

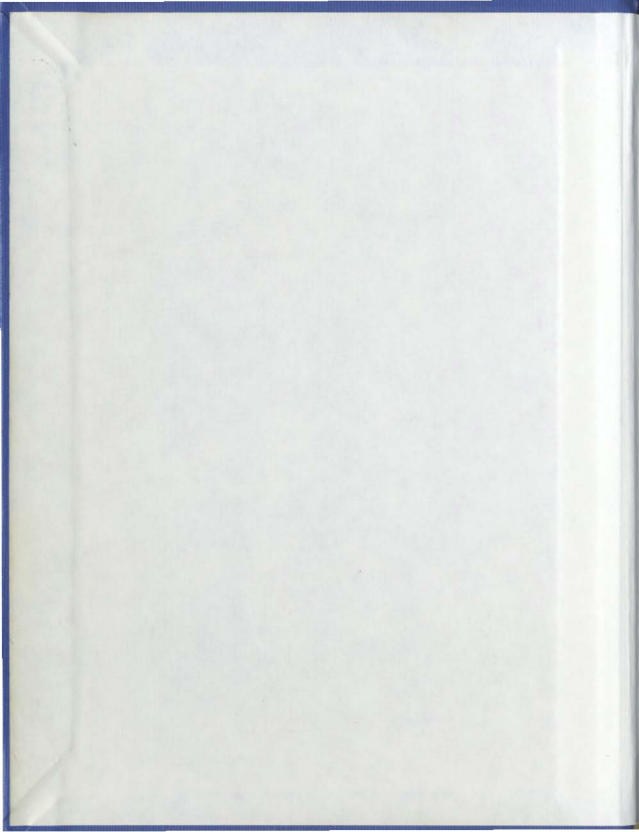
THE NEWFOUNDLAND PATRIOTIC ASSOCIATION:  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE  
WAR EFFORT, 1914-1918

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THE NEWFOUNDLAND PATRIOTIC ASSOCIATION:  
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WAR EFFORT, 1914-1918.

by



Patricia Ruth O'Brien, B.A.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

Department of History  
Memorial University of Newfoundland  
September 1981

St. John's

Newfoundland

#### ABSTRACT

When war broke out in 1914, Newfoundland was totally unprepared. But the government was required to make some response, and in order to raise a volunteer force of 500 men a Patriotic Committee was formed. St. John's-based, it consisted mainly of merchants, professionals and politicians of varying political and religious persuasions. It was almost immediately renamed the Patriotic Association of Newfoundland, commonly known as the NPA, and because of its original success, particularly in the political arena, was gradually transformed into a full-fledged department of militia. It remained in this quasi-official capacity until the summer of 1917 when mounting dissatisfaction over regimental affairs, insufficient recruits and the lack of government initiative came to a head. Economic factors compounded these problems, and together they resulted in the establishment of a national government. With its creation, the political threat to the war effort, previously contained by the NPA, receded. Thus the principal justification for the Patriotic Association disappeared and the way was cleared for a regular militia department. Unexpectedly, with the removal of the NPA from the scene politics again came to the fore, and dominated the war effort for the first time since August 1914.

Although private citizens through a variety of organizations and committees made an important contribution to the war effort elsewhere, the degree of control exercised by the NPA was unique.

Because its influence extended to every aspect of the war effort, a history of the Association becomes virtually a history of Newfoundland at war.

## PREFACE

Certain parts of the story told here have already appeared in print. The political history of the war period has received extensive treatment in Ian McDonald's Ph.D. thesis, "W.F. Coaker and the Fishermen's Protection Union in Newfoundland Politics, 1908-1925."<sup>1</sup> The period is also covered in S.J.R. Noel's Politics in Newfoundland.<sup>2</sup> The Newfoundland Regiment has provided the basis for several studies, the most important of which is G.W.L. Nicholson's The Fighting Newfoundlanders, published in 1964.<sup>3</sup> However, most have focused on the Regiment overseas, and there has been little attempt to look at its administration on this side of the water. Neither has the Regiment been placed within the context of contemporary political, social and economic developments. In particular, the Patriotic Association has never been subjected to the attention it deserves. This study attempts to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge of the war period through a close look at the NPA.

The largely untapped files of the Patriotic Association housed in the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador provided the basis for the present study. They have been supplemented mainly

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 1, fn. 1. The study is not widely available at present.

<sup>2</sup> See below, p. 1, fn. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See below, p. 27, fn. 87. See also the Bibliography.

by correspondence of the governor, prime minister and colonial secretary, likewise housed in the Provincial Archives, debates in the legislature and items from the St. John's press. Other than the Colonial Office series noted below, overseas records were beyond this writer's reach. A far more serious problem for the present study was the absence of NPA finance and recruiting committee reports, particularly the latter. They were almost certainly removed from the files and destroyed.

As far as possible, the organization of the following material is chronological. Only where this did not prove feasible has a topical approach been adopted. Chapter I deals with background material. Chapters II through IV trace developments in the fall of 1914, during which period the NPA, the Regiment and Naval Reserve assumed their basic characteristics. Chapter V deals with recruitment, although the absence of reliable information on the outports has resulted in a somewhat cursory treatment of some points. Besides, recruitment itself is deserving of a special and separate study, clearly beyond the scope of this work. Chapters VI and VII cover basic administration, including the care of dependants and returned servicemen. Economic matters are touched upon in Chapter VIII. At first glance, this may seem at odds with the study's primary focus, but it was discovered that the failure of the mercantile establishment to deal effectively and fairly with tonnage and supply problems had an important bearing on the NPA's downfall. In addition, most of the information in this chapter is new. Chapter IX deals with the establishment of the national government and the collapse of the NPA in July 1917. Chapter X covers the period from the fall of 1917 onwards, and is

included mainly because of the light it throws on the NPA's ultimate value. It proves beyond any question that political considerations rather than patriotic convictions dominated the war effort as far as most politicians were concerned.

My principal thanks are due to my supervisor, Dr. J.K. Hiller, for his generous encouragement and advice over a period of several years. I am also grateful to my original supervisor, the late Ian McDonald, who both suggested the topic and oversaw my initial first chapter. In addition, he very kindly allowed me the use of his extensive notes on C.O. 447, 448, 537 and 616 (Colonial Office, Original Correspondence, Secretary of State), access to which I should not otherwise have had. Thanks are also due to Dr. Stuart Pierson for his assistance; to Dr. H.C. McI for his interest; to Mr. Tom Ryan for access to papers in his possession; to Ms. Jessie Chisholm for sharing some of her own research; and to the staffs of the Provincial Archives, the Centre for Newfoundland Studies at Memorial University Library and the Provincial Reference Library, Newfoundland Division. Various persons have been helpful in other ways, and they too have been greatly appreciated. My graduate studies were made possible by a Memorial University Graduate Fellowship with assistance from the Newfoundland Department of Education, and by my husband.

PO'B

September 1981

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<sup>4</sup>For further information on Colonial Office record groups, see the Bibliography.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CO	Colonial Office Records
JHA	Journals of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland
PANL	Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador
PHA	Proceedings of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland
PLC	Proceedings of the Legislative Council of Newfoundland

## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND

In 1914 St. John's was the social, commercial and political centre of Newfoundland, and exerted a decided control over the remainder of the colony.<sup>1</sup> The town had a population of 32,000; the colony 242,000, of which 98.6 per cent was native-born.<sup>2</sup> Although St. John's had long been the principal social and political axis, its commercial and financial supremacy stemmed from its growing control over the seal and Labrador fisheries from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, and was consolidated after the bank crash of 1894. The commercial and social élite consisted of a small number of merchants representing approximately fifteen firms<sup>3</sup> engaged in both the fish export and consumer-oriented import trades. These men, referred to collectively as 'Water Street', were mainly of British extraction, overwhelmingly Protestant, and largely committed to the traditional fishing economy.

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<sup>1</sup>For a more detailed analysis of the social, economic and political culture of Newfoundland around the beginning of the twentieth century, see Ian McDonald, "W.F. Coaker and the Fishermen's Protective Union in Newfoundland, 1908-1925" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1971). Additional historical background is contained in S.J.R. Noel, Politics in Newfoundland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), pp. 2-94.

<sup>2</sup>Census of Newfoundland and Labrador 1911, Vol. 1, p. xxi.

<sup>3</sup>McDonald, "FPU," p. 12. For further information, see Appendix F.

Most major merchants retained an abiding loyalty to the mother country, continually reinforced by commercial and personal ties. A few spent long periods in England, and many sent their sons abroad to be educated.<sup>4</sup> Although a number had taken an active part in politics following the advent of responsible government in 1855, by the late 1890s Water Street merchants had for the most part abandoned the house of assembly and were content to monitor their business interests from seats in the legislative council.<sup>5</sup> Since they continued to view Newfoundland, as McDonald has said, as a mere "projection of their balance sheets,"<sup>6</sup> there developed a latent conviction that it was best suited to crown colony status.<sup>7</sup> They remained vigorous opponents of confederation with Canada, principally because of the commercial competition this would entail.<sup>8</sup> Neither were they noted for their civic pride or philanthropic activity. Referring in January 1914 to E.R. Bowring's recent gift of parkland and W.D. Reid's plans to build a tuberculosis hospital, a St. John's newspaper commended their generosity,

which was almost startling in its magnitude, especially in this community where there are few instances of gifts by wealthy citizens for public purposes. It is rather a regrettable circumstance that, in spite of all the great fortunes made in this Colony

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<sup>4</sup>CO 537/1167, Charles Alexander Harris to Walter Long, March 23, 1918.

<sup>5</sup>McDonald, "FPU," pp. 39-40, 348 and *passim*.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 358.

<sup>7</sup>CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918; McDonald, "FPU," p. 40.

<sup>8</sup>Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, pp. 24-25.

... by those who have developed its principal industries...., there has never been any substantial philanthropic offering on their behalf until the present year.... The change denotes a better realization of the moral, if not legal, claims of men of wealth to contribute to the betterment of the communities in which they have made their money.<sup>9</sup>

As a result, St. John's remained "a much neglected city."<sup>10</sup>

The political void left by the mercantile establishment was filled by a growing middle-class élite, mostly St. John's-based lawyers, journalists and newer businessmen. Their personal interests were tied to government/public service contracts, the urban economy and the railway, and their popular strength came mainly from the Avalon Peninsula and nearby Conception Bay.<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, Water Street merchants disparaged these politically active spokesmen of the 'new' economy whom they regarded as mere "jobbers", in office to advance themselves, and looked to the governor to exercise a strong moral influence.<sup>12</sup> Although a significant proportion of house of assembly members had

<sup>9</sup> Quoted from a January 1914 newspaper editorial in Alexander A. Parsons, "Governors I Have Known and Some of their Outstanding Characteristics," *Newfoundland Quarterly* (St. John's), April 1922, p. 4. Bowring was local representative of the Liverpool-based firm of Bowring Brothers; Canadian-born Reid, the colony's wealthiest industrialist. The Hospital never materialized.

<sup>10</sup> Melvin Baker, "William Gilbert Gosling and the Establishment of Commission Government in St. John's, Newfoundland, 1914," *Urban History Review*, IX (February 1981), 37.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth J. Kerr, "A Social Analysis of the Members of the Newfoundland House of Assembly, Executive Council, and Legislative Council for the Period, 1955-1914" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1973), pp. 520 and *passim*.

<sup>12</sup> CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918;  
CO 537/1169, Harris to Long, May 21, 1918.

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outport backgrounds,<sup>13</sup> for the most part they ensconced themselves in the capital and spent little time in their districts. The result was a concentration of the economically and politically powerful within the confines of the legislature. During the 1913 election, spokesmen of both economies supported the governing People's Party.<sup>14</sup>

The bulk of St. John's inhabitants no longer depended directly on the fisheries. Roughly twenty per cent of the labour force was employed in offices and shops; another twenty-five per cent was employed in manufacturing and the trades. The capital for these enterprises derived chiefly from the retained earnings of fish merchants who, beginning in the late nineteenth century and in the absence of a stock market, invested moderate sums in a number of limited liability companies providing goods and services to local consumers.<sup>15</sup> They were responding to the Whiteway government's new development strategy, which was based on the railway and envisioned a moving frontier of inland settlement opening new resource opportunities and leading to the growth of secondary industries.<sup>16</sup> The relative speed with which they diversified suggests a

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<sup>13</sup> See Kerr, "A Social Analysis," particularly pp. 27-34.

<sup>14</sup> For further details, see below, pp. 24-25.

<sup>15</sup> John Joy, "The Growth and Development of Trades and Manufacturing in St. John's, 1870-1914" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1977), pp. ii and passim.

<sup>16</sup> David Alexander, "Newfoundland's Traditional Economy and Development to 1934," in Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Essays in Interpretation, ed. by James Hillier and Peter Neary (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 25 and passim.



TABLE 1<sup>a</sup>  
OCCUPATIONAL BREAKDOWN, 1911:  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND ST. JOHN'S (MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES)

Occupation	Newfoundland (Total)	Town of St. John's <sup>b</sup>
Clergymen	249	35
Teachers	1,395	225
Lawyers	46	46
Doctors	119	37
Merchants and Traders	1,326	344
Office or Shop Workers	4,641	2,620
Government Service Workers	1,468	449
Farmers	2,915	160
Fishermen, and Others who cultivate the land	40,880	128
Mechanics	5,376	2,256
Engaged in Fish Catching & Curing	-	-
- Males	43,795	302
- Females	23,245	29
Lumbering	2,821	-
Mining	2,260	13
Engaged in Fisheries <sup>c</sup>	1,204	-
Factory and Workshop Workers <sup>d</sup>	-	937
Otherwise Employed <sup>e</sup>	14,811	4,833

<sup>a</sup>Derived from Census of Newfoundland and Labrador 1911,  
Vol. 1, pp. xxii-xxiii, 6-7, 18-19.

<sup>b</sup>Calculated on the basis of the five municipal wards.

<sup>c</sup>Given for Newfoundland only.

<sup>d</sup>Given for St. John's only.

<sup>e</sup>This category likely included workers in a variety of  
personal service occupations and in the transportation, communication,  
public utilities and construction industries. See Alexander,  
"Traditional Economy," pp. 27-28.

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willingness to adjust to the new order.<sup>17</sup> This not only resulted in a dramatic shift in the urban economy away from the fisheries, but allowed Water Street to dominate virtually all manufacturing, insurance and shipping companies, as well as many of the trades. By 1914 the St. John's-based Reid Newfoundland Company, builder of the railway, controlled much of the colony's transportation system. This included the steamship service which ran from the railway's western terminus at Port aux Basques to North Sydney, the St. John's tramway and the St. John's drydock, in addition to machine shops and the electric power company.<sup>18</sup> Control of the coastal and bay service was divided between the Reids, who had eight vessels in operation, and two Water Street firms, Bowring Brothers and the more recently established Newfoundland Produce Company, owned by the Hon. John Crosbie, MHA, which each had two.<sup>19</sup>

But in spite of protection owing to high tariff barriers, geographic location and high transportation costs, these manufacturing and service industries failed to maintain the entire St. John's workforce. Unemployment and poor wages were chronic.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, in the twenty years from 1891 to 1911, the population of St. John's was

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<sup>17</sup> See also Eric W. Sager, "The Merchants of Water Street and Capital Investment in Newfoundland's Traditional Economy," in The Enterprising Canadians: Entrepreneurs and Economic Development in Eastern Canada, 1820-1914, ed. by Lewis R. Fischer and Eric W. Sager (St. John's: Maritime History Group, 1979), pp. 90-91.

<sup>18</sup> P.T. McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911 (London: Whitehead, Morris & Co., 1911), p. 68. For additional information on the Reid empire, see Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, Chapter 3 and passim.

<sup>19</sup> McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, pp. 68, 268-71.

<sup>20</sup> Joy, "Trades and Manufacturing," p. 177.

significantly increased by the influx of job seekers from outlying districts.<sup>21</sup> From 1890 onwards, a number of unions had been formed to protect the interests of workers, although, for the most part, they met with little success. Given the high level of unemployment and the relatively small number of workers in each area, "employers could write their own employment contracts with little fear of challenge."<sup>22</sup> Moreover, in 1909 the Board of Trade had been formed to bring together fish merchants, manufacturers, importers and industrialists. Its purpose was to promote greater unity in the fish trades, encourage manufacturing and resource development, enable businessmen to be united in their dealings with the urban working class and ensure that all disputes within the business community were quickly settled.<sup>23</sup> By 1916, as the Newfoundland Quarterly reported, the Board of Trade had "come to play such a large part in the activities of the community that its presiding officer had come to be regarded as second only to the prime minister himself."<sup>24</sup> But despite the fact that on one end of the scale there was a large body of labouring and unemployed poor, on the other a small number of wealthy businessmen, the former closely identified their interests with the latter. Within the urban community, religion rather than economics was the principal source of friction.

<sup>21</sup> Census of Newfoundland and Labrador 1911, Vol. 1, pp. vii-x, particularly ix.

<sup>22</sup> Joy, "Trades and Manufacturing," p. 177.

<sup>23</sup> Baker, "Gosling," pp. 41-42.

<sup>24</sup> Newfoundland Quarterly, Spring 1916, p. 20.

Approximately one-half the St. John's population was Roman Catholic, the other half divided in roughly equal proportions between the Anglican and Methodist churches, with a small number of Presbyterians and other Protestant adherents. During the 1860s a compromise had been reached under which all offices and spoils were to be divided equally among the three principal faiths. This applied both to St. John's and the colony as a whole. Because the proportion of Catholics had steadily decreased since then, Roman Catholics had become the most vigilant monitors of the system. Hence, a preoccupation with denominational and religious balances had become the predominant peculiarity of the town.<sup>25</sup>

There were only two other major areas which did not rely principally on the fisheries — the mining area of Bell Island in Conception Bay and the lumbering area of central Newfoundland. Financed and owned by two Canadian companies, the Bell Island iron ore mines commenced operations in 1895, yielding 1,000,000 tons of haematite per year for smelters in Nova Scotia, Germany and the United States.<sup>26</sup> By 1911 the island had a resident population of over 3000, and a large number of men travelled from their Conception Bay and St. John's-area homes on a seasonal basis. While geographically a part of Conception

<sup>25</sup> For further details of this historic compromise, see McDonald, "FPU," pp. 83-85; Noël, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 24-25.

<sup>26</sup> McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, p. 106. For a brief history of Bell Island, see Peter Neary, "The Epic Tragedy of Bell Island," in The Book of Newfoundland, Vol. VI, ed. by J.R. Smallwood (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1975), pp. 200-25.

Bay, Bell Island was within the electoral district of St. John's East. Grand Falls was a paper town founded in 1905 by the Anglo-Newfoundland Development [AND] Company, owned by the Harmsworth newspaper interests of Great Britain.<sup>27</sup> It was the colony's first inland, modern industrial town, a company town in the purest sense. The company also owned 3,400 square miles of surrounding territory. Nearby, the Albert E. Reid Company, a London firm, established Bishop's Falls to produce wood pulp.<sup>28</sup> Several outlying lumbering communities grew up around these towns. By early 1915 the area accounted for roughly one-quarter of the colony's total value of exports.<sup>29</sup>

The remainder of the population was scattered around the island and along the coast of Labrador in roughly 1300 small, relatively isolated fishing settlements. Harbour Grace was largest with a population of just over 4000; Bonavista, Carbonear and Twillingate came next with populations of over 3000; then Burin and Bay Roberts with over 2000. The remainder had populations of below 2000, the majority well below. Highly individualistic in outlook, they were divided loosely into five regions. Although the inshore fishery was prosecuted in virtually all areas, there were a number of regional variations. These in turn influenced the degree of control that could be exercised from St. John's.

<sup>27</sup> Alfred Harmsworth became Lord Northcliffe and was owner of *The Times* and mass circulation *Daily Mail*. His brother Harold became Lord Rothermere. For an analysis of their wartime roles, see Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), pp. 44-46 and *passim*.

<sup>28</sup> E.P. Morris, "Newfoundland in 1910," reprinted from *The Financial News* (Colonial Section) (London: n.d.), pp. 7-8.

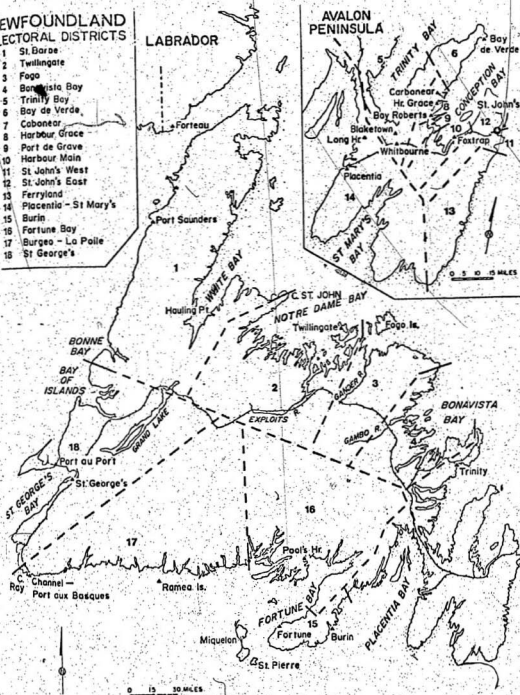
<sup>29</sup> *PANL*, GN 8/1, Prime Minister's Papers: E.P. Morris, file 61.1, Morris to Walter Edward Davidson, April 24, 1915.

# NEWFOUNDLAND ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

- 1 St. Barbe
- 2 Twillingate
- 3 Fogo
- 4 Bonavista Bay
- 5 Trinity Bay
- 6 Bay de Verde
- 7 Carbonear
- 8 Harbour Grace
- 9 Port de Grave
- 10 Harbour Main
- 11 St. John's West
- 12 St. John's East
- 13 Ferryland
- 14 Placentia - St. Mary's
- 15 Burin
- 16 Fortune Bay
- 17 Burgeo - La Poile
- 18 St. George's

## LABRADOR

## AVALON PENINSULA



The electoral districts of Ferryland and Placentia-St. Mary's were part of the heavily populated Avalon Peninsula. They were mainly involved in the shore fishery, conservative in outlook, and relatively tolerant of St. John's overlordship.<sup>30</sup> Almost exclusively Roman Catholic, the area was part of the archdiocese of St. John's, and local priests exercised a wide variety of prerogatives that ranged from land speculation to advising parishioners how to vote.<sup>31</sup> A number of residents were also involved in supplying ice and bait to foreign bankers, in boat building, the whale fishery and in wrecking activities.

The Conception Bay electoral districts of Harbour Main, Port de Grave, Harbour Grace, Carbonear and Bay de Verde were also on the Avalon Peninsula, and were by far the most heavily populated and best-served districts outside St. John's East and West. Dominated by the towns of Harbour Grace and Carbonear, the Conception Bay area rivalled St. John's during the early nineteenth century, but by late century the balance had shifted decisively in the capital's favour. Because of the relative decline of the local mercantile economy, residents had been willing to respond to the vision of land-based development.<sup>32</sup> The neighbouring northeast coast districts of Trinity, Bonavista, Fogo and Twillingate were more solidly committed to the

<sup>30</sup> McDonald, "FPU," p. 41.

<sup>31</sup> Robert J. Bryn and Barbara Neis, "Regional Factors in the Formation of the Fishermen's Protective Union of Newfoundland," in *Underdevelopment and Social Movements in Atlantic Canada*, ed. by Robert J. Bryn and R. James Sacouman (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1979), p. 212.

<sup>32</sup> McDonald, "FPU," pp. 8-10 and *passim*; Kerr, "A Social Analysis," p. 520; Neary, "Bell Island," pp. 204-11, *passim*.

traditional fishing economy. As a result, they grew openly hostile to alien developments in St. John's, including the growth of costly government programs that little benefitted the north.<sup>33</sup> Both the Conception Bay and northeast coast areas had become increasingly involved in central Newfoundland logging operations, which provided winter employment for many of the same men as were engaged at the seal and Labrador fisheries.

Both fisheries had originally been dominated by local shipowners, although with the advent of steam around mid-nineteenth century control gradually passed into Water Street's hands. The sealing industry experienced a second large infusion of Water Street capital in 1906 with the introduction of steel steamers, which were large (1500 to 2000 tons) with crews of up to 270 men, and which rendered the smaller wooden steamers obsolete.<sup>34</sup> In 1909-10 seal products had a combined export value of over \$1,000,000.<sup>35</sup> The Labrador fishery reached its maximum development during the first decade of the twentieth century when it accounted for between one-quarter and one-half of the colony's total production of salt cod. Merchants invested capital either by financing the construction and operation of schooners, or by establishing permanent fishing stations and transporting whole families by steamer

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<sup>33</sup> Kerr, "A Social Analysis," pp. 70-71.

<sup>34</sup> Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," pp. 210-11.

<sup>35</sup> McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, p. 127. A large number of seal skins were shipped to Germany. Ibid., p. 140.



for the season.<sup>36</sup> The seal fishery was prosecuted during the spring; the Labrador fishery during the summer and fall. Water Street dominated both.

The Conception Bay and northeast coast districts were part of the Roman Catholic diocese of Harbour Grace, but only Harbour Main had a Catholic majority. The remaining districts were divided between the Catholic, Methodist and Anglican churches, with a smattering of Salvation Army adherents. It has been argued that because no single religious group had a clear majority, one set of clergymen could be 'played off' against the other, and the power of the churches was correspondingly weaker.<sup>37</sup> Within the Roman Catholic Church, moreover, local Irish priests had on occasion got together to defy the bishop's authority.<sup>38</sup>

St. Barbe and St. George's districts had been known during most of the nineteenth century as the western treaty shore, for it was not until 1904 that France abrogated its right to land and dry fish on the long stretch of coast from Cape St. John to Cape Ray. Unlike the remainder of the island which had been populated mainly by west country English and southern Irish, inhabitants of the northwest coast were descendants of Jerseymen; Frenchmen; Anglo-Scottish and French Canadians; Nova Scotian Indians; or else they were transplanted east coast residents.

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<sup>36</sup> See Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," p. 209; McDonald, "FPU," pp. 17-18 and passim; McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, pp. 129-30.

<sup>37</sup> See Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," pp. 213-14 and passim.

<sup>38</sup> P.K. Devine and J.T. Lawton, Old King's Cove (n.p.: n.p., 1944), pp. 41-42.

Moreover, because of its ambiguous status, the area had been settled late and had not until 1882 been granted political representation in St. John's.<sup>39</sup> It was heavily dependent on the herring and lobster fisheries,<sup>40</sup> though some people farmed and cut wood for a living.

The remaining southwest coast districts of Burgeo-La Poile, Fortune Bay and Burin were tied mainly to the offshore fishery on the Grand Banks and were most independent of St. John's. During the nineteenth century residents showed their independence by continuing to sell bait to foreign bankers, a practice which St. John's tried constantly to frustrate.<sup>41</sup> Around the turn of the century local merchants became directly involved in the bank fishery by financing the construction of large schooners.<sup>42</sup> Thus while on the east coast both the export and import trades had fallen into the hands of foreign and St. John's-owned steamship companies, on the southwest coast local schooners continued to ply both the Caribbean and Mediterranean salt fish trades and to return with supplies from Nova Scotia, Massachusetts and St. Pierre. St. John's bridled at this situation but seemed

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<sup>39</sup>Kerr, "A Social Analysis," pp. 197-201.

<sup>40</sup>In 1909-10 tinned lobsters destined mainly for the German market had an export value of \$337,835, although the catch had fallen off shortly thereafter. The herring fishery was conducted in the late fall and early winter. McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, pp. 127-34, passim.

<sup>41</sup>See Peter Neary, "The French and American Shore Questions as Factors in Newfoundland History," in Newfoundland in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, ed. by Riller and Neary, p. 99 and passim. See also Kerr, "A Social Analysis," pp. 164-65.

<sup>42</sup>Brym and Neis, "Regional Factors," p. 208.

powerless to prevent it.<sup>43</sup> In addition, many southwest men were transients, shifting back and forth between the banks and the Nova Scotia and Boston fisheries.<sup>44</sup> The area was also unique in having a winter inshore cod fishery. While the denominationally mixed Burin Peninsula was relatively populous and well serviced, the predominantly Anglican south coast was extremely isolated and backward. The Roman Catholic diocese of St. George's organized in 1907 encompassed the two northwest and three southwest districts, but only St. George's district had a Catholic majority.

Generally speaking, St. John's merchants dominated the outport fishing economy through a system of credit, purchasing fish in exchange for supplies and consumer products. They supplied the capital and bore the risks of capital investment,<sup>45</sup> while fishermen bore the risks of the voyage.<sup>46</sup> Since they seldom received cash, fishermen were forced to tend gardens and livestock, hunt game, cut wood and build their own homes and vessels. Merchants in turn organized the marketing of fish and fish products. They invested capital chiefly in the wholesale and retail trades and came to depend increasingly on their monopoly of them.<sup>47</sup> As a result, much of the inshore fishery was

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<sup>43</sup> McDonald, "FPU," p. 41; PHA 1916, Currie, March 16, 1916, p. 15; below, pp. 235-36.

<sup>44</sup> Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," p. 208.

<sup>45</sup> Sager, "Merchants of Water Street," p. 77 and passim.

<sup>46</sup> Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," pp. 207-08 and passim. See also McDonald, "FPU," passim.

<sup>47</sup> Sager, "Merchants of Water Street," p. 91.

undercapitalized.<sup>48</sup> Although a number of outport merchants exported fish, they were generally too weak to invest in expensive equipment and remained dependent for wholesale supplies.<sup>49</sup> It has been estimated that by the first decade of the twentieth century over seventy per cent of all incoming and outgoing cargo passed through St. John's.<sup>50</sup> The fact that the outports provided the principal raison d'être for St. John's — on the supply side, raw materials and labour; on the demand side, markets for local manufactured and imported goods — was frequently lost sight of in the capital. Urban dwellers saw only their own interests.<sup>51</sup> Tensions with St. John's were further aggravated by its monopoly of small manufacturing industries which were protected by high tariffs, the principal source of government revenue.<sup>52</sup> It was this situation that gave rise to the first serious challenge to St. John's ascendancy, mounted by W.F. Coaker, founder of the Fishermen's Protective Union [FFU] and the Union Party.

Beginning on the northeast coast in 1908-09, Coaker set out to free fishermen from their dependence on St. John's merchants.

<sup>48</sup> Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," p. 208.

<sup>49</sup> McDonald, "FFU," p. 12. According to McDonald, approximately eleven outport firms were directly involved in the export trade.

<sup>50</sup> Sager, "Merchants of Water Street," p. 91; McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, p. 239.

<sup>51</sup> Note, for example, this comment from the Western Star as indicative of the feeling on the west coast: "But for ... [the outports] St. John's today would be a village of huts, and yet when it comes to public facilities and improvements they are shamefully neglected." Quoted in Evening Telegram (St. John's), October 25, 1918.

<sup>52</sup> Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, p. 20.

By the end of 1911 the FPU claimed 12,500 dues-paying members organized into 116 local and four district councils, an established newspaper (the Fishermen's Advocate, soon to become the Mail and Advocate) with over 6000 subscribers, and a series of cash stores operating under the name of the Union Trading Company.<sup>53</sup> This was followed by the founding of the Union Party, which advocated a radical transformation of the social and economic system. Coaker's main strength was concentrated in the northeast coast and Conception Bay districts of Twillingate, Fogo, Bonavista, Bay de Verde and Port de Grave. His success in these areas has generally been attributed to the tradition of men working together in the lumbering camps and at the seal and Labrador fisheries and to the absence of united clerical opposition.<sup>54</sup> His inroads on the Avalon Peninsula had been halted by the combined opposition of Water Street, the government and the Roman Catholic Church. When in 1911 eleven FPU locals were spontaneously formed in Ferryland and Placentia-St. Mary's districts, they were quickly banned by the Roman Catholic archbishop, who argued that they were "calculated to cause great confusion, and an upheaval of our social fabric; to set class against class, and to end in the ruin and destruction of our commercial and business system."<sup>55</sup> The FPU locals folded, and Coaker's advance was effectively impeded in

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 89, also pp. 75-94. For the most detailed account of the rise and development of the FPU, see McDonald, "FPU." By 1914 membership had reached 21,060 organized into 206 local councils, of which twenty-nine were on the southwest coast. McDonald, "FPU," pp. 54, 134.

<sup>54</sup> Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors." See also McDonald, "FPU," pp. 56-57; Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 91-94.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted from an open letter by Archbishop Howley in Bryn and Neis, "Regional Factors," p. 213.

other areas. In 1912 he made plans to shift his business headquarters from St. John's to Port Union in Trinity Bay, establishing an alternative to St. John's in the north. Construction commenced in 1916 and proceeded so rapidly that even St. John's clerks had reason to feel threatened.<sup>56</sup>

Resentment of the capital was further increased by the dearth of outport administrative agencies and services, poor district representation and the established practice of delegating administrative authority. With the exception of St. John's there was no local government, and the central government maintained but a fledgling bureaucracy. Its effectiveness was seriously undercut by the practice of employing a large number of part-time officials on the basis of political allegiance; principally around election time.<sup>57</sup> As a result, the outport public service, such as it was, suffered from a lack of continuity and cohesion. In addition to an inadequate postal-telegraph system,<sup>58</sup> thirty-two magistrates, thirty-six MIAs, a few justices of the peace, police and customs officials and regular circuits of the Supreme Court provided the chief links with the capital. Faced with the difficulty of providing services to isolated communities along a 6000-mile coast, successive governments had adopted the practice of delegating key responsibilities. Thus the Reids controlled a major part of the transportation system, missionary and church-sponsored

<sup>56</sup> McDonald, "YFU," pp. 61-62 and *passim*. See also CO 194/295, Harris to Long, July 29, 1918; CO 194/296, Harris to Alfred Milner, April 21, 1919.

<sup>57</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918.

<sup>58</sup> See Morris, "Newfoundland in 1910," p. 5. In 1910 there were only 160 telegraph offices and 2500 miles of line. Large parts of the northern peninsula and Labrador remained unconnected.

organizations a significant portion of health services, and individual MHAs and political ward heelers the distribution of public funds.<sup>59</sup>

Two hundred and fourteen outport clergymen fell heir to a considerable administrative burden because they often provided the sole institutional leadership in an area. Thus they acted in a variety of unofficial capacities, and frequently served as notaries, chairmen of local school and road boards and poor relief officers, to such an extent that presbyteries were converted into "virtual townhalls."<sup>60</sup> In addition, the churches provided the basis of most forms of social organization, including such fraternal organizations as the Masonic Order, the Loyal Orange Association, the Society of United Fishermen, the Star of the Sea Association and the Benevolent Irish Society. Church and lay leaders were concentrated in the capital.<sup>61</sup> The churches also controlled education, and hence the overwhelming majority of the colony's 1400 teachers.<sup>62</sup> (The rate of illiteracy was extremely high.<sup>63</sup>) The

<sup>59</sup> McDonald, "FFU," p. 108; Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 20-21.

<sup>60</sup> McDonald; "FFU," pp. 85-86.

<sup>61</sup> Kerr, "A Social Analysis," pp. 18-19, 278-79. The Star of the Sea Association and Benevolent Irish Society were almost exclusively St. John's-based. It has been noted that the Loyal Orange Association had a tradition of non-clerical leadership, particularly on the northeast coast, and provided Coaker with a valuable network of social contacts. See Brym and Neis, "Regional Factors," p. 214; Neary, "Bell Island," pp. 206-210; Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, p. 90.

<sup>62</sup> The only non-sectarian schools were in newly established central Newfoundland lumbering communities.

<sup>63</sup> Approximately twenty-five per cent of the population was illiterate. See Census of Newfoundland and Labrador 1911, Vol. 1., p. xxiv; McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, pp. 31-34. See also CO 194/291.

churches, in short, were in positions of the greatest influence, although church leaders were identified with St. John's.

Generally speaking, the outports had reason to feel neglected, and rival politicians consistently reinforced this view in an effort to gain election.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, because the allocation of public funds was based on a patronage system, district was set against district in the scramble for spoils.<sup>65</sup> This militated against a united approach to common problems and public issues. Thus for the most part politics were parochial, and the outlook of politicians narrow and selfish.<sup>66</sup>

The press was a major social and political force mainly in St. John's and FPU-dominated areas, although weekly newspapers were in existence in at least four outport locations.<sup>67</sup> In 1914 St. John's supported four daily newspapers, and a fifth commenced publication in 1916. Each was controlled by a major interest group or political party, and it was said that as a factor in political life the

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Davidson to Andrew Bonar Law, May 17, 1916. For an analysis of literacy in the nineteenth century, see David Alexander, "Literacy and Economic Development in Nineteenth Century Newfoundland," Acadiensis, X (Autumn 1980), 3-34.

<sup>64</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Governor's Office, Local and Miscellaneous Correspondence, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 19, 1917.

<sup>65</sup> McDonald, "FPU," pp. 40-41; Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 21-22.

<sup>66</sup> CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918; CO 537/1169, Harris to Long, May 21, 1918. Harris admitted, however, that an astute politician such as E.P. Morris could persuade them to "play up" to the imperial ideal.

<sup>67</sup> The Western Star, owned by the Réids, was the only newspaper on the west coast. The Twillingate Sun, Trinity Enterprise and Harbour Grace Standard, owned by the Munns, were all published on the east coast.



press "makes for mischief, not good." "St. John's cannot properly support more than two decent newspapers and it is greatly to be deplored that control of an organ is thought to be an essential condition in politics," the governor recorded in 1918: "The whole of the evening press battens on a fund of personal abuse and reciprocal insult which is puerile to the last degree."<sup>68</sup> This was particularly so before the outbreak of war and from the spring of 1917 onwards.

In 1914 Newfoundland was one of five self-governing dominions, although the government did not adopt the use of the term officially until 1918. During most of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries, the colony was unenthusiastic about the imperial federation movement and caused much imperial fuss over fishing and coastal rights of the Americans and French.<sup>69</sup> Once its own diplomatic wrangles were over shortly after the turn of the century the colony swung round, and henceforth believed that its interests could be best served within a strong imperial framework.<sup>70</sup>

Sir Walter Davidson was governor of Newfoundland when war broke out. Possessing an instinctive sense of superiority to those he ostensibly served, he was both paternalistic and authoritarian.

<sup>68</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Milner, January 8, 1919; CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918; CO 194/201, Harris to Milner, March 31, 1921. See also Ralph Williams, How I Became Governor (London: John Murray, 1913), p. 409.

<sup>69</sup> For details, see Neary, "French and American Shore Questions," Noel Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 10-50, *passim*.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, February 2, 1915; Daily News (St. John's), January 21, 1916 which contains a New York World interview with the Newfoundland prime minister.

Born in County Down, Ireland in 1859, Davidson had entered the colonial service immediately after graduation from Cambridge. Following twenty years in the Ceylon civil service, a brief stint as colonial secretary in the temporary administration of the Transvaal, and the governorship of the Seychelles Islands from 1902 onwards, he was appointed Newfoundland governor in 1912.<sup>71</sup> It was his first experience with responsible government, and rather than adapt to the new system he set out to undercut it. Shortly after his arrival in 1913, the governor addressed a private St. John's dinner audience and outlined the rôle he intended to play, a rôle calculated to win the approval of the St. John's mercantile establishment, which shared many of his convictions. He began by asserting that there was no essential difference between crown colony and responsible government because they stemmed from the same principle — ruling as the people wished. He repudiated the notion that a constitutional governor was merely the Crown's representative and channel of communication with the Colonial Office, stating that "no man worth his salt would accept such a position." Affirming his right to exercise his experience and ability in the running of local affairs, he nonetheless maintained that above all a governor must eschew partisan politics in order to ensure the government's honesty and integrity.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Who Was Who, Vol. II (1916-1918) (London: Adam and Chas. Black, 1947), p. 267; Parsons, "Governors I Have Known," *Newfoundland Quarterly*, April 1922, pp. 2-8. See also Gordon Duff, ed. and comp., "A Biographical Dictionary of the Governors of Newfoundland" (St. John's: unpublished, 1964). Parsons deplored the tendency of recent governors to surround themselves with "a particular circle of interests" and to mistake their enthusiasm for the mother country as indicative of the remainder of the population. This undoubtedly applied to Davidson.

<sup>72</sup> From a speech given by Davidson at the Currier's dinner, April 23, 1913, paraphrased in Parsons, "Governors I Have Known," *Newfoundland Quarterly*, Fall 1922, p. 14.

At a later date he was reported to have declared: "When times are smooth and things go well, there is little for a Governor to do beyond lubricating this [imperial] machinery; but when storms arise, like those incidental to the Great War, there are plenty of opportunities for a viceroy to develop the higher qualities of statesmanship."<sup>73</sup>

Davidson's prime minister was Sir Edward Patrick Morris, a lawyer and, in his own way, the more noteworthy of the two. Davidson was an administrator and adopted the imperial view; Morris was the quintessential local politician, attaching a great deal of importance to his own personal fortunes. (The governor, on the other hand, attached a great deal of importance to his own administrative talents.) Under normal conditions, the prime minister was a leader, not a follower,<sup>74</sup> but the war caught him temporarily off guard at what seemed to be almost the end of a long and successful political career.<sup>75</sup>

Born in St. John's in 1859 the son of a cooper who had immigrated from Ireland, Morris had risen through a combination of good fortune, hard work and an acute sense of political timing to become by 1889 minister without portfolio and recognized spokesman of the St. John's<sup>8</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Quoted in Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>74</sup> Morris, for example, was firmly in control of his party. For verification, see CO 194/288, Davidson to Lewis Harcourt, February 2, 1914, which contains a minute by A.B. Keith; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, January 25, 1917; Ibid., Private, Davidson to Long, March 19, 1917; CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, October 23, 1917.

<sup>75</sup> For details of Morris' early career see Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 28-115, passim, particularly pp. 32-33.

Roman Catholic population in Sir William Whiteway's Liberal administration. His predominantly Roman Catholic working-class district of St. John's West was to remain a personal fiefdom for the remainder of his political life. In opposition in 1898, he split with his party over railway matters and allied himself with its builders, the Reids. Two years later these differences were smoothed over, and Morris served as a member of Sir Robert Boid's executive until 1908 when he broke with the Liberal Party for good and established the People's Party, backed by the Reids. He had two trusted lieutenants, Michael P. Cashin and John R. Bennett; and the support of newspaper editor P.T. McGrath, the party's mainence grise. The 1908 election resulted in a tie; the 1909 election in a resounding victory for Morris.

The following election in 1913 was bitterly contested on a number of grounds, with no shortage of issues on which the administration might have been discredited by a united opposition. The potentially most damaging issues involved rumours of unconstrained timber speculation by government members and their friends, along with a series of lucrative contracts for the building of branch railway lines.<sup>76</sup> As it was, Morris' People's Party managed to remain in office because the opposition was unable to mount a concerted attack. In addition, Morris was supported by Water Street.<sup>77</sup> The People's Party won twenty-one out of thirty-six seats, but received only forty-six per cent of the popular vote. Coaker's newly formed Union Party won eight seats, the remaining

<sup>76</sup>For details, see Ibid., pp. 111-15.

<sup>77</sup>See below, p. 26, fn. 84.

seven going to Bond's chastened Liberal Party, five of them held on Union sufferance. Bond was succeeded shortly thereafter by J.M. Kent, under whose leadership the two parties continued to maintain an uneasy alliance.<sup>78</sup>

Even more unsettling to the government than the percentage of popular vote was the geographic distribution of seats in the house of assembly and the growing power and influence of the FPU. As has already been noted, Coaker's initial efforts had been concentrated on the predominantly Protestant northeast coast, and his momentum in the south halted through the combined efforts of the People's Party and the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>79</sup> The 1913 election results revealed the extent of the division, for the government retained sixteen southern, mainly Roman Catholic, seats, while eleven out of fifteen opposition members came from the Protestant north. The remaining seven Conception Bay North seats were split five to two. Thus it was with good reason that Morris himself conceded the prospect of an ensuing Union victory,<sup>80</sup> and with equal justification that Coaker could claim to speak for the people of the north.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, p. 118; McDonald, "FPU," p. 96.

<sup>79</sup> McDonald, "FPU," pp. 86-91, and passim; above, pp. 16-18.

<sup>80</sup> CO 194/287, Davidson to Harcourt, November 10, 1913; CO 537/500, Davidson to Harcourt, March 10, 1914.

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, Mail and Advocate (St. John's), August 29, 1914.

The government's financial position was equally discouraging by the summer of 1914. The People's Party had ridden to power in 1909 and again in 1913 on a welter of promises, based on a deceptively attractive policy of 'something for everyone.' In stark contrast to the financial conservatism of the preceding Bond administration, or the radical economic blueprint of William Coaker, the Morris administration had neither managed its finances very well nor planned for the economic future of the colony. The commercial buoyancy which had thus far characterized its tenure had been based on an unbroken series of trade surpluses, production at the Grand Falls and Bishop's Falls mills (both established under Bond), and large-scale railway branch line building by the Reid Newfoundland Company, financed by government borrowings of \$7,000,000. The effect of such a large infusion of outside capital was a veneer of prosperity, seemingly confirmed by a flurry of government expenditures on public works and social security programs, generated principally from fear of the Union Party.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, the prime minister's financial improvidence was legendary, and it was commonly said at the time that "Morris has no more regard for money than he has for the sand on the seashore."<sup>83</sup> It was largely for this reason, and in conjunction with persistent rumours of confederation with Canada, that Water Street, which had backed Morris in 1913, gradually withdrew its support.<sup>84</sup> Justly or not, the Morris administration has

<sup>82</sup> Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 57 and passim; McDonald, "FPU," pp. 79-81.

