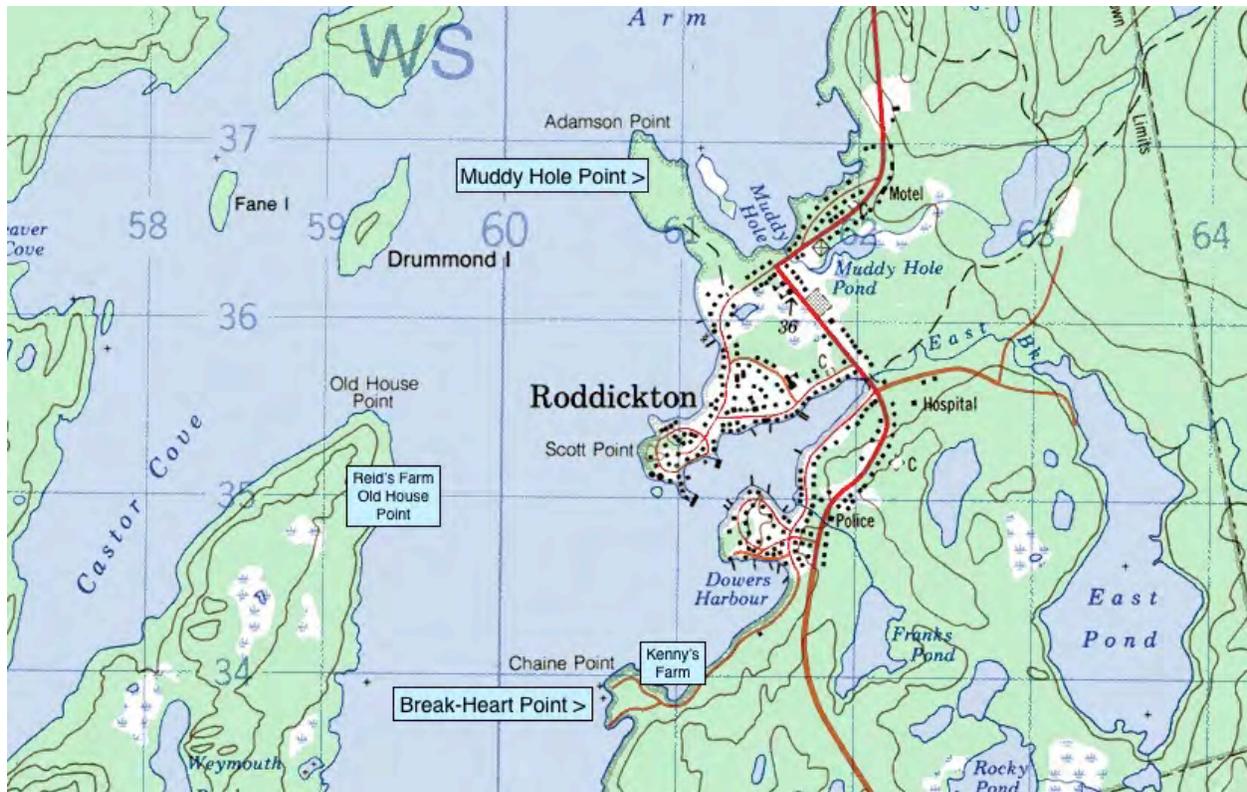
### Roddickton-Bide Arm (Canada Bay)

In his goal to improve the health of the local fishermen and their families, Dr. Grenfell was continuously looking for sites to develop bigger and better farms. Fishing families were scattered along the coast and bays, and Dr. Grenfell would visit these small, isolated communities during the

short summer season to serve their medical needs. He would also take stock of the general living conditions and health status of the families in the communities. Earle Pilgrim of Roddickton provided some context for Dr. Grenfell's farm development interests in Canada Bay:

*When Grenfell came [over to Northern Newfoundland], he had all this information [about the soil quality] from Sir Joseph Banks, who had surveyed Canada Bay in 1784. And he decided to put a farm in Canada Bay. He got some advice from Jimmy Tucker AKA "Uncle Jimmy Tucker", and he got a man— Kenneth Adams—employed in St. Anthony. He was from St. Lunaire. He took Kenneth Adams and came up to Canada Bay. (Earle Pilgrim, 2018)*

According to Earle Pilgrim, Grenfell came to Canada Bay in 1915, and shortly afterwards, sent Kenneth Adams there to start a farm. Adams was a widower and at that time, was 47 years old. He had been involved in running Grenfell's garden operation in St. Anthony, and Grenfell sent him along to Canada Bay to test the soil to see whether farming would be possible. Adams subsequently married Naomi, one of the eight daughters of Aaron Reid, who had a farm on Old House Point (Map 1). The land at Old House Point was located on the northeast point of land about 1.5 KM across the bay, west of Roddickton. The Reid family continued to farm at Old House Point, while Kenny and Naomi cleared 9 acres of land at Chaine Point (locally called Break-Heart Point). Grenfell provided an ox to help clear the land. According to the local knowledge provided by Earle Pilgrim, they had huge crops there, and they supplied the Grenfell Mission as well as selling produce to communities as far away as Lewisporte and Twillingate. (Pilgrim, personal communication, 2018). Over the next 15 years Kenny and Naomi continued to operate the farm, where they "grew potatoes, turnips, cabbage, carrots, beets and any other root vegetable that would grow" (Pilgrim, personal communication, 2018). Despite their success at farming for those 15 years, Kenny Adams "proved to Dr. Grenfell that farming in Canada Bay was impossible due to the climate. He gave up the farming experiment in 1930 due to late spring and early fall frost, and of course went to work in the lumber mill that Grenfell had in operation not far from the farm" (Pilgrim, personal communication, 2018).



Map 1: Showing the location of farms in the Roddickton area, as per E. Pilgrim (2018)

After the Adams stopped farming, the land at Chaine Point (Break-Heart Point) was left unused, although Kenny's Well (Image 7) remained as a reminder about the farming operations of the Grenfell Mission. In 1942, during WWII, the Canadian Armed Forces came into Canada Bay and built a naval base on the abandoned farm at Break-Heart Point. They landscaped the point, built wharfs, homes, concrete foundations and basements, and used much of the good soil and gravel from the old farm to build roads in the Roddickton area. Sixty years later, Break-Heart Point is now used as a community park, with signage related to the old farm and the wells (Image 8), and remnants of the old concrete foundations (Image 9) that were used for the naval equipment at the time.



Image 7: Kenny's Well (2018)



Image 8: Interpretative signage for "The Farm" on Break-Heart Point (2018)



Image 9: Remaining concrete foundations along the shore at “The Farm” (2018)

### Flowers Cove

Information regarding the farming initiatives in Flowers Cove was lacking in the IGA records. There were references to the fact that the gardens in Flowers Cove produced large quantities of various vegetables each year, which were enough to supply the local Mission hospital there each year. It was also known that vegetables were canned there, and one record showed that 200 hundred cans of vegetables were produced in 1942.(IGA, MG 63.2187).

### A Plethora of Land, Seeds and Plants

Many acres of land were cleared at the Mission farms and gardens to produce fresh vegetables such as cabbages, carrots, radishes, broccoli, beets, potatoes, and cauliflower (IGA, MG 63.368). Many of the seeds and other farming products used were purchased in Scotland from Dobbie and Co. Ltd. (Image 10: IGA, MG 63.233). This was a wise choice for seed purchasing because the soil and climate in Northern Newfoundland was similar to that experienced in Scotland. Dr. Grenfell and Prof. Fred Sears researched various seed varieties to determine the best seed for the regions where they had farms and gardens. Grenfell was keen to grow the very best vegetables possible at the Mission stations. Grenfell also went looking for agricultural advice from the Newfoundland Department of Lands and Fisheries. In 1933 he received a lengthy document from H.A Butler, Secretary of Agriculture outlining agricultural procedures and specific hardy plants that would do well in Northern Newfoundland and Labrador. There appeared to be no limits to the agricultural research efforts of Grenfell and his research team.

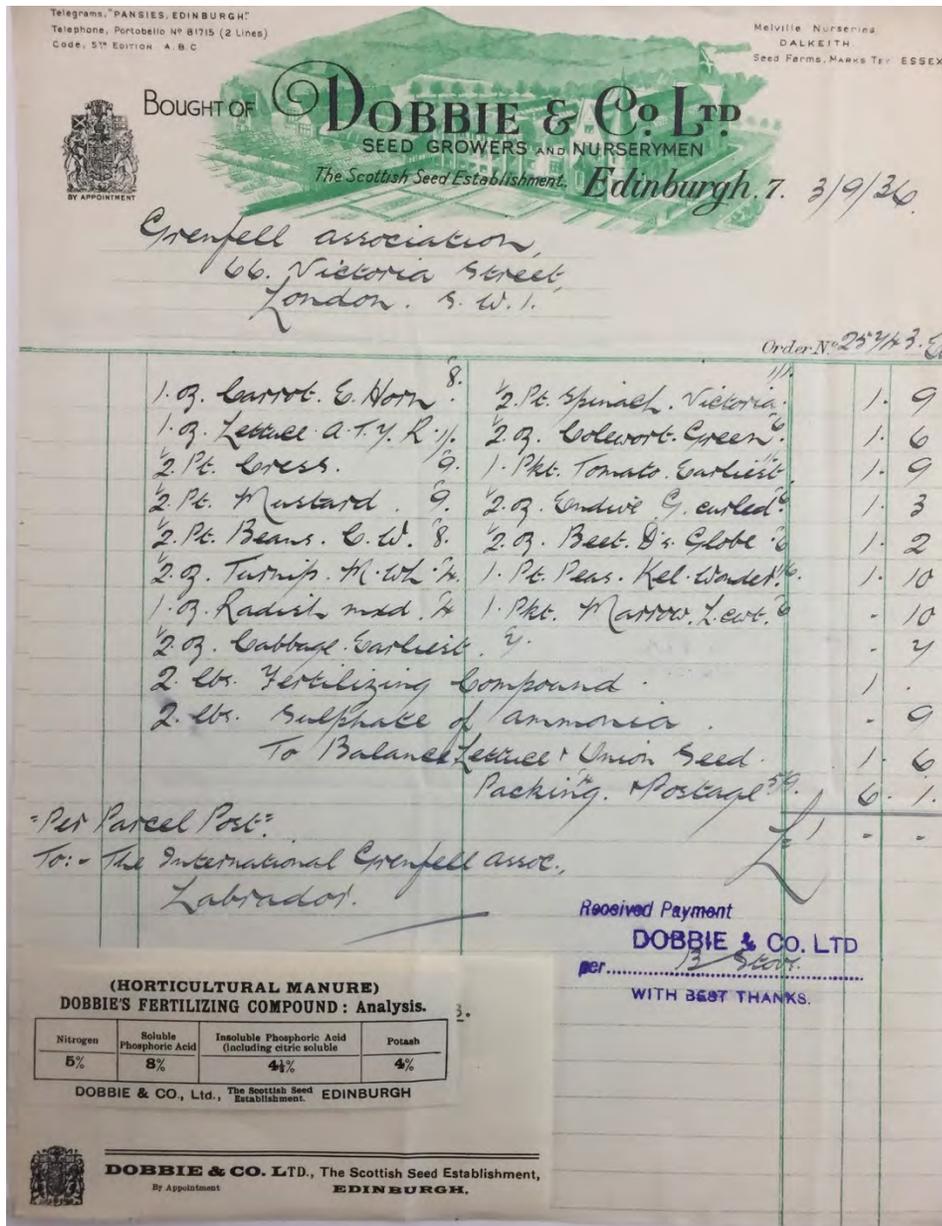


Image 10: Invoice of seeds and fertilizer purchased from Dobbie and Co. Ltd. by the Grenfell Mission, to be shipped to Labrador, March 9, 1936 (IGA, MG 63.233):

## *Cabbages*

Before the Mission began growing their own vegetables, they imported large amounts of cabbages from the U.S. and Canada. However, as the farming activities expanded, more and more of the communities along the coast began to buy cabbage plants from the Mission greenhouses (IGA, MG 63.332). There were instances when the Mission greenhouses were unable to produce enough cabbage plants to meet the demands of the local people (IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368). Cabbages were grown under glass in the greenhouses in the spring time, and then transplanted outside so that they would ripen well before the first frost appeared (IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.332). Wakefield and Danish Ballhead cabbage seedlings were sold for \$1.00-\$2.00 per 100 plants (Omohundro, 1994).