<sup>83</sup> Evening Telegram, April 20, 1915.

<sup>84</sup> McDonald, "FPU," pp. 110, 121 and passim; below, pp. 279-80.

been accused of having established the downward trend of financial profligacy, political corruption and moral decay which allegedly ended in commission government in 1933.<sup>85</sup> However, while the true financial picture may have eluded the bulk of the electorate in 1914, it could not have escaped the government's knowledge. In September 1914 the minister of finance, M.P. Cashin, announced an estimated operational deficit of \$237,000 for the financial year ending in June 1915, exclusive of huge capital outlays.<sup>86</sup>

Military considerations had never been a matter of concern for the local government. In fact, given the almost total absence of a modern military tradition, there was little in recent experience to prepare the colony for the events of August 1914.<sup>87</sup> The withdrawal of the British garrison in 1870 signalled the end of an era; thereafter, three separate British proposals for the establishment of a local voluntary militia foundered because the Newfoundland government was unwilling to bear the cost.<sup>88</sup> In 1902 it did agree to contribute £3000 per annum towards the support of a local branch of the Royal

<sup>85</sup> See Newfoundland Royal Commission, 1933 Report, Cmd. 4880 (generally referred to as the Amulree Report), sec. 218. See also Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 103-06; McDonald, "FPU," pp. 6-7; Kerr, "A Social Analysis," pp. 519 and passim. For a different point of view, see Alexander, "Traditional Economy," pp. 34-35 and passim.

<sup>86</sup> Daily News, September 5, 1914.

<sup>87</sup> For the most comprehensive treatment of the early military history of Newfoundland, see C.W.L. Nicholson, The Fighting Newfoundlander (London: Government of Newfoundland, 1964), pp. 1-98.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., pp. 88-91.

Naval Reserve. As a result, 600 naval reservists were enlisted for five-year terms and an Admiralty training vessel, the Calypso, took up permanent residence in St. John's Harbour, staffed by British navy personnel.<sup>89</sup> Given the colony's insular nature and the continued dominance of the British navy on the seas, further military expenditures were considered unnecessary.<sup>90</sup>

In addition to the Naval Reserve, the St. John's Rifle Club, four church-sponsored boys' cadet corps and several branches of the Legion of Frontiersmen completed the colony's military establishment. The St. John's Rifle Club was the offshoot of a volunteer rifle battalion established in 1860 with a small measure of public financial support. By the turn of the century it had become a private organization with substantial property on the south side of the harbour. Members were hampered by a lack of up-to-date firearms and ammunition shortages and, until the war, remained in existence solely as a sporting and social club.<sup>91</sup> The para-military boys' brigade movement had originated in Great Britain in the early 1890s and led to the establishment in St. John's of the Anglican-sponsored Church Lads' Brigade [CLB] in 1892, the Catholic Cadet Corps [CCC] in 1896, the Methodist Guards Brigade [MGB] in 1900 and finally the Presbyterian Newfoundland Highlanders in 1907. The CLB, CCC and MGB had substantial armouries in the heart of the city. Although corps existed in Harbour Grace and Bell Island and

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., pp. 90-91; Evening Telegram, September 19, 1918.

<sup>90</sup> PHA 1917, Bennett, July 25, 1917, p. 519.

<sup>91</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundland, p. 88.



possibly one or two other centres, for the most part they were an urban phenomenon and inter-denominational rivalry played a large part in their success. They received no government funding, but enjoyed a large measure of public support, and came to occupy an extremely important place in the social life of the town. Although membership was open to all classes, the brigades were commanded by prominent business and professional men and were officered by their sons, many of whom had received rudimentary rifle and drill instruction in British public schools.<sup>92</sup>

Nonetheless, the movement suffered through want of professional military expertise, since there were virtually no professionally trained soldiers resident in the colony. The Legion of Frontiersmen, a semi-military organization with roots in the Boer War, had been transported to Newfoundland by a member of the Grenfell Mission. It was distinguished from the cadet corps mainly by its adult membership, non-denominational character and northern orientation. Levies were maintained in Labrador, St. Anthony (on the northern tip of the island) and St. John's. The latter absorbed many former members of the boys' brigades.<sup>93</sup>

These scanty para-military resources were all that were available to the government in August 1914. Yet their overwhelming presence in St. John's was an exceedingly significant factor in determining the colony's response to the war, and their influence, particularly the influence of their commanding officers, remained critical well into the summer of 1917.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., pp. 91-96. See also PHA 1917, Bennett, July 25, 1917, pp. 518-19.

<sup>93</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 97; Evening Telegram, December 1, 1914.

When the British ultimatum to Germany expired at 12:00 p.m. on August 4, 1914, the empire was at war. It was the climax of a complicated tangle of European political and military rivalries that had been simmering for years. Although the conduct of foreign policy, including the declaration of war, was wholly a British prerogative, the extent of imperial participation was a matter for individual governments to decide. Unlike Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, each of which had participated in the Boer War and retained the nucleus of a military establishment,<sup>94</sup> Newfoundland had neither trained soldiers nor the necessary administrative apparatus to bring a force into being. Nor were existing political and financial conditions auspicious, so that it was clear that unusual methods must be adopted should the colony decide to take direct part.

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<sup>94</sup> For details of the response of the other dominions, see The Times (London), "The Response of the Dominions," in The Times History of the War, Vol. II (London, 1915), pp. 238-65; A.B. Keith, War Government in the Dominions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921).

## CHAPTER II

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NPA: ST. JOHN'S TAKES OVER

The outbreak of war came as a surprise to most St. John'smen. Although the public and press responded enthusiastically to the declaration of war, as befitted the capital of Britain's "oldest and most loyal colony," there was no immediate discussion of Newfoundland's prospective role. Instead, they stressed the universal nature of public approval, commended the Canadian, Australian and New Zealand response, and concerned themselves with the probable effects of the war on the local economy. "In the throng which visited the gubernatorial residence were men of all shades of religious and political affiliation.... The war spirit was everywhere," the Mail and Advocate noted with approval on one day; on the next it called for the opening of the legislature in view of serious financial difficulties facing the colony and fish trade, the "almost total failure" of the fishery in several areas and the prospect of profiteering among provision dealers.<sup>1</sup> The Liberal Evening Telegram and the Water Street-oriented Daily News also pressed for the opening of the legislature to protect trade and commerce. Specifically, they desired the enactment of a moratorium on all debts

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<sup>1</sup>Mail and Advocate, August 6-7, 1914.

held outside the colony, mainly in Great Britain, in order to relieve pressure on fish merchants in St. John's.<sup>2</sup>

Some of these worries were justified, since the outbreak of war did have a prejudicial economic impact. Iron ore companies on Bell Island which exported much of their product to Germany all but ceased operation, throwing over 1000 men from the St. John's area and Conception Bay out of work. The Reid Newfoundland Company shortened its working hours in an effort to avoid staff reductions, and rumours of impending layoffs in other firms spread throughout the town.<sup>3</sup> Provision prices soared and fish prices dropped owing to wildly fluctuating exchange rates in European markets and there was a run on the banks.<sup>4</sup> The Mail and Advocate continued to hammer away at the bleak prospects facing northern fishing communities and estimated that one-third of the total population would require government assistance during the winter.<sup>5</sup> Initial fears of the dislocating effect of the war were therefore widespread and deep; on August 11 the Daily News even anticipated the creation of a national government to cope with the crisis.

The prospect of a military response was not entirely overshadowed by these concerns, and the brigades were the first to show

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<sup>2</sup> Daily News, August 6, 1914; Evening Telegram, August 11, 1914. The Daily News had until recently supported the People's Party.

<sup>3</sup> Evening Herald (St. John's), August 10, 1914.

<sup>4</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 22, 1914; CO 194/288, Davidson to Harcourt, October 31, 1914.

<sup>5</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 8, 10, 1914.

any substantial interest. Over 500 persons attended a meeting at the CLB Armoury on August 11, and similar meetings were held by other organizations, including the CCC, the Highlanders and the Rifle Club. Many volunteered to enlist in imperial forces and all declared their support for a local voluntary militia.<sup>6</sup> The first indication that some form of official planning was in progress came from the government-sponsored Evening Herald, edited by the Hon. P.T. McGrath, which envisioned the raising of a civilian defence force available for garrison duty in Great Britain.<sup>7</sup> Two days later it published an exchange of telegrams between the governor and the secretary of state dated August 8 and 9, respectively which read in part:

Ministers desire authority to enlist special men [for] service abroad by land and sea. Ministers undertake [to] raise force of naval reserve by Oct. 31st to 1000 efficient men available for naval service abroad for one year, and are willing to meet all local expenses. Several hundred with efficient local brigade training offer for enlistment for land service abroad. Believe that 500 could be enlisted within one month. Propose to induce serviceable men between 18 and 36 years to enroll themselves in training for home defence wherever corps instructors are available. These would form material for further drafts.

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His Majesty's Government gladly avail themselves of offer of your Government to raise troops for land service abroad. Will telegraph later as to naval reserve.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 7, 1914; Daily News, August 10, 1914; Evening Telegram, August 10, 12, 1914.

<sup>7</sup> Evening Herald, August 8, 1914.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., August 10, 1914.

While on the surface it seemed that the Newfoundland government had not been slow to respond, closer inspection reveals that Davidson had adopted the initiative and persuaded Morris to follow.

Since Morris had not bothered to keep abreast of developments leading to the declaration of war, it was Davidson who suggested a meeting of the two leaders on August 3, when they discussed the colony's gold reserves, the possibility of price increases and various defensive precautions, including the appointment of a censor and mobilization of the Naval Reserve.<sup>9</sup> Because of the need for close coordination with British authorities, Davidson was naturally in the best position to oversee many of these arrangements; nonetheless, he seems to have taken it wholly upon himself to initiate proposals for the combined military and naval response two days later, on August 5. There is no indication that Davidson consulted Morris before drafting the telegram. But, since the prime minister's voice was practically the only one to carry weight in the government, it seems likely that Davidson did consult him prior to submitting the proposal to the executive council on August 7. The council approved the draft and it was forwarded to London the following day.<sup>10</sup>

Following immediate acceptance of the offer to raise a land force,<sup>11</sup> Davidson visited the Roman Catholic archbishop and

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<sup>9</sup> CO 616/1, Davidson to Harcourt, August 8, 1914. Davidson also kept members of the Board of Trade informed.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> The offer to increase the Naval Reserve was accepted several days later. For further details, see below, pp. 101-02.

secured his support.<sup>12</sup> He then attended a meeting at the colonial secretary's office presided over by Morris, the purpose of which was to arrange for a public gathering "in order to give the citizens themselves an opportunity of dealing with the matter."<sup>13</sup> Also present were representatives of the four brigades, the Frontiersmen and Rifle Club, and the commanding officer of the Naval Reserve, Lt.-Commander A. MacDermott. Emerging from this meeting, the prime minister assured the public that trade and commerce were safe in the hands of the British navy and dismissed the need to convene the legislature.<sup>14</sup>

Immediate reactions to the proposal for a Newfoundland contingent were favourable. Only the Mail and Advocate withheld comment, concentrating on the cost of provisions instead.<sup>15</sup> Notice was given of an open meeting at the CLB Armoury on August 12. In the meantime, details were carefully worked out by the prime minister, the governor and the colonial secretary, John R. Bennett, which left nothing to chance.<sup>16</sup> Over 3000 persons attended,<sup>17</sup> representing a fair cross-section

<sup>12</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 17, 1914.

<sup>13</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 11, 1914.

<sup>14</sup> Daily News, August 11, 1914.

<sup>15</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 12, 1914.

<sup>16</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, Files of the Patriotic Association of Newfoundland, 1914-1927, file 21a, Prime Minister's Correspondence, 1914.

<sup>17</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 17, 1914. The estimate seems high.

of the city. Seated before them on a platform was an impressive array of dignitaries, who besides cabinet representatives included only one member of the house of assembly, F.J. Morris, the prime minister's brother. Davidson presided and spoke first: "I pledged myself that Newfoundland would furnish five hundred men, but I hope the number will be five thousand," he declared at the outset, and was warmly applauded.<sup>18</sup> "I... have never spoken better," he later confided to the secretary of state.<sup>19</sup> Two resolutions were passed, each proposed, spoken for and seconded by representatives of the four brigades, the Rifle Club and the St. John's Ambulance Association. The first called for the appointment of a committee of twenty-five citizens, with power to increase its numbers, to "take such steps as may be deemed necessary for enlisting and equipping ... [500] men and ... to act in conjunction with the Government of the Colony and His Excellency the Governor." The committee was to be named by Davidson; once constituted, it was then to enlist the aid of outport magistrates. The second resolution authorized the committee to raise and equip a home defence force. The minister of justice, Richard Squires, paid tribute to Davidson's initiative, noting that the meeting was "a direct result of his personal efforts." Morris spoke last, stating that the meeting was a citizens', not a government meeting, that it had been called to endorse steps which had been taken in response to public sentiment, and that it

<sup>18</sup> Daily News, August 13, 1914.

<sup>19</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 17, 1914.



was up to the public to do its part, "in holding up the hands of the administration in this cause."<sup>20</sup>

The Mail and Advocate, the only newspaper to have refrained from comment on the events of the preceding week, finally broke silence on August 14. It denounced the meeting as a political fraud aimed at rehabilitating the People's Party in the eyes of the public, the committee as a subterfuge intended to mask the government's lack of administrative capability, and the procedure itself as a wilful evasion of the people's rights. Now, it asked, could a meeting of St. John's citizens bind the Newfoundland public when the only competent power was the house of assembly? The following day, however, it adopted a somewhat softened stance and made clear that its main objection lay in the government's failure to consult opposition parties or to invite them to take part at the meeting. By failing to do so it had transformed the Newfoundland war effort into "the concern of the [governing] Party and of a clique."<sup>21</sup>

The Mail and Advocate was justified in raising these issues. In the first place, Morris undoubtedly viewed the proposed

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<sup>20</sup> Daily News, August 13, 1914.

<sup>21</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 14-15, 1914: Coaker himself was a confirmed imperialist. Speaking of his party's general outlook in 1910 he declared: "The Union Party will act exactly as the Labour Party in England ... except that while the Labour Party in England is not of an imperialistic tone, the Union Party in this Colony will be strongly imperialistic. We stand not only for country, but for Empire as well." Quoted in Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, p. 121 from Fishermen's Advocate, October 29, 1910.

military force as a means of restoring some of his government's lost prestige in St. John's, for it not only capitalized on the enthusiasm generated by the declaration of war, but promised to divert attention from widespread commercial and economic dislocations which were expected to follow. Given the response of the other self-governing dominions, it would also have been difficult to avoid. In the second place, the proposed citizens committee averted the cumbersome, slow and expensive process of establishing the necessary government machinery to bring the force into being. The war, of course, was not expected to last beyond Christmas.<sup>22</sup>

The Mail and Advocate's third point — that by its failure to consult members of the opposition the government had subverted the democratic process and rendered the war effort the prerogative of a few — was equally true, but more difficult to explain. It would seem, however, that Morris' reluctance to take opposition parties into his confidence was based on sound political considerations. Fully aware that the war effort required a unified political front, he was nonetheless reluctant to place himself under any direct obligation to the Union Party. A coalition spelled certain disaster, since it would not only render domestic policy subject to the influence of the FPU, but destroy the remnants of his personal support on Water Street and in Roman Catholic areas. He therefore had little choice but to gamble on winning opposition approval through other means; success would hinge on gaining Liberal support for the proposed 'Recruiting Committee'.

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<sup>22</sup>PLC 1917, McGrath, July 5, 1917, p. 88.

On August 13, the day after the public meeting and the day before the Mail and Advocate first made its views known, Davidson drafted a list of forty-three names and submitted it to Morris, suggesting that he cut it down to more manageable proportions. Morris returned the list on August 14, having on the contrary added eight names.<sup>23</sup> A final list of fifty-five names was then published, accompanied by Davidson's explanation that the committee had been expanded "in order to include as many as possible of those whose help is needed to lead the way in the gravest crisis of our history."<sup>24</sup> It included leading members of the mercantile establishment, prominent quasi-military representatives, four opposition and three government MHA's and three professional journalists.<sup>25</sup> Covering letters were sent to individual members of the committee inviting them to attend the initial meeting on August 17.

Davidson spent the intervening period naming the organization the Patriotic Committee, fixing the responsibilities and make-up of various sub-committees ("Ministers are quite ready to accept my lead in all such matters and indeed rather lean on me," he noted in this connection),<sup>26</sup> writing a series of press articles explaining the war<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 17, 1914.

<sup>24</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 14, 1914. The discrepancy of four names remains unaccounted for.

<sup>25</sup> For a detailed breakdown, see below, Chapter III.

<sup>26</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 17, 1914.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., August 21, 1914. They were signed by "a well-informed correspondent," and according to Davidson were "widely read and appreciated."

and attempting to reach some sort of financial understanding with his prime minister. The latter proved the most difficult of all. Initially, Morris indicated the government's willingness to spend up to \$100,000. Because an additional amount was to be raised by voluntary subscription, it was felt that any show of largesse on the part of the government would have a stultifying effect. Financing, of course, hinged on what proportion of the contingent's total cost — still to be determined — the colony was willing to pay. Also remaining to be settled were questions concerning family support, pay scales, pensions and living allowances for soldiers before their departure overseas. Davidson protested that he was unable to fix terms for enlistment until the government addressed such matters: "I cannot impress Ministers with the urgency of rapidity in ... [these matters]. They are so dilatory and avoid giving me a free hand to carry through with a vim." As a result, most substantial issues remained unresolved by the night of August 17.<sup>28</sup>

In order to show that support for the force derived from the community Davidson did not immediately attend, but waited until the colonial secretary had opened the meeting and announced His Excellency's willingness to assist, whereupon it was moved that Davidson be invited to preside. Since Davidson had planned this in advance,<sup>29</sup> he arrived within minutes and was duly installed in

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., August 17, 21, 1914. Davidson also consulted three principal Water Street merchants, Sir Joseph Outerbridge and the Hon. John Harvey and W.C. Job, along with W.D. Reid.

<sup>29</sup> Details are contained in PANL, P8/B/9, file 20, Colonial Secretary's Office.

the chair, amidst "much cheering" and the singing of the national anthem. He then launched into a series of organizational details, including the appointment of individual sub-committees and an outline of their duties. They included proclamation, recruiting, physical fitness, equipment, musketry, finance and nominating committees which, taken together, were expected to cover all aspects of the contingent's nurture and welfare.<sup>30</sup>

A vice-chairman and secretary were also elected, although evidence indicates that Davidson had already chosen them.<sup>31</sup> The Committee readily accepted these proposals, although a great deal of discussion surrounded the extent of local liability for the force and the manner of meeting it. A few favoured a war tax, a larger number that expenses be met by the treasury, while the majority were willing to consider a combination of private and public funding. Unable to reach any firm agreement, the meeting was adjourned until the following night.<sup>32</sup> Referring three years later to the events of the first evening, Davidson conceded: "It was a thrilling evening, a time of tremendous happiness to me."<sup>33</sup>

Far more important, the meeting was a resounding success in terms of its most critical aspect, the attendance of Liberal Party

<sup>30</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, Minutes of General Meetings, 1914-19, August 17, 1914. Officers selection and transport committees were added three days later. For further details, see below, pp. 58-66.

<sup>31</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, file 20, memorandum by Davidson, n.d.; below, pp. 55-56.

<sup>32</sup> Evening Herald, August 18, 1914; CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 21, 1914.

<sup>33</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, Governor's Correspondence, 1916, containing a copy of an address delivered by Davidson in London on December 13, 1917.

appointees, who included Liberal leader J.M. Kent and party representatives J.A. Clift and W.F. Lloyd, editor of the Evening Telegram. All three accepted important positions on key committees, signifying a clear victory for Morris, who could now claim non-partisan support for his war policy. In fact, of the original fifty-five members, all save two — Coaker and H.M. Mosdell, editor of the Mail and Advocate — were present.<sup>34</sup> On August 17 the Mail and Advocate had declared that "no man representing the Opposition could decently accept an appointment on that Committee." However, the following day it was forced to concede the presence of Liberal members, whose patriotism the government had exploited in order to "place upon them the responsibility of shouldering a grave error in judgement and to stave off that indignation which will one day be argued ... over its unconstitutional actions." Reserving its most sweeping condemnation for the governor, it called him "a partisan of the strongest hue" who had "placed party advantage before his duty to the people and the [nation]."<sup>35</sup>

But the Mail and Advocate had little effect on the St. John's public. Backed by the nearly unanimous support of the St. John's community, the following day the Patriotic Committee amassed an

<sup>34</sup> PAUL, GN 1/1/7, Governor's Office, Despatches and Enclosures sent to the Colonial Office, no. 146, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

<sup>35</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 17-19, 1914. Coaker regarded Davidson as little more than a Morris henchman. He had been particularly enraged by the governor's appointment of two defeated People's Party candidates to the executive council in March 1914, and considered Davidson to have been hopelessly compromised by the \$4000 increase in his gubernatorial salary which the government subsequently authorized. See CO 194/288, Davidson to Harcourt, December 14, 1914 and enclosed memorandum, Coaker to Davidson, November 24, 1914.

all-encompassing range of responsibilities, and attempted to extend its influence to the outports. Based on the reasoning that it was intended to be representative of all interests, the nominating committee added some 250 names to the roster, including the prime minister; members of the house of assembly and legislative council; St. John's city commissioners; city clergymen; officers of city societies and unions; several additional St. John's businessmen; and newspaper editors throughout the colony.<sup>36</sup> It also advised that branches be established by outport magistrates to work under the direction of the central committee. The finance committee recommended the inauguration of a privately-subscribed patriotic fund to provide for the families of soldiers, but reserved the matter of pay for future consideration, pending the outcome of correspondence with Canadian military officials. It also recommended that funds for raising, equipping, training and transporting the contingent come from the Newfoundland government until such time as it was handed over to British authorities.<sup>37</sup> In these, as in all matters, the initiative was the governor's, who nevertheless paid tribute to signs of awakening interest among members themselves, who "begin to realize the gravity of the situation."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> On August 19 Davidson added the Roman Catholic archbishop, the Anglican bishop, and Supreme Court judges. CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 21, 1914.

<sup>37</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 18, 1914.

<sup>38</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 21, 1914; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 146, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

A third meeting of the Patriotic Committee was convened on August 20 with over 100 persons in attendance, by which time ministers had finally fixed the rough terms of the colony's financial commitment and the manner in which funding was to be handled. Correspondence between the colonial secretary and the chairman of the finance committee was tabled, which gave notice of the government's intention to meet the entire cost of the contingent both at home and abroad. Following this announcement, the finance committee announced the adoption of Canadian pay scales, which were considerably higher than British scales, commencing at \$1 per day for enlisted men with suitable increases for non-commissioned and commissioned officers. It was proposed that each soldier allot 40c per day to the support of his family, retaining only 60c for himself. These decisions represented a significant departure from previous intentions, and can only be explained in terms of the Canadian example.<sup>39</sup> At this point the government diverged sharply from established practice elsewhere and announced that funds would be made available through the finance committee "from time to time as required, the administration of said funds being in the hands of the Finance Committee subject to the audit of the Auditor General."<sup>40</sup> Davidson estimated an aggregate outlay of approximately \$300,000 for one year, including the cost of the proposed home defence force and the 400-man

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<sup>39</sup>See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Harcourt, October 21, 1914.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., file 1, August 20, 1914; Daily News, August 21, 1914. See also JHA 1915, Report of the Finance Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 324.



addition to the Naval Reserve. This represented a nine per cent increase in total government expenditures.<sup>41</sup>

Having been given a relatively free hand in most matters, the Patriotic Committee was now able to undertake the organization of the force itself. It issued on August 21 a proclamation calling for the enlistment of young men, and the following day enrollment began at the CLB Armoury. Before the end of the month almost 600 men had volunteered, almost all of whom were from the city.<sup>42</sup> Safe in the assurance that St. John's and the Liberals supported its efforts, and that it was keeping pace with the other dominions,<sup>43</sup> the government could now face the prospect of meeting the house with confidence.

In fact, by now all three parties agreed on the need to convene the legislature and on August 18 Morris conferred with Kent. Kent approached Coaker the following day.<sup>44</sup> Coaker's options had already been severely circumscribed by the actions of the Liberal Party and by the fact that for over two weeks he had been pressing the government to meet the house in order to deal with unemployment, dislocated fish markets, falling fish prices and the rising cost of provisions. The latter had been attributed to profiteering Water Street merchants, many of whom, as the Mail and Advocate pointed out, were prominent

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<sup>41</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

<sup>42</sup> Mail and Advocate, September 1, 1914.

<sup>43</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

<sup>44</sup> Evening Telegram, August 20-21, 1914.

members of the Patriotic Committee.<sup>45</sup> Coaker countered with an offer to support the government on condition that it address these and other matters, and consult the opposition with a view to united action.<sup>46</sup> Morris agreed, and it was announced that the legislature would convene in a special war session on September 2. Several days later, Coaker demanded price supports for fish, public control of provisions and the establishment of a coalition.<sup>47</sup> None of these demands could possibly have been met by a government which anticipated future Water Street support.

By the time the house finally opened, the government had smoothed over these differences, principally by agreeing to certain other of Coaker's proposals. Referring to the events of the preceding four weeks, Kent declared on behalf of the Liberal Party:

We are here to sanction measures taken by government and to provide the legislative authority without which their validity might be questioned.... So long as hostilities continue, so long as the Empire is engaged with a foreign foe, you will find no criticism, no opposition, from this side of the House.<sup>48</sup>

Coaker spoke of the Union Party's desire to facilitate the war effort and explained his initial refusal to join the Patriotic Committee on

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<sup>45</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 19, 24, 1914.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., August 20, 1914.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., August 29, 1914.

<sup>48</sup> Daily News, September 3, 1914; Mail and Advocate, September 3, 1914. See also PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 155, Davidson to Harcourt, September 7, 1914.

grounds that without legislative approval it was the tool of one party. Morris responded that even he had not been among the original fifty-five members,<sup>49</sup> and the Patriotic Committee was not mentioned again during the remainder of the session.<sup>50</sup>

Coaker was able to console himself with having had "most" legislation submitted to his party in advance<sup>51</sup> and with seeing several of his proposals enshrined in law.<sup>52</sup> Additional legislation empowered the governor-in-council "to do and authorize such acts and things, and to make, from time to time, such orders and regulations, as he may, by reason of the existence of real or apprehended war, invasion or insurrection, deem necessary or advisable for the security, defence, peace, order and welfare of Newfoundland," retroactive to August 1, 1914 (The

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<sup>49</sup> Evening Telegram, September 5, 1914. According to Davidson, Coaker expressed an interest in joining the Committee on August 27. The governor responded that his presence would be welcome at the meeting that night. However, Coaker failed to attend. The Mail and Advocate continued to take exception to the idea of a land, as opposed to a naval force, to the fact that the commitment had been made without prior reference to the house, and to equate the Patriotic Association with Water Street. See CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914; Mail and Advocate, September 10, 12, 18, 19, 1914 and passim; below, pp. 100-101.

<sup>50</sup> The closest legislative reference to the Patriotic Committee is contained in The Volunteer Force Loan Act, 1914, 5 Geo. V, cap 8, sec. 1, which states: "The said sum ... to be expended in such manner and by such persons as shall be determined by the Governor in Council."

<sup>51</sup> Mail and Advocate, August 31, 1914.

<sup>52</sup> They included an inquiry into the seal fishery and regulations requiring that all sealing steamers be equipped with a wireless, prompted by a large loss of life in the spring. In addition, the cabinet was empowered to take possession of foodstuffs "unreasonably withheld", to proclaim a moratorium on all debts and to authorize bank payments in paper rather than gold.

War Measures Act, 1914), and to raise a volunteer force. Several financial measures were also introduced. All passed virtually without debate, and at the end of a five-day session the house adjourned.

War has traditionally been the prerogative of executive government and has always implied the right of the party in power to exercise wide discretionary powers, including the right to proclaim rules and regulations which have the effect of law.<sup>53</sup> This privilege was formally conferred on the Newfoundland government by the War Measures Act (passed September 7, 1914), which was modelled on similar British and Canadian statutes. Authority could be wielded directly, through a series of orders-in-council, or delegated to a third body or party, giving rise to a wide variety of ad hoc committees and boards which administered key aspects of the war effort on behalf of governments throughout the empire. The majority of these bodies were headed and staffed by businessmen. They also possessed the power to make rules and regulations which were binding, provided only that a preliminary order-in-council had duly constituted and confirmed them.

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<sup>53</sup> The following discussion involving the legal and technical aspects of delegated and sub-delegated authority derives from F.H. Lawson and D.J. Bentley, Constitutional and Administrative Law (London: Butterworths, 1961), pp. 55-63; Blackpool Corporation v. Locher [1948], 1, All England Law Reports (Annotated), 85-104. It was not until 1947 that British courts formally ruled on these matters.

However, the right to conduct the war effort was never formally conferred on the Patriotic Committee. In spite of the all-encompassing range of responsibilities which befell the Patriotic Committee and its successor, the Patriotic Association, the government chose not to regularize its status or function as a war ministry, for fear, undoubtedly, of seeing its own authority so seriously attenuated. Neither did the government choose the more cumbersome method of relegating members to an advisory capacity, rendering each individual decision subject to an enabling order-in-council and hence a matter for prolonged political debate. Indeed, the administration's expressed purpose in creating the Patriotic Committee was to remove party politics from the war, and it was by involving Liberal representatives in both policy and administrative decisions that it was able to ensure continuing opposition support. Without this support it is unlikely that the government could have carried through on its own.

Once the necessary approval for the war effort had been secured from the legislature, Davidson recommended that the Patriotic Committee be renamed the Patriotic Association of Newfoundland <sup>54</sup> (commonly referred to as the NPA), signifying its general acceptance by the most influential members of the community. The new name was also intended to reflect the claim that the Association represented all parts of the island and Labrador. From these beginnings it simply grew, fed by the momentum of a prolonged war, on lines which were generally accepted as practical. Describing the process at a later date, Davidson declared:

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<sup>54</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, September 11, 1914.

The Patriotic Association was devised to carry national affairs out of the domain of politics. That done, we just sorted ourselves into the jobs for which we were best suited.... We got the best brains of the country in every special line without paying for them.<sup>55</sup>

The Patriotic Association was primarily a political expedient, designed at the outset of war by the governor and prime minister to overcome serious military, financial, administrative and political obstacles, permitting the colony to take its rightful place alongside Great Britain and the other dominions. Both the government and opposition also hoped that it would keep religious differences to a minimum.<sup>56</sup> In addition, the government was relying on the war effort, and therefore indirectly on the Association, to rehabilitate the People's Party in the eyes of the St. John's public, and particularly Water Street. Davidson's and Morris' initial disregard for the constitutional conventions of responsible government and the Association's continuing absence of legal sanction did not worry anyone as long as the war effort enjoyed the support of the three political parties and major opinion leaders. Although many were aware of these irregularities,<sup>57</sup> only a few FPU supporters objected, but they quickly withdrew their objections.

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<sup>55</sup> Daily Star, October 20, 1917. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, address by Davidson, December 13, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, March 12, 1917.

<sup>56</sup> Sir Leonard Outerbridge, son of Sir Joseph Outerbridge, interview conducted by the writer on October 12, 1976; Newfoundland Quarterly, Summer, 1917, p. 1; below, p. 58 and passim.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c containing an address delivered by Morris in London on December 13, 1917; also, below, pp. 283-84.

out of a genuine desire to take part in the war.<sup>58</sup> The unaccustomed unanimity on the part of politicians and the press was largely a result of the appropriateness of the means, the recruitment of key personnel and the skillful mobilization of the St. John's community, for which the governor mainly was responsible.

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<sup>58</sup>PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 170, Davidson to Harcourt, October 20, 1914. See also Mail and Advocate, November 16, 1914.

CHAPTER III  
THE STRUCTURE OF THE NPA

The Patriotic Association was essentially a St. John's organization dominated by the commercial elite, the professional middle class and a small group of St. John's-based politicians. Through the inclusion of members of the house of assembly, outport journalists and medical doctors<sup>1</sup> in the central committee, and the establishment of outport branches, it achieved a pseudo-representative aspect and hence a semblance of legitimacy, confirmed by the Crown's representative, the governor. News of the war, the proposed military force and the extension of the NPA was received with varying degrees of enthusiasm outside the city,<sup>2</sup> but under the guiding hand of outport magistrates forty-five branches boasting 300 members had been established by the end of September.<sup>3</sup> Following a brief flurry of fund-raising activity during the fall and winter of 1914-15, the majority fell into abeyance. The St. John's committee did little to prevent or repair this.

The reasons for this shortsightedness — for this is what it turned out to be — can perhaps best be explained in terms of

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<sup>1</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 20, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., file 24, Telegrams and letters received from Associations [sic] outside St. John's, 1914.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., file 1, September 28, 1914.



the capital's characteristic disregard for anything outside its own geographic confines, and the Association's willingness to rely on traditional administrative methods. Rather than devote the necessary energy to fostering support for the war effort outside St. John's, the NPA chose to rely on the voluntary services of outport clergymen, government officials, doctors and merchants, who were not always able to convey the more natural enthusiasm of their St. John's counterparts. The result was a lack of an effective organization in rural areas which was to have serious repercussions.

Neither were outport politicians inclined to fill in the gap. Once they had glimpsed the measure of outport resistance to the St. John's-dominated war effort they stood back, aloof and afraid, willing as much distance as possible between themselves and outport recruiting campaigns.<sup>4</sup> This was equally true of both government and opposition members, with few exceptions, and was reflected in the stand of all three political parties. Thus NPA branches existed, where they existed at all, with only a minimum of direction and encouragement from the capital. Little wonder, therefore, that they failed to live up to the original expectations of a distant St. John's elite.

The Women's Patriotic Association, by way of contrast, far outstripped its male counterpart in both organization and popular appeal. Founded by Lady Davidson in August 1914 and organized principally through the wives of outport clergy, it claimed 183 branches and

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<sup>4</sup> This is a factor discussed more fully below, Chapters V and X.

over 7000 members in little over a year.<sup>5</sup> The WFA confined itself mainly to providing comforts for "the boys" overseas, and St. John's recruiters were frequently dumbfounded by the discovery of a dedicated group of women working through long winter nights in remote settlements, often the only sign that a war was in progress.<sup>6</sup> As far as can be determined, it took little or no part in outport recruiting campaigns.

Of the original fifty-five members of the Patriotic Committee, over half were businessmen, and the majority of these were leading representatives of major Water Street firms. Their willingness to shoulder the burden was primarily a function of British ties. It was also in keeping with their long-standing distrust of local politicians, and later to the unabashed commercial advantages which accrued as a result of the war and the colony's participation.<sup>7</sup> Several more were smaller businessmen, engaged wholly in the local trade, for whom the war and the Regiment was also shortly to afford unexpected business opportunities.

Twelve of the original number were representatives of local para-military or para-medical organizations, including the heads of the four brigades, the Frontiersmen, the Rifle Club, the St. John's Ambulance Association, the Newfoundland Constabulary and the local branch of the Naval Reserve. They were predominantly professional men.

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<sup>5</sup> JHA 1916, Report of the Women's Patriotic Association, February, 1916, in NFA Report, 1916, p. 345.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, April 9, 1917.

<sup>7</sup> This factor is discussed fully below, Chapter VIII.

For then the war represented an unexpected opportunity to fulfil an important military function, and they remained the backbone of several important committees. Seven more were politicians — M.P. Cashin, J.R. Bennett and F.J. Morris for the government; W.F. Lloyd, J.M. Kent and J.M. Clift on behalf of the Liberal Party; and W.F. Coaker representing the Union Party.<sup>8</sup> Closely associated with them were three journalists — P.T. McGrath, H.M. Mosdell, and the Hon. J.A. Robinson, proprietor of the Daily News. Also included were the superintendents of the Roman Catholic and Anglican school boards, V.P. Burke and W.W. Blackall. Levi Curtis, superintendent of the Methodist school board, was quickly added. The sweeping additions made later were intended to include the most influential persons in the colony, bringing total membership in the Patriotic Association to just over 300.<sup>9</sup>

The Association's executive officers, excluding the chairman, seem to have played a comparatively minor role. Its vice-chairman, Sir Joseph Outerbridge, was a principal shareholder and director of Harvey and Company, one of the oldest and most important Water Street firms. He had been described by Davidson's predecessor as the colony's leading citizen and, even better, as "absolutely independent of politics," a view which was subsequently confirmed by Governor Harris.<sup>10</sup> Outerbridge

<sup>8</sup> As far as can be determined, Coaker attended only one meeting. See PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 10, 1914. Also see Evening Telegram, January 4, 1918.

<sup>9</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 146, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

<sup>10</sup> CO 448/9, Ralph Williams to Harcourt, February 18, 1911; Ibid., Williams to Harcourt, October 14, 1912; CO 539/1170, Harris to Long, September 30, 1918. Harris succeeded Davidson in December 1917.

had also been commanding officer of the CLB from 1901 to 1903. However, his business continued to take him to England for long periods and he does not appear to have spent a great deal of time on the affairs of the NPA. V.P. Burke was secretary and, although he did not play a significant role in his executive capacity, he was a key member of several committees. Burke was also a captain in the CCC and was singled out mainly because of his religious denomination.

Once major administrative details had been worked out and committees were functioning on their own, general meetings were convened at the Colonial Building at approximately monthly intervals, although this could vary. Attendance was irregular, but generally high, sessions attracting as many as 100 and never falling below fifty. Davidson always presided, with the prime minister or deputy prime minister seated on his right, and the leader of the opposition on his left. The chief justice, Sir William Horwood, usually sat with them and sometimes the Anglican Bishop as well. Following minutes of the previous meeting, the chairman opened with information regarding the strength of Regiment, promotions, honours and losses, details of particular engagements and a general overview of the war. The careers of officers serving in other regiments and with other forces were also touched upon. Davidson then outlined important new developments, after which individual committee chairmen gave their reports, which were generally followed by discussion. Davidson submitted yearly reports of the Association, including most standing committee reports, to the legislature.

The division of responsibility between the NPA and the government was never clearly defined, although there were certain

important conventions.<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, policy matters were discussed by Davidson and Morris, and possibly Cashin and Bennett. Executive members of important committees were also consulted, and they included key opposition members. Once a decision had been reached it was presented to the general meeting as a recommendation of the pertinent committee. The prime minister then publicly endorsed it on behalf of the government, and the leader of the opposition on behalf of his party. Discussion followed, although in most instances unanimous approval was assured. Morris was extremely sensitive to the need of having each new undertaking approved by the Association, as he was forced to remind Davidson on more than one occasion.<sup>12</sup> With only occasional differences, this system functioned smoothly to the end of 1916.

Once a matter of policy had been approved, the implementation of that policy was left in the hands of the appropriate standing committee. To the standing committees was entrusted the day-to-day direction of the war effort, although Davidson remained in constant touch with chairmen and secretaries. Both standing committees and the NPA itself could appoint sub-committees having either permanent or temporary status. The make-up of all major committees was determined by Davidson, following consultation with Morris and existing chairmen and secretaries. Two unspoken conventions dominated their composition:

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<sup>11</sup>For Davidson's description of general principles and procedures, see PANL, GN 1/1/7. no. 39, Davidson to Long, April 2, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, June 2, 1917.

<sup>12</sup>See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Morris to Davidson, November 9, 1914; *Ibid.*, file 22d, Governor's Correspondence, 1917, Morris to Davidson, July 13, 1917.

the first that they contain a rough denominational balance, the same convention as had always applied in political life.<sup>13</sup> This principle was also held to apply to regimental positions, particularly by Roman Catholics.<sup>14</sup> The second was that important committees contain at least one government and one opposition MHA, which generally applied to most other committees as well. A third, less well fixed convention, dictated that whenever possible deputy chairmen of standing committees be members of the House. These conventions were never formally adopted, but simply evolved and were adhered to because they were practical and worked.

Two standing committees, finance and reserve force, assumed paramount importance from the beginning.<sup>15</sup> The twenty-member finance committee was composed mainly of prominent St. John's merchants under the chairmanship of the Hon. (later Sir) E.R. Bowring, local representative of the Liverpool house of Bowring Brothers, the leading Water Street firm.<sup>16</sup> Its treasurer was Bowring's son-in-law, J.S. Munn, also a director of Bowring Brothers. P.T. McGrath was secretary. Also included were V.P. Burke, J.M. Kent, ex-St. John's mayor W.J. Ellis and finance minister M.P. Cashin, all of whom were Roman Catholic. With the exception of Cashin, who was the government's watchdog, they were

<sup>13</sup> Above, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> This aspect is discussed fully below, Chapter VI.

<sup>15</sup> A third committee, the pensions and disabilities board, assumed major importance from 1917 onwards. Unless otherwise indicated, the following details derive from PANL, PB/B/9, file 1, August 17, 20, 1914; JHA 1916, NFA Report, March 1916, pp. 307-10.

<sup>16</sup> CO 448/11, Davidson to Harcourt, April 4, 1915.

included mainly to counterbalance the committee's Protestant make-up, although Kent also represented the opposition party. Cashin was deputy chairman, and assumed the chair during Bowring's frequent absences from the colony.

The finance committee had complete control of all regimental expenditures, payable from government funds advanced as required. Although the government sanctioned all major financial commitments at the start, it seems to have exerted no direct influence over day-to-day spending, which was left principally in the hands of McGrath and Munn.<sup>17</sup> The sole authority for this trust stemmed from the August 20 Patriotic Committee meeting, since there was no covering minute of council.<sup>18</sup> It certainly was an unorthodox arrangement, although existing evidence does suggest that the finance committee was fairly vigilant in monitoring expenses.<sup>19</sup>

The reserve force committee was appointed on October 23, 1914 to undertake the raising, equipping and training of a supplementary force of 250 men. However, as the war lengthened and the number of recruits grew it was given direct responsibility for most military matters, including the management and direction of St. John's headquarters

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<sup>17</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1917, file 48, Harris to Long, March 26, 1918.

<sup>18</sup> Oddly enough, the following month the government did approve the adoption of Canadian pay scales. "as recommended by the Officers Selection Committee of the Patriotic Association" and subsequently awarded franking privileges on grounds that "the Patriotic Association is disbursing funds provided by the government and is ... practically a government department." PANL, GN 9/1, Minutes of Council, September 28, November 9, 1914.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp.

and the selection of overseas officers. It became in effect the executive NFA committee and the coordinating regimental authority. Inexplicably, the original name stuck until the spring of 1916 when Davidson finally suggested that it be renamed the standing committee on military organization, commonly referred to as the standing committee.<sup>20</sup>

Originally it consisted of only thirteen members, including R.G. Rendell, C. O'Neil Conroy, C.H. Hutchings, Drs. Lamont Paterson and Cluny Macpherson, and W.H. Rennie, respective heads of the CLB, the CCC, the MGB, the Newfoundland Highlanders, the St. John's Ambulance Association and the Rifle Club. Sir Joseph Outerbridge was chairman, although Davidson seems to have played a very large role. Deputy chairman was J.A. Clift, MHA, described by both Davidson and his successor as an "excellent man" of "high reputation," possessing "remarkable skill and tact,"<sup>21</sup> which were called into play during Outerbridge's extended leaves. Clift's was a highly visible role and a difficult one, but he suffered from ill health. The extent to which he was able to exert influence over other members of the committee remains unclear. V.P. Burke was secretary. Also included were W.J. Higgins, People's Party representative for St. John's East, J.J. McKay, a businessman and officer in the Newfoundland Highlanders, and A.J. Montgomerie, local manager of the Furness Withy Company. Montgomerie was a thirty-two

<sup>20</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 1, May 26, 1916.

<sup>21</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, January 8, 1918. Clift was a lawyer by profession.



year old native of Halifax and a former commissioned officer in the Canadian militia.<sup>22</sup> Last of the original members was E.A. Ayre, son of prominent Water Street merchant C.P. Ayre, and an officer in the MGB. Once it became clear that enlistments would exceed original expectations and that a coordinating body was needed, the chairmen of all existing NPA committees were added, along with W.D. Reid (later Sir) and J.W.N. Johnstone of the Reid Newfoundland Company.<sup>23</sup> The standing committee was enlarged again during the summer of 1916, bringing its total membership to twenty-six.<sup>24</sup>

Regimental headquarters was established on October 26, 1914 under Montgomerie's direction.<sup>25</sup> He subsequently became commanding officer subject to Davidson as Lt.-colonel-in-chief, and the civilian reserve force committee, and was responsible for most day-to-day administration and training. Executive control was exercised at informal weekly meetings between Davidson, Montgomerie and later regimental medical director Dr. Cluny Macpherson, who was an officer in the RAMC.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Governor's Correspondence, 1915, Davidson to Lord Islington, May 15, 1915; Newfoundland Quarterly, Summer 1918, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> JHA 1915, Report of the Reserve Force Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 329.

<sup>24</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Standing Committee on Military Organization, February, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 348.

<sup>25</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Reserve Force Committee, Minutes, 1914-16, October 26, 1914.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., file 18c, V.P. Burke, 1916, Davidson to Burke, December 21, 1916. Macpherson served overseas during most of 1915 and 1916.

Montgomery remained a civilian and retained his civilian employment,<sup>27</sup> although he became an Honorary captain, later major, commissioned at headquarters.

Among the lesser standing committees appointed on August 17 and 20 were the nominating, proclamation, musketry, physical fitness, equipment, transport, officers selection and recruiting committees. The nominating committee consisted of J.A. Clift, F.J. Morris and W.J. Ellis. It was established to invite "leading people" throughout the colony to join the Patriotic Committee,<sup>28</sup> but once this had been done, and outpost magistrates invited to establish branches in their districts, it lapsed. Thereafter, members were added by having their names brought forward at regular NPA meetings. The proclamation committee consisted of Bennett, Bowring, Cashin, Ellis, Burke, and the Hon<sup>ble</sup> John Harris and John Harvey, MLCs. Harvey was a principal director of Harvey and Company. Following agreement on pay scales, Davidson drew up the original proclamation outlining the terms of enlistment. It was then submitted to members of the committee, revised, and issued to the press.<sup>29</sup> This committee also seems to have lapsed, although it remained on the role of standing committees. The musketry

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., file 22b, Davidson to Islington, May 15, 1915. Although within military age and fit, Montgomery never volunteered for active service, being "unable to leave his business position." Davidson described him as "an exceedingly capable and hardworking administrator and also a kind-hearted Irishman."

<sup>28</sup> JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, p. 309.

<sup>29</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 24, 1914. Davidson pointedly noted that the proclamation had been "cut down in length from my original, and not improved."

committee consisted of members of the St. John's Rifle Club. An executive of business and professional men (W.H. Rennie, W.H. Green, F.W. Angel, J.W. Morris, and W.J. Higgins, MHA) was appointed to draw up the necessary training program. Several members received honorary commissions, and continued to direct instruction to the end of the war, although the principal object was to despatch troops as quickly as possible to Great Britain. The physical fitness committee consisted of Drs. Macpherson, Lamont Paterson, and Chaytor, and was responsible for determining physical standards and conducting medical examinations, with the assistance of doctors throughout the colony. However, regimental requirements soon outstripped this voluntary arrangement, a regimental medical officer was employed on a part-time basis<sup>30</sup> and the committee was abandoned.

The equipment committee consisted of Herbert Outerbridge, son of Sir Joseph Outerbridge and also a director of Harvey and Company, and the quartermasters of the four cadet corps. Outerbridge subsequently became regimental quartermaster with a staff of his own, and was responsible for outfitting the Regiment in St. John's. Tendering was widespread during the fall of 1914 and resulted in a number of loose contracts, which for the most part seem to have remained in place to the end of the war. The principal beneficiary was the Newfoundland Clothing Company, whose shareholders included the Hon. R.K. Bishop. Differences erupted in 1916 when J.B. Urquhart replaced Outerbridge and objected to the committee's lack of control. Other members of the committee

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<sup>30</sup> See below, pp. 222-24.

threatened to resign unless Urquhart were removed, and the matter was resolved by having the finance committee bypass Urquhart thereafter.<sup>31</sup> Similar problems beset the transport committee, and were perhaps inevitable in a small community which allowed the control of public affairs to rest in the hands of private citizens.

The original transport committee consisted of the local agents of three major British and Canadian steamship companies (George Shea, A.J. Harvey of A. Harvey and Company and A.J. Montgomerie) and was empowered to conclude a contract for the transport of the first contingent. After local firms protested that they had been deliberately excluded,<sup>32</sup> the committee was disbanded and a new one installed, made up of Sir Joseph Outerbridge, M.P. Cashin and R.G. Rendell. It subsequently became a sub-committee of the reserve force committee, and continued to oversee the conveyance of troops either from St. John's or via rail and steamer to Halifax, Saint John, New Brunswick or Quebec, there to await transport directly by Canadian transport officials.

The officers selection committee was appointed on August 20 to consider applications for overseas commissions, and it consisted of Sir Joseph Outerbridge, the commanding officers of the four cadet corps, Bennett, Burke and Davidson. Nevertheless, under the Volunteer

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<sup>31</sup> For further details, see PANL, P8/H/9, file 21e, Prime Minister's Correspondence, 1918, Bennett to Lloyd, October 30, 1918; *Ibid.*, file 19a, Chairman, Standing Committee, 1916, Equipment Committee to Joseph Outerbridge, October 12, 1916; *Ibid.*, file 25b, Regimental Correspondence, 1, Urquhart to Clift, January 12, 1917.

<sup>32</sup> See below, pp. 79-81.

Force Act, 1914, the governor was empowered to appoint the Regiment's commanding officer, who was empowered in turn to appoint all commissioned and non-commissioned officers.<sup>33</sup> Several days in advance of the act being passed, however, Davidson appointed himself Lt.-colonel. Anticipating some hesitation on the part of the Colonial Office, he gave his assurance that he was the unanimous choice of the officers selection committee:

Nevertheless, in view of the criticisms which may follow the acceptance by the Governor of an Executive Command, I first offered the post to ... Outerbridge, ... Rendell and ... Conroy.<sup>34</sup> All three declined and pressed me to accept.<sup>35</sup>

The officers selection committee was intended to serve as a buffer in order that Davidson's name not be too closely associated with the awarding of commissions, which were bound to pose problems for a number of reasons.<sup>35</sup> It also assumed responsibility for staff appointments in St. John's, and subsequently became a sub-committee of the reserve force committee.

The original recruiting committee was restricted to four St. John's brigade members, W.H. Franklin, C.H. Hutchings, G.T. Carty and A.J. Montgomerie, officers of outport brigades and outport magistrates. Before the end of 1914, a new committee was appointed consisting

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<sup>33</sup> See Newfoundland Acts 1914, The Volunteer Force Act, 5 Geo. V, cap. 4, sec. 2.

<sup>34</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 156, Davidson to Harcourt, September 21, 1914. See also Evening Telegram, September 2, 1914.

<sup>35</sup> CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914; below, p. 73. This aspect is discussed fully below, Chapter VI.

of the Hon. W.C. Job, a principal of the Water Street firm of Job Brothers, A.W. Piccott, MHA for Harbour Grace and minister of marine and fisheries, and F.J. Morris, MHA for Placentia-St. Mary's.<sup>36</sup> In the spring of 1916 it was reorganized again under F.J. Morris, W.F. Lloyd and the three superintendents of education,<sup>37</sup> although W.B. Grieve, principal director of Baine Johnston Company, a major firm, soon replaced Lloyd as secretary. Unfortunately, few records of this all-important committee survive, and the reason is clear. The suppression of its reports must be regarded as a deliberate attempt on the part of NPA officials and the government to mask the nature and extent of outport resistance to the war effort.<sup>38</sup>

Other standing committees were established later to meet subsequent requirements. They included the non-combatant selection committee, created in the fall of 1915 to consider applications for overseas service in auxiliary departments under the direction of Chief Justice Horwood,<sup>39</sup> the employment, forestry, food, war history, and war memorial committees, in addition to a pay and pensions board and various fund raising and hospital committees. These committees are dealt with in

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<sup>36</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 10, 1914.

<sup>37</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916.

<sup>38</sup> See below, Chapter V.

<sup>39</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Non-Combatant Selection Committee, March, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 365. By the spring of 1917, three chaplains, seven doctors, six hospital orderlies and twenty-six nurses and VADs had been despatched overseas. They were absorbed into British services and paid by the British government, with the exception of doctors who were paid by the Newfoundland government on the Newfoundland scale.

succeeding chapters. However, throughout 1914 and most of 1915 no one foresaw any need for them, since no one had any real conception of the awesome destructive capabilities of modern technology, the strategic paralysis of the military command or the sacrifices that the colony would be called on to make over the next four years. Developments in Newfoundland generally mirrored developments in Canada and Great Britain, where similar committees, boards and even new ministries were established. However, they came under the supervision of regular government departments, whereas in Newfoundland the NPA fulfilled this function, and remained, in effect, the quasi-official department of militia for almost three years.

Perhaps the most unusual aspect lay in Davidson's position. Although constitutional governor of a self-governing dominion, he was also ~~ex~~ officio minister of militia and Lt.-colonel-in-chief of the Newfoundland Regiment, with power of appointment over all officers and NPA committee members. If he had any misgivings regarding his position at the outset, he seems to have quickly set them aside and imposed himself on the political scene in a novel fashion.

CHAPTER IV  
THE FOUNDATION OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT

In many respects the Great War, as it was known to its contemporaries, began as a do-it-yourself kind of war. Armies were largely 'people's armies' in the sense that they were composed of non-professional soldiers who were frequently recruited, equipped and had their interests watched over by civilians. At the beginning, most governments were more than willing to rely on various voluntary organizations and the press to propagate support for the war effort and encourage recruitment.<sup>1</sup> A non-partisan Central Committee for National Patriotic Organizations was established in Great Britain in August 1914, headed by Asquith, Balfour and the Earl of Rosebery, to coordinate patriotic activities throughout the country. Its aims were primarily educational. The privately-subscribed Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, chaired by Asquith in conjunction with Bonar Law and Henderson, assumed a more active recruiting role, producing pamphlets and posters which were distributed throughout the empire. Constituency organizations provided speakers and coordinated local recruiting rallies, until conscription and growing discontent on the home front forced them to direct their efforts to sustaining civilian morale.

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<sup>1</sup>For a thorough treatment of this subject in the British context, see Haste, Home Fires, Chapters 3-4 and passim.



In Canada, a Speakers' Patriotic League was formed in February 1915 to raise money, promote regional organization and assist local military recruiters. Many of its branches were highly organized, and were broken down into a number of committees reminiscent of NPA committees, whose principal function was to provide soldiers and sailors for Canadian forces abroad. Believing that its main problem lay in keeping public enthusiasm within bounds, the Canadian government initially refused to grant any material assistance, and it was not until June 1915 that it was even persuaded to make recruiting continuous.<sup>2</sup> Undoubtedly, these bodies made an important contribution, but they supported rather than supplanted government efforts.

Regional and 'pals' battalions sprang up in both Great Britain and Canada during the early days of the war. The authorities welcomed these, since they both encouraged local interest and ensured esprit de corps. In Great Britain they were raised, equipped, housed and trained, not by the War Office, but by municipalities and prominent local individuals. No fewer than 300 British units were raised in this manner.<sup>3</sup> Eventually, even the Canadian government sanctioned the raising of county battalions commanded by local officers, and announced that communities enlisting a minimum of twenty-five men were eligible to

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<sup>2</sup>For further details, see Barbara Wilson, Ontario and the First World War, 1914-1918 (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1977), particularly pp. xxxiiff. See also John Herd Thompson, The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), p. 35.

<sup>3</sup>Haste, Home Fires, pp. 52-53.

became regional training centres. By 1916 practically every county and every major centre in Ontario had its own infantry battalion, and large cities had several.<sup>4</sup> This arrangement effectively exploited local pride, but could not withstand conditions at the front. On arrival in Great Britain, these units were broken up to provide reinforcements for casualty-ridden battalions already in service, and inexperienced senior officers were temporarily shelved. Reluctantly, Canadian military officials abandoned the idea of local battalions and instituted a more integrated system with a number of battalions from each province, which could then be reinforced on a continuing basis.<sup>5</sup> A similar adjustment also took place in Great Britain.

In time the haphazard volunteerism of the early days of the war gave way to government regulation and control of most facets of life, civilian as well as military, so that by 1918 the concept of a 'people's army' was but a memory. However, it flourished in St. John's during the fall of 1914 and, as a result, the Newfoundland Regiment was formed.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Wilson, Ontario, pp. xxxv-xxxvii, xlv.

<sup>5</sup> Keith, War Government, pp. 75-76; Wilson, Ontario, pp. xlviii-xlix, lx; Desmond Morton, "Junior but Sovereign Allies: The Transformation of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-18," Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, VIII (October 1979), 59.

<sup>6</sup> Forerunners had existed from 1795 to 1802 and again from 1803 to 1816. For further details, see Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 31-85.

Once physical requirements had been established at five feet, four inches and 140 pounds,<sup>7</sup> enrolment began at the CLB Armoury on August 22. Within twenty-one days 880 men had volunteered, 630 of whom were from St. John's. They included the sons of "nearly all the leading residents" of the capital.<sup>8</sup> Five hundred and twenty were accepted, 200 rejected, and the remainder held under consideration.<sup>9</sup> Approximately two-thirds had seen previous service in city brigades.<sup>10</sup> Recruiting in the city was then suspended, but it continued in the out-ports for another two weeks. At the end of this period a total of 970 men had volunteered, of whom roughly 600 were accepted.<sup>11</sup> The total was further reduced through dropouts, and by granting married men and only sons the option of retaining positions in St. John's. This small group later became the core of the headquarters staff.<sup>12</sup>

With only the experience of cadet corps behind them, members of the Patriotic Association, with the community's support,

<sup>7</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 20, 1914.

<sup>8</sup>PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 156, Davidson to Harcourt, September 21, 1914.

<sup>9</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, September 11, 1914. Initially, Davidson had anticipated a roughly equal proportion of St. John's and outport recruits. See CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

<sup>10</sup>Daily News, September 3, 1914. A breakdown of the first 442 reads as follows: CCC, 174; CLB, 130; MGB, 73; Highlanders, 47; Frontiersmen, 18.

<sup>11</sup>Evening Telegram, September 29, 1914. The term of enlistment was to the end of the war or one year.

<sup>12</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, September 28, 1914; Evening Telegram, October 6, 1914.

managed to provide the rudiments of training and equipment to a force of 540 men by October 3, 1914. A temporary military camp was erected on the outskirts of town at Pleasantville under the direction of the equipment committee. Offers of free transportation for outport recruits by the Reid Newfoundland Company, Bowring Brothers and Newfoundland Produce Company,<sup>13</sup> the services of two instructors from the Reids,<sup>14</sup> clerical assistance from G.N. Read, Son and Watson<sup>15</sup> and the free use of land, buildings, cars, tents and other equipment facilitated the effort to get training underway. Brigade officers and members of the St. John's Rifle Club conducted this training,<sup>16</sup> since only two members of the first contingent had any experience at real soldiering. Captain Alexander, a retired British officer who had served in the Boer War, was passing through St. John's when war was declared. He was appointed second-in-command. The second, who had been a private in the British army and was temporarily resident in St. John's, found himself appointed regimental sergeant major.<sup>17</sup>

The selection of camp staff provided an even more delicate matter than the choice of NPA committee members. On August 25 Davidson

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<sup>13</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 20, 1914.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., August 29, 1914; JHA 1915, Report of the Reserve Force Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 330.

<sup>15</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 29, 1914.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, draft report by F.T. McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part in the Great War;" PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Memorandum by Davidson, September 8, 1914.

drew up a list of camp officers, carefully weighed and balanced, "so that all sections of the community may be identified with the work."<sup>18</sup> By 'sections' he meant 'denominations', and of the ten who appeared on the original list, three were officers in the CCC, three in the MGB, two in the CLB, and one in the Legion of Frontiersmen. Apparently the CLB merited one fewer representative since it claimed the senior staff officer. Also included was H.A. Timewell, a chartered accountant, who was regimental paymaster. Davidson informed the secretary of state:

I prepared the list myself but its adoption (with some changes) will appear as the choice of the Officers Commanding the four Cadet Corps, and the report will be submitted to the Patriotic Committee by Sir Joseph Outerbridge. This course is taken by the desire of the Premier who wishes to avoid the association of my name with any criticism which may follow the appointments, actuated by religious or political differences.<sup>19</sup>

It was a wise decision, for as late as December 1915 Davidson was called upon to justify the precedence which had obtained among the camp's senior officers, which he defended on the grounds of military training and length of service in city brigades.<sup>20</sup> The list was altered slightly by the officers selection committee, which dropped two names and added another; the final result was that the CCC had one fewer representative.<sup>21</sup>

1914.

<sup>18</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, August 25,

<sup>19</sup>CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt, August 29, 1914.

<sup>20</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, December 31, 1915.

<sup>21</sup>The original list may be located in *Ibid.*, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, August 25, 1914; the final list in Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 106.

Outfitting the men proved a major problem. British ordnance offices were unable to furnish even a small proportion of British requirements, so that Davidson was informed the colony must rely on its own resources.<sup>22</sup> Lengthy negotiations with Canadian military officials and private suppliers eventually yielded 500 Ross rifles at exorbitant cost,<sup>23</sup> but they arrived the day after the contingent sailed from St. John's.<sup>24</sup> Regulation khaki serge was unavailable at any price so the men were outfitted with makeshift fatigues, blue serge puttees and white duck kitbags produced locally.<sup>25</sup> The blue puttees eventually became a mark of distinction, but the men, under order of the Canadian convoy command, had to dye the kitbags, and levels of improvisation reached new heights as the offending material was stained with a burnt sugar mixture in mid-Atlantic.<sup>26</sup> Later, Davidson admitted that the unprofessional appearance of the first contingent was less the result of the unavailability of goods and materials than it was of ignorance on the part of local officials as to how a soldier should be dressed.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Harcourt to Davidson, August 22, 1914.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., file 1, September 28, 1914. Pertinent correspondence is contained in Ibid., file 21a. The Ross rifle was subsequently discredited in the field.

<sup>24</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7<sup>25</sup> Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>25</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, September 11, 1914

<sup>26</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 109-110, 120.

<sup>27</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, Address by Davidson, December 13, 1917.

Application notices for overseas commissions first appeared on August 22, and although Davidson stated that every man was eligible,<sup>28</sup> this was not the case. A total of twenty-one commissions were granted one month later,<sup>29</sup> an unusually high proportion of officers to men, which was mainly the result of having to satisfy the demands of the St. John's élite. Consequently, several arrived in Great Britain without an active company command.<sup>30</sup> All were residents of St. John's and had been officers in cadet corps, which fact emphasized the initial character of the Regiment as a St. John's battalion, an identification which would persist for some time. Later, a handful of commissions were awarded to sons of outport merchants and clergymen, the majority of whom had been educated either in St. John's, Great Britain or Canada,<sup>31</sup> but they remained a minority. Eventually promotions were made from the

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., file 1, September 11, 1914. Apparently Davidson had drawn up a tentative list before the end of August, which he then submitted to the deputy minister of justice, C.H. Hutchings. Hutchings was forced to point out that until the legislature authorized the force he had no right to proceed. Ibid., file 21a, Hutchings to Morris, August 29, 1914.

<sup>29</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 112.

<sup>30</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a, Governor's Correspondence, 1914, Rev. T.F. Nangle to Davidson, December 1, 1914. See also Mail and Advocate, September 10, 1914.

<sup>31</sup> The Newfoundland Quarterly is particularly instructive in this respect. Beginning in the fall of 1915, it carried a section on newly commissioned officers, including their names and brief biographical sketches. Successive issues throughout the war reveal beyond any question that virtually every member of the NPA and the government had enlisted sons. A number of their daughters also served in the VAD.

ranks, but not before a great deal of adverse publicity had rendered it necessary.<sup>32</sup> Generally speaking, the Regiment was administered and officered by the St. John's upper- and middle-class for over three years.

During all these proceedings soldiers occupied the centre of attention, and the city gave itself over to an endless round of entertainments on their behalf. Farewell banquets and socials were tendered by church groups, fraternal organizations and business firms. Patriotic poetry and song became the dominant mode of expression and concerts were held. Citizens attended special church services, visited the Pleasantville camp and strained for a glimpse of "Ours" on parade. Cadet corps shared the limelight, and the Highlanders accepted fifty new recruits in one month.<sup>33</sup> Water Street firms undertook to hold open the positions of departing employees, and some even promised to make up differences in pay.<sup>34</sup> The government agreed to adopt a similar policy for certain public servants, although this did not become general practice until later.<sup>35</sup> Sir E.R. Bowring subsequently initiated a merchants' fund to provide officers with binoculars,<sup>36</sup> and R.G. Reid,

<sup>32</sup> This aspect is discussed more fully below, Chapter VI.

<sup>33</sup> Daily News, August 31, 1914; Evening Telegram, October 24, 1914.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, April 11, 1917; also below, p. 128.

<sup>35</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a; Davidson to Morris, August 25, 1914; Ibid., Morris to Davidson, August 26, 1914; PANL, GN 2/14, Colonial Secretary's Office, Correspondence re: World War I, 1914-1921, box 14, Squires to Dr. W.H. Parsons, December 12, 1917.

<sup>36</sup> Evening Telegram, November 13, 1915.



younger brother of Sir W.D. Reid and general manager of the Reid Newfoundland Company, offered to enlist with his Rolls Royce, prompting Davidson to request a chauffeur's appointment for him.<sup>37</sup> The generosity of most St. John's businessmen proved transient, however, and soon gave way to the far more lucrative policy of business as usual.

The signal achievements of those early weeks were accomplished in an atmosphere of caring and sacrifice. The ceasefire on the domestic political scene was matched by an equally united social and religious front. Anglican, Methodist and Roman Catholic women from all walks of life came together to knit,<sup>38</sup> and an inter-denominational day of prayer was proclaimed, the inspiration for which Davidson attributed to the Roman Catholic archbishop.<sup>39</sup> Hardly prepared to face the enemy with only a few weeks of basic training, ill-clad and weaponless, the men of the first Newfoundland contingent nonetheless marched off to war on October 3.<sup>40</sup> Virtually the entire St. John's population turned

<sup>37</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr. 1 Davidson to Bonar Law, October 30, 1916. Reid withdrew his offer a short time later in order to assume a more direct role in the affairs of the company. Ibid., Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, February 5, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, October 24, 1917.

<sup>38</sup> Evening Telegram, September 16, 1914. Originally, the St. John's WPA was divided into four groups according to first initials; later, groups were organized along denominational and religious lines.

<sup>39</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, October 23, 1914.

<sup>40</sup> Davidson described them in these terms: "The men have been enrolled from all ranks of society; they are of fine physique, rather short in stature but thick set and enduring; they are also handy men and very hardy and accustomed to hard work and little food.... With almost no exceptions, the men are abstemious." CO 616/2, Davidson to Harcourt; August 29, 1914.

out to see them off. Following a frustrating two-day delay as the Florizel lay tied up in the harbour awaiting its Canadian convoy, the citizenry bade a final goodbye and the Florizel slipped out to sea.<sup>41</sup>

In spite of the makeshift nature of accommodation, training and equipment, it is unlikely that the first Newfoundland contingent was substantially worse off than the first Canadian contingent assembled at Valcartier, Québec, or the majority of Kitchener's New Army battalions spread throughout Great Britain.<sup>42</sup> In the fall of 1914 the flood of new recruits strained the resources of British and Canadian military establishments to the limit. New Army recruits were uniformed in civilian clothing, equipped with broomsticks, and billeted in factories and shops. Most regular army officers had already been shipped off to France, so that those who were called up to train new men often possessed as little understanding of the nature of modern warfare as officers of cadet corps in St. John's. Moreover, whereas in Great Britain and Canada the forlorn conditions of training were often sufficient to dampen the enthusiasm of even the most ardent recruit, Newfoundland soldiers had the advantage of being the constant centre of personal attention of an admiring and envious throng. Newfoundlanders, of course, knew nothing of prevailing British conditions, yet had some

<sup>41</sup> Evening Telegram, October 3-5, 1914; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 114-17.

<sup>42</sup> For a brief description of the mobilization of the first Canadian contingent, see Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), pp. 214-16; of Kitchener's New Army in the fall of 1914, Haste, Home Fires, p. 63. See also Ian Hay [Ian Hay Beith], The First Five Hundred Thousand (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, [1917]).

knowledge of events in Quebec. The Evening Telegram pointedly contrasted the Canadian leave-taking, which attracted a mere handful of onlookers, with the St. John's send-off, which was witnessed by thousands.<sup>43</sup>

On the basis of the transport committee's recommendation and with the concurrence of a committee of the executive council, a contract to transport the first contingent had been concluded with the Canadian-owned Donaldson Line for the SS Letitia, whose agent was A.J. Harvey.<sup>44</sup> Objections were raised by local shipowners who had not been invited to tender,<sup>45</sup> as a result of which the original contract was set aside and a new one awarded. It went to the Red Cross Steamship Company, owned mainly by Browning Brothers, of which E.R. Browning and J.S. Munn were the principal directors. However, the new vessel, the Florizel, fell far short of the sumptuous standards of the Letitia and was somewhat more expensive.<sup>46</sup>

The Florizel's shortcomings became apparent as soon as the men were aboard, and the first seven days were spent fitting out sleeping, messing, washing and latrine accommodations, which nonetheless remained woefully inadequate. Exasperated regimental medical officers

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<sup>43</sup> Evening Telegram, October 9, 1914.

<sup>44</sup> Details surrounding these negotiations and a copy of the original charter can be located in: PANL, P8/B/9, file 9, Transport Committee, 1914, and Ibid., file 21a, passim.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., file 21b, Prime Minister's Correspondence, 1915, Morris to Davidson, January 9, 1915.

<sup>46</sup> See a statement from the Red Cross Steamship Company located in Ibid., file 21a.

protested at length to Davidson, claiming that these arrangements were to have been completed by the ship's owners.<sup>47</sup> Nor was the Florizel's crew complete and as a result men were pressed into service as bakers, butchers, stewards and cooks. The conducting officer submitted a bill to Davidson, suggesting that it be passed on to the company.<sup>48</sup> Morris conceded that the reports were extremely damaging, being "a reflection on everyone connected with the hiring of the steamer, and further, an entire breach of the contract on the part of Messrs. Bowring Bros. Ltd.," which could lead to court action. In order to prevent this and because the reports were "not inclined to stimulate recruitment," Morris censored a number of details before passing them on to the press. He also deleted several references to specific individuals "because commissions and promotions are always touchy" and a comment on the intelligence, cleanliness and sobriety of the men "as sounding like a matter for surprise."<sup>49</sup> Davidson informed members of the NPA that negotiations for the Letitia had fallen through and that at the last minute the transport committee was forced to fall back on the "public spirit" of Bowring.<sup>50</sup> The Donaldson Line claimed a loss of \$7000 through cancellation of the original charter, but agreed to refrain from pressing

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., file 22a, Paterson & Wakefield to Davidson, October 14, 1914.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Alexander to Davidson, October 14, 1914.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., file 21a, Morris to Davidson, October 29, 1914.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., file 1, October 23, 1914.

for payment "in the present crisis."<sup>51</sup> In order to avoid future difficulties and following a second protest from the Reid Newfoundland Company,<sup>52</sup> a new committee was installed. Two Reid company representatives were subsequently added to the reserve force committee.<sup>53</sup>

Immediately following the departure of the first contingent, public pressure began to mount for renewed enlistment. What concerned Morris was the government's ability to meet rapidly escalating cost estimates of raising and maintaining a force in the field. By mid-October this estimate had reached \$520,000 per year, far removed from the \$100,000 that he had originally projected.<sup>54</sup> Higher tariffs combined with death duties and a stamp tax imposed during the war session were expected to yield \$500,000, of which roughly one-half would be required to offset the estimated budget deficit for the financial year ending June 1914. The remainder was to be applied to meet interest payments on a proposed \$1,000,000 regimental bond issue.<sup>55</sup> In light of the government's financial position and the dislocating economic effect of

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., file 21a, Donaldson to A.J. Harvey, October 13, 1914; Ibid., file 22a, Harvey to Davidson, October 30, 1914.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., file 21b, Johnstone, Reid Newfoundland Company, to Morris, January 8, 1915; Ibid., file 5, January 14, 1915.

<sup>53</sup> Above, p. 61.

<sup>54</sup> PANL, P8/B/2, file 1, October 23, 1914; above, p. 40.

<sup>55</sup> Daily News, September 5, 1914.

the war,<sup>56</sup> it is no wonder that the prime minister hesitated. But public opinion was not to be denied, in addition to which the government had already committed itself to raise a home defence force from which reserves could be drawn,<sup>57</sup> and at the October 23 NPA meeting he submitted a new proposal, the details of which had again been worked out by Davidson. The plan had two chief attractions from the government's point of view — it was economical, and it satisfied St. John's.

Thus Morris proposed that the government, through the NPA, raise and equip a home defence force, training to take place on a voluntary basis four nights a week in St. John's. In the event that there were sufficient volunteers from other areas and the services of instructors could be secured free, training would also be conducted in specified outside centres. After three months, volunteers were to become eligible to enlist for active service, and to be enrolled in the Regiment on the same terms and conditions as the men of the first contingent, except that pay would commence upon arrival in Great Britain. Should their services be required overseas, a prospect which the government "earnestly hoped" could be avoided, the colony would once again bear the full cost of equipment, transportation and maintenance.<sup>58</sup> The NPA greeted this news with a great deal of enthusiasm, touched by a sense of relief. Opposition leader J.M. Kent pledged his support.

<sup>56</sup> Above, pp. 26-27, 32; below, pp. 106-07.

<sup>57</sup> Above, p. 33.

<sup>58</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, October 23, 1914.

and the resolution was adopted in full. Davidson then named the all-important reserve force committee, to which the control and direction of the new movement were entrusted.<sup>59</sup>

Financial pressures on the government were real enough, although relief was in the offing. Less than two weeks after the reserve force was announced, it was learned that in return for the colony's undertaking to provide additional men, the British government would meet overseas expenses for both forces. British officials also proposed to pay future drafts at British rates, leaving the Newfoundland government to make up the balance. Davidson advised Morris to accept the first, but not the second offer, to which the government agreed, and subsequently forwarded its decision to the Colonial Office.<sup>60</sup>

However, in doing so it broke with the practice of other dominion governments which continued to maintain their forces in the field, a fact which was frequently lost sight of in the four years ahead.<sup>61</sup> The Newfoundland government's obligations were thereby limited to expenditures within the colony, transportation overseas, pay, pensions and any additional allowances which might be determined upon at a later date, representing an estimated annual saving of \$200,000 for the first

<sup>59</sup> Above, pp. 59-61.

<sup>60</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, November 7, 1917; *Ibid.*, file 1, November 19, 1914 containing copies of the pertinent correspondence between the governor and the secretary of state. See also Evening Telegram, November 13, 1914.

<sup>61</sup> For example, it was not referred to by the Telegram until May 13, 1918.

contingent alone.<sup>62</sup> Members of the finance committee now calculated the cost of the Regiment at \$600 per annum per man, as opposed to the original \$1000, exclusive of pensions and allowances.<sup>63</sup>

Within three days of this agreement, the Army Council requested that because reinforcements were required at the rate of twenty-five per cent per month, two months reserves, or 250 men, be placed in training immediately. The request caught the government completely off guard so that while it agreed, it declined to state when the men would be ready.<sup>64</sup> Pressure also came from other sources. Colonel Clegg, the Canadian commanding officer of the Newfoundland contingent at Salisbury Plain, congratulated Davidson "not so much in point of numbers ... as in the calibre of the officers and men."<sup>65</sup> The Telegram seized the opportunity to point out that battalions were not generally sent to the front until their reserves had been trained: "There is therefore much yet to be done to enable the Newfoundland Contingent, which had begun so well, to follow that success up by

<sup>62</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, November 19, 1914.

<sup>63</sup> JHA 1915, Report of the Finance Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 325. In December the British government also agreed to advance the colony £200,000, or roughly \$1,000,000, to cover military and other war-related expenses, rather than have it float a loan on its own behalf in a congested market. A copy of the British Treasury Minute is contained in JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, Appendix 4, pp. 327-28.

<sup>64</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, November 19, 1914 containing a copy of the two telegrams, dated November 10 and November 18, respectively.

<sup>65</sup> Quoted in Evening Telegram, November 23, 1914.



success in the field."<sup>66</sup> Clearly the government could not delay for too long.

In the meantime the reserve force committee pressed ahead on the basis of the original proposal. Regimental headquarters was established at the CLE Armoury under Montgomerie, who was assisted by an officer from each of the four cadet corps and a member of the Rifle Club.<sup>67</sup> Recruitment notices appeared November 26 and four days later enlistment began. The response was immediate. One hundred and seventy-nine men enlisted on the first night, more than doubling the opening night of the first contingent,<sup>68</sup> and by the end of three nights there were 433 volunteers, the overwhelming majority again from St. John's.<sup>69</sup> The Telegram decided that the absence of outport recruits could be longer be ignored.

During World War I the press served two crucial functions, which often appeared contradictory. On the one hand, it became an important force in propaganda and recruiting campaigns, and willingly published editorials, articles and advertisements enjoining young men to enlist. On the other, it filled a major void left by opposition parties in the house, and remained the single institution capable of

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Above, pp. 61-62.

<sup>68</sup> Evening Telegram, December 1, 1914.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., December 3, 1914.

focusing public attention on legitimate grievances.<sup>70</sup> While the press often fulfilled a necessary function in this respect, it also sometimes fell prey to old habits, and reverted to its customary role as the mouthpiece of particular interests. On these occasions it was capable of nullifying much of its good effect.<sup>71</sup>

The opposition mounted by the Evening Telegram on November 30, 1914 in connection with the reserve force was an example of the former, although because its editor was W.F. Lloyd, shortly to become leader of the combined Liberal-Union Party, the Telegram's motives remain open to question. Referring to the fact that recruits were almost exclusively from the capital, the Telegram informed the apparently unsuspecting St. John's public that it was impossible for an outport man to train in the city without maintenance or pay for a minimum of three months, that little or no information had been made available outside St. John's, and that as of December 1 outport magistrates had not even been informed of their duty to open recruiting offices. It also questioned the level of training that could be achieved under the existing system, and pointed to the problem of Water Street clerks who worked until nine at night. The solution, it concluded, was for the NPA and the government to institute regular pay and full-time

<sup>70</sup> Newfoundland editors were not alone in this respect. The British house of commons did not discuss the war effort until May, 1915, following Northcliffe's exposé of the so-called shell scandal in the Daily Mail. See Haste, Home Fires, p. 75. See also Wilson, Ontario, p. xlviii; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 5, 16, 1917, pp. 88, 114-15; below, p. 193.

<sup>71</sup> This theme is explored further below, Chapters VI and VII.

training immediately, in conjunction with a massive outport publicity campaign.<sup>72</sup>

The editorials had an immediate effect. On December 2 the reserve force committee endorsed the Telegram's views,<sup>73</sup> and hastily addressed a few of the more pressing problems. It established age limits at nineteen and thirty-six years, lowered height and weight requirements to five feet, three inches and 120 pounds, and decided to provide free transportation to outport volunteers who passed local physical examinations. In the interests of Water Street, it agreed that city clerks should not be required to report for training until after the Christmas season; all remaining recruits were to commence training at once.<sup>74</sup> The committee nonetheless deferred the question of married men, which it more or less resolved two weeks later by instructing Montgomerie to treat individual cases on their own merit.<sup>75</sup> These proposals were submitted to and approved by the government on December 3, except that the government decided to provide outportmen with a daily maintenance allowance of 50c.<sup>76</sup>

However, it was clear that the patriotism of young men in St. John's and immediately surrounding areas required little stimulation.

<sup>72</sup> Evening Telegram, November 30-December 4, 1914.

<sup>73</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, December 2, 1914.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.; Evening Telegram, December 7, 1914.

<sup>75</sup> Evening Telegram, December 19, 1914; PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, March 8, 1915.

<sup>76</sup> Evening Telegram, December 4, 7, 1914.

and the rate of enlistment continued to exceed the most sanguine expectations. Between November 30 and December 10, 607 men volunteered, of whom 539 were from St. John's.<sup>77</sup> The remainder came mainly from Bell Island and Conception Bay.<sup>78</sup> Of the first 400 examined, 170 were accepted, 160 rejected, and 70 held over for "future consideration." Over half had previous brigade training, the CCC again leading in the total number of recruits.<sup>79</sup> On December 14 the finance committee asked the government for direction with respect to disbursements, and was informed that "Any reasonable expenditure agreed to by the Reserve Force and Finance Committees will be approved by the Government." This authorization applied to an additional 500 recruits.<sup>80</sup>

But even so, the government was not facing up to certain obvious facts. In 1914 the British army was organized in battalions of 1080 officers and men, as a result of which the 540-man Newfoundland contingent, exactly a half battalion, posed serious problems.<sup>81</sup> Davidson had requested that the men be attached to a Guards unit,<sup>82</sup> but since the

<sup>77</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 11, 1914; Evening Telegram, December 12, 1914.

<sup>78</sup> See below, p. 107.

<sup>79</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 11, 1914. The breakdown is as follows: CCC, 138; CLB, 93; MGB, 60; Newfoundland Highlanders, 40; Frontiersmen, 12.

<sup>80</sup> PANL, GN 9/4, December 14, 1914.

<sup>81</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 6, Reserve Force Committee, Agenda and Correspondence, Davidson to Outerbridge, January 5, 1914; JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, p. 311.

<sup>82</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 20, 1914.

Guards represented the elite of the British army, this was hardly likely. Difficulties were compounded by the fact that the Newfoundlanders were far better paid.<sup>83</sup> As a result, the contingent was encamped with the Canadian army on Salisbury Plain, an arrangement which was unacceptable to the Newfoundlanders who resented the loss of identity.<sup>84</sup> The London Times, for example, claimed that they could be distinguished only by their blue puttees.<sup>85</sup> It was rumoured that the men would be attached to a Canadian battalion, a prospect which was firmly resisted,<sup>86</sup> so that in time the men were ordered to take up garrison duty at Fort George and subsequently Edinburgh Castle, while Canadian forces were sent to France. Here they were allowed to remain until their status could be resolved through bringing their numbers up to the level of a full battalion plus necessary reserves, enabling the Regiment to take to the field.

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<sup>83</sup> Difficulties had already arisen in connection with Newfoundland naval reservists serving onboard Canadian vessels. See below, p. 201, fn. 1.

<sup>84</sup> See, for example, "Diary of the Late Lt. Owen Steele of the First Newfoundland Regiment Whilst on Active Service" (unpublished), p. 22; Alexander J. Robinson, ed., The Letters of Mayo Lind (St. John's: Robinson and Co., 1919), pp. 23, 42.

<sup>85</sup> Quoted in Evening Telegram, November 24, 1914.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, Ibid., January 8, February 2, 1915; Steele, "Diary," p. 23.

Character and administrative structure of  
the Regiment and Naval Reserve overseas

Perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of the Newfoundland Regiment was the extent to which it was identified with St. John's. Although it was gradually transformed from an almost exclusively St. John's battalion to one which encompassed members from all parts of the island and Labrador,<sup>87</sup> St. John's men in general remained its firmest supporters and its administration rested wholly in the hands of the St. John's commercial, professional and political elite. Likewise its officers, with the exception of its commanding officers, came from the ranks of the St. John's ruling class.

Two major considerations dominated the Regiment's administration throughout the war. The first was to maintain its distinct and separate identity, the second to oppose any diminution of NPA control. The former was widely shared by the members of the Regiment, the public, the Patriotic Association and the government; the latter mainly, but not exclusively, by the NPA. Together they prompted the removal of the Newfoundland contingent from the Canadian sphere of influence on Salisbury Plain, and the desire to raise a full battalion plus necessary reserves, finally establishing it as an independent fighting unit within the confines of the British army. Although subject to British officers and British army control in the field,<sup>88</sup> any further dilution of its integrity was vigorously opposed.

<sup>87</sup> See below, p. 140, fn. 126 for a breakdown of the proportion of St. John's and outport recruits in succeeding drafts; also, Tables 2 and 3 below, pp. 125, 308.

<sup>88</sup> See below, pp. 96-99.

A major problem emerged late in the fall of 1914 due to the lack of an administrative agency in London<sup>89</sup> and could only be solved through the timely intervention of the Army Council. Davidson proposed early in the fall that a pay office be established in London to serve as an overseas headquarters. It was to be administered by the paymaster, H.A. Timewell, who would be nominally subject to the finance committee but in reality to the Newfoundland treasury. Davidson also recommended that in addition to his regular pay Timewell receive a living allowance of £1 per day because he was "in fact the accountant and cashier of an important, although temporary, department of the civil administration."<sup>90</sup> A minute of council approved this.<sup>91</sup>

However, a considerable amount of dissatisfaction had centred on Timewell's appointment, and on the manner in which he and his officials conducted their business during the fall. Angry at not having been consulted and fearful of losing control, the NPA and opposition were forced to adopt a hard line. At issue in the beginning was the failure of the paymaster's staff to distribute allotment forms, authorizing a portion of each soldier's pay to be deducted for the

<sup>89</sup> A British high commissioner was not appointed until November 1918. See below, p. 309, fn. 16.

<sup>90</sup> PANL, CN 8/1, file 61.4, Davidson to Bennett, October 21, 1914. Timewell, local representative of the London firm of G.N. Read, Son and Watson, had been personally selected and recruited by the governor and had preceded the Regiment overseas. PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, August 25, 1914; Ibid., file 22a, Davidson to Harcourt, October 23, 1914.

<sup>91</sup> PANL, CN 9/1, October 22, 1914.

support of dependants. When it was discovered that Timewell was in receipt of pay and allowances to the amount of \$3200, as compared with the \$300 received by British paymasters, or the \$1800 annual salary of the Newfoundland deputy minister of finance, resentment could no longer be contained. The Evening Telegram demanded provisional support for dependants and a reduction of the paymaster's allowance.<sup>92</sup> The finance committee immediately agreed to advance each family \$10, and the government to withdraw Timewell's living allowance. The government also announced that henceforth the Bank of Montreal could handle the Regiment's London account, allowing the paymaster to accompany the force to the front.<sup>93</sup> At the same time the finance committee called a special meeting in order to dispel any impression that it had approved Timewell's allowance, and to protest the "unwarranted intrusion" of the executive council in the affairs of the Regiment. It forwarded a copy of its minutes to the government and press.<sup>94</sup>

A number of points emerge from this episode. Firstly, it reveals the critical influence of the press at a time when normal political channels were closed. Clearly Lloyd chose this method of registering his party's protest at being excluded from the cabinet's decision. Secondly, it was the first instance of direct government interference in the affairs of the Regiment, and as a result the

<sup>92</sup> Evening Telegram, November 6-7, 1914.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., November 7, 9, 1914.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., November 12, 1917. Finance minister M. P. Cashin was present at the meeting.



administration suffered a humiliating defeat. Morris did not forget the lesson, and was extremely conscious of the need to submit each subsequent decision to the NPA for approval.<sup>95</sup> Finally, it reveals the difficulty of conducting public affairs in a public forum. Although no one could have anticipated the monumental task that was shortly to befall the London Office, it was nonetheless patently absurd to suppose that the Regiment's financial affairs could be transacted by a bank.

The furor surrounding these events was allowed several weeks to die down, and in the end the Army Council settled the issue. In the middle of December it recommended the establishment of a combined pay and record office to be administered by Timewell, which would not only bring the Newfoundland Regiment in line with other overseas contingents but justify the paymaster's additional allowance.<sup>96</sup> The finance committee had little choice but to agree, and eventually Timewell was fully reinstated.<sup>97</sup>

Clearly the pay and record office represented one branch of regimental affairs over which the NPA could wield little direct influence, and as a result it was subject to constant attack.<sup>98</sup> Although nominally responsible to the finance committee, this committee had, as

<sup>95</sup> Above, p. 57.

<sup>96</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 22a, Harcourt to Davidson, December 18, 1914.

<sup>97</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, May 31, 1915.

<sup>98</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, December 15, 1915 which called attention to the fact that members of the Regiment were being paid in pounds rather than dollars with a resulting loss, and were not receiving field and mess allowances. See also PANL, PB/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, December 18, 1915, and particularly below, pp. 174-76.

successive reports show, virtually no control over its operation. Nor was the government willing to provide pertinent information.<sup>99</sup> In an attempt to prevent its complete exclusion, the NPA authorized Bowring and others to oversee the affairs of the pay office while in Great Britain<sup>100</sup> and the Newfoundland War Contingent Association was installed in offices next door.

In September 1915, interested overseas parties in conjunction with Davidson established the Newfoundland War Contingent Association (a forerunner had been in operation since September 1914<sup>101</sup>) to conform with similar associations for other overseas contingents. Its duties were to oversee the interests of the Regiment at the front, at the depot in Ayr, Scotland and in British hospitals.<sup>102</sup> It also raised funds in Great Britain, became the official Newfoundland agent of the Red Cross central prisoners of war committee, and was responsible for burials on British soil. Executive members included Arthur Steel-Maitland, parliamentary under-secretary of state for the colonies; the Rt. Hon.

<sup>99</sup> See yearly reports of the finance committee in NPA Reports, 1915-1917, for example. See also PLC 1917, Anderson, July 2, 1915, pp. 48, 62.

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, January 28, 1916 which contains a letter from Bowring to Davidson; JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, p. 330; PLC 1917, Anderson, July 2, 1917, pp. 49-50, 54.

<sup>101</sup> See PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Harcourt, September 22, October 2, 23, 1914; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, September 28, 1914. See also Daily News, January 20, 1915.

<sup>102</sup> For further details, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 17, War Contingent Association; JHA 1919, Report of the Newfoundland War Contingent Association, pp. 593-608.

Sir Charles Hanson, lord mayor of London; Sir William McGregor, a former Newfoundland governor; Lord Islington; Lady Louisa Fielding; Lady Morris;<sup>103</sup> Mayson M. Beeton, a director of the AND Company; and Bowring, in addition to a regular staff. Islington was the original chairman, then Steel-Maitland and finally Bowring,<sup>104</sup> all of whom served as a direct link with Davidson. A visiting committee oversaw the comfort of hospitalized, convalescing and furloughed men, compiled regular reports on their condition, and maintained contact with the pay and record office. The association was also responsible for the distribution of comforts.<sup>105</sup>

In keeping with the determination to maintain the Regiment's character as a distinctly Newfoundland battalion was the determination to restrict its offices and ranks to Newfoundland residents,<sup>106</sup> a convention which was rigidly adhered to in the face of chronic manpower shortages. Although two outsiders found their way into the Regiment in August 1914, and later a third at St. John's headquarters, all three were subsequently relieved of their duties following a great deal of adverse publicity.<sup>107</sup> During

<sup>103</sup> Lady Louisa Fielding was Lady Davidson's mother; Lady Morris, wife of the Newfoundland prime minister.