Table 2: Cabbage transplants grown and harvested by year and Mission station (IGA MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.2187; IGA, MG 63.2207; IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced	Notes
1931	St. Anthony	7,500 lb.	
	“	15,000 plants	10,000 sold
	“	2 tons	For winter
1933	St. Anthony	4 tons	
	“	24,000 plants	15,000 sold
1940	North West River	10,000 plants	
	“	5,000 lb.	
1940	St. Anthony	40,000 plants	35,000 sold; 5,000 planted
	“	14,000 lb.	
1942	North West River	3,000 lb.	
1942	St. Anthony	40,000 plants	
1941-1942	North West River	3,000 lb.	

Entries in the IGA account book (Image 11) show plants being sold to local residents to use for their own vegetable gardens.

	34	Greenhouse	Harold Penney	Plants	1 50
	35	Greenhouse	Will Styles	"	3 00
8	36	Canada Bay	Emily Blair	Refund, Travelling	2 30
	37	Farm	Nerke Simms	for May Milk	1 86
	38	Hospital	Hq. Peril	Fees	6 00
	39	Greenhouse	Noah Nicholas	Plants	3 00
	540	Stores	Alec Smith	Coal	5 00
9	41	Machine Shop	Mrs Randolph Roberts	Coffin & Water Bay	15 20

Image 11: Entries in the IGA account book (1941) for Harold Penney, Will Styles and Noah Nicholas for plants to use for their own vegetable gardens.

### Potatoes

In his book entitled “A Labrador Doctor”, Grenfell wrote, “I happened to be in the gardens at Nain... A troop of Eskimo women came out to cover up the potatoes. Every row of potatoes is covered with sticks and long strips of canvas along them. A huge roll of sacking is kept near each row and the whole is drawn over and the potatoes are tucked in bed for the night.” (As cited in Omohundro, 1994, p. 116). In 1933, Grenfell stated that many of the fishermen would fail to go to work due to hunger. He wanted to ensure that everyone with a garden from the Labrador Shore to Battle Harbour, Point Rich to Eddies Cove, the North-East Coast, and from St. Lewis Bay to Spotted Island received some potato seeds, so that they could prepare their gardens. The previous spring, the Government of NL had distributed potatoes along the southern Labrador shore (IGA, GN 8.249). If the seeds weren’t sent to the people on time by the Land Development Society, Grenfell feared that “... Beriberi will probably kill many next winter unless we get good prices for fish.” (IGA, GN 8.249). Grenfell wrote to Harvey and Co. Ltd., requesting 10 sacks of potato seeds for “... some of the people on the coast with whom he [was] specially acquainted.” (IGA, GN 8.249).



Image 12: VA 110-53.3 “Jimmy” Tucker in the potato patch, 1930

Table 3: Potatoes produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63. 2185; IGA, MG 63, 2187; IGA, MG 63.2207; IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332):

Year	Mission station	Potatoes-Quantity produced *
1931	St. Anthony	65 barrels
1932	St. Anthony	120 barrels
1933	St. Anthony	100 barrels
1940	North West River	68 barrels
1940	St. Anthony	65 barrels
1941-1942	North West River	100 barrels
1942	North West River	100 barrels

\* Note: A barrel of potatoes weighs approximately 165 lbs (or 75 Kilograms)

Source: [http://nppga.org/crop\\_science/measurements.php](http://nppga.org/crop_science/measurements.php)



### *Tomatoes*

Image 13: IGA 2-34 Interior of the St. Anthony greenhouse with tomato plants, before 1937

“That was a big greenhouse that had tomatoes” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018).

“Tomatoes were a big thing here.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). Tomatoes were supplied to the Mission institutions throughout the summer (IGA, MG 63.2187).



### *Lettuce*

Image 14: VA 94-98.3 Greenhouses in St. Anthony in February; lettuce, spinach, etc. before 1940

Before Grenfell introduced green vegetables to the people, their diets lacked iron, thus, lettuce... an iron-rich and easily grown vegetable... was cultivated. Lettuce was supplied to the hospital and orphanage, and at first, the hospital patients refused to eat

it (IGA, MG 63.368; IGA, MG 63.331).

Table 4: Lettuce produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.2207; IGA, MG 63.301; IGA 63.332):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced
1929	N/A	7,000 seedling plants ordered
1931	St. Anthony	500 dozen heads

*Assorted greens*

Table 5: Assorted greens and mixed vegetables produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.2187; IGA, MG 63.2207; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced
1931	St. Anthony	40 barrels
1933	St. Anthony	20 barrels
1941-1942	North West River	1,000 lb

*Turnips*

Table 6: Turnips produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.2187; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced
1931	St. Anthony	40 barrels
1933	St. Anthony	1,500 lb.
1940	St. Anthony	N/A
1941-1942	North West River	1,400 lb.

*Broccoli*

Table 7: Broccoli produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced
1940	St. Anthony	500 lb.

*Cauliflower*

Table 8: Cauliflower produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185):

<b>Year</b>	<b>Mission station</b>	<b>Quantity produced</b>
1940	St. Anthony	1,000 lb.

*Carrots*

Table 9: Carrots produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185):

<b>Year</b>	<b>Mission station</b>	<b>Quantity produced</b>
1940	St. Anthony	1,300 lb.

*Beets*

Table 10: Beets produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185):

<b>Year</b>	<b>Mission station</b>	<b>Quantity produced</b>
1940	St. Anthony	1,800 lb.

*Berries*

The Mission made efforts to encourage the people to make greater use of the native berries that grew well in some of the areas of the country, such as partridge berries (IGA, MG 63.301).



Image 15: IGA 1-90  
Berry picking 1900s

## *Flowers*

Grenfell believed that flowers were important in hospital psychology, thus, the St. Anthony garden produced potted and cut flowers such as stock, snapdragon, larkspur, pansies, and clarkia (IGA, MG 301; IGA, MG 63.332). These flowers were used to brighten the hospital porch and wards, the orphanage, and staff houses. The ability to grow and bloom flowers throughout the year provided everyone at the Mission with great joy. “The hospital sun porch has been a mass of flowers all summer, and we have had potted plants for all the wards, the Orphanage and the staff houses.



Even in January we have stock and snapdragon for the hospital” (IGA, MG 63.301, p. 112).

Image 16: VA 108-148.2 The flower garden at Nain 1914

## *Compost, Fertilizer, and Pesticides*



Image 17: VA 110-32.2 Plowing under capelin for fertilizer 1930

During his agricultural experiment in St. Anthony, Jimmy Tucker noted that more [sea] shell was needed to increase the lime content in the soil. Composting was also very important. The people also needed to make use of the best varieties of seeds available for different crops (IGA, GN 8.249).

Grenfell encouraged the use of peat, seaweed, and fish as fertilizer (Omohundro, 1994). When cows were introduced, they provided an alternative source of fertilizer- manure. Jimmy Tucker also maintained a compost heap and added it to the gardens (Tucker, 2014). “We actually used the barn’s cattle excrement in our compost... Dad threw in dead cats and fish bones- anything. Nothing was wasted. It all went into the compost pile.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018).

According to local retired teacher Cal Nicholas, the Grenfell Mission did not grow all their vegetables organically, as he remembers his father, Noah Nicholas, telling him that “... they used to mix up some sort of poison. The name he had on it was “corrosive sublimate”<sup>2</sup>. They used to mix it up in 45 gallon drums and take it and put it on the roots of the plant-- cabbage plants and turnip plants-- to kill the root maggot and the cutworm.” (Nicholas, personal communication, 2018). “We’d have this little stick in our hands and a big barrel of poison mixed up, and put our stick in the poison, push the plant aside, put poison around it, and go to the next one. Can you imagine doing that for thousands of plants? This was done twice a year.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018)

### *Canning*



Image 18: A 57-153 Mrs. Janie [Herb] and Mrs. W. Milley with table full of bottled preserves 1930

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<sup>2</sup> Corrosive sublimate (mercuric chloride: a heavy crystalline poisonous compound  $HgCl_2$  used as a disinfectant and fungicide and in photography. Also: A white poisonous soluble crystalline sublimate of mercury; used as a pesticide or antiseptic or wood preservative.

In addition to growing their own vegetables, the people were encouraged by the Grenfell Mission to make greater and more varied use of local products. One such example was through canning classes which were initiated by Professor Chenoweth from Massachusetts State College, Amherst, MA. (IGA, MG 63.332). Canned foods in the winter were ideal, as the only other available food sources the people had were wild game such as deer (caribou), grouse, and rabbits. Canned foods played a significant role in helping the people combat deficiency diseases (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368).

The women brought rabbits, salmon, cod, vegetables, native berries, and other food items to the central kitchen where community canning took place (IGA, MG 63.310; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368). They provided their own firewood and tins (IGA, MG 63.332). They were able to get their canning supplies at reduced rates through the co-operatives (IGA, MG 63.2137). Steam pressure cookers were also available at the hospitals and nursing stations (IGA, MG 63.310; IGA, MG 63.368).

Professor Chenoweth spent one month at the Mission during the summer of 1933, supervising the women's canning activities, and in 1940 Mrs. Paddon guided women in North West River in the preservation of salmon, partridges, trout, greens, and berries for local use (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.368). (See Table 20 below for items canned and quantities).

Table 11: Food items canned by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.2187; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Mission station	Items canned	Quantity
1932	St. Anthony	Salmon	2,000 cans
1933	N/A	Salmon	2,000 cans
1940	North West River	Salmon	2,500 cans
	North West River	Meat, greens, berries	1,200 cans
1942	N/A (Mrs. Forsyth)	Produce	1,000 lb.
1942	Flowers Cove	Vegetables	200 cans

It was noted that Newfoundland also exported thousands of barrels of native berries to the U.S. (IGA, MG 63.301).



### *Salting*

Image 19: VA 110-91.3 Taking on a cargo of salt at Battle Harbour 1930

Due to the lack of refrigerators, salting was an important method of preserving food, although it did drive out most of the nutrients from the food. Salting was described by Laura (Stone) Biles as “...a necessary evil.” (Tucker, 2014).

### *Greenhouses and transplants*

Due to the cooler climate of the country, the outdoor growing season for green vegetables was only 2 ½ months long, which was too short to allow vegetables such as cabbage to grow and mature well (IGA, MG 63.332). Greenhouses were known to increase the growing time for plants by at least 6-8 weeks. This enabled seeds to be planted 2 months before the ground was suitable for outdoor planting, and when ready, to be transplanted into the gardens (IGA, MG 63.2207; IGA, MG 63.301). Sir Wilfred sent out appeals for the donation of greenhouses, and in one instance, three greenhouses were sent from the ladies of Greenwich, Connecticut, and the Garden Clubs of America, and these greenhouses were established at different Mission centres (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332).