<sup>104</sup> Evening Telegram, January 7, 1915; PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, February 25, 1916.

<sup>105</sup> This controversial subject is discussed further below, pp. 174-78.

<sup>106</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, August 14, 1916, in particular.

<sup>107</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 75-76; PANL, P8/B/9, file 21c, Prime Minister's Correspondence, 1916, Hadow to Davidson, June 3, 1916. Captain Alexander (above, p. 72) was one of them.

the spring of 1916 rumours of twelve invalided Scots soldiers employed at the Ayr depot were said to be thwarting recruitment.<sup>108</sup>

The decision to employ high-ranking British officers was somewhat unexpected in this light, but reflected legitimate concerns lest local candidates be lacking in training and experience. It may also have reflected the difficulty of choosing between local brigade candidates. Since Lt.-Colonel R. de H. Burton, a British regular, had already replaced Clegg as commanding officer,<sup>109</sup> remaining at issue during the spring and summer of 1915 were the two senior field positions. Although Major W.H. Franklin, a St. John's businessman, commanding officer of the CLE in 1903-04, commanding staff officer at Pleasantville and second-in-command to Colonel Clegg at Salisbury Plain, had already been attached to a British regiment in order to qualify for field rank,<sup>110</sup> he was unexpectedly overlooked when the time for selection came. Davidson requested two British officers, but the Army Council informed him that it had none to spare, in lieu of which it pressed Franklin's candidacy as the Regiment's second officer.<sup>111</sup> Davidson was willing

<sup>108</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21c, Morris to Davidson, April 25, 1916.

<sup>109</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 125.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 93; PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a, Harcourt to Davidson, November 20, 1914; Evening Telegram, November 23, 1914, April 23, 1915; PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a, Harcourt to Davidson, December 11, 1914. Franklin was the son-in-law of the Hon. George Knowling, MLC, a major St. John's retailer.

<sup>111</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Davidson to Harcourt, April 7, 1915; Ibid., Harcourt to Davidson, May 12, 1915.

to consider this appointment, but the reserve force committee was not.<sup>112</sup> Members were cognizant of rumours which attributed severe losses among Canadian forces to want of experience on the part of Canadian officers, and expressed concern as to whether "the quality of our officers and their military training is up to the mark."<sup>113</sup> Members of the officers selection committee made their views known to the government, which agreed that "public feeling ... would blame [Ministers] in the event of heavy casualties ... on the ground that ... inexperienced [men] should have been placed under the direction of senior officers ... Regular Army."<sup>114</sup> Simultaneously, the government pressed the Army Council to improve the level of training the men were receiving.<sup>115</sup>

The Army Council yielded to these pressures and agreed to second two British field officers. The appointments were subsequently approved by the reserve force committee.<sup>116</sup> However, both soon proved

<sup>112</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 18, Davidson to Harcourt, May 12, 1915; PANL, P8/B/9, file 21b, Davidson to Morris, May 14, 1915; *Ibid.*, file 20, Bennett to Morris, May 18, 1915. Davidson conceded that "a Regular Army man would have been better in affording fuller confidence among ourselves ... [but] I am sure that with the exception of the higher commands our own officers are better suited to led the men."

<sup>113</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Davidson to Islington, May 15, 1915. The committee's views were heavily influenced by Montgomerie, who had recently returned from a visit to Scotland as a representative of the reserve force committee.

<sup>114</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., Davidson to Harcourt, May 21, 1915.

<sup>115</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 6, Bennett to Morris, May 13, 1915; *Ibid.*, file 22b, Davidson to Islington, May 15, 1915.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, file 6, Davidson to Harcourt, May 20, 1915; *Ibid.*, file 5, May 20, 1915.

unsatisfactory, so the Army Council replaced them. Ironically, Franklin, whom Davidson had originally described as "somewhat lacking in tact and method," possessing a "slight" knowledge of military matters, and suitable only for a staff position,<sup>117</sup> rose quickly to become the commanding officer of a British battalion.<sup>118</sup> In July 1915 Davidson reported that one of the causes for the delay in sending the Regiment to the front was the inability to secure an efficient second officer.<sup>119</sup> Following consultation with the reserve force committee, he drafted a telegram stating that "If there is still difficulty over a second-in-command, public opinion here would now welcome Franklin, who greatly desires to serve with his own people,"<sup>120</sup> but before it could be sent it was learned that the vacant field position had been filled, and that Major C.W. Whitaker, a retired British officer, had been given command of the newly established Ayr depot.<sup>121</sup>

Franklin bitterly resented his treatment at the hands of the civilian reserve force committee. In the spring of 1916 Bowring informed Davidson that he was "doing so well, his heart still, notwithstanding the many rebuffs, with the Newfoundland Regiment," and that he

<sup>117</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Hartcourt, October 3, 1914.

<sup>118</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 31, 1915, July 21, 1916.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., July 5, 1915.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., file 22b, Davidson to Steel-Maitland, July 16, 1915 (draft).

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., file 1, August 5, 1915.

would gladly come back if in a command position.<sup>122</sup> In the meantime, the Regiment had succeeded to a third commanding officer, Lt.-Colonel A.L. Hadow, who was unpopular with his men.<sup>123</sup> As a result, Davidson was willing to entertain the suggestion, believed it would win general approval, and proposed that Franklin be given command of the planned second battalion. However, this prospect was extinguished in the mud of the Somme.<sup>124</sup>

During this period and after the Regiment suffered a succession of British officers.<sup>125</sup> Commanding officers at both the depot and front were subject to unusual pressures as a result of being responsible to three separate authorities — the War Office, Davidson as commander-in-chief and the Newfoundland government, which exercised its authority through the reserve force/standing committee.<sup>126</sup> The Regiment also suffered a constant drain of non-commissioned and commissioned officers to other battalions and specialized services in search of promotions otherwise denied them.<sup>127</sup>

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., file 5, Bowring to Davidson, March 14, 1916.

<sup>123</sup> See, for example, Steele, "Diary," p. 1; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 240; below, pp. 177-78.

<sup>124</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Davidson to Bowring, April 8, 1916; below, pp. 136-39.

<sup>125</sup> For details, see Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, passim.

<sup>126</sup> This aspect is discussed more fully below, Chapter VI.

<sup>127</sup> There are no statistics available to indicate the precise number of men who adopted this course. Many joined the Regiment with the intention of applying elsewhere immediately upon arrival in

In contrast to the Regiment, the Newfoundland branch of the Royal Naval Reserve was regarded mainly as an outpost force. This was partly because it was composed predominantly, although by no means exclusively, of outportmen,<sup>128</sup> and partly because the NPA had virtually no control over its administration. This was principally because the British government paid the reservists. Since they were integrated with British forces under the Admiralty's command and dispersed throughout literally hundreds of British ships in the North Sea, Mediterranean and North Atlantic,<sup>129</sup> they had little or no opportunity to make a name for themselves as a group. As a result, local honour and pride were involved to only a minor degree, and St. John's men interested themselves seldom, if at all, in their welfare or fate. Unfortunately, the contribution of the men of the Naval Reserve, which received scant attention during the course of the war, has been almost equally overlooked during the succeeding sixty-three years. At the time it was sometimes referred to as "the silent force,"<sup>130</sup> which remains as true today as it was then.

It is possible to argue today, as Coaker argued then, that the Royal Naval Reserve afforded the most appropriate channel

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Great Britain. The Newfoundland government continued to pay them on the local scale. JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, p. 308.

<sup>128</sup> For a detailed breakdown of naval enlistments by district see below, Tables 2 and 3, pp. 125, 308. See also below, pp. 124-28.

<sup>129</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>130</sup> See, for example, JHA 1917, NPA Report, March, 1917, pp. 340-41.



through which the Newfoundland contribution might be made, particularly with respect to the minimal financial and administrative burden it entailed, and the singular aptitude of the colony's seafaring population.<sup>131</sup> But pressure from St. John's military enthusiasts combined with a general belief that the war would be won on land rather than at sea vitiated this hope,<sup>132</sup> so that once the British government accepted the offer to raise 500 soldiers on August 9,<sup>133</sup> postponing its decision to increase the size of the Naval Reserve until several days later,<sup>134</sup> the die was cast. A number of those who had already reported for duty were detailed to complete the complement of HMCS Niobe, while the remaining men were to be held ready to meet "later requirements."<sup>135</sup> Days later, however, the Admiralty informed Davidson that there was no immediate need for these men, so that reservists already in training

<sup>131</sup> The purpose of the Regiment, Coaker maintained, was "to make a big show at the fishermen's expense and scoop in a few blue ribbons for Government officials," at a time when the colony had "10,000 half-trained naval sailors" to draw on. See, for example, Mail and Advocate, August 18-20, 28, September 28, 1914; Daily News, September 5, 1914; Evening Telegram, December 11, 1914; FHA 1918, Coaker, May 11, 1918, p. 168.

<sup>132</sup> See, for example, Daily News, August 11, 1914; Evening Telegram, September 5, 1915 quoting Asquith; Daily News, September 5, 1914 which quotes W.F. Lloyd.

<sup>133</sup> Above, p. 33.

<sup>134</sup> JHA 1915, NFA Report, March, 1915, p. 312, containing a copy of Harcourt to Davidson, August 14, 1914.

<sup>135</sup> Five hundred and thirty-five men were on the rolls prior to the outbreak of war and they had been called upon August 2. Approximately 500 eventually reported for duty. See Ibid.; JHA 1917, NFA Report, May, 1917, p. 535; Hector Swain, History of the Naval Reserve in Newfoundland (St. John's: n.p., 1975), p. 3.

on board the Calypso were granted a leave of absence with pay and instructed to return to their homes. Those who had not yet reported were encouraged to remain at their existing employment.<sup>136</sup>

In October the Admiralty issued a fresh summons, followed by a proclamation calling for the enlistment of 400 men. Only seamen and fishermen were eligible,<sup>137</sup> and it was subsequently decided that the NPA should undertake their recruitment as well.<sup>138</sup> In the meantime 107 men, mostly from Trinity, Conception and Bonavista bays, had been despatched on board the Niobe at the beginning of September with only a handful of friends in attendance.<sup>139</sup> It was not until October 14 that their names were published, in marked contrast to the publicity which surrounded each new recruit for the Regiment.<sup>140</sup> In November a further 453 men were shipped off to join British vessels, of whom four-fifths were from the outports,<sup>141</sup> and it was not until December that it was suggested their names be secured.<sup>142</sup> Between November 30 and December 2,

<sup>136</sup> JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, p. 312, also containing a copy of Harcourt to Davidson, August 21, 1914. See also PANL, GN 8/1, file 36.

<sup>137</sup> See Evening Telegram, October 5, 26, 29, 1914.

<sup>138</sup> JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, p. 313.

<sup>139</sup> Evening Telegram, September 5, 1914; PHA 1915, Coaker, April 8, 1915, p. 48.

<sup>140</sup> Evening Telegram, October 14, 1915. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, November 19, 1914, and any St. John's newspaper of this period. Names of soldiers, but not sailors, were posted in post offices throughout the colony.

<sup>141</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, November 19, 1914; Evening Telegram, December 12, 1914.

<sup>142</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 11, 1914.

1914, 533 men enlisted in the reserve force, while enlistments in the Naval Reserve continued to average about five per day.<sup>143</sup> Opposition members claimed that many arrived in St. John's prepared to join the navy, but on being informed of the difference in pay — roughly 56¢ as opposed to \$1.10 per day — joined the army instead. They also blamed the general lack of consideration for reservists and the government's unpopularity in the north.<sup>144</sup> The government and the NFA, however, blamed the Admiralty and claimed that in sending the men back to their homes in August it had created an adverse impression.<sup>145</sup>

Thus it was not until March 1915 that the original target of 1000 men was reached. At that time naval reservists represented forty-four per cent of the total number of recruits, although within a year this had fallen to forty per cent, and the percentage decreased rapidly thereafter.<sup>146</sup> Sixty-one men were lost at the beginning of 1915 and this, combined with a request from the Admiralty that their

<sup>143</sup>Evening Telegram, December 3, 1914.

<sup>144</sup>PHA 1915, Coaker, April 8, 1915, p. 48; Ibid., Lloyd, April 9, 1915, p. 55; PHA 1916, Coaker, April 26, 1916, pp. 510-11; Mail and Advocate, October 29, 1914. See also PANL, GN 8/1, file 36, Davidson to Bonar Law, April 19, 1916. Reservists were paid by the British government at the rate of 15s.8d. per day, in addition to a war retainer of £1 per month and, in the case of married men, a small separation allowance. Evening Telegram, April 16, 1915; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>145</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 11, 1914; JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, p. 312; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>146</sup>See below, pp. 125, 308, for example.

services be replaced, led to the government's decision to continue recruitment.<sup>147</sup> The Admiralty subsequently requested that no limit with respect to numbers be set.<sup>148</sup> However, except for a brief flurry of concern over lagging naval enlistments during the spring of 1916,<sup>149</sup> a concern which was quickly dispelled by tragic reverses sustained by the Regiment during the summer, the Naval Reserve continued to occupy a distinctly second place in the eyes of St. John's and consequently the government. In response to sporadic demands that the government consider pay increases, Davidson argued that this would create problems among British naval reservists with whom the men served, and that seamen could look forward to prize money at the end of the war.<sup>150</sup>

The Newfoundland Regiment was raised, equipped, trained and administered by a group of prominent St. John's citizens under the direction of the governor. It was officered largely by their sons, and initially St. John'smen made up the bulk of its ranks. The government

<sup>147</sup> JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, pp. 313-14.

<sup>148</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Harcourt to Davidson, April 5, 1915.

<sup>149</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, May 4, 6, June 15, 1916.

<sup>150</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, November 4, 1914; Ibid., file 1, May 12, 1915; Evening Telegram, November 11, 1916; March 5, 1917. See also PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

responded to pressure from St. John's enthusiasts, Davidson and the Army Council. Although it never formally committed itself to raise a full battalion plus necessary reserves,<sup>151</sup> under the circumstances this would have been difficult to avoid, and the government was willing to be persuaded by the eagerness with which young men signed on. Overseas administration rested in the hands of the Army Council and the War Office, British commanding officers and officials of the Newfoundland pay and record office and War Contingent Association, with whom Davidson was in constant touch. Members of the NPA and opposition were exceedingly anxious that they not be excluded, and were able to exert their influence in a variety of ways. The Newfoundland branch of the Royal Naval Reserve was by comparison callously disregarded, principally because no one was sufficiently interested to speak on its behalf. But of all the problems entailed by the war effort, recruitment was soon to be the major one.

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<sup>151</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 6, Davidson to Outerbridge, January 5, 1915; below, pp. 115-16.

## CHAPTER V

### RECRUITMENT

The young men of St. John's and surrounding areas enlisted for a variety of reasons in the fall of 1914. In the initial euphoria hundreds joined up — far from having to be persuaded, they were impatient to don uniforms. Many went out of a vague sense of patriotism and militant idealism, and because they had become caught up in the general excitement. Few understood what the war was about or the role they would be called on to play, and the majority worried lest the best part of it be over before they arrived overseas.<sup>1</sup>

Others went because they had nothing better to do. Unemployment and poor wages were chronic among the working class of St. John's,<sup>2</sup> and with the declaration of war these conditions threatened to get worse. Sharply curtailed exports were followed by staff reductions and a general depression of all economic activity. Trade on Water Street dropped far below normal levels, merchants declined to replenish their stocks and shops remained closed at night, which was unprecedented

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<sup>1</sup> These attitudes are widely reflected in most contemporary sources. See, for example, Robinson; Letters of Mayo Lind; Steele, "Diary;" John Gallishaw, Trenching at Gallipoli (New York: A.L. Burt, 1916), p. 4; also, any St. John's newspaper of the period.

<sup>2</sup> Above, pp. 6-7.

during the fall.<sup>3</sup> In an effort to avoid further layoffs, Water Street employers encouraged their best men to enlist, so that four firms alone accounted for over fifty recruits in August and September.<sup>4</sup> In November the Methodist Church established the town's first unemployment bureau.<sup>5</sup> Former employees of the Bell Island and North Sydney mines constituted another large pool of surplus labour — it was estimated that as much as one-half of the labour force of Conception Bay had been affected — and as a result they also enlisted in large numbers.<sup>6</sup> In light of these conditions it is little wonder that a soldier's pay of \$1.10 per day, 365 days a year, all found, at a time when an ordinary working man might earn less than \$1 a day, was a powerful inducement.

Despite all expectations to the contrary, the atmosphere of crisis in the early fall gradually dissipated and there was no need to enforce the emergency legislation enacted during the war session. A run on the banks in August proved ephemeral, there was no serious

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<sup>3</sup>CO 194/289, Davidson to Harcourt, March 21, 1915; CO 194/290, Davidson to Bonar Law, November 15, 1915; Evening Telegram, October 9, 28, 1914; above, p. 32. The reluctance of merchants to replenish their stocks stemmed as much from persistent rumours of confederation, which would entail severe competition from cheaper Canadian goods, as it did from uncertainty as a result of the war. For further details of the confederation 'plot', see below, pp. 279-80.

<sup>4</sup>Evening Telegram, October 29, 1914, January 5, 1915; Newfoundland Quarterly, Fall 1914, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup>Evening Telegram, November 9, 1914.

<sup>6</sup>PHA 1915, Coaker, April 8, 1915, p. 47; Ibid., Piccott, May 25, 1915, p. 734.

demand by fish exporters to proclaim a moratorium on debts held outside the colony, while food prices had stabilized, even if at higher levels than before the war broke out.<sup>7</sup> The Newfoundland War Measures Act which gave government the right to legislate over most areas of national life remained in abeyance. Fall fish landings were abnormally high, just as European markets recovered their equilibrium, so that by the end of the year the bulk of the catch had been sold to regular customers at a good price.<sup>8</sup> Improved economic conditions combined to sustain the prevailing enthusiasm for the war, although they quickly militated against the number of new recruits. In fact, because the war was soon to give rise to an unprecedented demand for food and raw materials, which placed a premium on labour, some employers came to regret their initial haste and to constitute a powerful anti-enlistment lobby.<sup>9</sup>

The outports were affected to a far lesser extent by the outbreak of war. Reports from outport magistrates and NPA branch chairmen<sup>10</sup> showed that residents could muster little of the righteous exaltation and moral purpose that sustained their urban counterparts. Lacking a strong sentimental attachment to Great Britain and the imperial

<sup>7</sup> CO 194/288, Davidson to Harcourt, October 31, 1914; Ibid., March 6, 1915; above, p. 47, fn. 52.

<sup>8</sup> CO 194/288, Davidson to Harcourt, October 31, 1914; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 186, Davidson to Bennett, December 28, 1914.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, PHA 1916, Lloyd, March 21, 1916, pp. 39-40; Evening Telegram, May 9, 1916; below, pp. 171-72.

<sup>10</sup> See PANL, P8/B/3, file 24.



ideal, removed from the mainstream of the twentieth century and caught up in the daily grind of subsistence living, they were inclined to view the war as something apart from themselves. A measure of uncertainty as a result of falling fish prices prevailed during the first few weeks, but once normal conditions had been restored outport residents remained unaffected.<sup>11</sup> If anything, their economic situation improved, so that support for the war was manifest primarily in enthusiasm for the enhanced prospects of the fisheries.

Of course the war had not ended by Christmas, as everyone supposed it would, but nobody seemed to mind during most of 1915. The boys overseas were having a 'grand' time,<sup>12</sup> and life in St. John's was more exciting than ever. Events at home and abroad continued to provide an endless source of news and entertainment. Of immediate interest were the continuing round of addresses, dances, concerts and farewell banquets, letters from soldiers in Scotland and the names of recent volunteers; of less concern the plight of Belgian and French refugees and reports of mounting British and Canadian casualties, which seemed far away and unreal. Word that twenty-five naval reservists from twenty-one different settlements had been lost aboard HMS Viknor at the beginning of February did little to dampen the general euphoria, nor did a series of naval losses thereafter.<sup>13</sup> In fact, Davidson

<sup>11</sup> CO 194/289, Davidson to Harcourt, April 21, 1915.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, November 26, December 8, 1914, January 8, 1915.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., February 1, 1915; JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, p. 314.

maintained that military and naval reverses had the effect of stimulating recruitment well into the summer of 1917.<sup>14</sup>

Lulled into a false sense of ease by St. John's-area enlistments at the beginning, the NPA made few attempts to secure recruits from outlying districts. In the fall of 1914 several members visited nearby communities, but refrained from moving further afield,<sup>15</sup> so that recruitment elsewhere remained under the direction of the local élite. It was not until December 1914 that the NPA finally resolved to mount a series of campaigns along the coast and appointed a new recruiting committee.<sup>16</sup> But only three tours materialized, plans for a fourth and possibly fifth in the north<sup>17</sup> being shelved in the wake of a calamitous southwest coast expedition.

The first tour was launched under the direction of T.A. MacNab, a St. John's businessman, Levi Curtis, and MHAs J.G. Stone and G. Grimes. They covered the north side of Trinity Bay, heartland of the FPU. A series of meetings organized by local public and church officials yielded encouraging results. In Bonavista, a town of less

<sup>14</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, May 31, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, June 2, 1917.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, November 5, 19, December 16, 1914, January 23, 1915; PANL, PS/B/9, file 1, December 11, 1914; also, Evening Telegram, November 28, 1914 containing a letter from R.B. Job.

<sup>16</sup> Above, pp. 65-66.

<sup>17</sup> Evening Telegram, January 19, 1915; PANL, PS/B/9, file 4; March 30, 1915. In addition, F.J. Morris, M.J. Kennedy and W.F. Lloyd, MHAs, held a meeting at Harbour Main, and H.E. Cowan, W.G. Grieve and W.J. Higgins, MHA, in Carbonear. Evening Telegram, January 12, 18, 1915.

than 4000, sixty men volunteered; Port Rexton was second with twenty-four; and Catalina third with twenty, for a total of 116 recruits in all. Enlistment was heaviest in the Naval Reserve,<sup>18</sup> reflecting Conker's pro-naval stance. A second group consisting of V.P.-Burke, W.A. Munn and W.W. Blackall campaigned in Bay de Verde district.<sup>19</sup>

A third tour to the southwest coast was mounted by local columnist and businessman I.C. Morris and MHAs A.W. Piccott, R.J. Devereaux and C.H. Emerson, accompanied by several members of the Newfoundland Highlanders' band. The party covered a large area, from the Bay of Islands to Fortune Bay, but met with some unpleasant and unexpected results. In spite of the presence of local merchants, government and church officials on the platform, including the enthusiastic Roman Catholic bishop of St. George's, crowds were cool and frequently hostile. They openly questioned attempts to justify the war and Great Britain's involvement, queried its relevance to themselves, and related the mission of St. John's recruiters to the press gangs of old. Reporting on the results of the tour several weeks later, I.C. Morris described the general attitude as one of "careless indifference" resulting from a long period of peace and security and a failure to appreciate that it rested on the British navy. Where local branches of the NFA or WPA existed, mainly in larger population centres on the Burin Peninsula, crowds were marginally more receptive. But much to their amazement members of the party discovered that they had arrived

<sup>18</sup> Evening Telegram, February 13, 1915.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., January 19, 1915.

too late: in January of each year the young men of the southwest coast either left their homes for the western banks fishery or were involved in the winter inshore cod fishery.<sup>20</sup>

The southwest coast tour had a decidedly sobering effect on the government and politicians in St. John's. It convinced them, rightly or wrongly, that persuading Newfoundlanders beyond the immediate vicinity of the capital to leave their homes and families for far off European battlefields was a thankless task. Consequently, following the abortive 1915 southwest tour MHAs removed themselves as far as possible from outpost recruiting campaigns, and chose to rely on the voluntary efforts of the NPA, outpost clergymen and magistrates instead. There were a few exceptions, but the extent to which they reflected the natural predisposition of their constituents as opposed to their own personal convictions remains unclear.<sup>21</sup> In the house, however, ensconced amidst a zealous St. John's audience, outpost MHAs gave to the war effort their unqualified support, which in the absence of personal effort came to have an increasingly hollow ring. This deceitfulness was particularly noticeable in the case of outpost members like M.P. Cashin, W.F. Lloyd and J.A. Clift who continued to maintain key positions within the NPA. In light of what was generally interpreted as a sign of the government's

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<sup>20</sup> The covering report of this tour can be located in Ibid., February 18-March 1, 1915, passim.

<sup>21</sup> The principal, if not sole, exceptions were J.F. Downey of St. George's and E. Parsons and A.W. Piccott of Harbour Grace. Parsons claimed that over 200 men had enlisted in Harbour Grace during the first seven months alone, irrespective of the number of men from the district who had enlisted in St. John's. Official statistics show nowhere near this number. See PHA 1915, Parsons, April 7, 1915, pp. 15-16; below, p. 125.

indifference, and hence lack of real need,<sup>22</sup> combined with greatly improved economic prospects, it is hardly surprising that potential outport recruits chose to take advantage of the burgeoning wartime boom.

By the spring of 1915 the economy had picked up considerably. The cutting of pit props for Welsh coal mines,<sup>23</sup> the increased output of iron ore as a result of the birth of the Canadian munitions industry,<sup>24</sup> lesser competition from foreign fleets on the Grand Banks and a worldwide growth in the demand for foodstuffs<sup>25</sup> gave rise to growing optimism. Sir Wilfred Grenfell reported that fishermen on the northeast coast were receiving record prices for their catch,<sup>26</sup> the southwest coast bank fishery promised to be the best on record,<sup>27</sup> and plans for the supply of fresh frozen fish to American markets were under way.<sup>28</sup> In April members of the house of assembly reported favourably on economic conditions in most outport communities,<sup>29</sup> a view

<sup>22</sup> See below, pp. 172-73 in particular.

<sup>23</sup> See below, pp. 262-66.

<sup>24</sup> CO 194/289, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 21, 1915; Evening Telegram, September 9, 16, 1915.

<sup>25</sup> Evening Telegram, March 10, 1915. This aspect is discussed more fully below, Chapter VIII.

<sup>26</sup> Evening Telegram, March 9, 1915.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., March 11-12, 1915.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., March 10, 1915, quoting W.D. Reid in New York.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, PHA 1915, Downey, April 7, 1915, p. 8; Ibid., Jennings, April 8, 1915, p. 40; Ibid., Coaker, April 8, 1915, pp. 47, 68.

which was shared by the governor: "Nearly all parts of the Island and ... Labrador are exceptionally prosperous,... easily able to meet the present cost of the Administration," he confidently recorded.<sup>30</sup> As a result, the 1915 legislative session was harmonious.

St. John's shared in the good fortune of the remainder of the colony, although partly for different reasons. In February there were rumours of exceptional distress in the town; the Evening Telegram estimated that the cost of living had risen fifteen per cent.<sup>31</sup> They led to the establishment of a charity committee on which representatives of the clergy, charitable organizations and the town met to determine the extent of the supposed crisis and the best means of coping with it. A representative of the committee initially reported that twenty-six firms had during the first six weeks of 1915 alone paid out \$18,000 less in wages than usual, and estimated that purchasing power was down \$50,000 as a result of enlistments and lay-offs. Collections and charitable events for the poor were organized, and the town hired seventy men to break stone on a piece-work basis.<sup>32</sup>

However, the charity committee eventually reported that the crisis was more imagined than real. It found that accounts had been exaggerated, that applications for relief were no higher than other

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<sup>30</sup> CO 194/289, Davidson to Harcourt, April 21, 1915.

<sup>31</sup> Evening Telegram, February 23, 1915.

<sup>32</sup> For further details, see Ibid., February 15 - March 2, 1915, passim.

years, and that while a large number of tradesmen were unemployed, this condition was normal.<sup>33</sup> It seems likely, therefore, that the public had seriously underestimated the effect of the war on the island's economy, and the impact of the Regiment on St. John's. By February 1915 the finance committee was administering a monthly payroll of over \$35,000 and had spent over \$300,000 on the Regiment's behalf,<sup>34</sup> a large portion of which remained in the town and found its way into the pockets of Water Street merchants. Economic conditions, reflected in enlistment statistics, together with half-hearted recruitment, combined to reduce the rate at which young men signed on.

By March 1915 a total of 1030 recruits had been sent to Great Britain, while 243 more awaited transportation in St. John's. Roughly an equal number had been rejected on physical grounds.<sup>35</sup> Davidson pressed ahead with plans for a second reserve company and requested that those already in Scotland be allowed to take to the field. The Army Council stated that the second and third drafts remained deficient in training and pressed for additional men.<sup>36</sup> Davidson promised to take

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., March 10, 1915.

<sup>34</sup> JHA 1915, Report of the Finance Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, pp. 324-25.

<sup>35</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, March 30, May 12, 1915; JHA 1915, Report of the Reserve Force Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 330.

<sup>36</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 6, Davidson to Harcourt, March 20, 1915; Ibid., Harcourt to Davidson, April 5, 1915.

personal responsibility for their moral character and conduct,<sup>37</sup> and Morris promised that the government would continue to underwrite the cost.<sup>38</sup>

Enlistment was brisk until the spring of 1915, but slowed dramatically thereafter. The number of new recruits fell progressively from a high of 170 in March 1915 to a low of fifty-three in August.<sup>39</sup> The number increased to sixty-seven in September, giving rise to hopes that recruits would flock to the colours once the summer fishery was over. In the meantime, the Regiment had received sufficient reinforcements by July to enable it to be placed on active service, an eagerly awaited event. It now numbered 1500 men, and had been attached to the 88th brigade of the 29th Division, the only non-regular battalion in a regular army unit.<sup>40</sup> In August a regimental depot was established at Ayr, Scotland under Major Whitaker, and 1080 men were sent to Gallipoli on the eastern front.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., file 22b, Davidson to Burton, March 25, 1915.

<sup>38</sup> Evening Telegram, March 31, 1915; also, PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, June 29, 1915.

<sup>39</sup> Unless stated otherwise, monthly enlistment statistics are taken from JHA 1919, Report of the Department of Militia, 1919, pp. 514-15. "Enlistments" here refers to those actually accepted into the Regiment, although the distinction was not always made clear at the time. See also Appendix A.

<sup>40</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 168-69. The 29th Division was composed of regular army battalions recalled from garrison duty in India and elsewhere.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 151; above, p. 98.



The first in a long series of casualty lists reached St. John's on October 6, 1915. By mid-October the Regiment had lost one-third of its complement.<sup>42</sup> Although regimental authorities reported that recruiting was "brisk" in consequence,<sup>43</sup> only seventy-six men were accepted during the month. Whitaker warned that unless his forces were quickly augmented it was beyond the depot's capacity to maintain the Regiment at strength in the field.<sup>44</sup> The reserve force committee asked the government for instructions and was informed by Morris that the government would stand behind any decision reached by the committee and approved by the NPA.<sup>45</sup> Kent spoke on behalf of the opposition and declared that there could be "no question" as to the Regiment's continued existence. In doing so he cleared the way for a unanimous decision in favour of continued recruitment.<sup>46</sup>

The expected influx of volunteers at the end of the 1915 fishery did not materialize and new problems arose as disillusioned naval men returned home after one year's service and advised against

<sup>42</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 177. However, most subsequently recovered to rejoin the Regiment. Davidson maintained that Newfoundland soldiers in Gallipoli fared better than their "more delicately nurtured" British counterparts being less susceptible to frostbite, trenchfoot and enteric diseases due to conditions at home. PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 84. Davidson to Long, July 16, 1917.

<sup>43</sup> Evening Telegram, October 15, 1915.

<sup>44</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Whitaker to Davidson, October 11, 1915. According to the official Times history, by the time the Regiment left Gallipoli in January 1916, there were only 170 men left to answer the roll. Times History of the War, Vol. XIV, p. 193.

<sup>45</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, October 13, 1915.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

enlistment.<sup>47</sup> Enlistments in November dropped to fifty and in December to thirty-nine, hardly surprising in view of the almost total absence of effort on the part of the government, individual politicians and the NPA. As the Evening Telegram struggled to maintain the exalted sense of pride that had infused every discussion of the colony's relative contribution to date, it also allowed for the first time a reference to "cornerboy slackers" in St. John's.<sup>48</sup>

Nineteen-fifteen ended on a buoyant economic note. In place of trade dislocations and industrial distress, stay-at-homes now confronted signs of prosperity everywhere. Market prices for fish and other staples continued to climb, employment was full, local industries thriving. Year-end reviews were confident.<sup>49</sup> Less exhilarating, but not yet particularly troublesome, were the high price of food and other essentials in conjunction with growing tonnage shortages, which were beginning to affect both the import and export trades.<sup>50</sup> Simultaneously, enlistments came to a virtual standstill, and once again the St. John's press decided not only who was to blame but what must be done.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., file 5, November 5, 1915. See also below, pp. 150-51. Sailors, unlike soldiers, were given home furlough at the end of each year of service.

<sup>48</sup> Evening Telegram, October 16, 1915.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Ibid., December 31, 1915, January 26, 1916; Daily News, December 31, 1915.

<sup>50</sup> Evening Telegram, February 4, 8, 1916. See Chapter VIII for a more detailed discussion of these problems.

Given the almost excessive pride and enthusiasm which had characterized the war effort so far, the admission came reluctantly that Newfoundland was now lagging behind the other dominions. In October 1915 the Telegram estimated that on a proportional basis a total of 400,000 Canadian recruits would roughly equate 12,000 Newfoundland recruits.<sup>51</sup> Near the beginning of 1916, however, the Canadian government established an eventual target of 500,000 men.<sup>52</sup> In comparison, the colony's 3100 men was a poor showing.<sup>53</sup> At the beginning the press was inclined to point to such mitigating factors as the large loss of life at the seal fishery in the spring of 1914, the continued emigration of eligible young men and the large number of Newfoundlanders in Canadian forces.<sup>54</sup> Eventually, however, the Evening Telegram launched a major campaign intended to force the government to adopt a firm manpower objective. "The lead which the government should have taken has not been taken, and as the government is the only body which can give an authoritative lead in this matter and set up a standard, recruiting has almost died out," it maintained. The Daily News echoed the Telegram's

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., October 18, 1915. In 1914 Canada had a population of just under 8,000,000.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., January 27, 1916.

<sup>53</sup>Contrast this with December 1914 when the Montreal Herald pointed out that Newfoundland's enlistment rate far exceeded Canada's. See Evening Telegram, December 14, 1914.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., November 25, 1915, January 27, 1916. It was estimated that at least 700 Newfoundlanders had joined Canadian forces, of which the names of roughly 500 had been compiled. Daily News, February 10, 1916.

views, and together they urged a fixed minimum objective and new recruiting initiatives.<sup>55</sup>

Events abroad contrived to stiffen the government's resolve. Whitaker had already suggested that the Ayr depot be renamed the "second (reserve) battalion" on grounds that this would signify an independent command and give it greater influence with British army officials.<sup>56</sup> Bowring backed this proposal and with Whitaker repeatedly assured the reserve force committee that the adjustment would entail no real alteration in commitment or status and no additional expense. The committee finally approved, and at the same time agreed to gazette Whitaker as lieutenant-colonel. The Army Council, however, was confused about the purpose of the change. It chose to regard it as signifying the colony's intention to raise a second active service battalion, and announced that it had no objections as long as the Newfoundland government could ensure a continuing supply of reserves for both. In fact, both Davidson and the Army Council hoped that the creation of a second battalion would be the end result, but agreed that the second (reserve) battalion should continue to supply the first battalion with reinforcements

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<sup>55</sup>Evening Telegram, January 21--February 1, 1915, passim; Daily News, January 28, 1916.

<sup>56</sup>Pertinent correspondence can be located in PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, November 16, December 14, 1915, February 4, 1916. See also Evening Telegram, January 28, 1916; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 223. Whitaker also pointed out that an independent command would enable him to select his own officers without reference to the commanding officer at the front. For the significance of this argument, see below, Chapter VI, pp. 185-86 and passim.

until such time as the government made up its mind. In the meantime, the new name could fulfil either expectation.<sup>57</sup>

Unable to withstand the combined pressure of the governor, the Army Council and the St. John's press, the government succumbed. Within a matter of days it approved the creation of a second active service battalion, basing its decision on the assumption that, of the 25,000 young men between the ages of eighteen and thirty in the colony, approximately 20,000 were capable of bearing arms. Bennett explained to Davidson that the relatively low age of thirty had been fixed because it was considered appropriate to a sparse fishing population whose existence depended on a sufficient supply of able-bodied young men.<sup>58</sup> The NPA publicity endorsed this decision,<sup>59</sup> and the effect was sufficient to get enlistment moving again. Members of the reserve force committee used the opportunity to secure a number of commissions for favoured St. John's youths.<sup>60</sup>

This announcement represented the government's first major commitment since August 1914; it was a very large step. It signified an increase in the colony's military forces from 2000 to at

<sup>57</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, February 4, 1916; JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, p. 318.

<sup>58</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 27, containing Bennett to Davidson, February 4, 1916; also, JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, pp. 315-19. It was McGrath who suggested this approach. FLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 69.

<sup>59</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, February 4, 1916.

<sup>60</sup> Evening Telegram, February 14, 1916; below, pp. 190ff.

least 5000 men,<sup>61</sup> and was undertaken in the hope of restoring the colony to its former position as being "in the very first rank in proportion to her population" within the empire.<sup>62</sup> The reserve force committee now authorized accommodation, equipment and training for an additional 1250 men,<sup>63</sup> and on Davidson's advice renamed itself the standing committee on military organization, reflecting its new mandate and enhanced stature. It was enlarged as well.<sup>64</sup>

The recruiting committee was also enlarged and strengthened. F.W. Morris became chairman and W.F. Lloyd secretary, backed by MIAs, newspaper editors and the three superintendents of education.<sup>65</sup> The new committee decided to solicit the services of respected St. John's speakers to mount outpost recruiting platforms, and to have them accompanied by uniformed squads of soldiers and sailors. Responding to advice from outpost magistrates and NPA branch chairmen in the fall of 1914,<sup>66</sup> the committee hoped to secure speakers who either had sons overseas or were in uniform themselves. Mindful of the unfortunate experience of recruiters on the southwest coast over a year before, the committee also decided to

<sup>61</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Davidson to Bonar Law, February 7, 1916.

<sup>62</sup> PHA 1916, Davidson, March 16, 1916, pp. 3-4. Elsewhere, the governor referred to it as a "race of Honour." See JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, p. 315.

<sup>63</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, February 25, 1916.

<sup>64</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Standing Committee, February, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 348; above, pp. 59-61.

<sup>65</sup> Above, p. 66.

<sup>66</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, file 24.

first soften public opinion by an intensive publicity campaign. Open campaigning would then follow on its heels.<sup>67</sup> A publicity sub-committee consisting of newspaper editors and the leaders of the three political parties was appointed, and a second sub-committee was authorized to draft a series of public notices and circular letters to be distributed to outport clergymen and teachers. In addition, 5000 posters from the British Parliamentary Recruiting Committee were to be sent to all government offices, and special recruiting editions of local newspapers to every home. The recruiting committee also recommended that MHAs organize a series of district recruiting committees, and the Telegram suggested that special efforts be directed towards outport seafarers and women.<sup>68</sup>

Many of these plans never fully materialized,<sup>69</sup> although the immediate response to the proposed second battalion was encouraging. In February 1916, ninety-two men enlisted and in March 174, the largest number for over a year. Davidson was pleased, promised 2000 recruits by mid-summer,<sup>70</sup> and, acting on Whitaker's advice, agreed to be gazetted as

<sup>67</sup> Daily News, February 16, 1916; Evening Telegram, February 16, 1916; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916.

<sup>68</sup> Evening Telegram, February 8, 16, March 8, 1916.

<sup>69</sup> For example, there is no evidence that outport recruiting committees were ever established, with the exception of the Conception Bay recruiting committee under the chairmanship of George J. Adams.

<sup>70</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 22c, Davidson to Hadow, April 8, 1916.

colonel.<sup>71</sup> The Daily News continued to collect and publish the names of those enlisted elsewhere, while the Evening Telegram revived its policy of publishing the names of volunteers on a regular basis and, in an attempt to stimulate regional rivalry and local pride, enlistment statistics by community and district.<sup>72</sup>

These statistics confirmed what had been assumed from the beginning: that St. John's enjoyed a very substantial lead and had contributed, in fact, almost twice the ratio of its nearest outport rival.<sup>73</sup> By the end of February 1916, 1028 soldiers and 246 sailors had gone forward from the two St. John's districts, or one out of every thirty-six persons in the capital. The district of Trinity, where the new business headquarters of the FPU was about to be built, stood second with 223 sailors and 143 soldiers, or one out of every fifty-nine persons in the district. St. George's came third with one out of every sixty-three persons enlisted.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., file 5, November 16, 1915, containing Davidson to Outerbridge, October 30, 1915; Ibid., file 6, Memorandum by Davidson, May 9, 1916, in which he refers to the possibility of three or four battalions.

<sup>72</sup> The reasons for the wide discrepancy in district and community enlistment rates are worthy of a detailed and comprehensive study in themselves, which is beyond the scope of the present study. However, major factors appear to be the influence of local leaders, the degree of isolation and religion. Although the latter was not a factor in St. John's, it seems to have exerted an influence in Placentia-St. Mary's and Bay de Verde districts, as well as along the southwest coast. Carbonear poses a special problem, for although it shared the predominant characteristics of adjacent Harbour Grace, and was the colony's fourth largest centre, it nonetheless lagged far behind.

<sup>73</sup> The following statistics are taken from Evening Telegram, March 13, 1916. It is extremely important to bear in mind that both St. John's East and West included outport communities with high rates of enlistment, a fact that was generally lost sight of at the time. Portugal Cove and Bell Island are good examples.



TABLE 2  
ENLISTMENT STATISTICS BY DISTRICT TO FEBRUARY 29, 1916

District	Newfoundland Regiment	Newfoundland Naval Reserve	Total	Ratio of Total Population
St. John's (East & West)	1028	246	1278	1:36
Trinity	143	223	366	1:59
St. George's	97	89	186	1:63
Port de Grave	31	73	104	1:67
Harbour Grace	57	107	164	1:72
Bonaville	108	160	268	1:85
St. Barbe	39	79	118	1:88
Harbour Main	53	52	105	1:90
Twillingate	182	55	237	1:95
Placentia-St. Mary's	67	97	164	1:98
Fogo	42	41	83	1:99
Carbonear	13	25	38	1:134
Burin	49	18	67	1:165
Fortune Bay	29	18	47	1:176
Ferryland	21	14	35	1:212
Burgeo-LaPole	24	12	36	1:216
Bay de Verde	21	10	31	1:329
Total	2004	1319	3323	

Source: Evening Telegram, March 13, 1916.

divided almost equally between the two forces. St. George's was considered a special case, and gave rise to two separate explanations, the first that residents of French descent responded immediately, the second that the presence of British and French warships during the nineteenth century had instilled a martial spirit.<sup>74</sup> The area also boasted strong local leadership, mainly in the persons of district magistrate R. MacDonnell, president of the local NPA branch; A.J. O'Reilly, local correspondent for the Evening Telegram and NPA secretary; J.F. Downey, district MHA; and the Roman Catholic bishop for St. George's, Bishop Power.

Speaking on behalf of the St. George's NPA committee at a later date, O'Reilly took exception to the manner in which figures were compiled by St. John's officials. He claimed that statistics for the two St. John's districts were artificially inflated by including enlistments in Canadian forces, by basing percentages on the total population rather than on the number of eligible men, and by including those who had been rejected.<sup>75</sup> However, few besides O'Reilly were disposed to mount such a challenge — outport MHAs for the most part remained silent — and comparative statistics continued to breed resentment both inside and outside St. John's. As a result, charges that the rest of the colony was not bearing its share of the burden persisted and grew in the capital and in doing so, probably fulfilled

<sup>74</sup> Evening Telegram, December 10, 1914, containing "St. George's Notes" by A.J. O'Reilly; PANL, GN I/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1915, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>75</sup> See Evening Telegram, April 17, 1917.

themselves. Less critical than the absolute veracity of the charges was the fact that they were generally believed at the time.

Fourth, fifth and eighth place went to the three Conception Bay districts closest to St. John's, Port de Grave, Harbour Grace and Harbour Main, boasting 1:67, 1:72 and 1:90 respectively in February 1916. Taken together, naval enlistments far outweighed army enlistments in these areas. Sixth place went to the district of Bonavista, which also reflected a preference for the Naval Reserve, as did northern St. Barbe district which ranked seventh.<sup>76</sup> Willingate placed ninth, with three times the number of soldiers as sailors, although they came mainly from Grand Falls.

Grand Falls, as a company town, was a special case. A local branch of the NFA had been established in August 1914 under the chairmanship of Magistrate H.F. Fitzgerald, who was soon replaced by the local AND Company manager, W. Scott. The association and company became almost as one thereafter. The full measure of company support for the war effort was not realized until mid-1915 when tonnage shortages and British import restrictions resulted in huge cutbacks at the mill.<sup>77</sup> From then on, the interests of the company and the war

<sup>76</sup> Sir Wilfred Grenfell actively recruited in this area and along the Labrador coast. See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Grenfell to Davidson, March 26, 1915; Ibid., file 5, Davidson to Grenfell, April 5, 1915.

<sup>77</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 51/2, Rothermere to Morris, April 1, 1915; Ibid., Morris to Rothermere, April 25, 1915; Evening Telegram, May 6, 1916; below, p. 237.

effort coincided.<sup>78</sup> Following the decision to raise a second battalion in February 1916, a local campaign was launched with a target of 100 men.<sup>79</sup> Faced with the prospect of a large number of unemployed woodsmen and mill workers, the company once again agreed to make up differences in pay.<sup>80</sup> In less than two weeks, 109 men volunteered, accounting for a large proportion of February's recruits.<sup>81</sup> A visit from Davidson and his wife followed in March 1916, and there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that within a short time the atmosphere in Grand Falls had become extremely uncomfortable for the few remaining eligible young men.<sup>82</sup>

Men in the remaining eight districts, three on the southwest coast plus Ferryland, Placentia-St. Mary's, Fogo, Carbonear and Bay de Verde, enlisted at rates which ranged from a high of 1:98 in Placentia-St. Mary's to a low of 1:329 in Bay de Verde at the end of February 1916. Together they totalled only 501 men, of which 266 were soldiers and 235 sailors. Taken as a unit, the outports clearly favoured the Naval Reserve.

<sup>78</sup> Davidson reported that labour was well handled and controlled in Grand Falls, and that relations between the company and its employees were exceptionally good. CO 537/1166, Davidson to Bonar Law, September 19, 1916.

<sup>79</sup> Evening Telegram, February 7, 1916.

<sup>80</sup> Daily News, February 18, 1916. This policy had been put into effect for first battalion recruits; company officials claimed it was already costing them \$1000 per month.

<sup>81</sup> Evening Telegram, February 26, 1916.

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, letters contained in Ibid., December 21, 1916, April 16, 1917.

Despite the recent decision to raise a second battalion, there were those who continued to question the sufficiency of effort and planning, and variously ascribed fault to St. John's opinion leaders, regimental officials, private employers<sup>83</sup> and the FPU. When the house opened in March 1916 members on both sides, including W.F. Lloyd, recently appointed leader of the combined opposition and secretary of the recruiting committee, freely acknowledged that recruiting had been slack. "It is a remarkable fact that up to a few months ago, no appeal had been made for twelve months," Lloyd declared, carefully avoiding directing his remarks to any particular party or group.<sup>84</sup> E. Parsons, a government member from Harbour Grace, contrasted local recruitment with that in Nova Scotia where enlisted men received a bonus for each new recruit they brought in, and claimed that rejected Newfoundland soldiers were being accepted at North Sydney.<sup>85</sup> The Hon. A.J. Robinson blamed traditional St. John's leaders for insufficient effort, but was proud of the recruits: "Despite the little that has been done, our boys have joined the services in cold blood, and activated by calm reason — volunteers in the very best sense of the word."<sup>86</sup> Generally speaking, however, a mood of cordial agreement

<sup>83</sup> PHA 1916, Lloyd, March 21, 1916, p. 39.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., Parsons, May 2, 1916, p. 575. See also, Wilson, Ontario, pp. xxxvi-xxxvii.

<sup>86</sup> PLC 1916, Robinson, April 13, 1916, p. 53.

prevailed on most issues,<sup>87</sup> mainly because Morris had met most opposition demands in hopes of paving the way for an eventual coalition.

The coalition which he proposed in the spring of 1916 seems to have enjoyed the support of all three political parties, although Morris was unable to persuade Cashin, who objected to the inclusion of the FFU. Using the war effort as a base from which to discredit Coaker, Cashin quoted at length from back issues of the Mail and Advocate with respect to its initial opposition to the Regiment and to the NPA, and claimed that Coaker had dealt recruitment a severe blow from which it had never fully recovered.<sup>88</sup> Lloyd countered that for the past year there had been "complete harmony" on these issues, that the opposition, including Coaker, had gone out of its way to assist the war effort, and that Cashin's outburst was intended to disrupt the prevailing party unity. He also pointed out that outport enlistments were highest in districts where Coaker was strong, and contrasted the poor showing of Cashin's Ferryland district.<sup>89</sup> Although these differences were quickly smoothed over, and no one suggested that the Morris administration had failed to live up to its obligations, the idea of a coalition government was dropped for some time.

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<sup>87</sup> PHA 1916, Lloyd, April 17, 1916, p. 370. This was in marked contrast to Canadian parliamentary sessions, which beginning in 1915 were marred by a number of disputes centred on the war effort. For details, see Keith, War Government, pp. 198-207.

<sup>88</sup> PHA 1916, Cashin, April 27, 1916, pp. 521-29; above, pp. 37, 100-01. For further details on the proposed coalition, see below, pp. 279-80.

<sup>89</sup> PHA 1916, Lloyd, April 27, 1916, pp. 529-30.

Members of the legislature may have been willing to overlook certain obvious shortcomings, but the Daily News was not. On April 10, 1916 it levied specific charges against the recruiting committee, accusing its members of a lack of initiative in the outports and in the matter of rejection badges (about which more will be said in a moment). F.W. Morris responded to these charges in the house, and explained that recruiting had been deferred until the young men of the southwest coast returned home from the fishery, and until sixteen invalided soldiers returned home from Great Britain to make up the necessary recruiting parties. He argued that the matter of rejection badges had been grossly oversimplified, since it raised the question of who, if anybody, was ineligible for service on other than physical grounds.<sup>90</sup>

This issue had been raised first by cable superintendents at Heart's Content, who complained of their inability to retain the necessary staff to cope with the extraordinary volume of wartime traffic.<sup>91</sup> Since no one was legally ineligible for service if they met physical requirements, those who were considered unsuitable for reasons of character, financial circumstances or the nature of their employment were routinely rejected at headquarters solely at Montgomerie's discretion.<sup>92</sup> This gave rise to a considerable amount of dissatisfaction, not only among those directly concerned, but among vessel owners and

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., F.W. Morris, April 11, 1916, pp. 330-31.

<sup>91</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, March 3, 1916.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., March 8, 1915; above, p. 87.

masters who were unable to retain the necessary trapezen and crews.<sup>93</sup> Because men were not armed with proof of their ineligibility, many suffered unfairly, particularly once the unsavory practice of white feathering (a shaming technique, frequently adopted by women, who thrust white feathers upon ununiformed young men) got under way.<sup>94</sup> Morris defended the recruiting committee on grounds that authority must stem from the house, which then passed legislation authorizing the issue of badges,<sup>95</sup> and the government requested the reserve force committee to draw up the necessary regulations.

There the matter was allowed to rest until public intolerance, coupled with the pressing need for new recruits after July 1916, forced it to a head. Influenced more by the requirements of the Regiment than by the need to define or protect those performing essential services, the reserve force committee authorized rejection badges only for those who had been formally rejected on medical grounds.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Under existing legislation, indentured fishery servants enlisting without their master's consent were liable to arrest. The act was amended during the 1916 session. See PHA 1916, Lloyd, April 10, 1916, p. 317; Newfoundland Acts 1916, The Volunteer Force (Amendment) Act, 6 Geo. V, cap. 7, sec. 4. However, Davidson subsequently instructed recruiting officers not to accept them. PHA 1917, Hickman, June 18, 1917, p. 209.

<sup>94</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, July 22, August 4, 1916. Thus, rejection badges also served to protect those who had already offered their services, which was a case of "badging against badgering." It is unclear how widespread the practice of white feathering eventually became.

<sup>95</sup> Newfoundland Acts 1916, The Volunteer Force (Amendment) Act, 6 Geo. V, cap. 7, sec. 3.

<sup>96</sup> A copy of the regulations can be located in Evening Telegram, October 3, 1916. See also, Ibid., August 5, 1916.



In the hope of appeasing telegraph operators, it was decided to establish a recruiting office at Heart's Content, to be referred to as a "training" centre.<sup>97</sup> Thus the failure of both the government and the NPA to devise a rational policy of manpower allocation at this or any other time prior to the enactment of conscription continued to give rise to problems, and to serious differences as to what constituted an essential service. These problems were not met head on until the exemption tribunal began hearings nineteen months later.<sup>98</sup>

A number of other issues emerged in the spring of 1916 which also had an effect on recruitment. The rebellion in Ireland cast a shadow, although the extent to which it influenced the Newfoundland war effort is unclear. During the early days of the war John Redmond's example had been particularly heartening and the press gave him extensive coverage.<sup>99</sup> Because St. John's Roman Catholics, including the Roman Catholic archbishop, firmly supported the war effort but upheld the principle of home rule,<sup>100</sup> the press condemned the uprising.

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<sup>97</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 19b, Chairman, Standing Committee, 1917. Grieve to Davidson, September 19, 1916.

<sup>98</sup> Cable operators, for example, were not formally exempted until May 1918, apparently in response to a request from the imperial government. Evening Telegram, May 20, 1918. In Canada, a national service board was created in October 1916, and registration commenced on January 1, 1917.

<sup>99</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, December 1, 3, 13, 1914, January 13, July 3, 1915. Redmond was leader of the Irish Nationalist Party and an ardent supporter of the war effort.

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, Ibid., March 27, April 17, 1917.

minimized its importance,<sup>101</sup> and generally eschewed further comment. NHAs were even more reticent, except for Parsons, who vigorously defended the loyalty of Irish troops in the trenches, while admitting that enlistments in Harbour Grace had suffered.<sup>102</sup>

At approximately the same time, the wounded and disabled began returning home from the front. In April, nineteen veterans wound their way from Port aux Basques to St. John's by train, and were greeted in St. John's by a huge reception and parade which had been arranged by the WPA.<sup>103</sup> For most members of the community their return represented the first tangible evidence of the destructive capabilities of war, and it evoked a variety of special responses. Local war poetry and song again became the principal mode of expression, it was announced that the St. John's regatta would take place "along patriotic lines," and fishermen of nearby Pouch Cove agreed to set aside their annual differences over fishing berths "as a gesture to the men from the community at war."<sup>104</sup> The NPA and WPA organized classes for illiterate recruits, the WPA a soldiers and sailors club, and the reserve force committee the conversion

<sup>101</sup> See Evening Herald, April 26, 1916 in particular. See also CO 194/296, Harris to Long, March 18, 1919 in which the governor states that St. John's Roman Catholics were generally loyal, "just coloured by that tendency to lament the 'wrongs of Ireland' which seems to have become inherent in the Irish character especially on this side of the water."

<sup>102</sup> PHA 1916, Parsons, May 2, 1916, p. 575.

<sup>103</sup> Evening Telegram, April 14, 17, 1916.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., May 15, 29, 1916. The regatta had been cancelled the year before.

of town rinks into barracks for the expected influx of men in April and May.<sup>105</sup> However, returning soldiers threw into startling relief the absence of pensions, medical care facilities and civil re-establishment programs.<sup>106</sup> In addition, the veterans were accompanied by soldiers who refused to re-enlist at the end of their one-year term of service. Their presence was embarrassing, since many spread uncompromising reports of conditions abroad which officials took pains to discredit, generally by discrediting the men themselves.<sup>107</sup> Nonetheless, they had an effect on recruitment, and for these and other reasons the expected influx of men in the spring of 1916 failed to materialize. Although 169 men enlisted in April and the same number in May, the flow was sufficient only to maintain the first battalion,<sup>108</sup> and it was not until mid-May that outpost campaigning began in earnest.

On April 16 the colonial secretary, J.R. Bennett, issued a new proclamation. It was a simple, direct invitation to young men between the ages of nineteen and thirty-five to present themselves to the nearest magistrate or at one of two St. John's recruiting offices

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., May 6, 15, 16, 1916.

<sup>106</sup> For a fuller discussion of these problems, see below, Chapter VII.

<sup>107</sup> For further information on this subject, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Timewell to Davidson, March 22, 1916; Ibid., Davidson to Timewell, April 11, 1916; Evening Telegram, July 25, 29, August 9, 1916; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 73. During the 1915 legislative session, an attempt had been made to extend the term of enlistment to the end of the war, but had been blocked by Lloyd. In May 1916 a regimental order was issued requiring men to enlist for the duration, which effectively stemmed the flow. PRA 1915, Lloyd, May 21, 1915, p. 729; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 285.

<sup>108</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 6, memorandum by Montgomerie, April 4, 1916.

with a view to doubling the colony's military forces.<sup>109</sup> Coincidentally, 50,000 recruiting editions of local newspapers were distributed by school children.<sup>110</sup> In May, Dr. Thomas Hanrahan, Lieutenant Leo Murphy and ten other soldiers visited communities in Conception Bay. W.W. Blackall campaigned on the southwest; V.P. Burke in Ferryland district; and Levi Curtis in Bay de Verde. The format of these tours was basically the same as in early 1915, with meetings arranged and conducted by prominent citizens in each community.<sup>111</sup> Blackall reported that the men of the southwest coast were away at the fishery again,<sup>112</sup> and the overall results were disappointing. Enlistments dropped to sixty-seven in June.

The colony was totally unprepared for the events of July 1916. The battle of the Somme commenced on July 1 and that day alone proved, or should have proved, the fallacy of the offensive as a decisive strategy. One hundred and ten thousand British soldiers left the relative security of their makeshift trenches in orderly rows only to be hosed down by German machine guns a few yards away. Sixty thousand British casualties were recorded, including 20,000 dead, although statistics released by the Army Council revealed nowhere near

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<sup>109</sup> A copy of the proclamation can be located in Newfoundland Quarterly, Summer, 1916, p. 27. Compare this with the emotional approach of Governor Harris' March 30, 1918 appeal, a copy of which can be located in PANL, GN 2/14, box 10.

<sup>110</sup> Evening Telegram, May 27, 1916.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., May 19, 27, 1916.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., June 15, 1916.

that number and the day was hailed as a success.<sup>113</sup> Where regional battalions did not exist, it was possible to hide the magnitude of the slaughter from the civilian population; but for most Newfoundlanders the realities were painfully clear. St. John's was still adjusting to the concept of casualties<sup>114</sup> when it suddenly confronted the appalling results of total war. On July 7, nine officers were reported dead and three missing, and the population nervously awaited the toll of enlisted men. Davidson confirmed that there was a large number, but suggested that the next-of-kin be notified before names were released.<sup>115</sup> Suspense built and rumours abounded; the Evening Telegram called them "unBritishlike."<sup>116</sup> There were criticisms of the slowness with which the colonial secretary's office performed its task, but the Telegram upheld its efforts and explained the tremendous amounts of work involved.<sup>117</sup> On July 27 the first names were published. Roughly 810

<sup>113</sup> Haste, Home Fires, p. 71. See also Martin Middlebrook, The First Day on the Somme (London: Allen Lane, 1971); Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 12-13 and passim. Between July and November, 1916, the British army suffered 420,000 casualties in return for an advance of six miles.

<sup>114</sup> A list of casualties to June 16, 1916 reads as follows:

Killed or died of wounds .....	32
Died of sickness .....	26
Discharged physically unfit .....	42
Missing .....	0
Wounded or sick, still on rolls .....	135

Taken from Evening Telegram, June 23, 1916.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., July 7, 1916.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., July 25, 1916.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., July 12, 1916.

officers and men had gone into the battle in the vicinity of Beaumont Hamel on July 1, of whom fifteen officers and ninety-five men were killed, sixteen officers and 479 men wounded, and one officer and 114 men listed as missing. Only two officers and ninety-five men escaped unscathed.<sup>118</sup> Another long list of casualties followed on August 1, bringing the total number of killed, wounded or missing in July to 760.<sup>119</sup>

Pride, universal numbness and vague notions of patriotism kept grief within bounds. In St. John's the very multitude of names went a long way towards blunting the impact of individual losses.<sup>120</sup> Special church services were held as townsmen struggled to grasp the new meaning of war, and clung to the hope that the missing were prisoners

<sup>118</sup> These figures derive from Ibid., July 29, 1916. See also JHA 1919, Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 509; Middlebrook, First Day on the Somme, Appendix V, p. 330; Joy B. Cave, What Became of Corporal Pittman? (Portugal Cove, Newfoundland: Breakwater Books, 1974), Appendices 1-4, pp. 1-xxx. World War I casualty statistics are almost impossible to verify, let alone compare, since they frequently conflict and were sometimes falsified. However, it has been stated that on July 1, 1916 the British army suffered the largest loss suffered by any army in a single day. It has also been stated that the Newfoundland Regiment suffered more heavily in proportion to numbers than any other regiment. See Norman Dixon, On the Psychology of Military Incompetence (London: Futura Publications, 1976), p. 82; Times History of the War, Vol. XIV, p. 196.

<sup>119</sup> Evening Telegram, August 1, 1916.

<sup>120</sup> It is probable that most, if not all, officers were from St. John's. The dead included four grandsons of C.P. Ayre, Bruce Reid, son of W.D. Reid, Hubert Herder, son of the proprietor of the Evening Telegram, Clifford Rendell and Owen Steele. No accurate count of the number of enlisted men from the city is available, although the Telegram reported that of the 155 men listed as missing on August 1, sixty-five were from the capital. Evening Telegram, August 1, 1916.

of war in Germany. It was not until late November that this impression was dispelled.<sup>121</sup> Davidson addressed a huge gathering on the second anniversary of the war and stated that nine of every ten Newfoundlanders who went to war would return home to lead long and fruitful lives. Bennett reaffirmed the government's commitment and promised that new recruits would be available for as long as Britain had need of them.<sup>122</sup> The Roman Catholic archbishop, Archbishop Roche, reminded his flock that the wounded and dead had gone forward with the Church's benediction to defend the empire.<sup>123</sup> Seeking further reassurance, the community took heart in the extravagant praise of the Regiment's commanding officers, particularly Sir Douglas Haig, who said that the heroism of the Newfoundlanders on July 1 had never been surpassed.<sup>124</sup> No one doubted these words, and the commitment of St. John's was strengthened.

The Somme offensive brought plans for a second battalion to a grinding halt. From then on it was never mentioned; most frequently

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<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, August 1, 4, November 23, 1916. Only two members of the Regiment and one of the Naval Reserve were then prisoners.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, August 5, 1916.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, August 3, 1916.

<sup>124</sup> Quoted in Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundland*, p. 281. The *Boston Herald* stated that because of July 1 "Newfoundland looms larger on the map today than at any other time in its history." Davidson called it "the day when we entered the brotherhood of Fame." *Evening Telegram*, August 12, 1916, July 2, 1917. For many today, the Regiment's engagement near Beaumont Hamel on July 1, 1916, symbolizes Newfoundland's role in the Great War. For some, it remains the colony's finest hour.

at issue during the remainder of the war was the continued existence of the first battalion. However, the conviction that the colony was not contributing its fair share of money<sup>125</sup> and men gradually grew in St. John's, along with the view that the outports were not pulling their weight. Although the proportion of outport recruits continued to increase,<sup>126</sup> and they were considered by Davidson to be the best,<sup>127</sup> the St. John's public became increasingly intolerant of "slackers" and the outports in general. Unfortunately, few of these men had as yet reached France through no fault of their own, so that many of the complaints were unjustified.

Following the crippling losses of July 1916, the War Office gave serious consideration to recalling the Regiment in order

<sup>125</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, July 12, 1916; below, p. 212.

<sup>126</sup> A comparative breakdown reads as follows:

Company	Departed St. John's	Total Number Recruits	Percentage Outport Recruits
C	February 5, 1915	244	38
D	March 20, 1915	250	47
E	April 22, 1915	237	63
F	June 20, 1915	238	75
G	October 27, 1915	257	77

Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 212; JHA 1916, Report of the Reserve Force Committee, February, 1916, in NPA Report, 1916, p. 329.

<sup>127</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916. "The new volunteers are the best," the governor recorded. "The gentlemen class and the Irish with their love of soldiering responded first. But these Northern men coming in now had first to learn what war is all about and then obtain the reluctant leave of their mothers.... Sober, obedient, God-fearing Methodists for the most part, rather like what Cromwell's Ironsides must have been." See also CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917 in which he refers to northern Newfoundlanders as "the stalwart men who now form the backbone of the fighting units."



that it might regain its strength.<sup>128</sup> Although this proposal was never acted upon, it does give some measure of the problem faced by the Army Council owing to the fact that the Regiment could not be reinforced from outside and that new recruits were slow to arrive from St. John's. A total of six drafts, or 1327 men, left St. John's in 1915, but only one draft of 163 men during the first six months of 1916. Following the losses of July, two more drafts totalling 746 men left during the summer,<sup>129</sup> although it was estimated that it would be mid-October before they could be sent to France.<sup>130</sup> In the meantime, the Regiment was reinforced by existing reserves at Ayr, but it was not until the end of 1916 that it passed the 800 mark again.<sup>131</sup> The succeeding draft, the infamous Windsor Draft, did not reach Great Britain until April 1917.<sup>132</sup>

In the meantime, the number of enlistments fell to seventy-six in July, forty-four in August and twenty-two in September 1916. This decline goes a long way towards discrediting Davidson's theory that military reverses had a positive effect.<sup>133</sup> In addition,

<sup>128</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 284.

<sup>129</sup> JHA 1916, Report of the Reserve Force Committee, February, 1916, in NPA Report, 1916, p. 329; JHA 1917, Report of the Reserve Force Committee, February, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 352.

<sup>130</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 284.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>132</sup> See below, pp. 194-96.

<sup>133</sup> Above, pp. 109-10.

the dissension which now wracked the administration of the Regiment in St. John's, particularly with respect to the selection of officers, was taking its toll on potential recruits.<sup>134</sup> However, the need for reinforcements was pressing, and in the fall a number of tours were undertaken, although neither members of the house nor the NFA, with the exception of Davidson, took part.

In August the Rev. C.W. Holland campaigned in St. Barbe district, two returned soldiers in White Bay,<sup>135</sup> and in October and November Lieutenant George Hicks in Fogo and along the northeast coast. Hicks was accompanied by a squad of newly-enlisted recruits who drilled at each stop, and he enjoyed a measure of success.<sup>136</sup> Davidson journeyed to Grand Falls and the west coast by train, and thence by boat along the northwest coast to Labrador in August and September.<sup>137</sup> In addition, Private Philip Jensen, a Newfoundlander who had enlisted in the Canadian army and been invalided home after Ypres, had for several months been conducting a personal tour on behalf of the Red Cross. Jensen was also

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<sup>134</sup> This aspect is explored below, Chapter VI.

<sup>135</sup> Evening Telegram, August 7, 15, 1916.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., October 5, November 2, 1916. Hicks' tour coincided with the return of Labrador crews from the summer fishery and he claimed to have enlisted 270 men. Unfortunately, not all wound up in uniform. See Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 285; below, p. 168.

<sup>137</sup> CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, August 15, 1916; Evening Telegram, August 19, 1916. As far as can be determined, this was the first tour on the northwest coast. Visiting the area in 1921, Governor Harris noted its solid attachment to the Crown. See CO 194/301, Harris to Milner, September 16, 1921.

an energetic and successful recruiter, and as he travelled about the island he became increasingly critical of the methods of the NPA. During the fall he twice addressed large St. John's audiences and criticized the recruiting committee, thereby alienating an influential sector of the community.<sup>138</sup> In spite of these efforts, however, only 236 men were enlisted between October and December 1916, far short of the 150 men per month required by the Army Council to maintain the Regiment at strength in the field.<sup>139</sup>

Just as it was recovering from the events of July, the Regiment suffered a further blow. Engaged at Gueudencourt in October it sustained 239 casualties in three days, of which half were fatal.<sup>140</sup> Taking their lead from the brigade's commanding officer, newspaper accounts of the battle practically ignored these losses and chose to concentrate on the Regiment's "magnificent" success in having reached and held its objective and "wrought havoc" among enemy troops.<sup>141</sup>

After Gueudencourt an even more determined mood prevailed in the capital, while in the outports the gloomy news from the front

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<sup>138</sup> Evening Telegram, September 15, October 12, November 20, 1916, January 24, 1917 and passim. In the spring of 1917 Jensen re-emerged in Boston and New York with an attack on the standing committee. For further details, see below, p. 191, fn. 61.

<sup>139</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 2, November 27, 1916 containing a copy of Bonar Law to Davidson, October 31, 1916.

<sup>140</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlanders, p. 310. Included among the dead was Cecil Clift, son of J.A. Clift. It was estimated that approximately fifteen per cent of the casualties fell victim to friendly shellfire.

<sup>141</sup> Evening Telegram, November 20, December 30, 1916; Newfoundland Quarterly, Christmas 1916, p. 6.

combined with the lucrative nature of the fisheries to dampen any lingering enthusiasm for voluntary service. In St. John's the knowledge that casualties of July and October were not being offset by new recruits generated fear that the Regiment would cease to exist altogether, and it was held that the honour of the colony was at stake. The Evening Telegram openly referred to the need for better direction and control of the war effort, and blamed the government for the poor national showing.<sup>142</sup> It now claimed that on the basis of returns from Great Britain and the other dominions a seven per cent enlistment rate (total) was a reasonable goal, at a time when Newfoundland stood lowest with just over two per cent, with St. John's still well in the lead. As a result, it urged that each district aim to turn out fifty per cent of its eligible men for a total of 12,500 and, conceding that comparisons were "odious", promised to furnish weekly district statistics in hopes of stimulating a "healthy" rivalry.<sup>143</sup> A move was launched to bring the estimated forty to fifty men remaining of the first contingent home on furlough for Christmas, but the Army Council refused, stating that their services could not be spared.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>142</sup> Evening Telegram, October 19, 1916. According to the Telegram, the Army Council had already threatened to disband certain Irish divisions unless recruits were immediately forthcoming.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., October 28, 31, 1916.

<sup>144</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, October 10, 1916; Evening Telegram, October 21, 1916. It was reported that members of the first Australian, New Zealand and Canadian contingents were being sent home at this time. The attempt was repeated in the fall of 1917, but was again unsuccessful. See PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 175, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 426-27.

On November 1, 1916 the recruiting committee issued a new appeal, which read in part: "Our comparative immunity from the consequences of a state of war must not be allowed to blind us to the need [for men] ... not alone that victory may be secured but that Newfoundland's place in the colonial empire of Great Britain may be assured."<sup>145</sup> On its heels there followed a series of open air recruiting meetings in the capital, timed to coincide with the arrival of outport-men for their winter supplies.<sup>146</sup> For over a month St. John's resembled a vast recruiting platform, and on most nights there were bands and parades and huge gatherings in front of the court house on Water Street, where politicians, returned men and NPA officials used various emotional and rational ploys in an effort to attract recruits. Patriotism, honour and duty were called upon first, but speakers also emphasized the more material advantages of being a soldier, which were held to include maintenance and pay, support for dependants, broader horizons and better health. Those who refused to enlist were branded as "slackers" and "shirkers" and subjected to abuse from the crowd. As a result, almost forty men volunteered the first night alone,<sup>147</sup> and meetings continued to be held for some time, until weather conditions and the drying up of recruits forced them to be discontinued. At the same time, meetings were held in adjacent Ferryland district, although neither

<sup>145</sup> Evening Telegram, November 1, 1916.

<sup>146</sup> Details can be located in Ibid., November 6-28, 1916, passim.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., November 8, 1916.

government member attended and results were poor.<sup>148</sup> Enlistment statistics did jump — to ninety-eight in November and seventy-six in December — although how far this can be attributed to the St. John's campaign remains unclear.

More important than the number of volunteers in the long run was the crisis atmosphere to which the meetings gave rise. Reporting on the NPA meeting of November 7, the Evening Telegram noted that much of the debate "regrettably" savoured of "Germanism."<sup>149</sup> It was at this meeting that the subject of registration, "a mild-mannered brother of conscription," was first broached. F.J. Morris was of the opinion that the Association could initiate it, but Davidson countered that any such departure from the previous practice must come from the government. The recruiting committee announced plans for a new series of outport campaigns and the proposal was dropped,<sup>150</sup> although in just over a month it seemed in St. John's that conscription was on its way to becoming a political necessity.

Nineteen-seventeen was a perilous year. In Europe there were a series of military disasters, which included the withdrawal of Russia, the collapse of the Italian army, Rumania's fall and mutiny among French troops. At sea, Germany's resumption of unrestricted

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., November 9, December 8, 9, 1916. See also Ibid., April 11, 1917.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., November 8, 1916.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, November 7, 1916.

submarine warfare endangered supply lines in the North Atlantic, although it also led to the American entry into the war. In Newfoundland, high prices and tonnage shortages threatened both the import and export trades, although they existed alongside full and gainful employment. Despite the economic boom, in St. John's the undisguised enthusiasm of 1914-15 had given way to a grim determination to win the war, which meant a determination to maintain the Regiment. Although the Army Council had requested 150 new recruits each month,<sup>151</sup> or 1800 men per year, only 1084 had enlisted in 1916, down 321 from the year before. The strain of maintaining the Regiment began to show in St. John's, and the NPA was no longer willing to bear the burden alone.

The beginning of 1917 was marked by a growing number of disputes centred on the war effort. The press continued to report that soldiers overseas were receiving inadequate care and attention. Grumbling persisted and grew over the selection of officers. The government had still not enacted pension legislation. These and all the problems of returning ex-soldiers to civilian life festered like running sores. A continuing source of dissatisfaction among NPA members was the government's reluctance to undertake the defence of St. John's. Differences concerning the administration of patriotic funds came to the fore.<sup>152</sup> Tempers were frayed, with a grim sense of satisfaction the Telegram reported that a well-known Catalina-born seaman had been

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<sup>151</sup> Above, p. 143.

<sup>152</sup> These issues are dealt with below, Chapters VI and VII.

executed in London as a spy.<sup>153</sup> The prospect of a general election in the fall further sharpened the tension. As a result, the NPA was not convened in December 1916 and the January 19, 1917 meeting was conducted in secrecy; the Evening Telegram was not even informed of its being held.<sup>154</sup> For the first time a number of disputes between the NPA and the government erupted in the open, the most important of which was over the means to ensure the Regiment's survival. Thus, on January 19 the Association raised the matter of registration again.

By this time attitudes had hardened, and for the first Davidson seems to have been temporarily aligned against Morris. Contrary to his earlier position, the governor now claimed that the recruiting committee was competent to deal with the issue, and it was moved by J.W. Withers, seconded by W.G. Gosling,<sup>155</sup> that the committee draw up the necessary registration scheme. The prime minister, however, objected and claimed that Newfoundland was already doing its share. He was supported by Major G.T. Carty and P.T. McGrath, who suggested that the NPA lacked authority to enforce it.<sup>156</sup> The ensuing debate is not recorded, although Davidson later informed the Colonial Office that the principle of registration and conscription had been formally endorsed

<sup>153</sup> Evening Telegram, January 26, 1917.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., January 20, 1917.

<sup>155</sup> Gosling was a director of Harvey and Company and had recently been elected major.

<sup>156</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, January 19, 1917. All three were Roman Catholics, although it remains unclear whether this had a bearing on their stand.



by both the recruiting committee and the NPA, but rejected by his ministers, adding that in his opinion compulsion was impractical "in the present state of party politics and impending election."<sup>157</sup>

However, the NPA was unwilling to see the matter dropped, and in violation of the government's wishes, added Withers and Gosling to the recruiting committee.<sup>158</sup> Henceforth, the call for registration was replaced by the demand for conscription.

During the first three months of 1917 a series of campaigns were conducted in the outports, and for the first time the St. John's public was kept fully informed. Twelve members of the Regiment toured Conception Bay.<sup>159</sup> W.W. Blackall, accompanied by a member of the Regiment and of the Naval Reserve, campaigned in twenty-four settlements along the northeast and northwest coasts. The response was extremely uneven, for although a number of men volunteered in several communities, in the majority none did. Nonetheless, Blackall claimed sixty recruits.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., (tel. 393), Davidson to Long, February 15, 1917. The governor was more specific on the subject of registration later on, stating that it would be cumbersome, expensive and slow and required legislative sanction "which might not receive the support of all parties." Ibid., Davidson to Long, no. 44, April 9, 1917.

<sup>158</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 1, January 19, 1917.

<sup>159</sup> Evening Telegram, January 4, 1917.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., January 4-5, 1917.

Lieutenant James Bancroft toured the southwest coast and his report was published in detail.<sup>161</sup> He began by admitting that St. John's-based NPA members had been slow learners, since for the third successive year the campaign in that area had been launched at the wrong time of year, the young men of the southwest coast having either shipped for the fishery or left for Canada or the United States for jobs. Although the party was well received in several communities, mainly in response to support from local leaders,<sup>162</sup> in others it encountered ignorance or indifference. "We began to wonder," Bancroft mused, "if these people were aware that the Empire was at war." In still others the party met outright defiance, spurred on in some cases by the opposition of government officials. In Bay L'Argent, for example, Magistrate J.R. Courage, speaking from the chair, openly opposed recruitment, while in Garnish a government official named William Grandy claimed that the majority of men enlisted because they were too lazy to fish. Grandy had to answer to a magisterial inquiry for this charge.<sup>163</sup> Bancroft reported from Dawson's Cove that "All the young men here positively refused to enlist fearing they would be killed — apparently pro-German." He said that several communities had been influenced by

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<sup>161</sup> A copy of Bancroft's report can be located in Ibid., April 5-10, 1917, passim.

<sup>162</sup> Bancroft singled out Recontre West, Pushthrough and Galtois in particular, and paid tribute to the efforts of Father St. Croix of St. Albans.

<sup>163</sup> Evening Telegram, April 10, 1917; PANL, P8/B/9, file Miscellaneous 1, Pte. R. Courage to Capt. J.J. O'Grady, December 19, 1916 and passim. Garnish was on the Burin Peninsula.

disgruntled naval reservists, although for the most part he believed that the opposition of parents constituted the single greatest barrier. As a result he recorded only forty-three recruits.

A fourth expedition under Sergeant William Nugent travelled to the Burin Peninsula where, according to an estimate in the Telegram, about 900 young men (out of a population of 12,000) were eligible for military service. Of these, only 300, or two and one-half per cent, had enlisted so far.<sup>164</sup> Nugent reported that in large centres such as St. Lawrence, Burin, Grand Bank, Lums and Marystown leading citizens, church and public officials were "very much alive to their obligations," but that the same did not hold true for the remainder of the district. In some areas there were specific problems — the communities of Salt Pond, Salmonier and Burin Bay, for example, had recently lost a total of twenty-one men at sea — and as a result the local magistrate advised that they not be canvassed. However, for the most part, attitudes similar to those on the remainder of the coast held sway, and Nugent recorded only twenty recruits.<sup>165</sup>

In spite of the relatively strenuous efforts of the winter months, between January and March only 194 men were accepted into the Regiment.<sup>166</sup> The Evening Telegram now contended that a four

<sup>164</sup> Evening Telegram, March 14, 1917.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., April 14, 1917. A second disaster in April claimed the lives of nine more men, leaving a total of almost 100 dependents. Ibid., April 19, 1917.

<sup>166</sup> It is possible that these tours bore results several months later, as Lloyd maintained. Speaking in the house in July 1917, he admitted that volunteers from the southwest coast had been extremely

per cent enlistment rate was a respectable goal,<sup>167</sup> down from its previous objective of seven per cent. In a similar spirit, but also in response to the seeming paralysis at the political level, Davidson issued a personal appeal which heralded a new approach.

In April a picture of his resplendent in vice-regal finery appeared in newspapers and on posters throughout the colony. The accompanying text, ostensibly a letter to Grieve, read in part as follows:

My position as a constitutional governor requires that my Ministers should concur in my proposals; and I am proud to say that the official leaders of the Colony have gladly and at once agreed to support my action.

Hitherto, I have been content, at public meetings, to explain the causes and meaning of the war. . . . I have felt that it did not become me, — not being one of yourselves, — to dictate to any Newfoundlander what sacrifices his honour calls for. But now I cast away all reserve because the crisis is at its height and hesitation may mean ruin to us all.<sup>168</sup>

What followed was an appeal from "the King's Man" for all young men of military age "capable of bearing the hardship of public service," and

slow in forthcoming, but that recent efforts were "at length bringing forth abundant fruit." FNA 1917, Lloyd, July 23, 1917, p. 516.

<sup>167</sup> Evening Telegram, March 26, 1917.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., April 7, 1917. Davidson had also offered to conduct a personal recruiting tour, although it did not materialize. See PANL, P8/B/9, file 3, Davidson to Outerbridge, February 28, 1917.

"regardless of any personal reasons" to present themselves before the nearest magistrate in order that the magistrate might determine which of four forms of service should apply — the army, the navy, the forestry service<sup>169</sup> or the "lesser duty of staying behind" to maintain essential industries and services.<sup>170</sup> What he called for, in effect, was a loose form of voluntary registration followed by a "loose form of voluntary conscription. Apprising the Colonial Office of these developments, Davidson stated that he hoped to arouse "the traditional sense of personal loyalty" to the Crown, and that the appeal had created a "deep impression."<sup>171</sup>

The effect of this appeal was felt first in the capital.

On April 11 ninety-eight recruits presented themselves at the Water

<sup>169</sup> See below, pp. 154-57.

<sup>170</sup> Evening Telegram, April 7, 1917.

<sup>171</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 44, Davidson to Long, April 9, 1917. This approach coincided with Davidson's personal philosophy. He claimed to have learned in Ceylon that emotion exerted a greater influence on public opinion than logic or self-interest. He based this claim on the somewhat fatuous reasoning that his wife's devotion to salmon fishing had endeared her more to the Ceylonese population than his own "utmost devotion" to public service. "This indicates how influence may be wielded in a democratic country by a Governor whose official position may carry no weight," he concluded. PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, June 15, 1917. A draft appeal of a very different sort can be located in PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, however, which reads in part: "If we do not get 1000 men this year our Regiment will fall out of the battle line ... and the name of Newfoundland will disappear from the list of battle honours, and all the glorious work of our brothers will be sacrificed through your indolence.... Do you realize what failing to win the war may signify to us? Have you thought how Newfoundland can be stocked with 60,000 T of coal and 50,000 T of salt and 60,000 T of flour and food-stuffs again next winter?... The right course, the best course, the only course is for the young men to leave their work ... to go and help win the war." It seems unlikely that this appeal was issued.

Street station, the majority of whom were St. John's residents. The following day forty-eight men reported, of which forty-five were from the town.<sup>172</sup> However, the balance slowly shifted in favour of the out-ports, and of the thirty-two men who enrolled their names on April 17, sixteen were from outside areas, and of the forty-five men on April 27, a full thirty-seven.<sup>173</sup>

Of course, many offered to enlist in the newly created Newfoundland forestry unit, the establishment of which came about as a direct result of meetings of the Imperial War Conference and Imperial War Cabinet in London in March. These bodies were convened to secure additional assistance from the dominions.<sup>174</sup> Morris was present, and with his fellow prime ministers heard urgent appeals for more men; but whereas Borden of Canada and Hughes of Australia returned home determined to bring in conscription, Morris seized on the suggestion of providing men for a non-combatant forestry corps, which was not only far less risky, but cheaper. He immediately informed Davidson and asked him to

<sup>172</sup> Evening Telegram, April 12, 13, 1917.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., April 18, 28, 1917. For an indication of the rejection rate, which was high, see Appendix A.

<sup>174</sup> William C. Gilmore, "Newfoundland and the League of Nations," The Canadian Yearbook of International Law, XVIII (1980), 206. From these meetings derived the principle of dominion equality. Unless otherwise indicated, information on the forestry force derives from JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, pp. 337-40; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no: 44, Davidson to Long, April 9, 1917; Ibid., no. 46, Davidson to Long, April 17, 1917.

set the necessary wheels in motion.<sup>175</sup> Four days later the press announced that men of all ages would be eligible to enlist for forestry service in the United Kingdom. An official proclamation followed which expressly excluded single young men eligible for military service.<sup>176</sup> Foresters were to receive the same pay and allowances as soldiers, the British government bearing the full cost. The NPA approved these proposals a week later; to carry them out Davidson appointed a forestry committee consisting of W.B. Grieve, mine and mill company managers, plus the usual combination of St. John's politicians, business and professional men.<sup>177</sup> Mayson M. Beeton, a director of the AND Company in London, was authorized to oversee the British end, although Davidson retained the right to select and appoint overseas officers. There was no enabling legislation.<sup>178</sup>

Several days before this was approved by the NPA, enlistment had begun. The original plan called for five companies of 100 men each, although organizers hoped for 1500 men by mid-summer,<sup>179</sup> anticipating an immediate and large response from men in the lumber camps along the northeast coast. Within a matter of days, however, it

<sup>175</sup> Evening Telegram, April 4, 1917.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., April 7, 1917. The Newfoundland forestry unit differed from its Canadian prototype in its exclusion of conscientious objectors, although the number of men who might have fallen into this category was extremely low. See below, p. 326, fn. 81.

<sup>177</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, April 16, 1917.

<sup>178</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 83. Neither was there a covering minute of council. See PANL, P8/B/9, file 12, Forestry Committee.

<sup>179</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 19b, Beeton to Davidson, April 21, 1917.

became clear that for these men the prospect of felling trees in Scotland at \$1.10 a day held little attraction. Puzzling over their unexpected refusal to enlist, officials were informed that outport men were reluctant to forego the excellent prospects of the summer fishery. They also demanded separation allowances, and generally believed that the forestry companies were a ruse to attract yet more "cannon fodder."<sup>180</sup> Concerned over the inflationary impact of further recruitment in the capital, the Telegram urged that all St. John's men be rejected.<sup>181</sup>

Because recruitment for the forestry companies inspired so much publicity, the failure of the NPA to generate even a respectable response signified another nail in its coffin and one more step on the road to conscription. By May 19 only 333 men had enrolled, of whom 185 were accepted,<sup>182</sup> far short of the promised 500 recruits by June. Worse, overseas officials wanted at least 1000 men by autumn. "We won't get it by voluntary methods," warned the Telegram.<sup>183</sup> In June

<sup>180</sup> Evening Telegram, April 24, 1917; JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 340.

<sup>181</sup> Evening Telegram, April 12, 1917. Although recruiting offices had been set up in lumber camps, of the first 214 men to apply, 189 applied at the Water Street station. Ibid., April 26, 1917.

<sup>182</sup> JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 339.

<sup>183</sup> Evening Telegram, July 31, 1917. By this time the editorship of the Telegram had passed from the hands of Lloyd to H.A. Winter, son of Sir James Winter, leader of a Protestant mercantile party and prime minister from 1897 to 1900. This explains the Telegram's gradual but nonetheless dramatic shift on any number of issues from the summer of 1916 onwards. See Evening Telegram, June 12, 1916 in particular. Winter held an honorary commission as a member of the NPA musketry committee, and was a committed member of the ruling NPA coterie.



the secretary of state informed Davidson of the Army Council's willingness to accept the services of 250 miners under a similar arrangement. Davidson consulted Grieve, and decided the prospect was hopeless.<sup>184</sup> Around the same time, the Newfoundland government also rejected a British proposal to enlist men in an inland traveler reserve. "The Newfoundland fisherman is doing a great deal too well to offer him any inducement," Harris later told the Colonial Office.<sup>185</sup> In a last minute attempt to stave off complete disaster, the NPA strengthened the forestry committee by subjoining to it all major NPA committee chairmen and secretaries, but could not forestall the committee's replacement by the department of militia, which was created the following week.<sup>186</sup> Eventually, almost 500 foresters were enlisted, although Montgomerie continued to regard the forestry corps as an "absolute failure." "The people simply look upon this work as a job, and prefer to stay at home where they can make more money, stating that if they wanted to go, they would go in the Regiment."<sup>187</sup>

<sup>184</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22d, Long to Davidson, June 4, 1917; *Ibid.*, file 3, Davidson to Grieve, June 6, 1917.

<sup>185</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Harris to Long, August 2, 1918. Additional correspondence can be located in *Ibid.*, GN 2/14, box 2, file 29.

<sup>186</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 10, 1917. The creation of the department of militia is dealt with in Chapter IX.

<sup>187</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 534.

In the meantime, a new series of outpost campaigns had been timed to coincide with the government's appeal. Chief Justice Horwood and George J. Adams, vice-chairman of the newly created war history committee,<sup>188</sup> travelled to the south shore of Trinity Bay, a particularly backward enlistment area. Blackall campaigned in the vicinity of Port Rexton, while Burke opened a series of recruiting stations in Ferryland district.<sup>189</sup> However, of the 477 men who volunteered for the Regiment in April, only 143 were accepted, down twenty-six from April of the previous year. The following month Justice J.M. Kent, Burke and the Hon. A.J. Goodridge, MLC, toured Ferryland district, accompanied by clergymen throughout. However, they reported that residents remained unaware of existing pay and pension regulations, were reluctant to abandon their fishing property and gear, and generally reflected the government's 'wait and see' attitude.<sup>190</sup>

Just as these events were taking place, the Regiment sustained another large number of losses, second only to July 1, 1916. Between April 12 and 15, 460 men were either killed, wounded or taken prisoner at Monchy.<sup>191</sup> Although the brigade's commanding officer assured the public that "the spirit of the Regiment, in spite of its

<sup>188</sup> Below, pp. 301-02, fn. 88.

<sup>189</sup> Evening Telegram, April 11, 1917.

<sup>190</sup> PLC 1918, Goodridge, April 30, 1918, p. 50.