Image 20: IGA 13-75 St. Anthony greenhouses 1930

The Mission received other generous donations which were used to set up additional greenhouses (IGA, MG 63.368). Miss Smith and her sister spent many happy hours in the garden and greenhouse with their father, thus, they saw fit to donate a greenhouse to the Mission in their father's memory in 1935 (IGA, MG 63.233). Initially, Grenfell suggested putting up the greenhouse in St. Mary's River, Labrador, because it would have helped the people of that district and the Battle Harbour area. The plants could then be easily taken to Cartwright from there by the mail boat, thereby making the greenhouse more beneficial to a greater territory. However, in the end, the greenhouse was set up in Cartwright (IGA, MG 63.233). The frame for the greenhouse was made in England and sent out in sections, to be set up in Labrador, and the glass was also purchased in England (IGA, MG 63.233). Miss Smith enclosed an inscription on a small brass plate which was to be fastened onto the frame. The summer of 1935 was a very short one and Cartwright was far away and isolated. It therefore took a long time to transport the greenhouse components, which meant that there was insufficient time left to set it up before the start of the winter. However, plans were made for the greenhouse to be put up during the following spring/summer (IGA, MG 63.233). The Mission also received a \$500 donation from England which was used to obtain an additional greenhouse. It was built in 1942 in St. Anthony and used the following year (IGA, MG 63.2187).



Image 21: A 86-142 Large arched greenhouse 1930s

Watson Tucker, son of James “Jimmy” Tucker, when asked to describe the Mission greenhouses in St. Anthony, said, “The big one had many, many rooms. The big one was shaped like an “L”. There was a basement with a coal-fired furnace that had pipes all

through the greenhouse to make the greenhouse feasible early in the spring, rather than to wait until the summer time. Once the summer got here, the glass took care of it. And upstairs, there was the main part of the thing. The long one was with the tomato plants, and the shorter one - starter lettuce, starter cabbage, starter everything.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). The greenhouses had only one layer and, “The beds were on steel posts...” and “...they were chest high.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). There was a “... big cellar in the middle-sized greenhouse. They used to store cabbage there on wooden slats.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). Sam Elliott also recalled the greenhouse in St. Anthony where his father used to work. He often helped his father shovel coal to keep the furnaces going. The farm workers always started by putting peat in the beds, followed by the soil, and then heating the greenhouse (Elliott, personal communication, 2018).

Before the advantages of greenhouse transplants were understood, very few people bought them (IGA, MG 63.301). However, with time, the Mission greenhouses provided an increasing number of seedlings to the people, thereby ensuring that they had better gardens, resulting in a decrease in deficiency diseases (IGA, MG 63.368). One year, a village 10 miles from St. Anthony, ordered 700 seedling plants. The following year, their order had increased to 7,000 seedlings. The village even made plans to form a garden club (IGA, MG 63.301). A nurse at the Flowers Cove station handed out vegetable seeds and loaned out tools to the locals (Omohundro, 1994).

The gardens and greenhouses proved to be very beneficial to the people. One nurse, who returned after a 5-month absence, marveled at how every family had enlarged its garden, and the two families that did not have gardens were preparing theirs for the following spring (IGA, MG 63.301). Grenfell said, “These gardens will do more for the future health and happiness of the people than medicine alone can accomplish.” (IGA, MG 63.301). In December 1929, the doctor in charge of the St. Anthony hospital wrote to Grenfell saying, “We have plenty of green food fresh from the

greenhouse today- the only green food for 300 miles!” The following year, he wrote to Grenfell again, saying, “We now have lettuce throughout the year. In a country where there are eight months of winter, this addition to the diet is of greatest importance.” (IGA, MG 63.301). One of Grenfell’s volunteers said, “In two or three weeks, I saw cabbages pan [grow] from the stage where the plants were just nicely started to fairly hard and good-sized heads. And in that same period, potatoes grew from small plants, perhaps six inches high, to fully matured plants in bloom!” (IGA, MG 63.301).

### Livestock

The people of Northern Newfoundland and Labrador traditionally relied on huskies for transportation. The preferred food for huskies included seal, whale meat, and fish, which were not always available. Thus the huskies often resorted to killing sheep, cattle, and even people when they were hungry. This prevented the Mission doctors from rearing any livestock of their own (IGA, MG 63.304).



*The Reindeer Experiment*

Image 22: IGA 11-70 Reindeer 1908-1916

From Cape Chidley to Southern Labrador, the caribou - a species of reindeer - had supported themselves and multiplied for millenia (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.331).

The reindeer of the “Old World” and the Caribou of the “New World” were varieties of the same species, scientifically known as Rangifer Tarandus (IGA, MG 63.332). The reindeer had been domesticated, while the caribou remained wild (IGA, MG 63.332). Reindeer typically multiplied steadily, and bred annually for 8-10 years after their second season. Reindeer herds would double themselves every 3 years (IGA, MG 63.331). They were described as “... the one domesticated animal which could sustain itself throughout the year in that country without adventitious aid.” (IGA, MG 63.332).

Having observed the success of the reindeer introduction experiment in Alaska, Grenfell proposed that reindeer be introduced into northern Newfoundland to help address the issue of food insecurity in the country (IGA, MG 63.301; Séguin, 1989). Grenfell felt the deer would provide the locals with fresh milk and meat (IGA, MG 63.301; Séguin, 1989; Tucker, 2014). Huskies, which

were normally used for transportation, were “... subject to a disease that killed them by the hundred...” leaving the people without any means of transportation during the winters (IGA, MG 63.304). Thus, introducing the reindeer would provide a more reliable, alternative means of transportation for the people (IGA, MG 63.301; Séguin, 1989; Tucker, 2014).

Grenfell consulted with Dr. Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary who led the U.S. Government’s pilot project to introduce reindeer into Alaska. Dr. Jackson encouraged Grenfell to introduce reindeer into northern Newfoundland (IGA, MG 63.331). Grenfell informed Lord Grey, the Governor General of Canada (1907) that, “If it had not been for these animals the natives... would soon have been curiosities, whereas they now promise shortly to be... [a] sturdy population...” (Séguin, 1989). Lord Grey agreed with Grenfell and went on to convince Frank Olive, the Minister of the Interior, to introduce herds of reindeer in Northern Canada. Meanwhile Grenfell sought approval from Sydney Fisher, the Minister of Agriculture directly responsible for livestock. Although both Ministers agreed with this proposal, it was Minister Fisher and his cabinet partners who immediately apportioned \$5,000 to enable Norwegian reindeer to be introduced into the country (Séguin, 1989). Grenfell was required to lead the project and to distribute the reindeer according to the needs of the people. On March 22, 1907, Grenfell accepted the conditions and signed an agreement (Séguin, 1989).

Grenfell secured funds from the Newfoundland and Labrador Government as well as from the American public to purchase the reindeer (Séguin, 1989). He then sent an agent to Altenfjord, Norway to purchase 300 reindeer for \$15,300 (IGA, MG 63.301; Séguin, 1989). Transportation was organized (IGA, MG 63.301). Although it cost nothing to feed reindeer, as they ate moss, which was plentiful in Newfoundland and Labrador, securing adequate food for the journey proved to be a challenge (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.304). *Cladonia Rangiferina* AKA Iceland moss, the most abundant variety of moss along the coast, was transported on sledges over 30 miles by the reindeer. Thus, sailing to Newfoundland was delayed until late November when the snow had fallen (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.331). Three Lapp families were hired to teach herding to the locals, and many Lapp dogs were also brought over for driving the reindeer (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.331; Tucker, 2014).



Image 23: VA 118-37.8 Jack and Jill hauling 1908

On January 20, 1908, Grenfell's herd of 300 reindeer arrived 13 km south of St. Anthony in an area known as Crémaillère Bay (Lankester & Fong, 1989). One hundred and fifty reindeer were for the Mission in St.

Anthony; 50 were given to the pulp and paper giant Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company (A.N.D. Company); and the remaining 100 were for the rest of Canada (Séguin, 1989). The 50 reindeer that were sent to the A.N.D. Company were part of an experiment in which they were to be used to haul logs. However, the A.N.D. Company lost interest in this experiment and presented the reindeer back to the Grenfell Mission in St. Anthony as a donation (Morris, 1992). When the initial herd of reindeer arrived, they thrived well and multiplied (IGA, MG 63.331). By 1911 the reindeer herd in St. Anthony had grown to between 1200 and 1500 animals (Grenfell, 1919; Lankester & Fong, 1989). In the spring of 1912, there were 500 fawns (IGA, MG 63.331). A few reindeer from the original herd were sold to clubs, and another 50 reindeer were sold to the Government of Canada for the Peace River District. Unfortunately, the latter were lost because they were put in a flat area that was full of alders and far from barren lands where they would normally thrive (IGA, MG 63.331).

Additional issues arose concerning the expected outcomes of importing the reindeer to Newfoundland. Collecting a cupful of reindeer milk took half an hour, thus the reindeer did not prove to be a very efficient source of milk (Omohundro, 1994). However, they did provide the local people, the hospital, and the orphanage with fresh meat (IGA, n.d.; Lankester & Fong, 1989; Séguin, 1989). Grenfell said, "Their meat has been sampled locally by hundreds... and compares favourably with any mutton anywhere." (Grenfell, 1919). In comparison to huskies, the reindeer provided "... a safe, swifter means of transportation..." (IGA, MG 63.301). There was also a market for exporting their meat, and reindeer skins were used for clothing (IGA, MG 63.48; IGA, MG 63.304).

The reindeer staff brought to St. Anthony with the herd comprised of 3 Lapp teachers, 3 herders, and 3 apprentices. The apprentices received half of their salary in cash, and the other half

in reindeer—as was the case in Alaska (Séguin, 1989). Unfortunately, the Lapps were not fond of the country and frequently complained that Northern Newfoundland was too cold for them and that they wished to return to their homes. After the first year, one Lapp family returned home to Norway, and to retain the men, salaries were increased. However, the following season, the men wanted more money than the Mission could afford, thus, they were dismissed (IGA, MG 63.331).

More and more issues arose regarding the reindeer herd. Shortly after the loss of the Norwegian herders, the local people became very hostile towards the reindeer. They had experienced difficulties restraining their dogs, which attacked the reindeer (IGA, MG 63.301). The Government of Newfoundland did not offer the herds any protection against being killed, for political reasons (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.332). The people also feared that the Mission would force them to use reindeer instead of huskies for transportation, as a way of getting rid of their dogs. Local reindeer staff became careless when handling the herds. Ear tags were no longer attached, nor were bells replaced. And the herds were driven instead of being led. (IGA, MG 63.331). The herds were struck by lungworm, which had also caused a decline in local caribou herds (Omohundro, 1994). Incidences of poaching increased (IGA, MG 63.331).