<sup>191</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 355. A total of 166 men were killed, 141 wounded and 153 taken prisoner, 28 of whom died in captivity.

losses, remains as high as ever," he also admitted that it had been "practically wiped out" a second time.<sup>192</sup> Private opinion was gloomy. P.T. McGrath wrote to his nephew that the effect of the battle was disastrous from the viewpoint of potential recruits.<sup>193</sup> Even before Monchy, the Regiment had been below strength and now its remains, roughly 200 men, were joined with the remnants of the adjacent Essex battalion. On April 23 an additional sixty-three casualties were recorded. Following a brief period of rest during which reinforcements were received and then more action, regimental strength stood at eleven officers and 210 men by the end of May.<sup>194</sup>

As casualties mounted, the list of battle honours lengthened.<sup>195</sup> This rendered the prospect of the Regiment's ultimate demise that much more unpalatable. Talk of conscription again came to the fore, particularly because of what was referred to as a "veiled intimation"<sup>196</sup> of conscription by Morris following his return from

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<sup>192</sup> Cayley to Davidson, quoted in Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 356.

<sup>193</sup> McGrath Papers, McGrath to Jack McGrath, May 12, 1917.

<sup>194</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 357-58, 361.

<sup>195</sup> McGrath believed that the profusion of honours and decorations came as a result of the Regiment's being a colonial battalion, the Army Council having been "more generous with them than with Old Country battalions." He was probably correct. McGrath Papers, McGrath to Jack McGrath, November 3, 1917. McGrath also believed that the military situation was unlikely to improve "until we get a new lock, stock and barrel in control of things in army circles," calling the existing coterie "a great aggregate of misfits and failures." Ibid., McGrath to Sir Thomas Esmonde, August 11, 1917.

<sup>196</sup> Evening Telegram, May 22, 1917.

London in May. According to the Telegram, the country was ready for it.<sup>197</sup> However, several days later the Longshoremen's Protective Union, a predominantly St. John's, Roman Catholic, working class organization, gave voice to the first formal expression of anti-conscriptionist sentiment in the capital.

At a meeting on May 21, members of the LSPU resolved to resist any attempt to introduce conscription "by all lawful means," on grounds that it was "repugnant to the ideals of a free people," that at least ninety per cent of those already enlisted had been recruited from the ranks of the producing classes, and that any further diminution of their numbers would spell ruin.<sup>198</sup> According to the Telegram at a later date, this action had a determining effect on the prime minister who subsequently dropped the suggestion "like a hot brick,"<sup>199</sup> since opposition to it came from the base of his enduring political support.<sup>200</sup> Nonetheless, it is probable that the resolution of the Longshoremen's Protective Union forwarded rather than arrested the cause of conscription, for now the battle had been joined and debate was in the open.<sup>201</sup>

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., May 19, 1917.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., May 22, 1917.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., January 13, 1918.

<sup>200</sup> Above, pp. 23-24.

<sup>201</sup> It is also possible that the Hon. M.F. Gibbs, who instigated the LSPU resolution, wanted rather to embarrass the government than to stop conscription. Gibbs was a minister without portfolio, a lawyer and an officer of the LSPU. He was anxious to replace Morris and subsequently used the war effort as a base from which to discredit the succeeding administration. For further details, see below, Chapter X, particularly pp. 307-10, 326, fn. 81.

Supporters of conscription could claim, with considerable justification, that where it was already in effect it had been found to be more effective and fairer than the voluntary method. The Evening Telegram, for example, now maintained that it was a rational method of ensuring a just allocation of responsibility and a constant supply of men.<sup>202</sup> Moreover, the Regiment was in danger of disappearing.

A few men continued to join the Naval Reserve, but there was no pressure to do so. Although it had long been conceded that because of lower pay fewer men enlisted in the Reserve, there was still a fear of diverting recruits from the Regiment.<sup>203</sup> However, at the beginning of 1917 the Canadian government proposed to recruit Newfoundland seamen to man Canadian coastal patrol vessels.<sup>204</sup> In view of the "invidious" distinction this would imply between men on patrol service and men on active service, and with the prospect of a general election in the fall, the government decided the issue could no longer be ignored. Although Morris was absent, having left for New York and London, the executive passed a minute granting pay parity to naval reservists from the beginning of service. Davidson initially refused to approve it on grounds that it entailed an additional expenditure of approximately \$1,000,000, and informed Bennett that this decision, in conjunction with the decision

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<sup>202</sup> Evening Telegram, May 22, 1917.

<sup>203</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 36, Davidson to Bonar Law, April 19, 1916; Ibid. Davidson to Bennett, April 25, 1917; PHA 1917, Coaker, May 31, 1917, p. 47.

<sup>204</sup> For further information on the coastal patrol, see below, pp. 226-33.

to introduce separation allowances,<sup>205</sup> must lead either to insolvency or confederation. "We may as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb," Bennett replied. "The lot of a Governor in a self-governing community is hard for a man strictly brought up in the tenets of Crown Colony Government," Davidson informed the Colonial Office;<sup>206</sup> and reluctantly signed the offending order. Ironically, six months later Bennett informed Lloyd that 400 men had been sitting idle on board the Briton since the summer, and suggested that naval recruitment be discontinued.<sup>207</sup> However, it was not until the summer of 1918 that naval enlistments were prohibited by the military service board and exemption tribunal.<sup>208</sup>

Until the summer of 1917 the recruiting committee enabled the government to meet its limited aims with respect to recruitment, although on a per capita basis the rate of enlistment was low. Before the introduction of conscription in Canada in January 1918, enlistments in all forces numbered roughly 500,000 men, or over six per cent of the

<sup>205</sup> Below, pp. 209-10.

<sup>206</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, April 23, 1917; Ibid., GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, April 30, 1917.

<sup>207</sup> PANL, P8/8/9, file 21d, Bennett to Lloyd, October 16, 1917. The Calypso had been renamed the Briton in 1916.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., file 22e, Governor's Correspondence, 1918-20, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 8; below, p. 321, fn. 68.

total population,<sup>209</sup> as compared with roughly 6,000 uniformed Newfoundlanders, or less than two and one-half per cent.<sup>210</sup> There were many reasons for this. Isolation, a static, church-ridden population which had not seen any substantial immigration for almost one hundred years, and a parochial as opposed to imperial outlook, all contributed to the reluctance of young men in the outports to tear themselves from the few square miles they called home. According to Davidson, many did not even know which side they were on:

They [did not] understand the causes which compelled His Majesty's government to declare war nor did they consider themselves directly interested in the issue. The larger part, if they grasped the application to themselves of the principles involved, were on the whole inclined ... to side with the King of Prussia, as the Champion of Protestantism; and they remembered France only as the traditional enemy.<sup>211</sup>

These views were particularly prevalent among Protestants on the southwest coast,<sup>212</sup> and given the absence of an effective propaganda campaign they persisted, along with an instinctive aversion to war based on self-

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<sup>209</sup>For a more detailed breakdown, see PLC 1918, Anderson, May 1, 1918, pp. 74-75; Evening Telegram, April 27, 1918. See also A.M. Wilms, "Conscription 1917: A Brief for the Defence," in Carl Berger, intro., *Conscription 1917* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), pp. 12-13. These figures do not include non-combatant overseas forces.

<sup>210</sup>See below, Table 3, p. 308.

<sup>211</sup>CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917.

<sup>212</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, containing a copy of Davidson's London address, December 13, 1917.

preservation and the gospel. "The old memories of the press gang still lived in the outports and the recollection of soldiering was that the wasters of the hamlets enlisted for life and never returned home," for if a man were fortunate enough to survive he "married and settled down elsewhere and found no place to his liking at home."<sup>213</sup> Little wonder, then, that piquets sent to the northeast coast to guard remote inlets against the possibility of their being used as German submarine supply bases reported that "the women drove their men into the scrub, fearing that the 'press gang' was out."<sup>214</sup> Moreover,

People brought up on the Bible and in whose life the Decalogue is the highest law hate war and will have no part in murder.... It has been argued against soldiering that the account of the Roman soldiers in the closing scenes of the fourth Gospel shows the brutal indifference of soldiers.<sup>215</sup>

While these may have been extreme views, they do impart some sense of what recruiters were up against, as a result of which, in Davidson's opinion, no other dominion faced a "more difficult or delicate task."<sup>216</sup>

Nor did the recruiting committee or the government adopt adequate means of re-education. There remained too much reliance on local initiative and too little direction from St. John's. The

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<sup>213</sup> CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 23, 1917.

<sup>214</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 23, 1917.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917.



recruiting committee, acting through the superintendents of education, relied heavily on clergymen and school teachers — a traditional means of communication with the outports — to carry their message. Although Protestant church leaders, particularly of the Anglican Church, professed unquestioning support for the war effort,<sup>217</sup> there is much evidence to suggest that outport clergymen were not equally outspoken, having been cowed by the opposition of their flocks.<sup>218</sup> The same held true for the Roman Catholic Church hierarchy, which also lent unequivocal support despite the predominantly Irish makeup of its fold.<sup>219</sup> However, in the case of the Roman Catholic Church there existed a few "fanatics" among those priests either born or educated in Ireland whose inherited hostility towards 'the Pale' and the English transcends their appreciation of the advantages of British citizenship,<sup>220</sup> who actively thwarted the cause.<sup>220</sup> As a result, only native-born and educated priests could

<sup>217</sup> The views of leading representatives of the Anglican and Methodist churches contained in the Daily News, December 31, 1915 are particularly instructive. See also letters from Canon White, St. John's, and Rev. Darby, Trinity Bay, in Ibid., January 15, 1915; Evening Telegram, April 18, 1918, respectively.

<sup>218</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, November 30, 1917. It is also interesting to note that neither Davidson nor Harris paid tribute to the efforts of church leaders (except the Roman Catholic archbishop). Davidson did concede that all eligible sons of Methodist clergymen had enlisted, and Harris that the most active war workers outside St. John's were Anglicans. CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917; CO 448/15, Harris to Long, June 14, 1918.

<sup>219</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, November 18, December 18, 1916, January 15, 1917; CO 194/289, Davidson to Bonar Law, July 3, 1915; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, June 2, 1917.

<sup>220</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 23, 1917. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 18c, Bay of Islands Patriotic Committee to Burke, August 24, 1916; below, pp. 189-90.

be relied upon, and how far they were willing to exert their influence remains unclear. The same held true of government officials. Because of the practice of awarding a large number of part-time positions on a political basis, there was no reliable public service network. Moreover, there is evidence that some public servants openly opposed recruitment.<sup>221</sup>

Widespread support for the war effort might still have been achieved had either the NPA or the government attempted to mount a massive publicity campaign. Characteristically, they failed to do so, so that unlike St. John's, which was subjected to a constant stream of propaganda from the platform, pulpit and press, the outposts remained unenlightened. A letter from Musgrave Harbour revealing a total lack of information with respect to the war is instructive in this regard. It was addressed to Bennett, who forwarded it to Grieve, along with a comment that it showed

... such a state of ignorance in relation to this great war and the principles underlying it, that one cannot wonder so few recruits come forward from the North. The recruiting Committee have not evidently reached this place yet with their benign and patriotic influences ... and I am sending you the letter so that you may see what can be done by your Committee to redeem these people and forward the cause of Empire.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>221</sup>Above, pp. 18, 150.

<sup>222</sup>PANL, GN 2/14, box 9, Bennett to Grieve, n.d., containing a letter from A.J. Howlett, Musgrave Harbour, probably written in late 1916.

Other letters which reached the colonial secretary and the press revealed a similar dearth of information<sup>223</sup> which cannot be accounted for wholly on the basis of admitted deficiencies in the public news-gathering and wire service, the high rate of illiteracy or censorship.<sup>224</sup>

This situation was compounded by underemployment, poor representation and the absence of resident administrative agencies in underdeveloped and remote areas where the unintelligent efforts of indifferent governments bred a deep and abiding resentment. Rival politicians consistently reinforced this view.<sup>225</sup> As a result, there existed a widespread feeling that because the state had given nothing, it was owed nothing, and that little change would come about as a result of German as opposed to British rule.<sup>226</sup> This conviction was strengthened by the belief that high prices and scarcities were owing largely to

<sup>223</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, August 31, 1916 containing a letter from Trepassy lamenting that not a single item of war news had been posted for days; PANL, GN 2/14, box 15, H. Pollett, New Harbour, to Bennett, September 3, 1915; Evening Telegram, January 6, April 5, 1917. Other examples are scattered throughout PANL, GN 2/14 and St. John's newspapers.

<sup>224</sup> For further information on the wire service, see Melvin Rowe, "Filling the Readers Needs," Evening Telegram, April 7, 1919; also Ibid., July 8, 13, 1916, January 6, 25, February 2, 1917. For further information on censorship, see PANL, PB/B/9, file 3, Censorship, 1914-1917; Ibid., file 22c, Bennett to Davidson, January 31, 1916; PHA 1916, Bennett and Coaker, March 23, 1916, pp. 78-79.

<sup>225</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, March 19, 1917; above, p. 20.

<sup>226</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 533; PANL, GN 2/14, box 13, Dr. H.L. Paddon, Indian Harbour, to Bennett, July 10, 1917; PLC 1918, McGrath, May 1, 1918, p. 71.

profiteering Water Street merchants, so that while the wealthy gained, the people suffered, and to cowardice on the part of the government in dealing with the matter.<sup>227</sup> Rural Newfoundland also resented the lack of consideration for outport recruits,<sup>228</sup> the missing pensions, the government's seeming indifference to the plight of returned soldiers, and the manner in which recruiting was carried out by over-zealous military officials.

Canadian officials discovered early in the war that shaming and other coercive techniques proved harmful in the long run, and they therefore eschewed them in favour of a more rational approach. The services of eligible young men were solicited on a personal basis, and recruiters were forbidden to invite young men to sign on at massive recruiting rallies.<sup>229</sup> However, Newfoundland recruiters seem never to have learned this lesson. The result was a large gap between the number of young men who stepped forward in the heat of the moment and those who eventually donned uniforms; in addition to a residue of ill will and bitter feeling.<sup>230</sup> Montgomerie conceded as much when he referred to

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<sup>227</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, February 18, 1918. This issue is explored further below, Chapter VIII.

<sup>228</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, April 7, 1917 containing a letter from an outport resident who complained that four men from his community had walked forty miles to a railway station in the dead of winter, only to be rejected as medically unfit immediately upon arrival in St. John's. The writer questioned why these men could not have been provided with some respite; or even better, have been examined at home. The lack of outport commissions (below, p. 193 and *passim*) was another issue. Pensions and civil re-establishment are dealt with in Chapter VII.

<sup>229</sup> Wilson, Ontario, pp. xlv-xlvi.

<sup>230</sup> See Evening Telegram, February 22, April 13, 1918, for example.

the harsh and uncompromising tactics of military recruiters, adding that "the average soldier on whom we have to rely, is by education and experience not fitted to do this work."<sup>231</sup> The principal difficulty, of course, lay in the fact that members of the government and the NPA consistently ignored requests to head up outport recruiting parties.<sup>232</sup>

As McGrath complained:

With regard to recruiting ... at a recent meeting of the Patriotic Association I was struck with the plea ... for volunteers to go out in charge of [outport] parties.... It was declared that men of light and leading in the community were hanging back from the work, and it was explained that because of this laxity it was impossible to send out parties, as it was felt to be undesirable to despatch more squads around the country without having such men in charge.... I think it is regrettable that more of the men who have not heretofore been very conspicuous by their exertions in behalf of our war work, could not see their way clear to do something in this direction, but I think it is preferable that parties should be kept back altogether than that they should be allowed to go out uncontrolled and undisciplined, as has been the case in many instances in the past.<sup>233</sup>

Recruiting could be a lucrative proposition for returned soldiers, since in addition to regular pay and allowances they received travelling

<sup>231</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 533.

<sup>232</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, January 20, February 27, March 23, 1917; Evening Telegram, January 20, February 28, March 24, 1917. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 27, Bonavista Patriotic Association to McGrath, January 5, 1917; Ibid., McGrath to Bonavista Patriotic Association, n.d., 1917; JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 533.

<sup>233</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 80-81.

expenses, and it was said that they criss-crossed the country in need-less luxury. The same charge was levelled at civilian recruiters. Thus while admitting that "some agencies connected with the Recruiting Committee have done much good work," McGrath also contended: "There is much, I might say ... of a character that would astound the people of this country ... of circumstances the public exposure of which would startle and dismay everyone."<sup>234</sup> This problem also tended to exacerbate existing tensions, and to render prospects for enlistment far less favourable than they otherwise might have been.

Even more serious from the point of view of potential recruits was the peculiar nature of the economy, the wave of relative prosperity and the failure of military wages to keep pace.<sup>235</sup> From the very beginning it had been recognized that recruitment in Newfoundland presented unique problems, particularly in remote areas where the existence of families depended on the availability of able young men.<sup>236</sup> Because the rural economy was structured around family production units, the removal of a key member could spell the difference between destitution and material well-being. Moreover, the war placed a new

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., pp. 78-79. See also Ibid., Gibbs, July 2, 1917, p. 46.

<sup>235</sup> For example, by the summer of 1917 the Dominion Iron and Steel Company was reported to be paying an average wage of between \$3 to \$3.50 per day at its limestone operation on the Port au Port Peninsula. Evening Telegram, June 15, 1917. See also below, p. 261, fn. 89.

<sup>236</sup> See, for example, PNL, P8/B/9, file 6, Davidson to W.E. Swaffield, Cartwright, April 1, 1915 (draft); Evening Telegram, July 12, 1918; above, p. 121. See also McDonald, "FPU," pp. 161-63; below, pp. 322-23, fn. 68.

value on labour; many now had cash for the first time in their lives.<sup>237</sup> On the southwest coast it was reported that men who had formerly earned \$175 to \$200 per year were now earning \$1200 to \$1400.<sup>238</sup> As a result, most parents opposed recruitment. Montgomerie regarded this as a very serious obstacle to the recruiters' efforts,<sup>239</sup> and Harris noted the universal reluctance to part with "well-grown" boys whose parents sometimes tried to bribe naval and military officials into releasing them.<sup>240</sup> Employers and suppliers constituted another formidable barrier. The wholesale expansion that took place as a result of the war worsened the situation. A large number of outport planters and fishermen had invested

<sup>237</sup> Note, for example, CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 27, 1917, in which the governor describes large savings in cash, the improved equipment of the fishing fleet, a higher standard of home comfort and the enlarged purchasing power of all classes. Note also this comment by Lieutenant James, recruiting officer for Burin district in the fall of 1917: "Burin district enjoying great prosperity at this time. The young men, being well supplied with money made at the fishery this year appear to be determined to enjoy life while it lasts and for that reason will neither enlist or [sic] go to sea.... There is an undercurrent of feeling, fostered by some of the local prominent men, against more men being taken lest the fishery should suffer." Lieutenant Spooner reported that recruiters in Carbonear were laughed at. Quoted from Douglas Graham Day, "A Well Run Dry: The Royal Newfoundland Regiment and the Conscription Crisis of 1917-1918" (unpublished B.A. (Hons.) dissertation; Department of History, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1981), pp. 25-26. See also below, p. 261.

<sup>238</sup> H. MacDermott, MacDermott of Fortune Bay (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1938), pp. 211-12.

<sup>239</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 533; above, pp. 140, fn. 127, 151.

<sup>240</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Harris to Long, August 2, 1918. The colonial secretary's files are full of similar petitions, and in many cases they appear to have had the desired effect of having sons rejected at headquarters.

in new and expensive equipment which they could not have afforded under normal conditions.<sup>241</sup> In this the colony was similar to rural areas in Canada, where women could not take the place of men and where the population resisted recruitment and conscription so strenuously as to result in wholesale farm exemptions.<sup>242</sup> In Newfoundland, the recruiters created an anxious atmosphere. "Each man watching his neighbour to see what he is doing and one settlement watching another...." In some communities those who have gone to the war and those families who have given men are looked upon as having done a foolish thing.<sup>243</sup> In this light, it is hardly surprising that outport recruiters reported little support for their efforts.

More critical than all these factors in the long run was the government's failure to back the efforts of the recruiting committee and the reluctance of MHAs to campaign in their districts.<sup>244</sup> For while the NPA removed the administration of the war effort from party politics, it did not eliminate political considerations. Faced with the

<sup>241</sup> CO 194/301, Harris to Milner, January 4, 1921; McDonald, pp. 219 and passim.

<sup>242</sup> Wilson, Ontario, pp. lvi-lvii; Hard, Harvests, pp. 133 and passim.

<sup>243</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 533.

<sup>244</sup> Coaker was an exception. In May 1918 he claimed to have addressed forty-five public meetings on the subject since 1914, including the FPU convention of 1916 when he warned that if fifty recruits were not forthcoming by a certain date he would resign and enlist himself. As a result, he claimed, roughly 130 men had offered themselves as "Coaker recruits," of whom approximately seventy were accepted. PHA 1918, Coaker, May 11, 1918, p. 168.



unpopularity of recruitment in rural areas, politicians in St. John's chose to put as much distance as possible between themselves and out-port recruiting campaigns. Montgomerie guessed that many potential recruits reasoned "if there was any real need of men for military service, their representatives would have toured the district and laid the matter before them," and "if the Empire were badly in need of men the Government would take some more decisive [*sic*] action than has yet been evidenced." Some stated they were willing to go "when they had to."<sup>245</sup> In this sense, they were merely reflecting the government's 'wait and see' attitude.<sup>246</sup> Thus, Gibbs was probably right in stating: "If voluntary enlistment ... failed it failed not through the fault of the young men of the country, but through the apathy and indifference of those who have not been doing their duty by them."<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 533-34. See also, Evening Telegram, January 20, September 2, 1917.

<sup>246</sup> This view was widely acknowledged in St. John's in 1917 and 1918. See, for example, PLC 1918, Gibbs, April 23, 30, 1918, pp. 23-24, 57-59; Ibid., Goodridge, April 30, 1918, p. 50; Ibid., Squires, April 30, 1918, p. 52; FHA 1918, Walsh, April 24, 1918, p. 32.

<sup>247</sup> PLC 1918, Gibbs, April 30, 1918, p. 59.

CHAPTER VI  
INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION

During most of the tenure of the NPA there were different factors at work which also placed a strain on the war effort and affected recruitment. They arose in the Regiment's internal administration, which was the responsibility of the reserve force/standing committee. Many of the problems that developed overseas were beyond the committee's control. Other problems were directly of the committee's making, and aggravated existing religious, social and geographic tensions. Both types of problems and the ensuing controversies to which they gave rise emerged repeatedly in the St. John's press.

A major issue evolved during the fall of 1915 following the Regiment's removal to the eastern front. Reports surfaced in the Daily News that Newfoundland soldiers were cold and ill-equipped while battalions alongside had excess supplies.<sup>1</sup> Officials at home immediately accused Timewell, claiming that he was responsible for the failure of comforts and mail to reach the front. Timewell defended himself at length, pointing out that these matters were the responsibility of the Newfoundland War Contingent Association. But since no one was prepared

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<sup>1</sup>Robinson, Letters of Mayo Lind, pp. 16-17, 104-105, 135. See also PLC 1917, Anderson, July 2, 1917, p. 48.

to find fault with its august members, they continued to blame Timewell.<sup>2</sup> Davidson informed him that persistent charges and counter-charges were undermining public confidence in the war effort.<sup>3</sup>

There were also difficulties arising from Timewell's promotion, which he claimed was necessary if the Newfoundland pay office were to maintain its relative standing with the pay offices of other overseas contingents. Since the state of public opinion precluded a pay raise, Davidson and Bowring agreed that Timewell should be gazetted an honorary major and forego his daily expense allowance. Two other members of Timewell's staff would be promoted as well. Davidson promised to back their case before the officers selection and reserve force committees.<sup>4</sup>

However, the press continued to concentrate on alleged deficiencies within the pay and record office, charging among other things that Timewell surrounded himself in red tape and that his staff took "more interest in music hall matters than in the welfare of the ... boys in the trenches."<sup>5</sup> There were also complaints regarding the

<sup>2</sup> Evening Telegram, November 29, 1915-January 6, 1916, passim; PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, Davidson to Timewell, February 3, 1916; Robinson, Letters of Mayo Lind, pp. 16-17, 169; JHA 1916, Report of Finance Committee, March, 1916, in NFA Report, 1916, p. 330.

<sup>3</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, December 14, 1915, containing a copy of Davidson to Timewell, December 14, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., Bowring to Davidson, March 21, 1916; Ibid., Davidson to Bowring, April 8, 1916.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Daily News, June 21, September 19, 21, 1916; PLC 1917, Anderson, July 2, 1917, pp. 47-64; PANL, P8/B/9, file 18c, Davidson to Burke, September 22, 1916.

inadequacy of provision for wounded and furloughed men and the absence of reliable information about the Regiment. The press also charged that the government was exerting pressure on the reserve force/standing committee in order to advance Timewell and his civilian staff members, enabling the committee to block their promotions. In the end, the standing committee authorized an official investigation into the affairs of the pay office. A special NPA and WPA sub-committee reported on June 26, 1916, three days after its appointment, that there were no justifiable grounds for complaint.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, the standing committee decided to send an emissary to conduct a personal investigation.<sup>7</sup> Several months later the standing committee finally approved the promotions, but only on condition that any additional staff be selected from among rejected volunteers.<sup>8</sup> However, stalled or lost parcels and mail continued to exercise the population well into the summer of 1917.

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<sup>6</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, June 23, 1916; *Ibid.*, file 2d, Joint Committee on Deficiencies of Clothing, etc., Newfoundland Regiment, 1916. The investigation consisted of a number of interviews with returned soldiers. See also PHA 1916, April 10, 1916, pp. 303-12.

<sup>7</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, July 17, 1916; *Ibid.*, file 3, Agenda for Meetings, Standing Committee, 1916-18, 1921, Davidson to Timewell, July 18, 1916; JHA 1917, Report of the Standing Committee, February, 1917 in NPA Report, 1917, p. 349; PANL, P8/B/9, file 9, which contains a copy of Paterson's report. There is evidence to suggest that the government resented what it considered the unwarranted intrusion of the NPA in the affairs of the pay office. See in particular a comment by Bennett in *Ibid.*, file 2; July 17, 1916.

<sup>8</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, November 25, 1916; *Ibid.*, file 3, Davidson to Timewell, December 5, 1916. This provision was occasioned by the growing public feeling that civilians were profiting unduly at the Regiment's expense, and perhaps by the committee's desire to divert attention from its own shortcomings in this respect. Note, for example, this comment by the Hon. John Anderson: "We need not vent our spleen on the Pay and Record Office, London. You can find plenty of blunders

In the meantime the St. John's newspapers reported a number of other complaints regarding food, pay, training, conditions of leave and the severity of field punishments.<sup>9</sup> Davidson referred these matters directly to the Regiment's commanding officers both at the depot and front. Whitaker replied immediately and at length to specific and often trivial grievances.<sup>10</sup> However Lt.-Colonel A.L. Hadow, who succeeded Burton in Gallipoli and shortly thereafter accompanied the Regiment to France, responded testily, as one might expect, considering the far more difficult position of an officer in the field.<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless, during the summer of 1916 Hadow dealt in detail with a number of recurring issues. Referring to unavoidable delays in the arrival of WPA comforts at the front he informed Davidson:

I only wish that those who complain in Newfoundland ... could see the appalling waste which has gone on ever since the Regiment landed in Gallipoli owing

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and mistakes in Newfoundland, if we had only the moral courage to speak them out." PLC 1917, Anderson, July 3, 1917, p. 63. See also below, p. 224. It is also worthy of note that Anderson, Bennett and E.P. Morris all had sons on staff at the pay office.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Evening Herald, June 10, 14, 1916.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, Davidson to Whitaker, June 9, 1916; Ibid., Whitaker to Davidson, June 13, 1916; Ibid., file 6, which contains correspondence between Whitaker and Bennett on the subject of Private Daws.

<sup>11</sup> The same applied to Burton who kept Davidson fully informed of events in Britain, but not at the front: "We are thirsting for news," the governor lamented in December 1915. Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundland, pp. 179, 132-33. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 16, 1915.

to men throwing away excellent clothing simply because it was dirty.... I have done my utmost to stop this but without much success.

He dismissed grievances with respect to food on grounds that "the Newfoundland soldier is a particularly hearty eater, and can eat a good deal more than the average soldier. The Regiment also suffers from not having efficient cooks." Referring to charges that men at the front were chronically short of pocket money, he explained that a full allotment had been authorized by his predecessor and had resulted in large-scale absenteeism and drunkenness. Consequently, he ordered that future allotments be made in the amount of 10s.; but he added, "I regret to say that a very great deal of pay still goes in drink." With respect to his own strict disciplinarian and training methods, about which there had been a great deal of comment, he pointed to the wide gap between the raw Newfoundland force and the other regular army battalions of the 29th Division.<sup>12</sup> He concluded his defence with a reminder that as a regular army officer he was precluded from replying publicly to these charges: "My job is to uphold the honour and reputation of the Regiment, my worst enemy the man who glibly writes to newspapers statements which are false."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Hadow was critical of the standard of training received in Great Britain, as a result of which Davidson warned: "Hadow is working the Battalion fairly hard, and letters of complaint have been received from men in the ranks.... I hope none of these letters will be published locally." PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, containing a copy of Hadow to Davidson, February 28, 1916 and a pencilled memorandum by Davidson; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, pp. 228-29.

<sup>13</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, Hadow to Davidson, July 5, 1916. See also Ibid., Davidson to Hadow, June 12, 1916; Ibid., file Miscellaneous, Hadow to Davidson, April 17, 1916.

Most of these problems were inevitable given the nature of conditions abroad and the degree of public ignorance.<sup>14</sup> But the fact that perhaps no other unit in the British army had such a degree of personal interest concentrated upon it, combined with the willingness of newspaper editors to accord so much publicity to the complaints, lent them an immediacy and importance they would not otherwise have possessed. The same problem complicated the selection of overseas officers and headquarters staff,<sup>15</sup> and in the long run this issue had an even greater impact because it so clearly reflected the selfish and narrow outlook of ruling St. John's interests.

Sectarianism emerged as a factor in the selection of camp and overseas officers during the fall of 1914,<sup>16</sup> but presented a major problem only in the case of a regimental chaplain. Ordinarily a single chaplain was assigned to each British battalion, but because the denominational principle was so firmly entrenched and there was only half a battalion, it was decided to make do without.<sup>17</sup> As a result Fr. Thomas Nangle, chaplain of the CCC, threatened to withdraw Roman Catholic members of the contingent immediately before their scheduled

<sup>14</sup> See Steele, "Diary," pp. 161, 186, 192-93 for an officer's view of the situation. See also Evening Telegram, August 30, 1916.

<sup>15</sup> Staff appointments in St. John's are dealt with in the following chapter.

<sup>16</sup> Above, 72-73.

<sup>17</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlanders, p. 177. Applications from A.K. Maguer, a Presbyterian minister from Harbour Grace, and Rev. H. Legge of Salvage can be located in PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a and Ibid., file Miscellaneous.

departure from St. John's. Fortunately, Sir Joseph Outerbridge was able to meet with the Roman Catholic archbishop and remove this obstacle before it became general knowledge.<sup>18</sup> Upon arrival in Great Britain, religious needs were met first by chaplains of the CEF on Salisbury Plain, and later by Scottish clergy.<sup>19</sup>

Nangle, however, persisted in his attempt to be attached to the Regiment and in December 1914 submitted a second application, pointing out that his presence would remove many of the objections of Roman Catholic parents. He also proposed to undertake a recruiting tour of Roman Catholic districts.<sup>20</sup> The Rev. R. Clayton of St. John's also applied, with the approval of the Anglican bishop, to go overseas. The reserve force committee urged Davidson that a third candidate, Methodist student R.W.K. Stenlake, be considered as well.<sup>21</sup> But the War Office was unwilling to consider the possibility of three chaplains.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, the reserve force committee continued to press the issue, and appointed a special sub-committee consisting of Sir Joseph Outerbridge and the commanding officers of the three cadet corps to meet with Davidson

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Sir Leonard Outerbridge, October 12, 1976.

<sup>19</sup> Evening Telegram, November 21, 1914; Robinson, Letters of Mayo Lind, pp. 50-51.

<sup>20</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a, Nangle to Davidson, December 1, 1914. See also Ibid., file 5, December 2, 1914, August 31, 1915; Evening Telegram, July 19, 1916.

<sup>21</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, August 31, 1915; PANL, CN 1/1/7, no. 190, Davidson to Bonar Law, August 28, 1915; Ibid., no. 196, Davidson to Bonar Law, November 21, 1916.

<sup>22</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, October 4, 1915.



and the "proper ecclesiastical authorities" in October 1915.<sup>23</sup> These efforts finally bore fruit eight months later with the War Office's decision to assign all three candidates to the Regiment.<sup>24</sup>

A second incident revealing underlying religious and social tensions occurred at the beginning of 1915 when Leo Murphy of Bell Island, a stalwart of the local CCC and NPA branch, appealed to V.P. Burke (the Association's Catholic executive officer) after being twice rejected for active service.<sup>25</sup> Burke suggested to the reserve force committee that he be made a company quartermaster. This was blocked by Herbert Outerbridge, whereupon the commanding officer of the CCC, C.O.N. Conroy, resigned from the committee, and was with difficulty persuaded to return. The committee agreed to employ Murphy as a regimental instructor, but Conroy persisted in trying to obtain for him a transfer to the quartermaster's department. Outerbridge, who wanted the position for a friend, would only retreat when so ordered by his father.<sup>26</sup> Similar difficulties emerged over the selection of transport officers, and in October 1915 McGrath used the issue to discuss in the Herald the wider problem of overseas commissions.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., file 1, October 13, 1915; Ibid., file 5, October 25, 30, 1915.

<sup>24</sup> Evening Telegram, July 19, November 26, 1916; JHA 1917, Report of the Non-Combatant Selection Committee, March, 1917 in NPA Report, 1917, p. 365.

<sup>25</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 18b, V.P. Burke, 1915, Murphy to Burke, January 5, 1915.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., file 5, February 1, 11, March 8, 18, 1915; Ibid., file 6, Burke to Ross, March 20, 1915.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., file 5, March 31, June 1, October 13, 25, 1915; Evening Herald, October 23, 1915.

The Herald charged that Roman Catholics were not receiving their fair share of commissions, since forty-nine Protestants and only nine Catholics had been commissioned from the time the force originated. In response, the reserve force committee convened a special meeting at which it asked the governor to inquire into the method of selecting officers at Ayr and in France.<sup>28</sup> However, this was something of a red-herring since the right to appoint officers was firmly in Davidson's hands, although he allowed his choice to be directed by the officers' selection and reserve force committees.<sup>29</sup> Although Davidson had authorized the Regiment's commanding officer to make provisional appointments, they had subsequently to be confirmed by him.<sup>30</sup> Once the depot had been established and the command split, this was also held to apply to the commanding officer at Ayr. At the same time that it requested an overseas inquiry, the reserve force committee approved a formal request from the Army Council that both promotions and appointments be made by the commanding officer overseas without prior reference to Newfoundland authorities.<sup>31</sup> This was considered of sufficient importance to

<sup>28</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, October 30, 1915.

<sup>29</sup> Above, pp. 64-65. See also McGrath Papers, McGrath to Jack McGrath, May 12, 1917 in which he states that British officials had absolutely no control over overseas commissions.

<sup>30</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a, Timewell to Davidson, December 16, 1914 and attached note by Rendell; *Ibid.*, file 22b, Davidson to Burton, January 26, 1915. See also Newfoundland Acts 1915, Volunteer Force (Amendment) Act, 1915, 6 Geo. V, cap. 8, sec. 2.

<sup>31</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, October 30, 1915.

warrant a minute of council,<sup>32</sup> and for the most part the selection of officers at the front passed out of the NPA's hands. Apparently it was not presumed to apply to Whitaker at the depot.

In October 1915 Montgomerie accompanied G Company to Ayr, where he remained for several months as an emissary of the reserve force committee. He subsequently assured Davidson that religion was not a factor in awarding commissions at the depot, and that the majority of NCO appointments had been made in St. John's.<sup>33</sup> Whitaker had already responded to the governor's inquiries, also assuring him that both commissioned and non-commissioned officers were chosen on the basis of character, efficiency and ability to lead "irrespective of all other considerations."<sup>34</sup> However, McGrath continued to hold that religion played a part and because of his objections, the committee's ensuing report failed to win approval at a subsequent NPA meeting in November.<sup>35</sup> A second meeting of the Association convened the following week also ended inconclusively, the report again being sent back to the committee for "reconsideration."<sup>36</sup> At a third meeting three days later, members of the reserve force committee vigorously denied suggestions that

<sup>32</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, November 1, 1915.

<sup>33</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, October 25, November 12, December 10, 1915 which contains a letter from Montgomerie to Davidson. See also *Ibid.*, file 22c, Whitaker to Davidson, January 10, 1916; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Whitaker, February 4, 1916.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, file 5, November 5, 1915.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, file 1, November 8, 1915.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, November 15, 1915.

appointments were influenced by factors other than fitness and ability. J.M. Kent requested that the Association ask British officials to conduct an investigation, but failed to muster the support of the majority for this suggestion. Objections to the reserve force committee's report were finally withdrawn, the hope being expressed that the press, meaning the Herald, would forego future comment on such "dangerous questions."<sup>37</sup>

However, the controversy refused to die down. Whitaker again cabled Davidson, indignantly protesting that "as an officer in the British Army I know nothing of politics and creeds."<sup>38</sup> A lengthy letter followed in which he stated that until his receipt of Davidson's cable he was unaware of the "political and sectarian difficulties with which the administration of the ... Newfoundland Regiment is surrounded," but that he had subsequently enlightened himself through a perusal of the St. John's press, and could now emphatically declare:

There are not, and there never have been any politics - there are not and there never have been any sectarian difficulties, in the British Army. Abroad, the only differences are those which divide allies from enemies. The difficulties, therefore, which loom so large in St. John's have disappeared entirely, or have dwindled into such insignificance as to be indiscernible, since the Regiment crossed the Atlantic.... Will your Executive please assure those concerned that there is no slightest groundwork [sic] for the suspicions that have arisen as to the existence on this side of

<sup>37</sup> Evening Telegram, November 19, 1915. There is no record of this meeting in NPA files.

<sup>38</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Whitaker to Davidson, November 19, 1915.

the water of the difficulties and dangers<sup>39</sup>  
that appear to beset them in St. John's.

Burton also responded to Davidson's inquiries and assured the governor that neither politics nor religion played a part in promotions under his command. He maintained that "if a less percentage of Catholics have been promoted it is due" — since Roman Catholic officers had an equal say in promotions — "to accidental and temporary causes, not to any policy or prejudice, antipathy or discrimination."<sup>40</sup> Although Burton professed no knowledge of religious affiliation in "ninety-nine out of one hundred cases," it seems he was not unwilling to learn about politics, since he recommended the son of J.A. Clift, a Liberal, for a commission the following day.<sup>41</sup>

The principal problem in the eyes of men on active service was not so much the religious aspect of the granting of commissions as the policy of making appointments in St. John's and at the depot, while neglecting more deserving candidates in the field. Because the majority of trained personnel had been sent to the front in the fall of 1915, Whitaker had little option but to promote recent recruits.<sup>42</sup> This accorded well with the reserve force committee's policy of awarding commissions to former officers of St. John's cadet corps and other whose

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Whitaker to Davidson, December 15, 1915.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., file 5, Burton to Davidson, December 26, 1915.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Burton to Davidson, December 27, 1915. Although politics was undoubtedly another issue, it was never a major one.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., file 22b, Whitaker to Davidson, October 11, 1915; Ibid., Whitaker to Davidson, November 19, 1915.

cargers they sought to promote for social and political reasons.<sup>43</sup> These men subsequently arrived in France with all the trappings of rank but none of the experience. One can imagine all the problems this entailed. Experienced front line men laid their case before the St. John's public through the press. In order to avoid this type of publicity, Whitaker suggested that the Regiment's commanding officer release men from the front.<sup>44</sup> Hadow replied that this was impossible owing to the depletion of the Regiment's ranks, but acknowledged the fact that there existed among active service men "a considerable feeling ... that commissions have been granted at the depot on a very liberal scale and on very doubtful qualifications."<sup>45</sup> It was partly for this reason that Hadow objected to Whitaker's being given an independent command.<sup>46</sup>

In the meantime, the reserve force committee continued to receive applications for commissions from newly enlisted recruits and men at the depot, and to recommend their acceptance or rejection.<sup>47</sup> Davidson was also guilty of quietly advancing the names of specific individuals before the Regiment's overseas officers, NFA officials and

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., file 5, December 7, 1915; see also Ibid., November 5, 16, 1915.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., file 22b, Whitaker to Davidson, November 19, 1915.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., file 5, Hadow to Davidson, February 28, 1916.

<sup>46</sup> Above, pp. 120-21.

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Whitaker to Davidson, October 11, 1915; Ibid., file 5, December 31, 1915.

the Army Council.<sup>48</sup> In response to mounting public opposition the committee finally resolved that, wherever possible, preference be given to men who had seen active service, so that by the beginning of January 1916 men were being promoted from the ranks and sent back to Ayr.<sup>49</sup> Davidson subsequently observed that all grounds for complaint had been removed, and all grievances with respect to commissions settled.<sup>50</sup>

Although this was probably a pious hope, it was undoubtedly bolstered by the appointment of McGrath to the presidency of the legislative council in the spring of 1916. The office was traditionally held by a Roman Catholic, and McGrath's selection could reasonably be expected to preclude any further criticism of regimental affairs in the Herald. However, Davidson was dubious, and informed Morris that the position was associated "with a tradition of personal dignity and presence" that McGrath did not possess. He also suggested that because McGrath had "offended many by his mordant press" and had allowed his "anxiety to score as a journalist" to outrun his discretion about raising the religious issue, he would find his council "antipathetic." Morris

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<sup>48</sup> See, for example, Ibid., file 6, Davidson to Outerbridge, April 13, 1915; Ibid., file 5, November 5, 1915; Ibid., file 6, Davidson to Brig. Gen. H.D.E. Parsons, Director of Ordnance Offices, BEF, January 17, 1916; Ibid., file 22c, Davidson to Bonar Law, April 20, 1916; PANL, GEN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Morris, March 19, 1917.

<sup>49</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, memorandum by Davidson, January 5, 1916; Ibid., file 5, Hadow to Davidson, February 28, 1916 containing a pencilled note by Davidson; Ibid., April 24, 1916; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 82; Steele, "Diary," p. 45.

<sup>50</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Hadow to Davidson, February 28, 1916 and enclosed note; Ibid., file 22c, Davidson to Hadow, April 18, 1916.

replied that McGrath would "grow into the position."<sup>51</sup> However, McGrath not only continued to voice his opinion in the Herald, but had an even more powerful forum in the legislative council, which he used with maximum effect in the summer of 1917.<sup>52</sup>

The denominational balance of commissioned officers continued to exercise the Roman Catholic population.<sup>53</sup> The reserve

<sup>51</sup> PANL, CN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916.

<sup>52</sup> Below, pp. 191-96 and passim.

<sup>53</sup> The denominational breakdown of enlistments and officers to June 12, 1916, as taken from PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, is as follows:

Enlistments		Officers	Combat	Non-Combat
Church of England	915	Church of England	26	4
Roman Catholic	830	Roman Catholic	18	1
Methodist	771	Methodist	18	1
Salvation Army	83			
Presbyterian	70	Presbyterian	10	2
Congregational	16			
Adventist	2			
Total	2687		72	8

The denominational breakdown of enlistments to October 5, 1917 according to statistics released by Bennett in February 1918, as taken from Evening Telegram, February 27, 1918, reads as follows:

Church of England	1313
Methodist	1097
Roman Catholic	1062
Salvation Army	146
Presbyterian	86
Congregational	21
Other	2
Total	3727

The following table was published in the Evening Telegram, October 5, 1918. It was reported to have originally appeared in a Toronto newspaper based on statistics compiled by "unknown" persons in St. John's:



force committee visited Davidson, who claimed that few Catholics had applied.<sup>54</sup> Nonetheless, in the midst of a tour of the Roman Catholic district of Placentia-St. Mary's in June 1916, the governor was unexpectedly barred from Argentia by the local parish priest, who stated that his presence in the area would be unwelcome. Davidson consulted the two MRAs from the district and was advised to cancel the remainder of his journey. On his return to the capital he referred the matter to the vicar general, who denied any knowledge of the incident.<sup>55</sup> Davidson wrote again, expressing his "deepest concern ... that you have not thought good ... to place on record your regret at the affront offered to the King's representative."<sup>56</sup> Reluctantly, he approached the archbishop,

Denomination	Total Membership - 1911 Census	Number of Recruits	% per 1000 of Population
Roman Catholic	81,779	1,639	20.02
Anglican	78,618	2,044	26.00
Methodist	68,042	1,818	26.72
Salvation Army	10,141	265	26.01

<sup>54</sup> McGrath Papers, McGrath to Davidson, June 22, 1916. It is interesting to note here that during the spring of 1916 McGrath persuaded his nephew Jack to apply for a commission in an Irish regiment, having failed to secure Davidson's support for an application to the Newfoundland Regiment. He explained the situation in these terms: "No one would expect officers in a regiment for active service to be appointed according to creed, but when in every batch of appointments we got only one or two out of a dozen it became evident that agencies were at work such as you had to face in Ireland. After standing it for a year, I exposed it in the paper ... [with the result that] dominating elements have been sore but have had to make partial adjustments." Ibid., McGrath to Sir J.H. Gratton, September 14, 1916.

<sup>55</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 38, Davidson to McDermott, Vicar General, June 20, 1916; Ibid., McDermott to Davidson, June 21, 1916. The priest in question was Father Ashley, who re-emerged again in the summer of 1918. For further details, see below, p. 326, fn. 81.

<sup>56</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 38, Davidson to McDermott, June 22, 1916.

who had him informed that feeling in the district ran high as a result of the granting of commissions in St. John's.<sup>57</sup> A second incident followed in the Bay of Islands. Before paying a visit, Davidson appointed the very Rev. Dean O'Rourke, P.P., chairman of the local NFA branch. Other members of the committee objected, stating that O'Rourke had hindered recruitment.<sup>58</sup> Whether he was opposed to the war effort in general or the method of awarding commissions in particular remains unclear.

Following the decimation of the Regiment on July 1, 1916, the Army Council again suggested that owing to the shortage of officers it be authorized, in consultation with the Regiment's commanding officers, to promote men from the ranks.<sup>59</sup> Since this had already been agreed to in the case of the commanding officer at the front, it can be assumed it was intended to apply to the Ayr depot. In order to circumvent the mounting opposition to inexperienced officers, and the increasing difficulty of ensuring commissions for its friends, the standing committee in the fall of 1916 instituted an officers' training program in St. John's. It was intended to afford instruction to candidates wishing to apply for commissions, so that the committee could then recommend to both Whitaker and Hadow those who were likely to make suitable officers.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., Ashley to Davidson, July 4, 1916; also Ibid., Ashley to Walsh, June 20, 1916.

<sup>58</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 18c, Bay of Islands Patriotic Association to Burke, August 24, 1916.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., file 22c, Bonar Law to Davidson, July 14, 1916.

<sup>60</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Standing Committee, February, 1917, in NFA Report, 1917, p. 349.

Although the nature and purpose of these classes were widely discussed at the time, it was not until the summer of 1917 that the issue was laid bare. M.P. Gibbs broached the matter in the legislative council, and McGrath took it up.<sup>61</sup> Both agreed that the officers' training program had been inaugurated in order to accommodate a number of well-connected St. John's recruits, "Sons of Somebody," who responded to the call for a second battalion in the spring, but deferred their enlistment until the fall. In the meantime, 750 outpost recruits trained in St. John's during the spring and most of the summer, and it was not until after their departure that classes began.<sup>62</sup> The men

<sup>61</sup> PLC 1917, Gibbs, July 2, 1917, pp. 45-46; Ibid., McGrath, July 3-16, 1917, pp. 69-124, passim. Philip Jensen (above, p. 142) had already raised this issue in the spring of 1917 while lecturing in the United States. Among other things, he referred to the nepotism of the standing committee, and in May 1917 the NPA, through the recruiting committee, had been forced to respond in an open letter to Jensen. The letter stated in part: "We do not credit that you made any objectionable reference to any section of this community or of their kith or kin elsewhere.... It is unspeakable that you would disparage men who have 'played the game' like yourself.... So far from dropping you we are proud to have been in association with you." This matter was complicated by the fact that Jensen had recently been promoted from a private to a captain in the CEF, although the Telegram sought to dispel the impression that this was on account of his Newfoundland activities. In June 1917 the press reported that he was returning to Newfoundland, but he seems to have dropped from sight thereafter. See Evening Telegram, April 2-3, May 5, June 22, 1917; also, below, p. 214.

<sup>62</sup> In the main, they consisted of a series of lectures by NPA officials, following which candidates sat for an examination and received certificates accordingly. This hardly met with the rigorous standards set by British officers training corps. McGrath illustrated this point by reading from the British syllabus of instruction. He claimed that copies had been sent to the press with directions that no details be published until after April 1, 1917, by which time local candidates would be safely overseas. PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 70-71.

subsequently embarked from St. John's as part of the so-called Windsor Draft, which suffered a series of delays and did not reach Scotland until April 1917. Within forty-eight hours of their arrival, Whitaker drew up a list of twelve names which he then forwarded to Davidson recommending that they receive commissions.<sup>63</sup> This list, together with the questionable circumstances which surrounded the scheduled departure of the men from St. John's,<sup>64</sup> proved the downfall of the standing Committee. All were Protestants, mainly St. John's Protestants, and McGrath reported that the list "exhibited such an apparent disregard for the feelings of a large section of the community" (i.e. St. John's Roman Catholics) that it was never published, but led to the appointment of a committee of leading Roman Catholics who conferred with the archbishop. As a result, a new list was drawn up containing the names of those who had passed the officers' training course in order of merit, along with the names of three non-commissioned officers in St. John's at the time. This list was forwarded to Whitaker, who drew up a third list and sent it back to St. John's. It was altered again, and a final list of names gazetted accordingly. At the same time, the Roman Catholic Church decided to institute its own inquiry into granting of commissions.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Details of the following events are confusing, but can be derived from a variety of sources, including PAUL, P8/B/9, file 2, May 4, 17, 1917; Ibid., file Miscellaneous, Replies to Questions by the Hon. John Harvey in the Legislative Council, July 5, 1917, drawn up by the Standing Committee; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 16, 1917, pp. 71-72, 116-17; Evening Herald, May 9-10, 1917; Evening Telegram, May 9, December 12, 1917.

<sup>64</sup> Below, pp. 194-96.

<sup>65</sup> Evening Telegram, May 9, 1917. The principal issue here was sectarian rather than social.

The furor surrounding these events also gave rise to questions respecting the existing imbalance between the number of St. John's as opposed to outport officers,<sup>66</sup> but characteristically this matter was not pursued by the St. John's press.

Although McGrath had so far refrained from commenting on the social aspect of commissions, confining himself mainly to the religious side in the Herald, he now informed members of the legislative council that scores of complaints had reached his attention in this regard, and that no other aspect of the war effort had aroused so much resentment. Maintaining that "bitter, widespread and constantly growing discontent" had surrounded the administration of the Regiment from the fall of 1914, he vilified local officials for having entrusted the lives of men in the trenches to inexperienced officers, commissioned purely on the basis of social standing. He pointed out that in many cases they were men who had enjoyed the luxury of remaining at home for two and a half years, and that the greater part of the population regarded the situation as "a scandal of the first dimension." Referring to the example of the British press which had directed attention to incompetence in high places on a number of recent occasions, he concluded that the time was right to expose similar defects in St. John's, and thereby to rid the population of the "shackles of class ascendancy."<sup>67</sup> This amounted to a root-and-branch condemnation of the

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, letters contained in Evening Telegram, May 18, June 8, 1917.

<sup>67</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3-16, 1917, pp. 69-119, *passim*. McGrath was referring mainly to Northcliffe, whose role in exposing the so-called 'shell scandal' in the spring of 1915 was legendary. He

standing committee. Only the Hons. John Harvey and R.K. Bishop came to its defence, but with little conviction.<sup>68</sup>

Favouritism was also the key issue in the heated controversy surrounding the Windsor Draft,<sup>69</sup> as the contingent of 160 soldiers scheduled to leave St. John's in November 1916 came, to be called. It was delayed by Admiralty reports that submarines were operating in the North Atlantic. The standing committee decided at an emergency meeting, with Davidson and Morris both present, to defer the departure. The standing committee later maintained that it had been actuated by fears for the men's safety, and to a lesser extent for their health, since measles were prevalent at the time. However, McGrath and others claimed that the committee had responded to pressure from one of its members who had a son in the draft.<sup>70</sup> It was not until the end of January 1917 that it was arranged for the men to go forward with a subsequent draft as far as Halifax, there to await overseas transportation in the hands of Canadian transport officials. Because accommodation was scarce, the Newfoundlanders were sent to nearby Windsor, where owing to a second

was a friend and admirer of Northcliffe, who, recall, had an interest in the Grand Falls mill. He was also referring to inquiries into the Dardanelles and Mesopotamia campaigns, likewise prompted by the press. See also Evening Herald, May 9-10, 1917.

<sup>68</sup> PLC 1917, Harvey, July 5, 16, 1917, pp. 86, 118-20; Ibid., Bishop, July 16, 1917, pp. 122-23.

<sup>69</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, details of the Windsor Draft derive from Ibid., McGrath, July 5-16, 1917, pp. 72-125, passim; PAML, P8/B/9, file Miscellaneous, Replies to questions by the Hon. John Harvey. See also Evening Telegram, August 9, 1917; PLC 1917, Harvey, July 16, 1917, pp. 119-20.

<sup>70</sup> The individual in question was probably either I.J. Edens or John Bennett.

outbreak of measles and a shortage of vessels they were forced to remain for an additional three months. They finally arrived at the depot in April.

The delay was costly for several reasons. In the first place, it was expensive, since the standing committee had incurred additional obligations of more than \$35,000.<sup>71</sup> In the second place, it deprived the Regiment of reinforcements which, in the aftermath of Monchy, were badly needed. McGrath drew the sobering conclusion that "many of the casualties which the country is mourning of late might have been avoided if . . . the men had been sent forward in the regular course."<sup>72</sup> Moreover, on the heels of suggestions that earlier drafts, owing to the speed with which they were rushed to the front, were insufficiently trained,<sup>73</sup> the men who arrived at Ayr in April were subjected to even more concentrated instruction, and there were reports that several had broken down under the strain. McGrath believed that from this point a state of demoralization set in from which the Regiment would never fully recover.<sup>74</sup>

But perhaps the most revealing feature of the entire episode was the fact that 100 naval reservists had embarked in November

<sup>71</sup> PLC 1917, Gibbs, July 2, 1917, p. 46; Ibid., McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 73.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 73.

<sup>73</sup> Evening Herald, July 6, 1917; Evening Telegram, July 7, 1917.

<sup>74</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3 & 5, 1917, p. 73, 88-89; above, pp. 158-59.

1916 as scheduled (and on the same ship as the 160 soldiers were supposed to travel), "simply because they had nobody to make a similar plea on their behalf and nobody ... sufficiently interested to care what became of them."<sup>75</sup> Some members of the standing committee later denied any knowledge of their departure, and stated that they would have been unable to prevent it in any event. Others admitted this was not so, and regretted that these things should happen.<sup>76</sup>

Although the standing committee rebutted these and other charges in a detailed report, the damage had been done and within days the department of militia was created.<sup>77</sup> The standing committee's report also criticized McGrath for creating a public "ferment," but conceded that he had rendered "excellent service" in other areas.<sup>78</sup> The Association adopted the report unanimously in McGrath's absence and passed it on to the press.<sup>79</sup> However, by this time the standing

<sup>75</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 73.

<sup>76</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file Miscellaneous, Replies to questions by the Hon. John Harvey; PLC 1917, Harvey, July 16, 1917, pp. 124-25; Ibid., McGrath, July 5, 16, 1917, pp. 89, 124; Ibid., Bishop, July 16, 1917, p. 122.

<sup>77</sup> See below, Chapter IX.

<sup>78</sup> This was undeniably so. At the beginning of 1918 McGrath received a K.B.E. for his war work, the highest honour to be awarded (excepting Morris'). Harris also conceded that his contribution had been outstanding, notwithstanding the fact that he had worked "a good deal of mischief" through his criticism of regimental affairs in the Herald and council chambers. See CO 448/14, Harris to Long, January 22, 29, 1918; CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918. Also see JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919 in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 533.

<sup>79</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, file Miscellaneous, Replies to questions by the Hon. John Harvey; Evening Telegram, August 9, 1917. Both sources contain the text of the standing committee's report. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 3, 1917; Evening Telegram, August 4, 1917.



committee had been relieved of its duties and was never publicly mentioned again.<sup>80</sup>

Many of these difficulties subsequently disappeared. The Army Council had already taken steps to ensure that the selection of officers would be subject to its voice, and in December 1916 had informed the Newfoundland government that henceforth all officers should first complete training in British cadet corps. The Regiment's commanding officers were to select candidates and submit their names directly to British officials.<sup>81</sup> The standing committee had little choice but to approve this arrangement, and subsequently to disband the officers' selection committee.<sup>82</sup> Apparently, these provisions did not apply to those who had already completed officers' training in St. John's.

In July 1917 the Army Council moved to transfer the depot from Ayr to Barry, near Winchester, ostensibly to allow the men to train alongside other troops under a more experienced officer. This meant that Whitaker would lose his command. He resisted vigorously, claiming that the move was due only to friction between the men and the sober citizens of Ayr, and that the Regiment's record showed the success of his command. He also argued that his command had been exceptionally difficult, being subject to direction from several sources, including

<sup>80</sup> See also below, pp. 296-97.

<sup>81</sup> A copy of this directive can be located in JHA 1917, Report of the Standing Committee, February, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 350.

<sup>82</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 5; February 16, 23, 1917.

the Scottish command, Davidson as colonel-in-chief and the Newfoundland government. His mistakes, he maintained, had been owing primarily to the impossibility of pleasing everybody, especially St. John's with its strong political and sectarian sentiments.<sup>83</sup> Although Morris and others in St. John's supported him, he lost his case.<sup>84</sup> Whitaker recommended that he be succeeded by Major W.F. Rendell, whose appointment, in Whitaker's opinion, "would sit well with the government and people of Newfoundland."<sup>85</sup> British officials, however, rejected his recommendation. Two months later Harris, who had by then succeeded Davidson, informed the Colonial Office: "Ministers suggest that it is now time for the Army Council to consider promoting Newfoundland officers to higher ranks within its [sic] own regiment. Selection of men from outside ... has not in all cases been .... satisfactory."<sup>86</sup> The Army Council had

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., file 21d, Prime Minister's Correspondence, 1917, Long to Davidson, July 24, 1917; Ibid., Whitaker to Morris, July 2, 1917; Ibid., Morris to Davidson, July 25, 1917; Ibid., file 22d, Whitaker to Headquarters, Tay Defences, August 18, 1917; Ibid., J.S. Ewart, Commander-in-Chief of the Scottish Command to Headquarters, Edinburgh, August 21, 1917. See also Evening Telegram, December 12, 1917, January 16, 1918. It is also possible that the Army Council hoped eventually to integrate the Regiment with another force, which would explain the extremely strong reaction.

<sup>84</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21d, Davidson to Long, August 22, 1917; Ibid., Long to Davidson, September 14, 1917; Ibid., file 22d, War Office to Fiddes, September 30, 1917; Ibid., file 25a, War Office to Fiddes, January 2, 1918.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., file 22d, Whitaker to Headquarters, Tay Defences, August 18, 1917.

<sup>86</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 33, Harris to Long, March 11, 1918.

proposed this course three years before,<sup>87</sup> but by now preferred out-siders.

In spite of — or perhaps because of — the overwhelming pride most Newfoundlanders, especially St. John'smen, took in the Regiment, and the unprecedented honour it brought the colony,<sup>88</sup> its internal administration was wracked with dissension. Many of the problems were not the fault of local officials, but the publicity they inspired was nonetheless a constant burden. Yet some of the difficulties were directly of their making. The failure of the NPA and government to recruit in a wholehearted and effective manner, the determination of the St. John's elite to control the awarding of offices and the resulting disaffection of the Roman Catholic and outport population, all operated to the detriment of the Regiment in the field. These vexations also bore heavily on the Army Council, which nevertheless revealed a surprising amount of forbearance in the interests of the war effort as a whole. Ironically, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that social and religious distinctions fell away in the trenches.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Above, pp. 96-97.

<sup>88</sup> This aspect is discussed further below, pp. 335-36.

<sup>89</sup> This feature has been reported by most World War I observers, and did not go unobserved by Newfoundlanders. See, for example, Evening Telegram, June 19, 1917; April 5, 1918; Robinson, Letters of Mayo Lind, p. 59; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 177.

If so, many of the Regiment's problems were imposed from St. John's. Thus the administration of the standing committee was exposed to charges of patronage under the guise of patriotism, thereby reinforcing existing social, religious and geographic tensions. Similar conditions prevailed on the home front, with much the same effect.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE HOME FRONT

Military service involved mutual responsibilities, for once it was accepted that citizens had an obligation to the state, it followed that the state had obligations to its citizens. This idea was slow to take shape, however, and at the beginning, just as the government was willing to see the Regiment raised and administered by civilians, it was willing to see the well-being of dependants and returned soldiers entrusted to private citizens. Thus the early years of the war witnessed a great flurry of fund-raising and other charitable activity.

The earliest opportunity for private charity was provided by the Patriotic Fund, inaugurated on August 29 to supplement the resources of regimental, and later naval, dependants.<sup>1</sup> The appeal was an immediate success, and the enthusiasm it evoked during the fall and winter of 1914-15 was not equalled again. Patriotic Fund events were organized across the island and in Labrador, subscription lists were compiled, and payroll deduction plans enforced. In less than seven months the Fund had reached \$88,000. By the end of 1915, when over

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<sup>1</sup> Once Newfoundland naval reservists on board the HMCS Niobe discovered that dependants of Canadian seamen were being assisted by the Canadian Patriotic Fund, local Fund officials were forced to adopt a similar policy. See PAML, P8/B/9, August 29, 1914; Ibid., file 21a, Davidson to Morris, November 4, 1914; Evening Telegram, November 12, 1914. See also above, p. 43.

\$100,000 had been subscribed. Fund officials decided that the amount was sufficient to meet foreseeable needs and canvassing was discontinued in favour of other requirements.<sup>2</sup>

A great deal of suspicion seems to have attached to the Fund at the beginning, and it was said in some quarters that contributions were being used to maintain the Regiment. This was hardly surprising, since both regimental expenses and the Fund were administered by the finance committee. Thus, in the spring of 1915 the NPA decided to separate the two accounts and to place the Fund on a legal footing through an act of the legislature.<sup>3</sup> Once the government agreed to this, Fund and finance committee officials agreed to draw up a statement of the Fund's all-encompassing nature and purpose. Besides augmenting, where necessary, the resources of military and naval dependants, it was to assist invalided servicemen and bereaved families until government pensions were in place. In cases where pensions were not provided, but a moral claim for support existed, the Fund would act as well. In addition, it could provide supplementary aid for the disabled, orphaned

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<sup>2</sup>JLC 1915, Report of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 348; JLC 1916, Report of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund, December 1915, in NPA Report, 1916, pp. 355-56; PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, Treasurer's files, 1924-49, McGrath to Bennett, November 4, 1925. However, in the spring of 1916 a Grand Falls Permanent Patriotic Fund was established, administered jointly by local clergymen and NPA officials. It was the only independent fund in existence. See Evening Telegram, May 6, 1916; PANL, P8/B/9, file 18d, V.P. Burke, 1918, Scott to Davidson, September 7, 1917.

<sup>3</sup>See Evening Telegram, October 21, 1914, February 19, March 31, 1915; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 11, 1914, February 18, March 30, 1915; PLC 1915, Grimes, June 2, 1915, pp. 845-46.

children, aged parents and recipients of fixed pensions. Although it was plainly stated that the Fund was not intended to take the place of pension legislation,<sup>4</sup> it was clear that the government could delay for some time.

In the spring of 1915 the legislature duly incorporated the Patriotic Fund under the trusteeship of members of the finance committee, the general assembly, justices of the supreme court, stipendiary magistrates and the mayor of St. John's. Members of the corporation were given broad powers of discretion and immunity.<sup>5</sup> This step stands in marked contrast to the legal ambiguity which the finance committee enjoyed or suffered. Although responsibility for the Fund was now the government's, trustees continued to report to the Patriotic Association<sup>6</sup> in order to prevent the Fund's becoming a matter for political discussion.

A special sub-committee (J.S. Munn, McGrath and Cashin) had been appointed before the incorporation to assess individual claims. By March 1915, it had considered ninety-two applications and accepted seventy-six, of which fifty-six came from dependants of naval reservists. Sixty families received regular allotments totalling \$501 per month, or

<sup>4</sup> JHA 1915, NPA Report, 1915, p. 316; Evening Telegram, April 8, 1915. See also JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 343.

<sup>5</sup> See Newfoundland Acts 1915, The Newfoundland Patriotic Fund Act, 6 Geo. V, cap. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Davidson's successor took particular exception to this fact. See PAML, P8/B/9, file 23, draft reports, 1917-19.

an average of \$6.35 per person per month.<sup>7</sup> This compared extremely unfavourably with support from the Canadian Patriotic Fund, which by April 1915 was assisting over 10,000 families, including 600 in Nova Scotia and 400 in New Brunswick. The average Canadian grant in 1916 was \$192 per family per year, in addition to which families received a government separation allowance of \$20 per month.<sup>8</sup>

The reasons for this were obvious. Whereas Canadian trustees had raised over \$4 per head of population by the summer of 1917, the Newfoundland trustees had raised only 40¢ per head, so that it had quickly become apparent that different principles must apply.<sup>9</sup> In Canada, it had been decided to establish a minimum scale of family income to a maximum of \$60 per month depending on the number of children. Since government separation allowances of \$20 were already in effect, and servicemen were forced to allocate an additional \$15, the Canadian Patriotic Fund was left to provide at most \$25 per month.

<sup>7</sup> JHA 1915, NPA Report, March, 1915, p. 316; *Ibid.*, Report of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 348. W.B. Grieve, John Browning and Eric Bowring were also actively identified with the relief committee later on. Accounting procedures and personnel were coordinated with the finance committee and later the pensions and disabilities board.

<sup>8</sup> *Evening Telegram*, April 8, 1915; Philip H. Morris, *The Canadian Patriotic Fund: A Record of its Activities from 1914 to 1919* (Ottawa: n.p., n.d.), p. 23. Newfoundland officials also distributed assistance to dependants of Newfoundlanders serving in Canadian forces, recording a total outlay of almost \$50,000. They were reimbursed by the Canadian Fund. PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, McGrath to Bennett, November 4, 1924.

<sup>9</sup> The following information derives from JHA 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1915, pp. 64-69, and can be verified in Morrig, *Canadian Patriotic Fund*, pp. 29-31.



In Newfoundland, however, trustees were forced to adopt the principle of maintaining individual families at their usual level. Each soldier was expected to allot his family 70c per day, or roughly \$21 per month, and the Patriotic Fund contributed additional support up to the level of his previous earnings less the estimated cost of his keep. Thus, if a man had been earning \$40 per month, and allotted the expected \$21, the Fund awarded an allowance of \$10, \$9 being considered equal to the breadwinner's share. The Fund's principal spokesman, P.T. McGrath, maintained that families were in fact better off under this system because they escaped the inevitable shortfalls of sickness and unemployment, because deductions for the breadwinner were low, and because allotments in every case were more generous than the rule implied. Moreover, because it had been shown that a large number of men contributed substantially to the maintenance of other than immediate family, the Fund had been broadened to include support for any individual who could show that he or she had sustained a financial loss through an enlistment.<sup>10</sup>

The trustees occasionally reviewed applications for assistance in the hope of reducing the number of regular recipients<sup>11</sup> or, as in the fall of 1916, to take into account the rising cost of living. They did this "without any solicitation from the beneficiaries of the Fund — for, taking them all in all, we have found these people

<sup>10</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 66; PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, McGrath to Bennett, November 4, 1924; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Sect., February 2, 1918; McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>11</sup> JHA 1915, Report of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 348.

most reasonable and prepared to accept the inconveniences inevitable in a situation like the present, without complaint."<sup>12</sup> After reviewing over 1000 applications, the trustees granted increases averaging just under \$1 per week in seventy-seven cases, and approved several additional claims;<sup>13</sup> but since the cost of living had risen dramatically by this time, it was little more than a gesture. A year later McGrath conceded that a further review was inevitable,<sup>14</sup> although the subsequent introduction of separation allowances rendered this unnecessary.

One of the Fund's major problems — again the matter was raised by Gibbs in the legislative council in July 1917 — lay in the fact that Newfoundland soldiers, unlike Canadian soldiers, were never legally compelled to allot a portion of their pay.<sup>15</sup> Although the majority of soldiers did authorize deductions under pressure from commanding officers and regimental pay officials, over 500 men cancelled them by the summer of 1917. McGrath argued that where support was forthcoming from other sources, local officials had no right to interfere, but that in cases where dependants were destitute, compulsion was justified. Officials of the Fund had accordingly approached the government,

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<sup>12</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 66.

<sup>13</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund, February, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, pp. 356-57.

<sup>14</sup> PLC 1917, Gibbs, July 2, 1917, p. 45; Ibid., McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 66.

<sup>15</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, the following information derives from PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 66-68.

which drafted the necessary legislation. Plainly annoyed that it had not been consulted, the standing committee rejected the idea on grounds that any attempt to render allotments compulsory was in violation of the original service agreement and to the detriment of recruitment. As a result, the government deferred the introduction of the bill, and submitted it to a joint meeting of the finance and standing committees and representatives of both sides of the house. The standing committee prevailed and the provision was dropped.<sup>16</sup> Since it had already been decided that the failure of men to provide for their families should not affect support claims, McGrath claimed that while many men were stinting themselves

there are other men who have coolly repudiated their obligations altogether, and because their families cannot be allowed to starve, and the authorities will not afford us legislation, the monies of the Patriotic Fund, obtained from the public for other purposes, have to be misused to keep these unfortunate people from dying of hunger.... I am afraid ... that it is going to prove the thin edge of the wedge for gross abuse of the Patriotic Fund because when it becomes known on the other side that certain people can unload their obligations onto the Patriotic Fund, there will likely be a lot of that sort of thing done.<sup>17</sup>

The introduction of separation allowances shortly thereafter solved this problem also.

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<sup>16</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, June 2, 9, 23, 1917; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 67. The motives of the standing committee remain unclear.

<sup>17</sup> PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 67. See also Ibid., Gibbs, July 2, 1917, p. 45.

Another major difficulty lay in the lack of administrative machinery in the outports. Once again, officials relied on outport clergymen, merchants and functionaries for information. This was cumbersome: some cases took two years to resolve.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, some thought that the Fund was a government fund, and that therefore money was to be had for the asking. "In every case," McGrath explained,

the most careful inquiry is made before allowances are given. Everything that seems suspicious is investigated, and no loophole for fraud that it is humanly possible for us to close, is allowed to remain open ... our sole idea being that deserving cases shall get the fullest assistance we can give them, and that the undeserving shall not circumvent us. That there are frauds being practised upon the Fund I dare say is correct, because nobody ever attempted to carry out any project of this kind in any other country without being victimized to some extent; but I claim for those associated with the management, that no greater efforts could be made to ensure that the money goes into the right channels.<sup>19</sup>

Naturally the process was slow and frequently resulted in hardship; many of the complaints which reached the colonial secretary's desk were justified.<sup>20</sup>

Members of the legislative council agreed that administrators of the Fund could not be held responsible for these shortcomings,<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, January 19, 1917; Evening Telegram, January 20, 1917.

<sup>19</sup> FLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 66-68.

<sup>20</sup> See PANL, GN 2/14, passim, particularly boxes 9-19.

<sup>21</sup> FLC 1917, Harvey, July 5, 1917, p. 86; Ibid., Gibbs, July 5, 1917, p. 87.

and there is no evidence to suggest that the concept of private charity was ever seriously challenged.<sup>22</sup> However, it is clear that Patriotic Fund officials did not consider it their duty to ensure a minimum standard of living for the dependants of servicemen, or a more equitable distribution of the nation's wealth. Moreover, those who enlisted early in the war before incomes had risen saw their families penalized as the cost of living rose. Nor is there any evidence that Fund officials ever provided the wide variety of services performed by officials of the Canadian Patriotic Fund.<sup>23</sup>

Separation allowances of \$20 per month awarded to all married men in September 1917<sup>24</sup> removed some of these inequities and greatly reduced the Fund's burden. Significantly, the government decided on this award in the spring with the prospect of a general election in the fall.<sup>25</sup> However, the issue went back to the imprecise pay regulations of August and September 1914, when the government had decided to adopt Canadian pay scales.<sup>26</sup> Eventually it became known that in addition to the regular pay and field allowances of Canadian servicemen, the dependants of married men received an additional \$20 a month.

<sup>22</sup> In Canada the system was almost universally condemned as a "nightmare relic of barbarianism." See Thompson, Harvests of War, pp. 165-66.

<sup>23</sup> See Morris, Canadian Patriotic Fund, pp. 41-49 and passim.

<sup>24</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, September 8, 1917.

<sup>25</sup> See PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, May 31, 1917; below, p. 280. Davidson believed that conscription might win acceptance as a result.

<sup>26</sup> See above, p. 44.

Following demands by Newfoundland soldiers for equal treatment, an offer by the British government to underwrite separation allowances for Newfoundland foresters, and reports that potential recruits were by now loudly demanding them, the government asked the standing committee to look into the matter. It reported that payments from the Patriotic Fund were both "satisfactory and sufficient."<sup>27</sup> However, the Morris government had already decided to introduce them in any event,<sup>28</sup> and an executive minute was eventually passed to coincide with the national government's fall recruitment campaign.<sup>29</sup> The Patriotic Fund continued to assist those who were not eligible for the new allowance.<sup>30</sup> As early as February 1917, trustees foresaw the inevitable drying up of the Fund and urged that it be maintained in order to meet a variety of post-war contingencies.<sup>31</sup> However, the government was not willing to consider this until the post-war election of 1919.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>27</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, May 4, July 28, 1917.

<sup>28</sup> See above, pp. 161-62. McGrath maintained that to have applied them from the beginning would have meant the expenditure of an additional \$1,000,000, "a demand on the Treasury which I do not think could have been met." PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 65.

<sup>29</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 530. Prior to the election of 1919, separation allowances were made retroactive to the beginning of service. PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, McGrath to Bennett, November 4, 1924.

<sup>30</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, Bowring to E.L. Brittain, Canadian Patriotic Fund, May 14, 1931.

<sup>31</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Trustees of the Patriotic Fund, February, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 357.

<sup>32</sup> For further information, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, McGrath to Bennett, November 4, 1924; below, pp. 297-98.

Nineteen-fifteen and early 1916 was a period of fund raising and the popularity of the Patriotic Fund was soon superseded by other appeals. It was a good way to keep in touch with the Regiment, and encouraged a sense of participation in the war. In 1915 alone, local WPA organizers for the Belgian relief fund, the kharki prisoners fund and the St. Dunstan's Hostel fund for blind soldiers and sailors raised almost \$10,000, mainly through small donations, a significant proportion of which came from outside St. John's.<sup>33</sup> All these were begun in response to requests from overseas, but most were shortly abandoned in favour of local appeals. The 'Mayolind' fund, organized by the Hon. J.A. Robinson, yielded over \$8000 for tobacco and cigarettes; the 1915 Christmas gift fund over \$3500; and the 1916 'fish and brewis fund' over \$2000.<sup>34</sup>

The most interesting and popular of the early appeals was the aeroplane fund.<sup>35</sup> The idea originated with the London Overseas Club, which proposed that each branch contribute an aeroplane to the imperial aircraft flotilla. The NPA formed an aeroplane committee<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 343; PHA 1915, Clift, April 7, 1915, p. 31; Evening Telegram, September 7, 1915.

<sup>34</sup> JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 343; Robinson, Letters of Mayolind, p. 168. The name Mayolind was a blend of the Daily News' popular soldier-correspondent Frank Lind and the equally popular Mayo brand of tobacco.

<sup>35</sup> The following information derives mainly from Evening Telegram, July 3-August 27, 1915, passim.

<sup>36</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, file 1, August 5, 1915. It consisted of Mayor G.W. Gosling, J.A. Clift and businessman C.R. Steer. Over forty persons attended the first meeting on July 19.

which distributed subscription books to city firms, fraternal organizations and outpost magistrates, although the appeal was so intrinsically popular that it required little special effort.<sup>37</sup> In less than a month, over \$53,000 had been collected (only \$7500 was needed), and Grand Falls promoters urged that the excess be devoted to machine guns for the Regiment.<sup>38</sup> The Army Council, however, declared that no machine guns were needed, so the entire amount went towards the purchase of four 100-horsepower Gnome Vickers bi-planes bearing the colony's name. The Reid Newfoundland Company purchased a fifth plane bearing its name.

The success of this appeal engendered a great deal of pride and contributed to the general belief that the colony was enjoying a substantial lead in both money and men over the other dominions. The Montreal Herald informed its readers that on a per capita basis the Newfoundland contribution far exceeded the Canadian contribution, and that "had all of the Empire done proportionally as well the enemy would be absolutely overwhelmed."<sup>39</sup> It was not until the end of 1915 that this impression faded.<sup>40</sup> In time, too, fund raising led to a

<sup>37</sup> Davidson attributed the fund's success to the fact that it was launched at a time when Allied fortunes were low and it was generally believed British air supremacy was threatened. JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, pp. 334, 344. The company towns of Grand Falls, Millertown, Badger and Bell Island contributed heavily.

<sup>38</sup> They had been prompted by the machine gun 'movement' in Canada. For details, see Wilson, Ontario, pp. xxxix-xl; Evening Telegram, August 17, 1915.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted in Evening Telegram, August 13, 1915. See also above, p. 118.

<sup>40</sup> See, for example, Daily News, December 31, 1915, February 8, 1916; above, p. 119.



considerable amount of friction and back-biting which added to the NPA's growing troubles.

The St. John's Ambulance cot fund and the Jensen Red Cross fund are good examples. The former was inaugurated in 1915 to provide endowed beds and medical care for Newfoundland soldiers. Organized by Chief Justice Horwood and an NPA committee through school teachers and children, the fund was immensely successful. By 1917 almost \$800,000 had been raised, but only 290 beds endowed. In Davidson's mawkish words, "Fathers and mothers .... have poured in their savings from every bay and harbour .... happy to think that they help to make easy the lot of stricken men of our Army and Navy and hoping that their own boys may be cheered by the sight of the home name when they are being soothed and tended in a distant land."<sup>41</sup> There were those who objected to Horwood's tactics, however, and who felt that the excess amount should be sent to London for distribution by the joint British Red Cross-St. John's Ambulance committee. John Browning and David Baird made these points at a stormy NPA meeting on January 26, 1917. They held that because more than sufficient monies were already in hand the fund should be closed, and complained that outport people had been told that Newfoundland wounded would lie unattended on the battlefields unless additional funds were forthcoming. Horwood argued that the colony could not be seen to have given up its obligations to its own men, and that transferring money to British organizations would involve a breach of

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<sup>41</sup> JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 334. For further details, see *Ibid.*, pp. 343-44; *Evening Telegram*, July 21, September 7, October 23, 1915; JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, pp. 319-20. The fund was often referred to, as "Horwood's fund."

trust. He was supported by Davidson and other members of the Patriotic Association.<sup>42</sup>

The WPA also raised money for the sick and wounded, but under the auspices of the British Red Cross and Order of St. John. Tag day collections yielded over \$42,000 by the spring of 1916.<sup>43</sup> That same year, however, Private Philip Jensen started an independent Red Cross fund and simultaneously launched his attacks on the NPA's handling of recruitment and other matters.<sup>44</sup> This split with the official fund-raisers was exacerbated when Mrs. John Browning — whose husband was so critical of the cot fund — quarreled with Lady Davidson, left the WPA, and decided to support Jensen.<sup>45</sup> These bitter, if ultimately insignificant disputes, led Davidson to consolidate all fund raising for the sick and wounded. He set up a committee chaired by Horwood and consisting of three representatives each of the NPA, WPA and the

<sup>42</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 3, Ranfurly to Davidson, undated; Ibid., file 1, January 26, 1917; Ibid., file 31, St. John's Ambulance and Red Cross, Horwood to Davidson, January 26, 1917; Evening Telegram, January 29, 1917. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 18d, Baird to Burke, February 19, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Sir Robert Hudson, Chairman, Joint Committee of the British Red Cross Society, March 12, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Morris, March 19, 1917.

<sup>43</sup> JHA 1916, NPA Report, March, 1916, p. 319; JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 334.

<sup>44</sup> Above, pp. 142-43, 191, fn. 61.

<sup>45</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Harris to Long, January 29, 1918; CO 448/14, Harris to Long, February 11, 1918; below, p. 222.

local St. John's Ambulance Association.<sup>46</sup> Under the new committee, the 1917 empire day campaign yielded a record \$40,000.<sup>47</sup>

There are no figures to indicate the total amount of money raised by public subscription, although Davidson estimated that \$500,000 had been raised by the end of 1916.<sup>48</sup> The total to the end of the war was probably in the region of \$1,000,000. Predictably, from late 1916 onwards, most charitable activity was devoted to care of returned soldiers.

The plight of the wounded and disabled first attracted public attention in August 1916 when men began returning home in significant numbers. Men were discharged in England without maintenance or pay, and frequently without the means to purchase civilian clothing.<sup>49</sup> Stung by charges that the community had failed to make adequate preparations, NPA and WPA officials hastily organized the social aspects of their homecoming, establishing welcoming committees and arranging receptions, which continued to attract a large attendance long after the spectacle of the wounded and disabled had lost its novelty. This was all very well, but the majority of men required adequate medical

<sup>46</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Hudson, March 12, 1917; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, March 23, 1917; JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 334.

<sup>47</sup> JHA 1917, NPA Report, May, 1917, p. 334.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 343-45.

<sup>49</sup> Evening Telegram, September 25, 1916. See also Ibid., August 8, 12, September 21, 1916.

care and facilities, re-education and retraining programs, employment opportunities and back pay and allowances. Even more serious was the need for disability and mortality pensions.

Davidson had raised the matter of pensions in the fall of 1914, and the NPA had referred it to a special finance sub-committee.<sup>50</sup> In May 1915 it recommended that Canadian procedures and scales be adopted.<sup>51</sup> But because there was no public pressure, and the Patriotic Fund was assisting the handful of discharged men and their dependants, nothing was done. After July 1916 pressure on the government began to mount, and in September Bennett conceded that most of the returned soldiers' concerns were justified. He announced that the standing and finance committees had approved temporary arrangements to meet the soldiers' needs pending the introduction of a definitive pension scheme. Effective immediately, men would continue to receive regular pay and allowances until a detailed inquiry into their physical condition and financial resources could be conducted in St. John's. Those who were discharged as medically unfit would continue to get help until they found jobs, while those granted extended sick leave would stay on full pay and allowances until they were fit to return to active service.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> For additional details, see PANL, P8/E/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, August 19, 1914; *Ibid.*, Morris to Davidson, November 18, 1914; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Bennett, November 24, 1914; *Ibid.*, file 1, November 19, 1914; JHA 1915, Report of the Finance Committee, March, 1915, in NPA Report, 1915, p. 325.

<sup>51</sup> PANL, P8/E/9, file 1, May 12, 1915.

<sup>52</sup> Evening Telegram, September 25, 1916. See also JHA 1917; Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, March, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 370; PANL, P8/E/9, file 18c, Davidson to Burke, September 22, 1916. Once again, the initiative was Davidson's.

Inevitably, this led to a marked extension of the NPA's responsibilities, and in October 1916 it set up an interim pensions and disabilities board under the chairmanship of P.T. McGrath and consisting of M.P. Cashin, J.A. Clift, a representative of the Regiment and Naval Reserve, and five Water Street businessmen. It was empowered to devise policy and establish procedures with respect to discharged men subject to the approval of the NPA, to employ administrative and support staff and to draft pension legislation. It had access to government funds, subject to review by the auditor general. The NPA also established a WPA sub-committee under the direction of Mrs. John Browning to assist in adjusting claims.<sup>53</sup> Naturally, there were critics who challenged the board's makeup in view of its sweeping responsibilities and the opportunity for patronage. W.F. Lloyd demanded to go on record in the NPA as being opposed to the principle of giving political representatives a voice in the granting of pensions or other awards. A heated and lengthy debate ensued, at the end of which the Association confirmed the board on grounds that it was a temporary arrangement pending the establishment of a permanent government authority, Lloyd dissenting.<sup>54</sup> The board then established a standing medical board

<sup>53</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, October 10, 1916; JLC 1917, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, March, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, pp. 366-67. It is worthy of note that with the exception of a minute of council dated December 12, 1916 awarding it franking privileges, there is no mention of this all-important committee in minutes of the executive council.

<sup>54</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, October 10, 1916; Evening Telegram, October 11, 1916.

consisting of four doctors to handle the highly subjective and sensitive task of determining each individual's physical condition and of recommending whether he be discharged or granted sick furlough.<sup>55</sup>

The pensions and disabilities board announced later in the fall that "after mature consideration" it had decided to recommend adoption of Canadian disability pensions and to supplement the pensions of naval reservists. The prime minister and leader of the opposition approved this decision and authorized the board to start meeting disability claims. Total disability pensions were thus fixed at \$40 a month for privates, with lesser amounts for partial disabilities to a minimum of \$8. Non-commissioned and commissioned officers received correspondingly larger amounts, beginning at a minimum of \$12.<sup>56</sup> Lengthy delays in adjusting claims and forwarding assistance gave rise to numerous complaints. Moreover, many, including Coaker, claimed that pensions were inadequate, particularly in the case of men who received only \$8 a month and could not get jobs.<sup>57</sup> As a result, McGrath was forced to defend the board on several occasions, claiming that the bulk

<sup>55</sup> For further details, see JLC 1917, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, March, 1917, in NPA Report, p. 367; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, June 1, 1917; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 73-75; PANL, P8/B/9, file 21e, Halfyard to Lloyd, April 20, 1918.

<sup>56</sup> JLC 1917, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, March, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, pp. 367-68; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, p. 74.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, December 13, 1916, July 14, August 3, 1917; PHA 1917, Coaker, June 14, 1917, pp. 169-70. PLC 1917, Gibbs, July 2, 1917, p. 46; ibid., McGrath, July 3, 1917, p.p. 74-75. See also PANL, GN 2/14, boxes 9-19, passim.

of dissatisfaction stemmed from "irresponsible persons" who sought assistance on false or misleading grounds. He also pointed to the difficulty of processing the hundreds of cases "representing every possible phase of human disability" which came before the board, and noted the "disinclination" of soldiers to return to the "hum drum" occupations of civilian life. He dismissed charges that disability pensions were inadequate on grounds that benefits were in line with benefits in Canada, which "admittedly pays the highest pensions of any country on earth to-day."<sup>58</sup>

Of equal if not greater concern was the continuing absence of mortality pensions and its effect of discouraging enlistment as the stock of independent young men dried up.<sup>59</sup> Although bereaved families continued to receive soldiers' allotments at government expense, supplemented by grants from the Patriotic Fund, assistance was meagre and slow to materialize. In addition to all this, there was a general unease associated with the lack of a permanent arrangement. This issue was finally laid to rest at the January 26, 1917 meeting of the NPA when McGrath tabled a report by the board recommending the adoption of Canadian mortality pensions and regulations "with such modifications as may suit locally." Lloyd promised opposition support in the house, clearing the way for Morris to approve the report "from

<sup>58</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1; January 19; June 1, 1917; Evening Telegram, January 20, 1917; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 24-75.

<sup>59</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, September 21, December 13, 16, 1916; Daily Star, December 15, 1916; PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, September 7, 1916.

this date, just as if the bill had been passed in the Legislature.<sup>60</sup> Thus mortality pensions were fixed at \$32 per month for widows plus an additional \$6.66 for each child; in the case of unmarried servicemen, dependent fathers or mothers received \$24. The national government put the bill to the house in late July 1917 and forced it through the assembly in a single day.<sup>61</sup>

The board's January 1917 report also dealt with employment, re-education and retraining programs and continuous care for the sick and infirm. Acting on its recommendations, Davidson appointed an NPA employment committee the following month, consisting of the usual political representatives, the three superintendents of education and major Water Street and outport employers, under the direction of Justice J.M. Kent.<sup>62</sup> In fact, it amounted to little more than a registration bureau, maintaining files on those who were seeking employment and posting their names in the rooms of the Board of Trade.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, January 26, 1917.

<sup>61</sup> See Evening Telegram, July 25, 1917. The speech from the throne made no mention of pension legislation and there is no way of knowing whether the government intended to introduce it. Lloyd objected, and was informed by Morris that the matter was being dealt with by the Patriotic Association, "which is really our War Department." Lloyd responded: "Then, Sir, I say... that the Rt. Hon. Premier is derelict in his duty when he leaves a matter of this sort solely to any association or persons outside the House, because no matter who may compose that association, or who those persons may be, they are not responsible... to the people." PHA 1917, Lloyd, May 30, 1917, p. 18; Ibid.; Morris, May 30, 1917, p. 18. The significance of this comment, and several more like it, will become clear in Chapter IX.

<sup>62</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, February 27, 1917.

<sup>63</sup> Evening Telegram, May 1, July 19, 1917. See also Evening Herald, May 9, 1917.



Because a number of men who had never seen active service remained on staff at headquarters, there was concerted public pressure to have them removed. However, regimental officials were not always willing to see them replaced by veterans, arguing that in the "great majority of cases we find these returned men most unreliable and most inefficient in their duties." The standing committee backed them on this.<sup>64</sup> The public also demanded to have vacant public service positions filled by returned men, a demand that was supported by the NPA. The government consistently failed to comply with the request,<sup>65</sup> and the Telegram worried lest such a policy "bring up the vexed question of promotions and appointments over which there has been not a little heart burning."<sup>66</sup> Thus a large number of men remained unemployed, and it was not until the end of the war that officials began to deal seriously with the problem.<sup>67</sup> Civil re-establishment programs remained the responsibility of the pensions and disabilities board, although by July 1918 only thirty men had participated in any form of technical or educational training.<sup>68</sup> Part

<sup>64</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 3, Ayre to Davidson, undated; Ibid., file 2, March 30, 1917.

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, April 12, August 24, November 20, 1917; PANL, GN 2/14, box 11, Halfyard to Department Heads, March 4, 1918.

<sup>66</sup> Evening Telegram, September 21, 1917.

<sup>67</sup> See CO 194/296, Harris to Long, March 29, 1919; PANL, P8/B/9, file 6, Initial Report of the Civil Re-establishment Committee, no date; below, p. 295.