Image 24: VA 118-144.7 Milking a reindeer into a glove 1908

To combat this, Grenfell and his team moved the reindeer to new pastures along the coast and they fenced the reindeer in. Unfortunately, the herds continued to decrease in number, while the demand for reindeer meat

increased, especially at the start of the World War I (MG 63.331). The Mission's reindeer project was suspended during the War, and when Grenfell returned to Labrador after the War, he struggled to resume the experiment (IGA, MG 63.332). Most of the reindeer had been lost or destroyed. The 130 deer that remained were captured and placed in the care of the Government of Canada's Department of Indian Affairs, who agreed to relocate them to Anticosti Island, Quebec (IGA, MG 63.331; IGA, MG 63.332). Preparations for transferring the reindeer to Anticosti were made in 1917. However, due to the War, the steamer which was supposed to transport the herd, was delayed until

the following year. In 1918, the steamer was again delayed, thus the Mission decided to transfer the reindeer themselves on their vessel, the *George B. Cluett* (IGA, MG 63.331). A few deer had "... ended up mixing in with the Peninsula's wild caribou herds, where they surprised hunters as "tame" caribou which would not run and were therefore easy to kill." (Omohundro, 1994, p. 118). Grenfell said, "I still believe that we were absolutely right in our theory of the introduction of the deer into this north country... That these thousands of miles, now useless to men, will be grazed over one day by countless herds of deer affording milk, meat, clothing, transport, and pleasure to the human race, is certain." (IGA, MG 63.331).

### Other Livestock

The Mission received generous donations over the fifteen years of development, with which the scope of their animal husbandry department grew to include cattle, pigs, sheep, and pedigreed goats. These additional animals provided fresh meat and milk to the hospital and orphanage, and they also improved the stock of the Mission and coastal herd of Northern Newfoundland and Labrador (IGA, 1914; IGA MG 63.301).

### *Goats*



Image 25: VA 110-29.4 Goats 1930

Before the introduction of livestock, the only source of milk that the Mission Orphanage had was canned milk (IGA, MG 63.311). An article in the *Journal of American Medical Society* described the goat as "... the healthiest domestic animal in the world... immune to tuberculosis and other diseases among cows." (IGA, MG 63.301). Grenfell said, "Of course goats can eat almost anything, can convert almost anything into milk and they can climb almost inaccessible rocks if there is anything growing on top of them." (IGA, MG 63.311) Their milk was more easily digestible and made a rich beverage because the cream did not separate easily. The Mission sought goats to provide an alternative source of milk, especially for the young children

(Omohundro, 1994). A group of child welfare workers (also described as society girls) organized a “Labrador Goat Brigade” in which they raised funds from Chicago to purchase eight Toggenburg and Anglo-Nubian goats for the Mission (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.311). Each goat cost \$500. Not wanting to bear the responsibility of transporting the goats to the Mission, Grenfell told the girls, “If you are humane enough to buy goats for me surely you will bring them to us.” (IGA, MG 63.311). Eight of the girls boarded a Black Diamond liner and each of them accompanied a goat safely from Chicago to Labrador (IGA MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.311).

With the introduction of goat’s milk into their diets, the health of the children improved significantly (IGA, MG 63.301). One of Grenfell’s dentists observed that in one of the areas that had been using goat’s milk for a long time, he did not have to perform any tooth extractions, while in another community that had not had goats for over 50 years, the children’s teeth were in very poor condition. Two mothers from a Labrador village told one of the nurses that the goat’s milk that they had received the previous winter had saved their babies’ lives (IGA, MG 63.301). During the fall, goat kids were slaughtered. Unfortunately, many locals did not like the taste of goat meat; thus, goats never fully competed with cows in most communities (Omohundro, 1994).

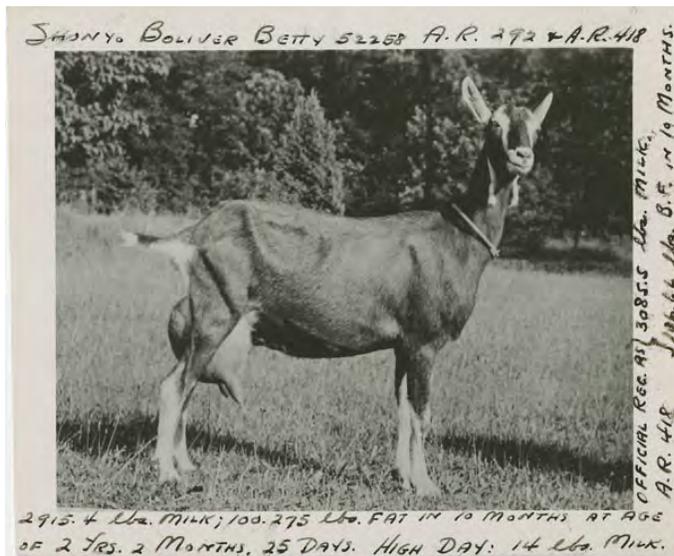


Image 26: VA 105-88 Shanyo Boliver Betty [goat] 1914

The goats did present some problems however. According to Grenfell, the goats “... gave as much trouble with gardens which are never too well fenced in.” (Grenfell, 1932 as cited in Omohundro, 1994, p. 118). They also ate laundry off the lines and fish that was left to cure on the flakes. When the goats were tethered, the Orphanage children were responsible for collecting grass to feed them (Omohundro, 1994). However, when they roamed freely, they grazed on cow parsnip or cow parsley, and other weeds which they found between rocks during the summers. Unfortunately, these plants left their milk with a strong, unpleasant taste (Omohundro, 1994, IGA, MG 63.301). During the winters, the goats were fed very little as they supplemented their food with young birch boughs which were gathered and

stored (IGA, MG 63.301). In the early 1930s, the herd of imported Angora goats died in the winter due to a lack of proper food (IGA, MG 63.331).



Image 27: VA 111-1 Rosamond Grenfell as a milk maid 1930

### *Dairy Cows and Beef Cattle*

The Mission owned “... one of the best herds of cattle in the country...” (IGA, MG 63.368). When Grenfell started working in Northern Newfoundland, there were very few cows because they were not able to roam outdoors freely for long periods of time due to attacks by the dogs (IGA, MG 63.301). Shortly after the goats arrived and proved to be very beneficial to the overall health of the people, especially the young children, the Mission obtained cows (IGA, MG 63.311).

When Dr. Allen from Vermont donated a thorough-bred Holstein bull and two thorough-bred Holstein heifers in 1925 (IGA, MG 63.332), Grenfell had not prepared the appropriate food for them. Holsteins were not able to climb cliffs, nor were they able to make milk from the same food that goats ate. Fortunately for Grenfell, when a large grain vessel that was traveling from Montreal to Europe with 5,000 tons of barley hit a rock in the sea close to the Mission, they were able to gather all the barley that they needed to feed the cows (IGA, MG 63.311).

According to Grenfell, a Norwegian friend of his informed him that her cattle were always fed Iceland moss. In the beginning when they refused to eat the moss, she mixed it with molasses and water and fed it to them. She gradually reduced the amount of molasses solution that she added, until the cows had learned to eat and grow on moss alone. This led to an experiment being conducted

at the Northwest River station in which cows were fed moss, and it proved to be successful (IGA, MG 63.301). The Mission farm received other donations of cattle.



Image 28: IGA 17-183  
Cows in the barn 1938-1945

Table 12: Cattle donations made to the Grenfell Mission (IGA, MG 63.2137; IGA MG 63. 311; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Name of cattle donor/ institution	Breed and number of cattle donated	Receiving farming station
1925	Dr. Allen (St. Johnsbury, Vermont)	1 thorough-bred Holstein bull 2 thorough-bred Holstein heifers	St. Anthony
1930	Mr. Edward Shattuck (Andover, Massachusetts)	1 heifer 1 bull	
1931	American Guernsey Club	1 registered Guernsey bull 5 cows	4 cows to St. Anthony Bull and 1 heifer to other stations

1931	Eastleigh Farms of Framingham, Massachusetts (through Mr. Shattuck)	1 registered Duroc Jersey boar	
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In 1942, the Mission barns housed twenty-four thorough-bred Holstein cows and two bulls (IGA, MG 63.2187). The cattle were contained in a modern-style barn and looked after by the orphan boys -- Saunders and Mitchelmore -- who were taught that "... cleanliness and gentleness in the care of animals is important." (IGA, MG 63.368; Tucker, personal communication, 2018). "They always had a bull and they always called it "Dauntless". (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). Watson Tucker recalls that "Holsteins were one of the top milkers in the world at the time. They used a lot of our cast-off leaves as cattle fodder" (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). The herd of Holstein cows in St. Anthony produced 120,000 lbs of milk annually. Meanwhile, St. Mary's River and North West River had smaller herds of cattle (IGA, MG 63.368).

The cows produced milk and meat for the hospital patients and medical staff, the school children and orphans, as well as for the local people (IGA, MG 63.301). They could produce as much as 3 gallons per cow per milking during the summer months when the feed was good (Omohundro, 1994). (See Table 15 and 16 below for milk and meat production respectively).

Table 13: Milk produced by year and Mission station (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.2207; IGA, MG 63.332; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced	Notes
1930	St. Anthony	120,000 lbs.	
1931	St. Anthony	67,299 lbs.	
1933	St. Anthony	68,000 lbs.	
1940s	St. Anthony	120,000 lbs.	
1940s	North West River	160,000 lbs.	
1964	N/A	151,817 lbs.	Sold at \$0.15/lb.

Table 14: Meat produced by year and Mission station (IGA MG 63.1878; IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.368):

Year	Mission station	Quantity produced
------	-----------------	-------------------

1930	St. Anthony	7,500 lbs.
1933	St. Anthony	7,500 lbs.
1940s	St. Anthony	10,000 lbs.
1964	N/A	18,114 lbs.

The Mission did not raise calves, but, instead, sold them to enterprising fishermen who lived along the coast. George Taylor, from the Massachusetts State Board of Agriculture, spent several weeks of the summer of 1933 at the Mission, offering invaluable advice about cattle feeding and proper drainage and treatment of soil for hay (IGA, MG 63.368).



Image 29: VA 119-2.1 Unidentified man feeding sheep 1907-1908

### *Sheep*

The people also benefited from raising their own sheep. They used the wool to make clothing for the winters (IGA, MG 63.301). The Mission received a herd of 40 Herdwick sheep from Dr. Wakefield. Unfortunately, 27 of them were killed at once by dogs (IGA, MG 63.331). The Mission also imported Sutland's black-faced sheep from Scotland, which were fattened on heather (Grenfell, 1932 as cited in Omohundro, 1994, p. 117). Sheep required good housing to be reared successfully. However, the harsh, long winters of the region meant that the sheep were restricted to the barns for most of the year. Hay did not grow easily, and importing grain for feed was very costly (MG 63.301).



Image 30: IGA 24-477 Pork for the winter, Flowers Cove, ,1940s

*Pigs*

On January 26, 1934, Mr. Wilmer of the Grenfell Association in New York, wrote a letter regarding supplying three carloads of salt pork at a cost of 3 cents per pound, with each car load weighing 40,000 lbs. FOB New York's Furness Withy Company. This pork was intended to provide relief to many of the Newfoundlanders who had worked in the U.S., but were forced to return to their homes due to the depressed economy (IGA, GN 8.249).

Many of the local people raised pigs, which were supplied mostly by the Mission from their own stock (IGA, MG 63368). Three pedigreed Wessex pigs were received at St. Anthony from Mr. K. Lewin (Manager of Bowater Paper Company, Corner Brook) (IGA, MG 63.2185). In 1942, the Mission had fifty pigs (IGA, MG 63.2187).



*Chickens*

Image 31: IGA 17-171 Chickens 1938-1945

In St. Anthony in 1942, Mr. Brown built a henhouse to accommodate 50 hens to try and generate interest in raising poultry from the children at the Orphanage (IGA, MG 63.2187). The hennery was run by Jimmy Tucker's father (Nicholas, personal communication, 2018). The chickens had to be constantly guarded from weasels, hawks, rats, and vermin (IGA, MG 63.331). The hens at North West River produced 300 dozen eggs in 1940 (IGA, MG 63.2185).



Image 32: The henry

### *Bees*

The Mission attempted to keep bees, but failed because of the inevitable, harsh winters which killed many bees, thus, new bee colonies had to be bought every spring (Grenfell, 1932 as cited in Omohundro, 1994, p. 117).

### *Other food items utilized by the Grenfell Mission*

A steamship called the “Newfoundland” set sail for St. John’s, NL from Boston on November 27, 1933 with the following produce on board:

- 100- 98 lb cotton sacks of Wingold whole-wheat flour
- 35- 140 lb sacks of Royal Wall, high grade straight flour, which was used by families and in bakeries in the U.S.
- Unspecified quantities of whole-wheat flour with nothing added/ removed.

The document containing details of this shipment was sent to E.M. LeMessurier of the IGA, St. John’s. (IGA, GN 8.249).



Image 33: VA 92-98 A cargo of flour arrives 1932

Grenfell also provided the “needier” families with barrels of brown flour and tubs of butter which were “... for no reason but to keep people alive.” (IGA, GN 8.249). See Image 34 below.

COPY.

On Board the Cunard  
R.M.S. FRANCONIA,  
April 24th. 1933.

ROUGH & THE ROOM TO MYSELF.

Dear Brookes:-

Will you be good enough to do the following small things to help out some of my poor Labrador friends. I feel certain as I come from the grotesquely overdone dining menu that there will be many hungry stomachs and many unable to go to the fishery, unless I help one or two scattered ones. I thank God our stations are centres of service. Miss Karlsen to whom we sent \$250.00 for such purposes writes she took in two destitute families all Winter. Neither had a breadwinner and one has two widows in it!! besides the children. Starvation of Anglo Saxons sounds bad, but last Winter the relief couldn't without much help keep body and soul together in many cases.

I want to be quite sure that Potatoes for seed go by first boat, enough for people to set their gardens. Mr. Butt, Customs Officer for Forteau, will know about the Labrador shore to Battle Harbour, and Mr. Kean at Flower's Cove will know, I think, from Point Rich to Eddies Cove. If not, the Customs Officer for Flowers Cove will know, and Dr. Curtis will see about the North East Coast, and Dr. Moret about the St. Lewis Bay to Spotted Island people.

The Government sent Potatoes last Spring to the South Labrador shore, and I do hope you will see that someone makes certain that seed Potatoes are sent, otherwise Beri Beri will probably kill many next Winter unless we get good prices for fish. Will the Land Development Society see to this?

I also want to send down to a few worthwhile but therefore the more needy families, because they have to support their neighbours, a barrel of brown flour and a tub of Butter. You sent some down last Fall (Leohard Outerbridge did). Will he similarly send these few down and as they are absolutely for no reason but to keep people alive, I am sure the Government won't want me to pay freight now if they are asked. Can you do this and get the food sent off by the first Labrador boat. I am sending some I think through LeMessurier or you already.. I wrote, I think, in March or February to have the food go on the first boat, but alas in moving I can't get at my files and so I have forgotten to whom I said send some, therefore would you call LeMessurier and ask him about it, as I particularly do not want to overlap in this dole work, which I hate anyhow.

Image 34: Letter written to Herbert Brookes in the Government Offices in St. John's, by Sir Wilfred Grenfell regarding helping families on the coast of Labrador (1933)

*Agricultural experimentation*

Grenfell sought the expertise of volunteers to conduct research to determine the kinds of vegetables that were most suitable for the local, cold climate (IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.331). Jimmy Tucker conducted some experimental work on the Grenfell Gardens in St. Anthony from 1929 to 1931.



Image 35: VA 118-138.2 Agricultural experiment 1908-1910

Table 15: Agricultural experiment notes compiled by H.A. Butler, Secretary of Agriculture, based on Jimmy Tucker's agricultural experiment:

<b>Crop</b>	<b>Variety</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Girasol ( <i>Helianthus Tuberosus</i> )	N/A	Underground tubers similar to potatoes Requires no special treatment; will continue to grow and spread if left alone Entire season required to make tubers Product only dug when tops begin to die Tubers left in ground not damaged by frost Tubers planted in Autumn or Spring Plant may become weed, which can be given to pigs as feed
Beets	Stokes Seed Detroit Dark Red	Good for canning Easily transplanted
Carrots	Denvers Half-long	Thrives well in most soils- if well-maintained and with necessary plant nutrients added
Cauliflower	Snowball	Single ply tar paper discs at surface of ground to prevent cabbage root maggot Also, corrosive sublimate, but not always available

Onions	<p>Canadian preferred over English seeds:                  Mt. Danvers (\$3.00/lb)                  Riverside Sweet Spanish (\$3.25/lb)</p>	<p>Land preparation in Autumn                  Reclaimed marshes with roots and peat removed ideal                  Soil without clods or stones                  Avoid use of raw and course stable manure                  Apply wood ashes in Autumn or Spring as surface dressing                  Seeds best sown in early Spring; cool season optimal                  Sow seeds thickly as onions germinate slowly                  Cultivate thoroughly throughout season                  Manage weeds</p>
Cabbage	<p>Copenhagen                  Market                  Jersey                  Wakefield                  Golden Acre                  Glory of Enthuzien</p>	<p>Tar paper discs to prevent cabbage maggot</p>
Swiss Chard	<p>Fordhook                  Giant</p>	<p>Leaves/ greens can be stripped off                  Stalks/ stems after first frost similar to celery</p>
Sweet corn	<p>Golden                  Bantam</p>	<p>Elevated field with fertile, well-cultivated soil required</p>
Rutabagas	<p>Green Top                  Swede</p>	<p>Green Top Swede immune to club root</p>

Tomatoes	Earlianna Marglobe Bonny Best	Start early in greenhouse Transplant to open 2 <sup>nd</sup> week of June
Lime		Pulverised [sea] shell - more readily available and preferred over hydrated lime  Contains calcium carbonate which is available in soil faster than limestone  Mix shell with ¼ part bone meal for potted plants
Commercial fertiliser and composted manure		Composted manure and other organic matter to be used rather than commercial fertilisers  St. Anthony composting method excellent; nitrogen and phosphoric acid from fish and bones; potash from seaweed

## The Mission Orphanage



Image 36: VA 112-23  
Orphans working in their garden, St. Anthony, 1932

“The orphanage is not merely a home for the fatherless children, but a place in which they are enabled to receive practical instruction in occupations to fit them for their life’s

work.” (IGA, MG 63.332).

Grenfell helped many orphans in the region by establishing orphanages, and schools which provided scholarships for them to further their education abroad in the United States and England (Simms, 1992). The orphanage boys spent their summer days fishing in their rowboat called the “Blair Lawrence” (IGA, MG 63.49; IGA, MG 63.51). On some days, they returned with very large catches of fish that were enough to feed the orphanage for days. They built a fishing stage near the wharf, and they salted and dried fish which was used by the hospital and the orphanage during the winters (IGA, MG 63.51). During the winters, the boys learned how to make skin boots and clogs which they wore during the summers, while the girls learned how to sew, cook, and perform other household chores (IGA, MG 63.49).

Noah Nicholas grew up in the Mission Orphanage in St. Anthony. In 1917, Noah “... went in the orphanage at the age of 5 or 6 years old... And he stayed there until he was in his late teens, maybe even twenty or twenty-one. He stayed there because he had nowhere else to go... Each person that was in the Orphanage had tasks assigned to them. His task was to help in the greenhouses and on the farm. So, that’s where he picked up some of his knowledge - from Jimmy Tucker.... When he got out on his own, he always carried this love of farming. I suppose it was a necessity at the time; survival.” (Nicholas, personal communication, 2018).

### Working at the Mission farms

The Mission welcomed many volunteers from the U.S., Canada, and Europe. They were referred to as “WOPs”, or workers without pay. Many of them volunteered at the Mission throughout the summer months. The Mission provided them with accommodations (IGA, n.d.). WOPs assisted by making cement, digging ditches and trenches, unloading supplies from shipping vessels, clearing land, fishing, and splitting logs.



Image 37: VA 129-89.2 Peter, WOP [worker without pay] at work 1911-1913

Grenfell encouraged the local people to work hard to meet their own needs (Flanagan, 2017). The Mission provided employment to many people from all along the coast, who required food and clothing. They cleared land for the farms, gathered fertilizer, fenced the farm area, and planted hay (IGA, MG 63.2185; IGA, MG 63.301; IGA, MG 63.368). During the fall of 1940, 200 men were hired by the Mission (IGA, MG 63.2185). Many of the women received clothing in exchange for supplying eggs, fish, wild game, and berries, and laundry and housekeeping services to the hospital (Flanagan, 2017; IGA, MG 63.301). By participating in these exchanges, the people were able to access basics such as clothing, food, and medical care. Historical records show that at that time, 6 partridges could be exchanged for 2 pairs of new corduroy pants for a boy; while working as a maid at a hospital for a month could earn a young woman a new apron (Flanagan, 2017).

The recipients of “dole” during the winter of 1932-1933 were required to work for the food that they received. In St. Anthony and Hare Bay, the people cut wood for the Mission, while in the northern villages, they cut wharf sticks and built bridge materials (IGA, GN 8.249). In the fall of 1932, approximately 500 men worked at the Mission. In 1933, the men on dole worked for the Mission, clearing land and preparing the gardens for the summer. In exchange for their work, these men received ground whole-wheat flour and beans, as well as butter, and sugar. The use of brown flour as payment resulted in a significant decrease in the incidences of Beriberi within the St. Anthony District (IGA, GN 8.249).

### **James “Jimmy” Tucker (Chief Gardener)**



Image 38: VA 124-28.1 Jimmy Tucker with his ripe tomatoes, St. Anthony 1937

James John Tucker first came to St. Anthony in 1919 “... possibly by small boat, shank's mare or even dogs and komatik.” (Tucker, 2014). “He probably found fishing for a living a bit boring and wanted something more interesting and challenging to do with his life.” (Tucker, 2014). He met and introduced himself to Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, 30 years his senior, and said, “My name is Jim Tucker. I don’t like fishing... I don’t know if I’ll get a job here.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). Grenfell was interested in James, so “...he gave him the job of outdoor foreman. He designed and built all the Mission roads at that time.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). He cleared a total of 35 acres of land for the Mission with the help of the farming crew, old tractors, and horses (Tucker, 2014).

James excelled in his position as outdoor foreman “... but needed more responsibility” (Tucker, 2014). He was eventually offered the position of “Chief Gardener” for the Mission (Tucker, 2014).



Image 39: IGA 11-28 One of Jimmy Tucker's giant cabbages 1934-1937

“I hear people talking about the dirty 30s and 40s, and people were hungry. I didn't experience that in my life. Dad farmed, and he had his own garden as well as the Mission gardens. And we lived on a lot of rabbits and seals and seabirds. Dad went to school in the Straits. He got as far as grade 6” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). Although Jimmy Tucker did not have much formal education, “He was a smart man, very intelligent.” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018). The Grenfell Mission “... sent him to Truro, NS, to the agricultural college there, and he really excelled there... He used to emphasize, “A book is a great tool. Take care of it”. ” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018).

Jimmy Tucker provided many of the people in St. Anthony and the surrounding areas from White Bay in the south, to Southern Labrador in the north with 'started' & 'hardened off' cabbage plants and turnip plants (Tucker, 2014). “During cabbage plant time when Dad used to grow cabbage plants and sell them to the surrounding areas, Mom was in charge of that. She collected money for it. She counted the plants out, and she threw in an extra couple of plants to make you happy. Something like 3 cents or 4 cents each. They were very inexpensive. And Dad had big cabbages. Was it Professor Sears who said, “It takes a day and a half to walk across one of Jimmy Tucker's cabbages?” (Tucker, personal communication, 2018).

Jimmy Tucker also supplied fresh, locally produced vegetables such as Brussels sprouts, peas, beans, broccoli, kale, cucumber, carrots, parsley, pumpkins, lettuce, cauliflower radishes, tomatoes, and various fruits to the hospital, the orphanage, as well as to many of the doctors and their families (Tucker, 2014). Jimmy Tucker's gardens were very large, thus, the phrase “all of God's farm and Jimmy Tucker's, too” became a popular expression that meant “everywhere (Omohundro, 1994).

Jimmy Tucker's love and passion for farming was strong. “Dad breathed farming. His heart beat for farming. And you could see it. When he worked, he sang. That's why he did so well at it.”

(Tucker, personal communication, 2018). Evidence of Jimmy Tucker's passion and dedication can be seen today in St. Anthony "...in dozens or even hundreds of little and large roadside gardens, providing fresh vegetables for their owners and their families" (Tucker, 2014).

Jimmy Tucker retired from the Grenfell Mission in 1967. "If Sir Wilfred Grenfell had a 'right-hand' man, it was certainly James John Tucker." (Tucker, 2014).

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **The End of the Grenfell Farm (1965)**

In 1965 the IGA decided to lease the farm to Dr. Nathan Budgell, a former orphan of the Grenfell Mission in St. Anthony. The lease arrangement included transferring the barn and other buildings to Dr. Budgell, and the IGA also sold him the remaining livestock and agricultural supplies to continue as a private commercial operation. The fact that Jimmy Tucker had planned to retire in 1967 may have been the impetus for the Grenfell Mission to dispose of the farm two years earlier than his retirement, because the decisions was certainly not driven by any financial losses by the farm (see Image 40: Farm balance sheet for 1964-65).

Nathan Budgell was born in Brown's Cove, White Bay in 1912. Nathan's father passed away after contracting pneumonia in the woods camp, and in the fall of 1915, he was brought to the orphanage at St. Anthony with his brothers, Peter and George. There he would eventually meet Christine Fellows, a horticulturist from England. She travelled to St. Anthony in 1921, 1923, and 1924 to initiate and develop the mission's agriculture program. Nathan spent those summers helping with the weeding, hoeing, and harvesting of crops. (Connor, J. J., and Side, K., 2019, pp. 211). After graduating from the two-year agricultural program at Chadacre Agricultural Institute in England, Nathan was hired by the IGA in 1930 as an agriculturist for the Grenfell Mission in Northwest River, Labrador. He was hired on a 2-year contract, with an annual salary of \$500 (IGA, MG 63.547) (Connor, J. J., and Side, K., 2019, pp. 211). Budgell subsequently cleared 50 acres of forest in Mud Lake, which he felt would be a better site for growing vegetables than Northwest River. He also cleared four acres of ground in Northwest River, but in 1931, after a disastrous loss of virtually the whole cabbage crop due to root maggot, Dr. Paddon, the hospital administrator in Northwest River, fired Budgell (Connor, J. J., and Side, K., 2019, pp. 211).

Following communication with Dr. Grenfell, Budgell was rehired by the IGA Mission in 1932 to work on the St. Anthony farm, and his life unfolded successfully toward becoming a veterinarian and farm manager:

*“Nathan would work at the St. Anthony mission garden and farm from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. The pay was \$1.80 a day until the mission scaled back and paid for labour with a voucher from the IGA's Spot Cash Store. Nathan had no money, not even enough to purchase a postage stamp for a card to Miss Fellows. Charles Curtis, physician at the St. Anthony Hospital, provided him with a small cash allowance, but with the worsening effects of the Depression, advised him that he might be better off in Canada. Nathan followed his advice and in the spring of 1933, found his way to Ontario and worked at various jobs. In 1935, using an inheritance gift he received from Miss Fellows's estate, he registered at the Ontario Veterinary College and graduated in 1939 as a doctor of veterinary medicine” (Connor, J. J., and Side, K., 2019, pp. 212).*

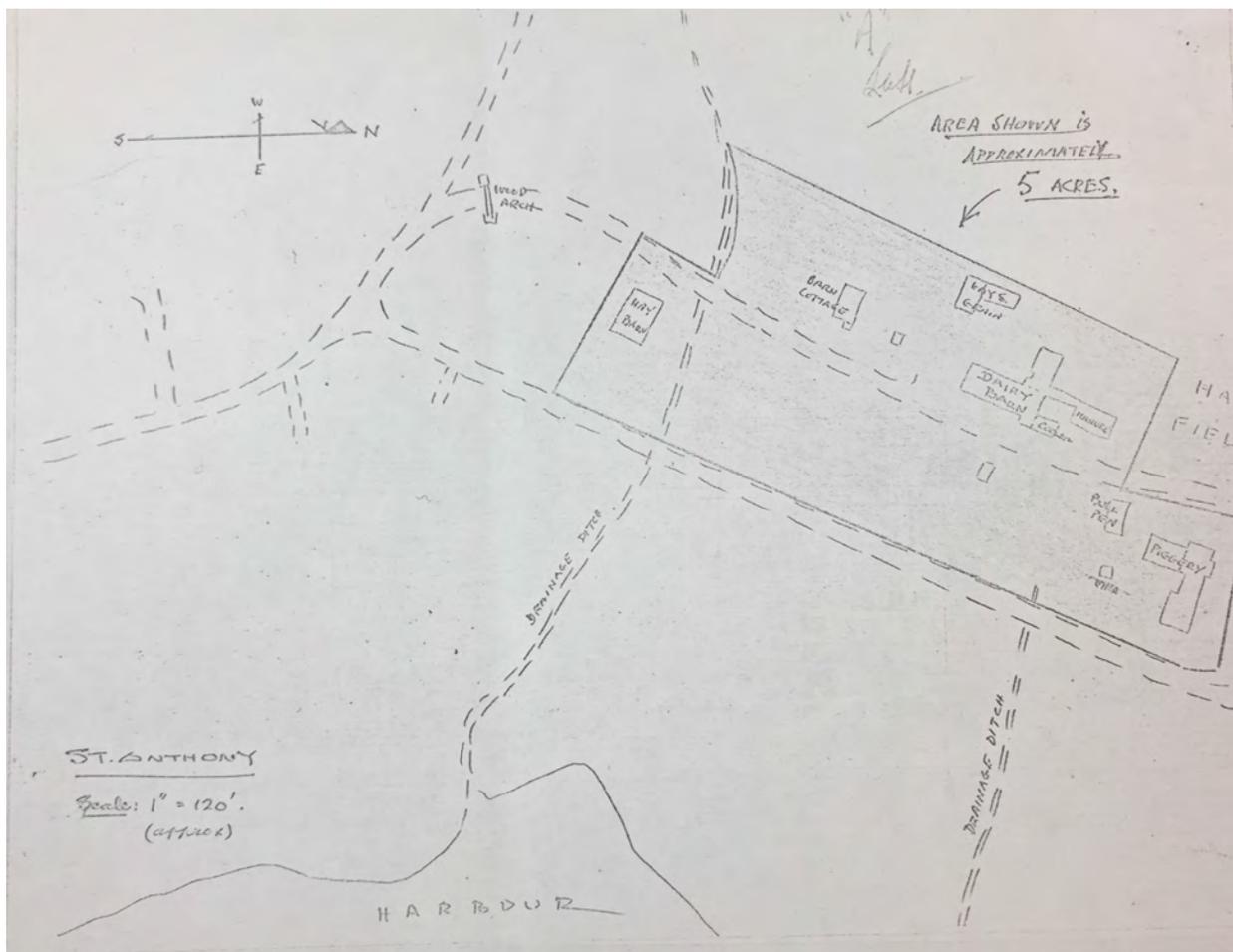
Despite being in a cash surplus position for the years 1964 and 1965, when the farm income doubled the farm expenses (see Image 40), the Mission entered into a lease agreement in October 1965 with Dr. Nathan Budgell. Budgell, who was now a registered veterinarian, signed an agreement to lease the farm, totally five acres, and to buy the livestock and remaining agricultural supplies on the farm. This included the dairy portion of the farm enterprise. The Mission sold its herd of pedigreed Holstein cattle to Dr. Budgell, and a milking machine (also known as a “mechanical cow”) was sought for the station in St. Anthony. Upon receiving a quotation from the Creamer Package Manufacturing Company of Canada, the milking unit was ordered on July 27, 1965 for \$8,063.51 (IGA, MG 63.1878). Budgell convinced the Grenfell Mission to lend him the funds to purchase the milking machine, and agreed to pay a percentage of his revenues back to the Mission for the purchase of the machine. When he took over the farm operations in St. Anthony, he intended to purchase enough pigs to be able to supply the Mission and the surrounding area’s needs. He also planned to establish an initial flock of about 500 hens to supply fresh eggs to the Mission. Surplus eggs were to go to the local market. The hennery was to be expanded as required (IGA, MG 63.1878). If the hens produced fewer eggs than required, supplementary eggs would come from Hammonds Farm Ltd., in Corner Brook. An assistant was required to oversee the poultry operations (IGA, MG 63.1878). The mechanical cow was set up in the barn in St. Anthony, but the machine

required renovations and facilities such as steam. It mechanical cow was supposed to produce enough milk to supply the Mission, the town, and the surrounding areas with a reliable and safe source of fresh milk. Operation of the mechanical cow was also supposed to be supervised by a suitable man or a husband and wife team (IGA, MG 63.1878).

Dr. Budgell proposed to expand the farm services to supply the immediate town area, as well as to the outside areas—if necessary—to ensure that adequate, continual supplies of fresh meat, eggs, milk, and vegetables were produced for the Mission's needs. The pricing of all produce sold to the Mission was to be competitive based on the quality (IGA, MG 63.1878).

Fowl and pork were processed and stored in the farm freezer, and other meats were bought pre-cut or as carcasses and stored for use by the Mission and the local area. The farm considered supplying fresh vegetables to the Mission and the surrounding area at the time (IGA, MG 63.1878). However, this did not turn into a successful relationship over time, as regular loan payments to the IGA were missed, the milk and other produce was often found to be of poor quality, and the condition of the barns, other building and fences were deteriorating without adequate repair or maintenance (IGA, MG 63.1878).





Map 2: Map of the Mission farm property leased to Dr. Nathan Budgell in 1965

Table 16: IGA account with Dr. Budgell, October 1965 (IGA, MG 63.1878):

Date	Item	Amount	Debit (\$)	Credit (\$)
Oct. 1965	Livestock and feeds taken over from IGA, St. Anthony farm			
		Cows on hand	3,000	
		Pigs (116 @\$30 ea.)	3,480	
		Bull calves (2 @\$35 ea.)	70	
		Hay (17.5 tons @\$10/t)	175	

		Feed (325 bags 16 % @ \$4.00/bag)	1,300	
		Chicken feed (25 bags)	100	
		Pig grower (1,800 bags)	7,200	
		Payment for livestock on account		3,000
		Payment for feeds on account		2,300
Dec. 1965	Farm rent, Oct. to Dec.		300	
Jan. 1966	Payment to Creamer Package Mfg. Co. re mechanical cow		4,063.51	
Apr. 1966	Pomeroy Bros.		3.68	
	Food		66.84	
Aug 1966	Powdered milk- Borden's		447.50	

## CHAPTER 5

### Conclusion

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell was the backbone of the Northern Newfoundland and Labrador region (Pilgrim, personal communication, 2018). He improved the lives of the people he encountered. He defied the belief that it was impossible to grow vegetables in the Northern Newfoundland and Labrador climate. “The gardens and the farms of the Labrador all testif [ied] to Sir Wilfred’s care for the health and well-being of the people of the coast.” (IGA, MG 63.301). He did not give the local people handouts, but, instead, taught them practical skills and to work hard for the things that they needed and wanted. As Edward Wilmer once wrote, “... he has shown his generosity towards the people of Newfoundland in a practical [fashion].” (IGA, GN 8.249) Wherever Grenfell saw a need, he did his very best to try to address it, whether it was through canning classes to preserve foods for use in the winters, introducing livestock as a source of meat and milk, setting up cooperatives so people could buy supplies at lower prices, or tending to the people’s medical needs (IGA, MG 63.2137). During a period where the local people could not survive solely off the sea,

the Grenfell Mission encouraged them to be more self-sufficient and to improve the quality and variety of their diets by helping them build upon skills that they already possessed, such as hunting, trapping, and gathering, while learning other invaluable skills such as gardening, canning and preserving food, and rearing livestock.

This research project was envisioned to provide the context and historical background of Sir Wilfred Grenfell's Gardens, with the hope that local residents will once again take up gardening as a form of healthful recreation, as well as to provide healthy produce for their families. The Grenfell's Gardens research team has a strong interest in assisting the local leadership at the IGA and the communities in northern Newfoundland to develop a business plan for a "Grenfell Heritage Garden", with the expectation that this would help the region become an even bigger tourist destination. More importantly as a social enterprise initiative, a heritage garden could also be a community memory and teaching tool for the residents, and a source of healthy produce for community members. The research team would like to thank the local community and the Harris Centre for your support of this project.

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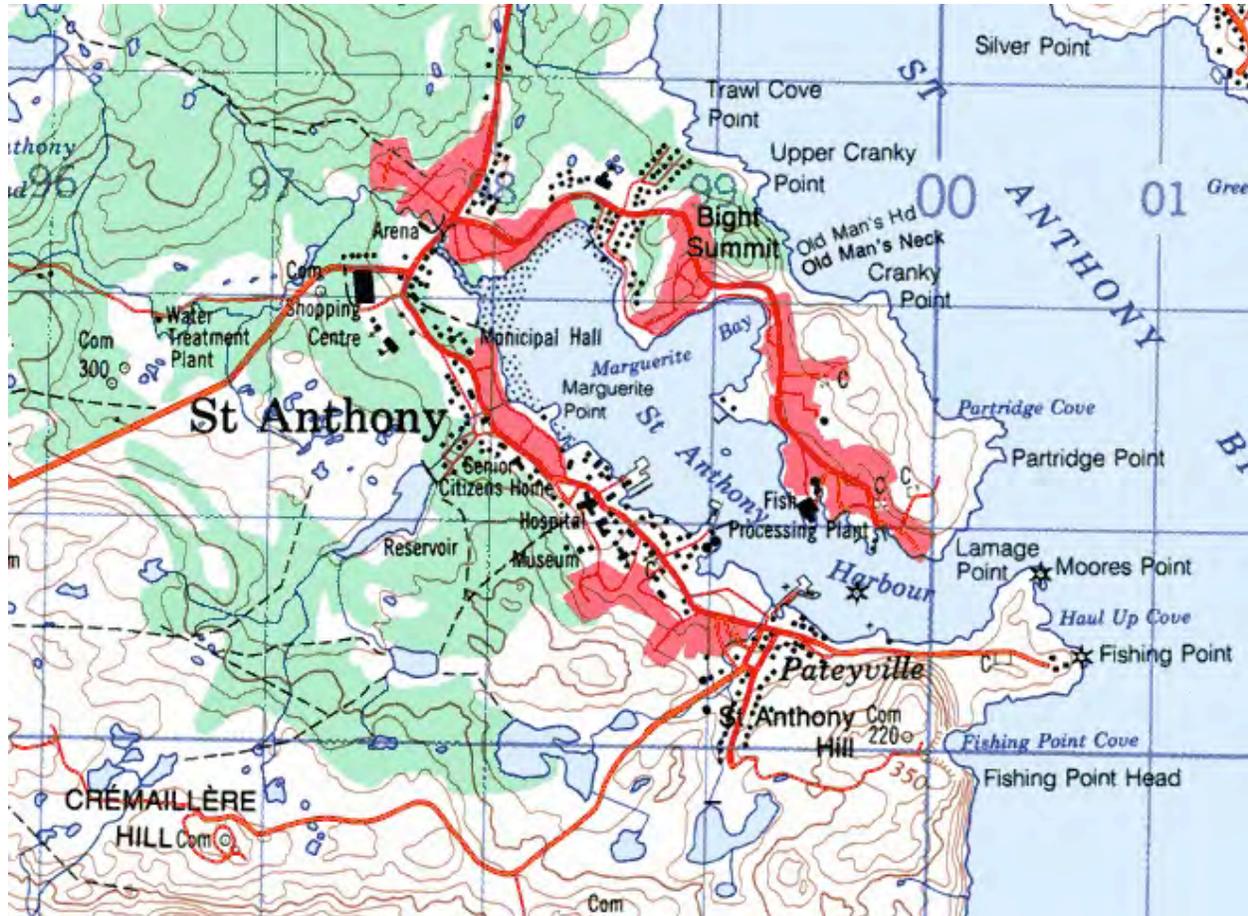
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## APPENDICES

Map 3: Topo Map of St. Anthony (1994):



Source: Dept of Energy, Mines and Resources Canada (1994)

Map 4: Aerial photo of Grenfell Mission properties in St. Anthony (1930's)



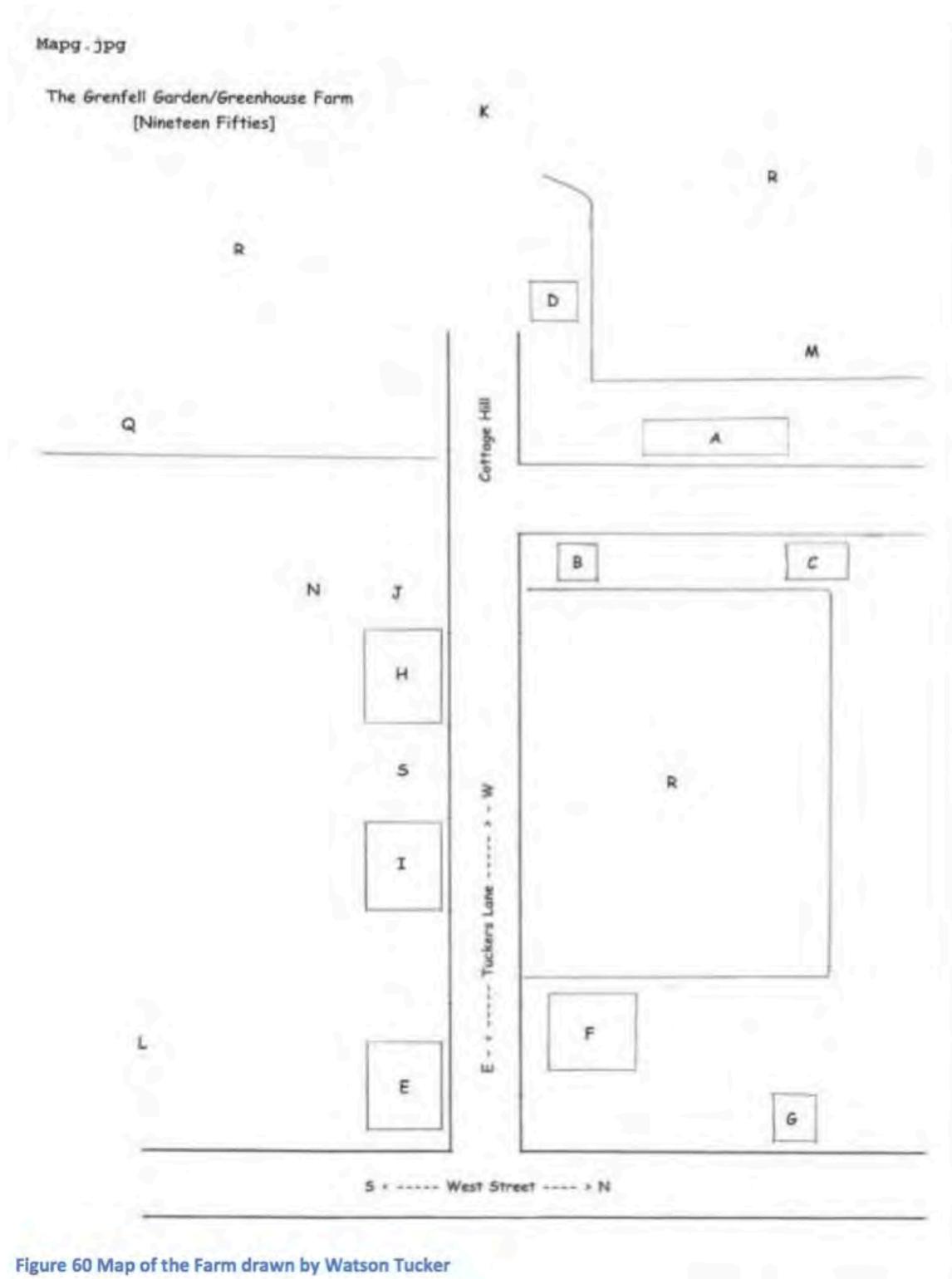
Source: International Grenfell Association (2018)

Map 5: Grenfell Farm overlay (as of the 1930's): Areas outlined in black were utilized for growing crops and feed for livestock.



Source: Google Earth (2018), adapted by G. Wood (2018)

Map 6: Grenfell farm layout (1950's) along Tucker's Lane and Cottage Hill



Source: Watson Tucker (2018)

Map 7: Legend describing Grenfell Farm along Tuckers' Lane and Cottage Hill (1950's)

The Grenfell Garden/Greenhouse Farm (Nineteen Fifties)

LEGEND

- A The Largest Greenhouse  
3 sun-drenched rooms (2 with soil-filled beds on both sides) - Mechanical ventilation system. Most of the produce from this greenhouse, including tomato, leaf lettuce, parsley, pumpkin & watercress, were delivered (in season) to the Grenfell House, the Bungalow, the Grenfell Hospital, the orphanage, homes of doctors, the Nurses' Annex and the Barn Cottage. This building stood partially where Miss Jeanette Hostetter's home now stands.
- B The Smallest Greenhouse  
Often used as a cabbage plant starter unit, this building was steel framed and had beds on both sides. The seed was sown in the late spring and the plants, having reached about 1 or 1 ½ inches, in height, were transplanted in wooden flats<sup>01</sup>, each containing 140 plants, to be 'hardened off'<sup>02</sup> before being sold. These boxes of 'ready for garden' plants were sold to customers throughout the area and in Canada Bay, Conche & Croque, Englee & Roddickton, across on Southern Labrador and even in Central & Southern White Bay. This little greenhouse was situated about where Mr. Robert Parsons now lives.
- C The Medium Greenhouse  
One large, steel-framed room (3 beds wide) with a full concrete basement vegetable storage cellar. This fairly large building was also used to 'start' cabbage plants and the plants were usually sold 'loosely' to customers who needed less than 140 plants for their home or roadside gardens. There was always a large pile of agricultural lime stored at the rear of this building that Mr. Tucker used to keep the soil ph level<sup>03</sup> (acid/alkalinity) of his soil at the proper level to produce healthy plants. This building was located near where Ms. Carol Ann Patey now resides.
- D The Sterling Cottage  
A Grenfell building (probably donated by a gent or lady name 'Sterling') used to house Air Ambulance Pilots and their families, sometime doctors and often Co-op field workers.
- E The Wilfred B Mesher Home (Now Filatre's Funeral Home)
- F The Home of William & Susan Clarke
- G The Bank of Nova Scotia
- H The Home of James & Susan Tucker
- I The Home Of Horace & Hazel McNeil
- J Location Of Susan Tucker's Home Garden
- K The Footpath To Starrigan Hill
- L Site Of The New United Church (1959)
- M Footpath from Large Greenhouse To Gardens on Hill
- N James Tucker's Well (popular with neighbours in 'dry' times)
- O Location Of Pomeroy Brothers Store (later Handy Andy and eventually destroyed)
- P Saint Anthony Inn (once a very important building but eventually destroyed like much of the town's historic past)
- Q The site (part of a large garden) of the house built for the hospital administrator, Doctor Gordon Thomas. Now the residence of Drs. Bill & Mary [O'Keefe] Fitzgerald.
- R The large gardens<sup>04</sup>
- S Roadway to Gordon Smith's House

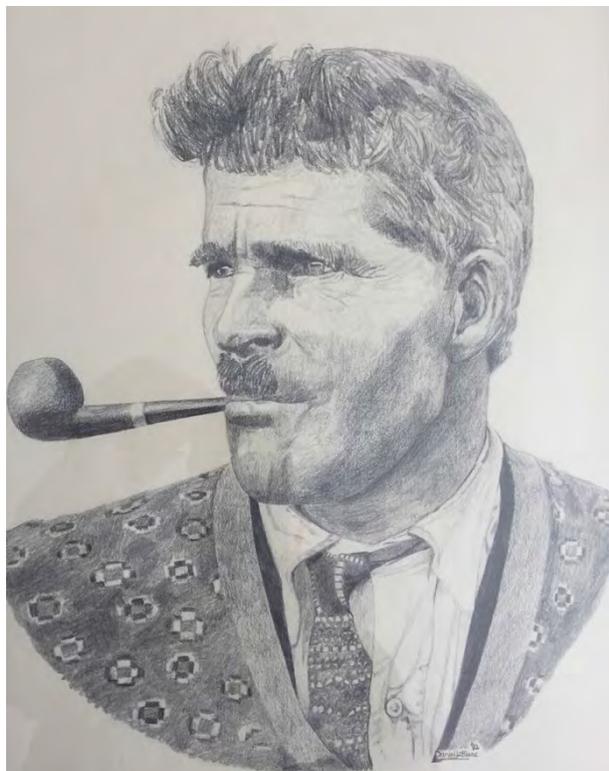
Superscript notation

- 01 flats  
Boxes built of 3/4 inch X 4 inch lumber, at the greenhouse, to hold 140 plants and to make them readily carried (often in motorboats) to their new homes.
- 02 hardened off  
This was the term used to indicate that the cabbage plants were ready for the local outdoor climate, having been exposed to it several times and for longer periods of time (thus hardened or make 'tougher').
- 03 ph level  
Because local soils in Northern Newfoundland were and are excessively acidic, agricultural lime was added to the soil to neutralize some of that acidity to make it more conducive to growing healthy plants and produce.
- 04 large gardens  
The 3 large gardens produced cabbage, turnip, carrot, broccoli, cauliflower Brussels sprouts, peas, beans, horse raddish, raddish, iceberg lettuce, beets and even cucumber, tomatoes and pumpkins at times.

Source: Watson Tucker (2018)

## Biography: James John Tucker

(Original text provided by Watson Tucker, son of James John Tucker 2018)



James John Tucker first came to St. Anthony in 1919, possibly by small boat, shank's mare or even dogs and komatik. He probably found fishing for a living a bit boring and wanted something more interesting and challenging to do with his life. He met and introduced himself to Dr. Wilfred Grenfell (30 years his senior) and told the good doctor of his desires and aspirations. Grenfell was certainly interested in this young man and immediately hired him on as foreman on building the 'mission' streets or, as they were called by the locals, 'roads'. He excelled in this position but 'needed' more responsibility.

Image 41: James “Jimmy” Tucker, pencil drawing by Daniel LeBlanc, a friend of the Tucker family (1992)

James, Susan, Ethelyn & Stephen were brought to St. Anthony on the mission ship 'Strathcona', in 1921. The master of this ship was Captain William (Bill) Simms. Captain Bill has a grandson (Kevin) still living in St. Anthony. After returning home for his family (wife Susan [nee Coates], his daughter, Ethelyn, eventually a teacher, a lay reader and, most importantly, a wife and mother of 9 *children*, and son, Stephen (who *later served with the Newfoundland Regiment* in Italy, France & Germany during the great war), James Tucker was offered the position of 'Chief Gardener' for the mission (this would be realizing Grenfell's plan to have the population of this new colony better fed with nutritious fresh 'home-grown' vegetables.) The Grenfell Mission sent young James to the Agricultural College in Truro, Nova Scotia where he outshone the class. Driving in to St. Anthony, even in today's busy to-do, you'll find evidence of his work in dozens or even hundreds of

little and large roadside gardens, providing fresh vegetables for their owners and their families. For many years James John provided 'started' & 'hardened off' cabbage plants and turnip seeds for the populations in St. Anthony and the surrounding communities as far South as White Bay and North to Southern Labrador. He also provided the hospital, the orphanage and many resident doctors and their families with locally produced beans, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, cucumber, kale, lettuce (leaf & head), parsley, peas, pumpkin, radish, tomatoes, and countless other fruits and vegetables.

James & Susan Tucker parented 17 children, twelve of whom they raised to adulthood, then adopted two more on whom they lavished the same selfless love & life-guiding influence. At least 5 of these children followed in Dad's footsteps in that they were lay readers in their churches. James John Tucker was instrumental in the founding of the Co-operative movement (and Credit Union) in St. Anthony, even voluntarily managing that infant store until it became a viable operation. He also was instrumental in the formation of a Town Council in 1945 and served on this as well. I suppose his last great push to help his community came in 1959 when the new United Church was completed: a grand edifice, and still the largest church in this part of Newfoundland and Labrador.

James John Tucker retired from the Grenfell Mission (then the International Grenfell Association) in 1967. The IGA presented him with a pocket watch! They should have given him the largest of the Greenhouses as a gift. It would have cost the organization nothing and would have probably extended his life by a decade or more. What is really sad is that this giant among men has been forgotten by his town and his church<sup>01</sup>, both of which became the better because of his association with it. If Sir Wilfred Grenfell had a 'right-hand' man, it was certainly James John Tucker.

When the Grenfell Interpretation Centre was opened a few years back (I think 1992), it was suggested by a thoughtful citizen that some kind mention should be afforded James John Tucker for the part he played in the Grenfell Story. What did the committee do to honour him? With pomp, circumstance and flair, they planted a cabbage plant!

The United Church minister in St. Anthony actually served the United Church congregations in many of the surrounding communities. James John Tucker, as lay reader, he probably led and preached more services than any other person involved in the church during his life of service because the minister had all these extra charges to serve. His sermons weren't written for him, but by him, and these sermons were often composed and written on 'exercise books' while he worked at his other great love in life, the growing of food! I have seen him at this many times, having walked

to the large greenhouse and watched through the 'transparent' walls, pruning his beloved tomato plants and making notes for his next sermon!

Watson Tucker, 2018

### **Revelations about Sir Wilfred Grenfell**

During the year of research conducted into Sir Wilfred Grenfell's farm endeavours, I was constantly confronted with revelations about the man, the doctor, the humanitarian and the visionary. The points below reflect my list of newly acquired information about Dr. Grenfell that greatly impacted my personal views toward him:

- Dr. Grenfell constantly wrote personal letters, notes and wireless messages to ship captains going up the coast, asking them to stop along their route to deliver potatoes, flour, butter and sugar (at IGA expense) to individuals and families he knew along the coast to make sure they would survive the winter.
- He conducted studies and experiments, as well as sourcing investments for developing fish skin products to make shoes and handbags, and mining Labradorite (bluestone) for the making of jewelry and carvings.
- Dr. Grenfell endlessly requested assistance from both the provincial and federal levels of government, the Hudson's Bay Company and National Geographic to fund a survey and map the Labrador Coast for shipping safety. He referenced having these marine surveys to assist the Grenfell Mission boats, commercial shipping, as well tourism cruises along the coast. As a part of this proposed survey, Dr. Grenfell also enlisted pilots, aircraft and geographers to fly over and photograph the "Grand Falls" (aka Churchill Falls) to look at the possibilities for hydroelectric generation. He was rather ahead of his time.
- Dr. Grenfell continuously suggesting to the forestry department and the forest harvesting companies of NL to practice silviculture by replanting trees where they have been harvested. Dr. Grenfell was concerned that the local firewood cutting and pulp industry would use up the timber in the area, and it would not be replaced.
- Dr. Grenfell's travels in Germany led him to recommend that locals be trained in the stone and brick masonry trades and use local stone and limestone mortar to construct homes for healthier living in northern Newfoundland and Labrador. Goodness knows we have enough stone and limestone in the province.
- Dr. Grenfell brought new people into the Mission to work on new ideas and possible market products. He brought in Turnbull to look at whether the fur from seal skins could be used as packing materials, and to research the value of seaweeds.

- Dr. Grenfell contacted government and university agricultural departments in NL, United States and Scotland looking for assistance in doing agricultural research in northern regions to find hardy plants and developing methods for getting high crop yields. He implemented procedures including heated greenhouses, cold frames, tar paper around plants (to deter cabbage moth), early planting under glass, and the use of row covers. Many of the seeds he purchased were from Scotland where the climate and soil conditions are similar. He also experimented with different grasses and wild plants that could grow on bogs but still provide good feed for cattle and other livestock.
- Dr. Grenfell's love and devotion to Northern Newfoundland and Labrador is unbounded. His 1934 letters to Robert St. Barbe Baker and Herbert Brookes are compelling and heart-felt as he is dealing with a heart condition and is seeing his demise soon.
- Dr. Grenfell was also interested and constantly on point about the need for a road up the Great Northern Peninsula from Norris Point, and across the Tip of the Northern Peninsula to Canada Bay, Hare Bay, and St. Anthony.
- Dr. Grenfell suggested to government to provide a travelling orthopedic surgeon to conduct research along the coast concerning the prevalence of crippling diseases, as well as research in tuberculosis and food deficiency diseases.
- Harriett Curtis, the wife of Dr. Curtis introduced canning of wild game and produce to the Mission and local area, and taught canning to the local people to preserve their summer vegetables and year round game.
- Dr. Grenfell conducted research and field testing of the "Labrador Cloth" fabric which he promoted for both Northern climates, outdoor adventures (Everest mountain climbing), and for aircraft pilot clothing. He had renowned pilots use his fabric for their uniforms and testify to the value of the Labrador Cloth. He also promoted the cloth for tropical exploration.
- Dr. Grenfell spent time promoting bird watching to bird enthusiasts and ornithologists around the world (ie: Gyr-falcon).

Greg Wood, January 2019