<sup>68</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 18e, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, July 10, 1918.

of the problem lay in the fact that returned men were slow to organize. Although a Returned Veterans and Rejected Volunteers Association was formed in the spring of 1918, it concentrated on the maintenance of the Regiment at the front.<sup>69</sup>

Davidson also drew up a series of specific proposals covering the care of sick and convalescing men. As a result, in February 1917 the pensions and disabilities board assumed responsibility for the Jensen Camp, established in 1916 by Jensen and Mrs. Browning for tubercular servicemen.<sup>70</sup> Davidson also proposed the establishment of a convalescent hospital, and Sir E.R. Bowring offered to provide a suitable building. Davidson appointed a joint NPA/WPA committee of control and it launched a series of fund drives.<sup>71</sup> Both institutions received supplementary funding from the government. Because many were reluctant to enter either establishment, the pensions and disabilities board decided to reduce by one-third the pension benefits of anyone who refused treatment.<sup>72</sup>

However, these facilities were slow to get started, and even then there were charges that men were receiving inadequate care.

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<sup>69</sup> Evening Telegram, April 13, 1918; below, pp. 314-20, *passim*.

<sup>70</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, March, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 368; PANL, P8/B/9, file 18c, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, July 10, 1918. This facility was the first of its kind.

<sup>71</sup> JHA 1917, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, March, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, p. 369.

<sup>72</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, June 1, 1917.

Medical services had been, in fact, a controversial topic for some time. In December 1915 the reserve force committee had appointed a part-time medical officer to replace volunteers.<sup>73</sup> But McGrath thought this arrangement was unduly expensive — lucrative to the doctor<sup>74</sup> — and he eventually referred the matter to Davidson in May 1917. He pointed out that the chief medical officer, Dr. F.W. Burden, was fit and affluent, and suggested that he either enlist or resign his commission.<sup>75</sup> Davidson broached the matter with Burden, who refused to do either, and took his case to the press.<sup>76</sup> The standing committee initiated yet another internal investigation,<sup>77</sup> while McGrath exerted influence by launching in the Herald a vigorous assault on both the standing committee and medical profession.<sup>78</sup> This was followed by a series of highly publicized incidents involving the care of specific individuals, which led MHAs to demand a second inquiry and to suggest that the government should be responsible for such matters to the house.<sup>79</sup> The standing committee

<sup>73</sup> For further details, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, Davidson to Outerbridge, December 10, 1915; Ibid., file 5, December 31, 1915; Ibid., file 1, February 4, 1916.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., file 8, McGrath to Burke, May 19, 1916; Ibid., Statement of medical accounts, May 19 to August 19, 1916; Ibid., file 2, October 19, 1916.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., file 8, McGrath to Davidson, May 3, 1917.

<sup>76</sup> See Evening Telegram, May 21, 1917.

<sup>77</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2, May 11, 26, 1917; Ibid., Warren and Macpherson to Clift, May 26, 1917.

<sup>78</sup> Evening Herald, May 18-25, 1917, passim.

<sup>79</sup> See, for example, Ibid., June 23, 28-29, 1917; Daily Star, July 19, 1917; PHA 1917, Coaker, June 28, 1917, p. 410; Ibid., E.P.

subsequently recorded "an absolute lack of defined authority and responsibility" in medical services, and recommended a complete re-organization of the system.<sup>80</sup>

The controversy surrounding medical services and care reflected two basic problems: the inability of voluntary personnel to cope with the situation, and the difficulty of involving civilians in military matters. The latter problem was especially vexing in view of the standing committee's willingness to employ civilians in a variety of regimental capacities. These people generally received honorary commissions and handsome pay, giving rise to a great deal of adverse publicity.<sup>81</sup> Both problems had the effect of undermining public confidence in the war effort, but neither was as damaging as the wide discrepancy between the treatment of officers and men in the ranks at headquarters. Once again Gibbs raised the matter in the legislative council,<sup>82</sup> and McGrath pursued it.

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Morris, June 28, 1917, pp. 410-11; Ibid., Parsons, July 20, 1917, pp. 478-79; Ibid., Bennett, July 20, 1917, pp. 479-80; PLC 1917, McGrath, July 5, 1917, pp. 80-81.

<sup>80</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 2c, Sub-committee re: Medical Organization of Regiment, Report of the Sub-committee looking into Medical Re-organization, June 29, 1917.

<sup>81</sup> See, for example, PLC 1918, McGrath, May 1, 1918, p. 72. The reason for awarding honorary commissions was to lend "due military authority" to the services performed. See Evening Telegram, May 21, 1917. Examples are contained throughout the files of the reserve force and standing committees, and objections are scattered throughout the press.

<sup>82</sup> PLC 1917, Gibbs, July 2, 1917, pp. 46-47.

McGrath claimed that over 300 privates and non-commissioned officers had been discharged from the Regiment and forced to fend for themselves, as compared to only a half dozen commissioned officers who returned to their civilian positions. The remaining officers, of whom there were a large number, mainly because their families had exerted pressure to have them brought home,<sup>83</sup> had either been awarded staff positions or granted extended sick leave with full pay. Because a second lieutenant received pay and allowances which totalled \$4.60 per day or over \$1600 per annum and commanded a great deal of prestige, either — staff position or sick leave — was considered a very attractive prospect. McGrath maintained that several discharged men had actually sought to have themselves reinstated, "arguing that to wear an officer's uniform, draw \$140 a month, and remain in St. John's ... is a consummation very much to be desired." Moreover, many who were enjoying sick leave appeared eminently fit for overseas service, since "several who claimed that they were unequal to the task of doing light duty at the barracks, were able to play hockey night after night and attend every dance and tea fight that took place from one end of the town to the other," until Davidson was forced to prohibit them from taking part in such activities. Because headquarters was already overstaffed, McGrath urged that unfit men be discharged, and the remainder sent back to Ayr.

In order to illustrate his point, McGrath drew the names of six individuals from the files, three commissioned officers and three men

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<sup>83</sup> This possibility had been raised first in the fall of 1916. See Evening Telegram, November 25, 1916.

from the ranks, who suffered from similar disabilities. The three enlisted men had been discharged with pensions of \$8 per month for a period of three months, at the end of which time their pensions were subject to renewal, while two of the officers had been retained on staff and the third granted a series of extended sick furloughs. Further examination revealed that the standing committee had overridden the pension and disability board's recommendation that the three officers be discharged.

Officers ... have been held here for indefinite periods until their presence became a scandal in every place where our soldier lads congregate and prejudiced recruiting to an extent few can realize, besides causing intense indignation among the families of those not possessed of the influence to secure even a week's leave for boys who have been at the front since the early days of the war.... When the war is over and the survivors come back ... (and) sit down and seriously consider the difference in the treatment which they have got, and which officers have got who had social influence there will be harvested a crop of bitterness that will reflect itself harmfully for many a long day in the relations of the different elements making up this country.<sup>84</sup>

No government board or agency could have withstood such an onslaught.

The difficulties of involving civilians in predominantly military matters were highlighted further by the matter of home defence, a cause of considerable friction between the NPA and the government for most of the war. The basic questions were whether and how St. John's

<sup>84</sup> PLC 1917; McGrath, July 3-16, 1917, pp. 76-124, *passim*. See in particular pp. 76-77, 118. Upon questioning the following year, Bennett refused to specify the number of persons employed at headquarters. See PHA 1918, Currie, May 8, 1918, p. 142; *Ibid.*, Bennett, May 8, 1918, p. 142.

in particular and Newfoundland in general should be defended. The subsidiary matter of restrictions on aliens remained uncontroversial.<sup>85</sup> From the outset, the NPA showed itself to be keen on defending St. John's and less interested in coastal defence. The government, on the other hand, was unenthusiastic about the former, but recognized the need for the latter. Partly from a fear of the consequences of St. John's losing its unfortified status under international law, partly from fear of expense and partly because Coaker objected, Morris refused in 1915 to allow the NPA to raise and equip a local defence force.<sup>86</sup> However, under pressure from the Admiralty he did reach an agreement

<sup>85</sup> A handful of men were interned at the St. John's penitentiary and Harbour Grace jail until a detention camp was erected at Donovan's under the direction of the reserve force committee. It opened in September 1915 with twenty-two inmates, although most, if not all, were subsequently transferred to Great Britain. Moravian missionaries in Labrador and Norwegian shipbuilding interests in Harbour Grace presented the only other major problems. For further details, see PANL, GN 1/3/A, box "Newfoundland Patrol, July-August 1915," *passim*; PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, July 29, September 16, 1915; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 208, Davidson to Bonar Law, December 5, 1916; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, June 15, 1917; *Ibid.*, 1918, file 9; Evening Telegram, June 5, 1917, May 14, September 10, 12, 1918.

<sup>86</sup> For further details, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, September 11, 28, 1914; Mail and Advocate, September 12, 1914; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 180, Davidson to Harcourt, October 31, 1914; PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Davidson to Morris, December 18, 1914; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, August 7, 1915 containing a letter from Morris; PANL, GN 1/3/A, box "Newfoundland Patrol, 1915," Morris to Davidson, September 2, 1915 and *passim*; Evening Telegram, February 22, 1915; PANL, P8/B/9, file 5, July 29, August 7, 9, 16, 1915. Davidson advocated a vigorous defence policy (rather than having to "submit to such exactions as the commander of a hostile cruiser might impose") and had already devised a plan in the event of an attack on St. John's. It included the sinking of local vessels at the mouth of the harbour, the threat of armed retaliation by the population and an offer to accept surrender "before the advent of a superior force." See CO 616/1, Davidson to Harcourt, August 8, 1914.

with the Canadian government whereby the latter would patrol the Gulf, including the island's west coast, while Newfoundland would patrol the east coast from Cape Race to Cape Chidley. For this purpose, the executive council formed a home defence committee which referred all matters of policy to the prime minister and governor.<sup>87</sup> The committee organized three patrol vessels under the overall command of Lt.-Commander A. MacDermott, supplemented by temporarily commissioned NPA members commanding soldiers stationed at key land points. They had many difficulties and found no Germans.<sup>88</sup>

The NPA's demand for the defence of St. John's revived early in 1916 after the burning of the Canadian parliament buildings,<sup>89</sup> and the government finally installed guns overlooking the narrows. They were manned by Frontiersmen under MacDermott's command.<sup>90</sup> Davidson conceded privately that the guns could serve no useful purpose, but that "Ministers must make some sort of show."<sup>91</sup> The 1916 coastal

<sup>87</sup> For further details, see PANL, GN 1/3/A, box "Newfoundland Patrol, 1915," passim. The reserve force committee administered several minor aspects.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., Davidson to Bonar Law, August 14, September 16, 1915 and passim; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, February 8, 1916; PANL, GN 1/2/0, Governor's Office, Despatches from the Colonial Office, Sect., Bonar Law to Davidson, April 14, 1916 and enclosed Admiralty memorandum, April 8, 1916; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 23, 1917.

<sup>89</sup> Evening Telegram, February 7, 1916.

<sup>90</sup> PANL, P8/E/9, file 19a, undated memorandum, author uncertain.

<sup>91</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, January 25, 1917.



patrols were coordinated with the Canadians under a central command based in Sydney, but otherwise differed little from those of the previous year.<sup>92</sup> Though Davidson was satisfied that the coast was secure,<sup>93</sup> the Admiralty disagreed and recommended that the number of patrol vessels be dramatically increased the following year.<sup>94</sup> Further, the sinking of the local Red Cross liner Stephano near Nantucket on its regular St. John's-to-New York run in October 1916 struck perilously close to home.<sup>95</sup> The government, through the home defence committee, imposed blackout regulations during the winter, and closed the harbour to shipping at night.<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, although the shortage of suitable patrol vessels was becoming a serious problem, the government a short time later approved the sale of the two largest and fastest vessels remaining on the local coastal service, the Bowring-owned Prospero and Portia. The Admiralty countermanded this action, and the government reluctantly agreed to new proposals for an expanded joint Canadian-Newfoundland patrol.<sup>97</sup> It faced determined opposition from the St. John's-oriented NPA.

<sup>92</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, February 8, 1916; PANL, GN 1/2/0, Conf., Bonar Law to Davidson, March 8, 1916.

<sup>93</sup> CO 537/1166, Davidson to Bonar Law, September 19, 1916.

<sup>94</sup> PANL, GN 1/2/0, Bonar Law to Davidson, November 14, 1916 containing a letter from the Admiralty dated November 7, 1916.

<sup>95</sup> Evening Telegram, October 9, 1916.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., October 11, 1916.

<sup>97</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, November 13, 1916; Ibid., Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, January 12, 1917; PANL, GN 9/1, January 12, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, January 25, 1917. The tonnage situation is discussed further below, Chapter VIII.

Differences over home defence policy came to a head at the Association's meeting on January 19, 1917. Forces were aligned in two camps: those who favoured an expanded joint coastal patrol, led by Davidson and Admiralty intelligence officer Captain C.H.F. Abraham; and those led by MacDermott who advocated an end to the patrols and a vigorous defence policy for St. John's. The MacDermott party commanded a decided majority.<sup>98</sup> How far members were influenced by the fact that the Admiralty, invoking the overriding needs of the patrol service, had denied them the right to sell off privately-owned vessels remains unclear.

Davidson and MacDermott, in fact, had been in conflict for some time, and in the fall of 1916 the governor had asked the Admiralty to remove the Lt.-commander.<sup>99</sup> Davidson claimed that he was acting on behalf of his ministers and suggested that MacDermott had failed to provide the necessary leadership with respect to recruitment for the Naval Reserve. However, MacDermott had support from the executive council's home defence committee, which forwarded a resolution on his behalf to British officials. Davidson argued that because

<sup>98</sup> PANL, PS/B/9, file 1, January 19, 1917; Evening Telegram, January 20, 1917.

<sup>99</sup> Details of the following, including the pertinent correspondence, can be located in PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1918, file 563. MacDermott disliked Davidson intensely. Among other things, he believed that Davidson was antipathetic to the local Irish population (though himself a northern Irishman), which raises the interesting possibility that the governor may have exercised a greater say in regimental appointments than other evidence would indicate. See Anthony MacDermott, "Some Irish Families and their Influence in Newfoundland," in Book of Newfoundland, Vol. VI, Smallwood, ed., p. 200.

MacDermott had recently married into an "influential St. John's family" and because the situation afforded "an opportunity of administering a rebuff to the governor," the committee's resolution should be disregarded. He also accused MacDermott of having become involved in "local politics," and of deliberately inflaming the home defence issue. The Admiralty declined to remove MacDermott, but authorized a further report on his conduct in three months time. Harris, who succeeded as governor in December 1917, found MacDermott's services satisfactory and managed to "lose" Davidson's report, suggesting that differences were due to "a want of sympathy and understanding" on the part of Davidson, "fermented by little jealousies arising from MacDermott's naval position." While these differences may appear insignificant in the long run, they were symptomatic of much that had been going on, and undoubtedly contributed to Davidson's feeling that he was nearing the end of his influence, and to the Colonial Office's decision not to extend his stay.<sup>100</sup>

Notwithstanding the many rebuffs, the NPA continued to demand that it be given responsibility for St. John's defence,<sup>101</sup> and to devise elaborate defensive precautions, including a plan for the erection of a boom at the mouth of the harbour. Morris and Davidson repeatedly assured the Association that the government had matters well in hand. Their assurances led Davidson to hope that "people now

<sup>100</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, September 18, 1917; below, pp. 284-85.

<sup>101</sup> See, for example, PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, January 19, 26, February 27, 1917 and attached memorandum.

understand that the war will be decided at St. Quentin and not off the Narrows,"<sup>102</sup> although in a further attempt to allay public anxiety one of six local vessels assigned to the coastal patrol was permanently stationed in St. John's.<sup>103</sup> After the summer of 1917 the government virtually abandoned its commitment to coastal defence, relying on Canadian and American high seas patrols to protect the Newfoundland coast. Members of the national government agreed that defence expenditures during the summer of 1917 had been "wasted." They also refused an Admiralty request that fishing vessels on the Grand Banks be protected.<sup>104</sup> Ironically, the submarine menace in 1918 was worse than ever, and the sinking of fishing vessels on and near the Grand Banks led to a renewed demand for the defence of St. John's.<sup>105</sup> The government capitulated: Civil defence measures were drawn up, and an impressive

<sup>102</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private; Davidson to Morris, March 19, 1917. Davidson described the boom as "beyond our means and capacity." See also Ibid., Davidson to Long, April 7, 1917 for another revealing glimpse of Davidson's character.

<sup>103</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1918, file 81A, undated memorandum by Harris.

<sup>104</sup> For further details, see Ibid., file 81, Memorandum by Harris, March, 1918; PANL, GN 9/1, April 2, 1918; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 81, Halfyard to Harris, May 15, 1918; JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, May 2, 1919 in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 524-25. The charter of six vessels alone had cost \$1650 per day in 1917, of which it was reported that the Newfoundland Produce Company owned by the Hon. John Crosbie received a total of \$92,000, the Reid Newfoundland Company \$92,000, the Hon. D.R. Ryan \$38,000 and Tasker Cook \$31,000. Coaker had been a vigorous opponent of defence expenditures throughout. See PHA 1917, Coaker, June 20, 1917, p. 263; Evening Telegram, May 23, 1918.

<sup>105</sup> Evening Telegram, June 5-August 21, 1918, passim.

volunteer force of 200 youths enrolled to strike fear into invaders' hearts.<sup>106</sup> Like the harbour guns, this gratified St. John's and was not designed to serve a useful purpose.

Undoubtedly the Regiment conferred mixed blessings on St. John's,<sup>107</sup> and yet except for occasional references to drunkenness,<sup>108</sup> relations between the civilian population and the Regiment were exceptionally good. The St. John's upper- and middle-classes enthusiastically engaged in a wide range of fund raising and charitable activity on its behalf, thereby fulfilling their social and moral obligations while relieving much of the government's burden. Unfortunately, this also led to a considerable amount of friction, and

<sup>106</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, May 2, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 524-25. Regulations are contained in Evening Telegram, August 3, 1918.

<sup>107</sup> A series of outbreaks of infectious diseases was perhaps the most outstanding example of its negative impact. For further information, see PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 84, Davidson to Long, July 16, 1917; Evening Telegram, July 26, 1917; JHA 1919, Report of the Standing Medical Officer, April 26, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 559-61. The inflationary effect of the Regiment was another.

<sup>108</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, May 31, June 14, 20, 1916, April 24, November 24, 1917 and passim. Although prohibition had been enacted in 1916, it was only partially effective. Prohibition also removed many of the objections to daylight saving time, which was enacted in 1917. For further details, see PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part;" Evening Telegram, September 25, November 26, 1915, January 23, June 6, 11, 1917; PHA 1917, Coaker, June 6, 1917, p. 61; CO 194/298, Harris to Milner, March 30, 1920.

requirements were beyond the capacity of voluntary personnel. The difficulties of civilian control were further highlighted by the open-handedness with which the standing committee dispensed honorary commissions, by the retention of officers on the roles of the Regiment and in the matter of home defence. Home defence was one of the few areas where the government accepted responsibility, although the NPA continued to demand that it be given a say. Given the willingness with which the business and professional community discharged its responsibilities, the government was able to defer its obligations. This was particularly so in the case of pensions, separation allowances, medical care and civil re-establishment programs. However, it was not the case in the matter of tonnage and supply.

CHAPTER VIII  
THE ST. JOHN'S ÉLITE CASHES IN:  
TONNAGE AND SUPPLY

By the spring of 1917 the St. John's élite's handling of the war effort had been discredited on several fronts, and none was more revealing than its failure to live up to the moral and practical demands of wartime trade. The jugular vein of the Newfoundland economy was tonnage. Saltfish was transported to Europe and Caribbean markets, often by way of trans-shipment through Liverpool and New York; pulp and paper went to Great Britain; and iron ore to Nova Scotia, the United States and Germany. Incoming carriers brought basic foodstuffs from Canada and the United States, molasses from the British West Indies, coal from North Sydney, salt from Spain, and from the United Kingdom, dry goods and confectionaries.<sup>1</sup> The colony also imported raw materials and machinery used for local manufacturing purposes. A total of twelve coastal and bay vessels provided the chief, and often only link, with communities along the coast. During much of the nineteenth century this trade had been carried out by locally owned schooners, although the advent of steam in mid-century had caused a gradual decline in the

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<sup>1</sup>Unless otherwise indicated, the following information derives from PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.2, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 14, 1916; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 12, 1916; PANL, GN 2/14, box 5, file 7, Davidson to Long, February 21, 1917; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 19, Davidson to Long, March 3, 1917; *Ibid.*, no. 112, Davidson to Long, August 15, 1917; *Ibid.*, Sec., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part." It was estimated that only one-third of total food requirements could be brought in by rail.

sailing fleet. On the east coast, sailing vessels had come to be replaced by regular steamship connections between St. John's and the United Kingdom, New York, Montreal and Halifax, supplemented by the Reid Newfoundland system running from North Sydney to St. John's, and by a fleet of St. John's-owned sealing steamers. Shortly after the turn of the twentieth century the smaller wooden steamers, which were generally too small and slow for ocean freight, had been replaced by a fleet of large steel steamers owned by a consortium of Water Street interests. By 1914 they had come to monopolize both the export and coastal trades, and were being used for general purposes ten months of the year. Although local merchants along the south and west coasts continued to employ banking schooners, sailing vessels were quickly becoming a thing of the past.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, in 1915 Water Street merchants began selling off local tonnage. This short-sighted, greedy and potentially suicidal policy seriously threatened both the incoming and outgoing trades. In all facets of commerce Water Street revealed a growing tendency towards cooperation and combination, along with an increasing reliance on government. Because many of the principals involved were important NFA members, the discreditable performance of Water Street in economic matters contributed to the downfall of the NFA.

At the beginning of the war Newfoundland businessmen seemed well aware that their interests would be best served by a

<sup>2</sup> PHA 1916, Currie, March 16, 1916, p. 15; Evening Telegram, June 9, 1917; above, pp. 12, 14. The Atlantic Canada Shipping Project, sponsored by the Maritime History Group of Memorial University, has done extensive work on the local mercantile fleet, the trades it served and the regional and international contexts within which it operated up to 1913. Findings to date are compiled in five volumes of papers from the Project's annual workshops.



continuance of normal trading patterns and practices. But although 'business as usual' was the universal catchphrase, they drastically cut their level of imports from fear of the dislocating effects of war and because of rumours of confederation.<sup>3</sup> By mid-1915, however, trade in most commodities had resumed its normal level.<sup>4</sup>

Even so, by the spring of 1915 most facets of trade were beginning to feel the pinch of tonnage diversions. Of the four major British and North American steamship companies which serviced the colony in 1914,<sup>5</sup> only one, the Furness Withy Company, remained, but with only three of its original six vessels.<sup>6</sup> Its space was soon controlled by Canadian transport officials and Newfoundland freight suffered accordingly.<sup>7</sup> Production at Grand Falls was seriously threatened from the spring of 1915 onwards, and Rotheimere repeatedly pressed Morris to intervene with the Admiralty, urging that otherwise the mill would close.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> CO 194/289, Davidson to Harcourt, March 21, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> CO 194/290, Davidson to Bonar Law, November 15, 1915.

<sup>5</sup> See McGrath, Newfoundland in 1911, pp. 268-71.

<sup>6</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Bonar Law, May 29, 1915; Daily News, January 26, 1916; Evening Telegram, February 18, 1916.

<sup>7</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21d, Montgomerie to Bennett, March 23, 1917.

<sup>8</sup> Correspondence relative to Grand Falls can be located in both PANL, GN 8/1, file 50 and file 61.2. See also PANL, GN 2/14, box 5, file 7, Davidson to Bonar Law, February 8, 1916; above, pp. 127-28. Referring to British import controls in the fall of 1916, Morris complained that Newfoundland had been treated on a par with Sweden, revealing the characteristic British disregard for the colony "in spite of our sacrifices at war." PANL, GN 8/1, file 50, Morris to Davidson, October 24, 1916. By the summer of 1918 over \$4,000,000 in newsprint was stockpiled, and only one of five machines remained in operation. Evening Telegram, June 6, 13, 1918.

Iron ore companies on Bell Island were similarly affected.<sup>9</sup> The cost of transporting saltfish to Mediterranean markets had risen from \$1.80 per four-quintal cask in 1913 to \$9 by the beginning of 1916, and passage was increasingly difficult to obtain.<sup>10</sup>

Despite these setbacks and the resulting dependence on local resources, Water Street shipowners began to sell off local steel vessels. The first to go were the Reid vessels, Lintrose and Bruce, which had been running between Port aux Basques and North Sydney. Only one member of the government objected that they were under public contract, and he was informed they would be replaced.<sup>11</sup> In fact, no suitable replacement was ever secured, and the result was a serious congestion of incoming freight at North Sydney and Halifax.<sup>12</sup> Next were the Adventure, Bellaventure and Bonaventure owned by a consortium of Water Street interests dominated by A. Harvey and.

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<sup>9</sup> See PANL, GN 8/1, file 6.6, passim. Nonetheless, the needs of the Canadian munitions industry overcame these difficulties and by May 1917 over 2200 men were employed in the mines and additional labour was being sought. Evening Telegram, May 3; June 15, 1917.

<sup>10</sup> Evening Telegram, February 18, 1916. See also PLC 1916, Goodridge, March 16, 1916; p. 7.

<sup>11</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 5, file 7, Ficcott to Bennett, July 5, 1915; Ibid., Bennett to Ficcott, July 8, 1915. Apparently, the sales had been negotiated without the government's approval, placing the administration in "a most anomalous and undignified position." Ibid., Bennett to Reid, July 10, 1915.

<sup>12</sup> Eventually two much smaller vessels were removed from the coastal and bay service, which suffered correspondingly. There was no adjustment in the government subsidy.

Company. Most shareholders were influential NPA members.<sup>13</sup> These vessels were followed by the Nascopie and Beothic, owned principally by Job Brothers. All but the Nascopie had been sold to the Russian government which was attempting to keep supply lines open in the White Sea, and were viewed by those involved in their sale as an important contribution to the Allied war effort.<sup>14</sup> They also yielded their owners a substantial profit.<sup>15</sup> By the end of 1915 only two vessels remained of the original steel fleet, the Florizel and Stephano, owned by the Red Cross Steamship Company which was controlled by Bowring Brothers, and they continued to ply the St. John's-Halifax-New York route.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Among those present at the final shareholder's meeting of the Venture Steamship Company in December 1915 were the following:

A.J. Harvey	David Baird
The Hon. M.C. Winter	W.J. Ellis
The Hon. George Knowling	Norman Outerbridge
The Hon. James Angel	Herbert Outerbridge
G.W.B. Ayre	C.M. Harvey

Evening Telegram, December 7, 1915. The Hons. R.K. Bishop, John Harris and John Harvey were also shareholders. See Ibid., January 18, 1916. See below, Appendix F for NPA connections.

<sup>14</sup> Daily News, December 21, 1916; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part." The Nascopie was chartered to the Russian government and later sold to the Hudson's Bay Company. An eighth vessel, the Iceland, was sold before it came off the dry dock in Scotland.

<sup>15</sup> See Evening Telegram, December 4, 7, 11, 1915; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 11, 1916.

<sup>16</sup> CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 12, 1916. See also PANL, GN 2/14, box 5, file 7, Davidson to Bonar Law, February 21, 1917.

Just as these events were taking place the government began buying and distributing coal in St. John's. This was to have a significant effect on a number of subsequent events. Part of a recognition of the need for wider state control in many aspects of national life, it was also a direct result of the failure of merchants to assure adequate supplies of necessities at an equitable price. Up to the end of 1915 it had generally been conceded that high costs and scarcities reflected wartime conditions. But at the beginning of 1916 irrefutable evidence came to light which indicated the existence of monopolistic rings. The coal issue proved beyond question that major Water Street merchants were using their control over the importing, wholesale and retail trades to exact the highest possible margin of profit.

Rumours of impending coal shortages and price increases abounded in December 1915. The general manager of the Dominion Iron and Steel Company at Bell Island informed Morris that production for non-military purposes at the company's mines in North Sydney had been drastically curtailed, but that if the Newfoundland government could secure the required vessels, the company would attempt to assure necessary supplies. He also pointed out that tonnage would not have been a problem had the government prohibited the sale of the steel sealing fleet, but "no doubt you considered the fact they were for war purposes."<sup>17</sup> Morris in turn canvassed local coal dealers,<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5, MacDougall to Morris, December 13, 20, 1915; Five of the steel vessels had previously been used for coal transport.

<sup>18</sup> The following information derives mainly from PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5; Evening Telegram, December 7, 1915-June 24, 1916.

but was informed that owners of small wooden sealing steamers proposed to increase freight rates on hard coal from \$1.80 to \$4 per ton.<sup>19</sup> A.J. Harvey, one of the major coal importers and a principal of the Venture Steamship Company, informed Morris that he was in a position to retail coal for \$13 per ton, up from the existing price of \$8; but since he ran the risk of cheaper coal being brought in later, he was unwilling to conclude the contract unless the government guaranteed him against loss. He reminded the prime minister that existing stores were sufficient for only twenty days.<sup>20</sup>

Morris then concluded an agreement with the AND Company for the importation of 6000 tons in the government's name, at a rate of \$3.10 per ton. According to Rothermere, dealers could sell it for \$7.50 and still show a profit.<sup>21</sup> Importers protested that their private cargoes would have to sell for a much higher price, and that

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passim. Unless otherwise specified, coal here refers to hard coal. The situation in the outports was far less serious, since wood was generally used for fuel and with the exception of one or two communities in Conception Bay, merchants had already laid in sufficient coal supplies for the winter. On the Burin Peninsula coal was imported direct from North Sydney by schooner, and sold cheaper than in St. John's. See CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 11, 1916; PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5, J.B. Coates, Brigus, to Morris, January 3, 1916; Evening Telegram, May 14, 1917.

<sup>19</sup> Evening Telegram, December 11, 1915.

<sup>20</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5, Harvey to Morris, December 30, 1915.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Rothermere to Morris, January 3, 1916.

they would be unable to market them until the government coal had been sold.<sup>22</sup> To compensate themselves, most major dealers, led by Harvey, raised the price on existing stocks from \$8 to \$10.50 per ton. Harvey conceded that the major reason for the increase in price was the shortage of tonnage arising from the sale of the Venture vessels, but argued that they had been sold because recent sealing regulations had rendered them unprofitable. He then pointed out that importers were not in the business for philanthropic reasons and were following the laws of supply and demand. However, Davidson discounted arguments that tonnage was scarce and blamed shortages on importers' fears that they would face subsequent losses in a falling market.<sup>23</sup> Inevitably, this led the public to demand that the government commandeer all stocks in the town and ensure future supplies.<sup>24</sup> Reluctant to be forced into this position, the government proposed that if merchants restored the price on existing stocks to its former level, the government would replace these stocks ton for ton with incoming government coal, which pooled with more expensive private cargoes could then be sold for approximately \$10 per ton. The government also promised to help dealers obtain future consignments at

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., A.H. Murray to Morris, January 11, 1916; Ibid., Outline of Scheme for Adjusting Prices of Coal till April 15, 1916, dated January 5, 1916.

<sup>23</sup> Evening Telegram, January 8, 1917; CO 194/291; Davidson to Bonar Law, January 11, 1916; Ibid., Davidson to Bonar Law, May 17, 1916.

<sup>24</sup> Evening Telegram, January 3-4, 1916.

the lowest possible price.<sup>25</sup> The importers rejected this proposal out of hand.<sup>26</sup> A minute of council passed on January 10, 1916 authorized the government to fix coal prices and to commandeer the stocks of any dealer who refused to fall in line. The government also took possession of existing soft coal stocks and assumed responsibility for commercial and industrial contracts. To prevent hardship, the government established a citizens' committee to oversee the sale and distribution of specified amounts of hard coal to individual householders.<sup>27</sup> Although Davidson conceded that coal merchants had conducted themselves in a most reprehensible manner, he was clearly disquieted by the new trend, which was "bristling" with trouble.<sup>28</sup>

This most certainly proved to be the case, for rather than distributing new stocks to all dealers, the government singled out four, including two Harvey-owned companies, creating what in fact was a government-sponsored monopoly. Rival dealers claimed that they could still import and retail coal for less than the government's price,

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<sup>25</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5, Outline of Scheme for Adjusting Prices of Coal till April 15, 1916. It is instructive to note that old stocks which sold for \$8. per ton had been imported at from \$1.75 to \$1.80, while it was estimated that government stocks imported at \$3.10 per ton could be sold for between \$7.50 and \$8.50 and still show a profit. See also CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 11, 1916.

<sup>26</sup> Evening Telegram, January 8, 1916; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 18, 1916.

<sup>27</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, January 10, 1916.

<sup>28</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.9, Davidson to Morris, April 8, 1916; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 11, 1916.

so that in suppressing legitimate competition the government had raised rather than lowered the price.<sup>29</sup> However, an act of indemnity was passed by the house acquitting the government of any past or future liability.<sup>30</sup> The Admiralty offered to release a collier for the purpose of importing coal, but merchants rejected this as being too expensive and chose to rely on their own wooden steamers.<sup>31</sup> Although a great many questions continued to surround these transactions,<sup>32</sup> Davidson believed that the experience had awakened importers to a sense of their responsibility.<sup>33</sup> This was confirmed for him by the subsequent action of salt dealers.

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<sup>29</sup>PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5, Memorandum of Agreement between [government engineer] T.A. Hall and representatives of Harvey and Company, Stabb, Morey and United Coal, February 7, 1916; Ibid., Murray to Morris, February 15, 17, 1916; Ibid., Morris to Murray, February 17, 1916; Evening Telegram, February 18, 26, 1916. A.H. Murray spoke on behalf of smaller dealers who were independent of Harveys and who had refused to fall in line with the decision to raise the price on old stocks. Murray continued to sell coal at \$8 per ton until his stocks were exhausted. Evening Telegram, May 16, 1916. J.C. Crosbie, People's Party representative for Bay de Verde, was also a major coal importer but his position remains unclear.

<sup>30</sup>CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 17, 1916.

<sup>31</sup>PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.9, Davidson to Morris, April 8, 1916; Evening Telegram, April 14, 1916; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 17, 1916.

<sup>32</sup>See, for example, Evening Telegram, March 11, June 24, 1916; PHA 1916, Lloyd, March 21, 1916, p. 41; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 12, 1916; PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.5, Memorandum on three government coal cargoes, undated.

<sup>33</sup>CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 17, 1916. Between January and August 1916, double the amount of coal was imported as during the same period in 1915. Evening Telegram, April 14, August 12, 1916.



Salt, like coal, was also in short supply in 1915 and it was reported that fish all around the island was spoiling. Moved by the example of coal merchants, major salt importers, which included R.B. Job, W.B. Grieve and W.A. Munn, three influential NPA members,<sup>34</sup> approached the government in January 1916 stating that they feared even larger shortages during the coming season. They proposed, therefore, to import jointly well in advance of existing requirements, but only on condition that the government agree to confiscate any stocks brought in later at a lesser price, and the Admiralty agreed not to requisition their vessels. In return they would agree not to increase their existing profit margin.<sup>35</sup>

Both Morris and Davidson welcomed their initiative. Davidson believed that the makeup of the delegation alone was an adequate guarantee of its competitive "good faith."<sup>36</sup> The Telegram conceded that the ordinary competition system had broken down, and that the only way out was through cooperation.<sup>37</sup> The tonnage committee<sup>38</sup> assumed direct

<sup>34</sup> See below, Appendix F.

<sup>35</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, January 28, 1916. Harvey and Co. was also involved in the trade.

<sup>36</sup> CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 31, 1916 and attached minute.

<sup>37</sup> Evening Telegram, January 25, 1916.

<sup>38</sup> See below, pp. 247, 250.

responsibility for concluding the necessary charters, and the Admiralty agreed to release two AND Company vessels, the Alconda and Cranley for exclusive use in the paper and salt trades.<sup>39</sup> This arrangement worked satisfactorily for the remainder of 1916, and the government entered into a similar agreement with the salt importers for 1917.<sup>40</sup>

However, by the beginning of 1917 the Admiralty had withdrawn the Alconda, and the Cranley had to return from Britain with general cargo.<sup>41</sup> Fish merchants reluctantly agreed to have sailing vessels return from Mediterranean markets with salt rather than ballast. Referring to the fact that this option had been available all along, Davidson commented: "It is curious that the Board of Trade looks as hopelessly to the government for help in difficulties as if the Colony had not a constitution and was still a Crown Colony."<sup>42</sup>

The government also arranged for the importation of a single large consignment of salt, which it then passed over to Jobs.

<sup>39</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.2, Davidson to Bonar Law, January 6, 1916; Ibid., Davidson to Bonar Law, March 11, 1916; Evening Telegram, March 11, 20, 24, 1916. The government was the contracting party.

<sup>40</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, December 19, 1916.

<sup>41</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.2, Rothermere to Morris, January 3, 1917; Ibid., Bonar Law to Davidson, January 23, 1917; PANL, GN 2/14, Davidson to Bonar Law, February 21, 1917; Evening Telegram, May 21, 1917. The Cranley was the only ocean-going steamer remaining in the Newfoundland trade besides the Furness Withy boats.

<sup>42</sup> Evening Telegram, March 13, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, March 19, 1917. It is unclear whether Davidson was referring to the Newfoundland government, the British government, or both. The Evening Telegram had repeatedly urged this move in the past.

Coaker questioned this transaction in the house, demanding to know the price and whether the cargo had been tendered to other firms; but he received no reply. In spite of all these efforts, shortages occurred during the 1917 fishing season and gave rise to charges that merchants were withholding supplies in order to inflate market values. Although the majority of these claims were never substantiated, Coaker maintained that salt dealers had reaped double their usual profits.<sup>43</sup>

In February 1916 the Board of Trade had established a tonnage sub-committee following the government's intervention in the coal trade and the departure of the last steel vessel. It was chaired by the Hon. John Harvey, who had been a shareholder in the now-defunct Venture Steamship Company, and included other influential NPA members. It soon reported that exporting saltfish to the Mediterranean and importing foodstuffs from Canada presented the most serious problems. Anxious to forestall suggestions that the government requisition smaller wooden sealing vessels for use on the Cabot Strait, the committee recommended the adoption of shipping and shipbuilding subsidies, a public insurance scheme and direct government charters. It invited the government to form a joint committee to consider these proposals, a committee which should also include opposition members to guard against "favouritism." Morris, who was present at the meeting, agreed, then lamented the recent depletion of the sailing fleet, which left the colony dependent

<sup>43</sup> PHA 1917, Coaker, May 31, June 6, 1917, pp. 45-46, 76; Ibid., Morris, June 6, 1917, p. 76; Evening Telegram, August 27, 1917. See also PANL, CN 9/1, July 24, 1917.

on "outsiders."<sup>44</sup> In the meantime, W.C. Job, a former owner of both the Nascopie and Beothic, was in New York negotiating for a charter in the government's name, and owners of local whaling vessels were negotiating their sale to the French government.<sup>45</sup>

The irony of the situation was not lost on other members of the community. A Telegram columnist pointed out that merchants had only themselves to blame, and demanded that the government take steps to bring them in line. It had several suggestions, including the establishment of a local shipping registry, a charter licensing system, fixed freight rates and import restrictions, all of which had been instituted by the British government. It also recommended the introduction of an excess profits tax applicable to past and future sales, the proceeds of which could then be directed towards the hire of an additional steamer. It predicted that unless these or similar steps were taken, the remaining coastal vessels would also be sold.<sup>46</sup>

Members of the house also pointed to the folly of Water Street. Their attitude was summed up by Currie, government member from Burin and editor and part-owner of the Daily News:

The pity is ... [that the situation] was not foreseen by those gentlemen of the trade whose interests are most affected. In the hurry to get rich quick they were parties, most of them, to the sale of the

<sup>44</sup> Evening Telegram, February 18, 22, 1916.

<sup>45</sup> PANI, GN 8/1, file 61.5, Morris to W.C. Job, January 14, 1916 and passim; Evening Telegram, February 12, 1916.

<sup>46</sup> Evening Telegram, February 18, 25, 26, 1916. See also ibid., March 10, 1916.

splendid fleet of steel ships ... which if retained, would have solved all our difficulties. Patriotism is the reason I have heard advanced for their transfer ... but ... it was the kind of patriotism that paid. And now ... they are throwing the onus of providing tonnage accommodation on the Government. It was ever thus.... Why should they worry?<sup>47</sup>

Other members echoed this view and declared their intention of resisting tonnage subsidies.<sup>48</sup> Predictably, members of the legislative council adopted a different position. John Harvey stated again that the vessels had been rendered unprofitable by recent sealing regulations and that anyway none, except the Reid boats, were under contractual obligation.<sup>49</sup> Others stated they would welcome any form of government assistance in spite of the "dangerous" precedent, and rejoiced there would be no recourse to direct taxation.<sup>50</sup> Nonetheless, the legislature passed an amendment to the War Measures Act because the price of all incoming commodities "appeared" to have been artificially inflated as a result of shortages and increased insurance and freight charges. The amendment gave the government enlarged powers with respect to the pricing of coal and other foodstuffs.<sup>51</sup> However, no immediate steps were taken under the act.

<sup>47</sup> FLA 1916, Currie, March 16, 1916, p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., Kent, March 16, 1916, pp. 17-18; Ibid., Lloyd, March 21, 1916, pp. 40-41; Ibid., Coaker, March 21, 1916, p. 48.

<sup>49</sup> FLC 1916, Harvey, March 16, 1916, p. 14.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, Ibid., Murphy, March 16, 1916, p. 11; Ibid., Goodridge, March 16, 1916, p. 7.

<sup>51</sup> Newfoundland Acts 1916, War Measures (Amendment) Act, 6 Geo. V, cap. 4; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 12, 1916; Ibid., Davidson to Bonar Law, May 17, 1916. See also Newfoundland Acts 1916, Articles of Commerce Act, 6 Geo. V, cap. 5; FLC 1916, Harvey, March 30-April 6, 1916, pp. 28-36, passim.

On March 6, 1916 the government authorized the creation of a joint tonnage committee consisting of three members of the executive council and four members of the trade, including M.G. Winter and R.F. Horwood. Members at large included other important NPA members. The Liberal Party agreed to support any "reasonable" steps taken by the committee but declined to take direct part, although Coaker was added as a member of the Union Party.<sup>52</sup> Since it was felt that prime consideration should be given to getting goods in, the committee first considered the importation of foodstuffs from Canada, and a sub-committee arranged for Croëble's Stephano and Fogota to make two extra trips to North Sydney and Halifax. At the same time, merchants pressed their own wooden steamers back into service as general cargo carriers.<sup>53</sup> Although the Admiralty had offered to release two vessels to take up the slack, merchants claimed they were too costly,<sup>54</sup> and the Raids were given permission to raise their rates on flour.<sup>55</sup> Apparently, merchants now believed that prices would continue to rise rather than fall, and rather than risk further government interference imported in excess of their needs. By the fall it was generally conceded that the city was

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<sup>52</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, March 6, 1916; Evening Telegram, March 9, 1916.

<sup>53</sup> Evening Telegram, March 9-11, April 14, 1916; PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.2, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 14, 1916; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916. See also CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, May 21, 1917.

<sup>54</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, 61.9, Davidson to Morris, April 8, 1916.

<sup>55</sup> Evening Telegram, April 9, 1916.

well-stocked with most commodities.<sup>56</sup> Although prices were up, often to over double their pre-war level, they seem to have been largely offset by the increased value of fish, wage increases and relatively full employment.<sup>57</sup> The press announced shortages of food in Britain, and said not only that was the colony not suffering enough, but that it was not suffering at all.<sup>58</sup>

However, in time high prices and shortages produced mounting dissatisfaction, which emerged first in connection with rate increases on Bowring's Red Cross vessels, managed by J.S. Munn. Sizeable increases in May 1916 attracted relatively little attention, but a further increment in October (after the loss of the Stephano) gave rise to strenuous objections. An Evening Telegram columnist maintained that rates had risen from 100 to 300 per cent since the beginning of the war, and that although the government had approved the increases, they far exceeded the company's costs. It was said that this, in conjunction with rumours that the government was about to approve the sale of the Bowring-owned Prospero and Portia, under contract in the Coastal service, would turn men's minds to "revolutionary thoughts." For the first, but by no means the last time, the position of

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., August 12, 26, October 14, 1916.

<sup>57</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, April 30, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 23, 27, August 18, 1917.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, July 1, October 19, November 16, December 30, 1916.

profiteering Water Street merchants and public service contractors was contrasted with the "poor volunteer."<sup>59</sup>

The Telegram began to voice the growing demand for a commission of inquiry into the rising cost of living. It was now generally conceded that local merchants had contributed far more to high prices than had originally been suspected. An editorial referred to the "glaring omission" of excess profits legislation during the 1916 session.<sup>60</sup> Oblivious of these warnings, Bowring announced a third increase in the Florizel's rates in November 1916, and justified it mainly on grounds that the vessel could be chartered more advantageously elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> Days later, the home defence committee under pressure from the Admiralty denied Bowring's request to sell the whaling steamer Hawk, because the patrol service needed it.<sup>62</sup> Undeterred, company officials concluded arrangements to sell the Prospero and Fortia to French interests and the government subsequently approved the sale; however,

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., May 6, October 28, November 4, 1916. See also Ibid., September 2, 1916. The columnist in question, Theobald, had become an increasingly vocal spokesman of the working classes. His last column appeared on December 2, 1916.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., November 6, 1916. Contrast this with Ibid., October 19, 1916.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., November 11, 1916.

<sup>62</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 201, Davidson to Bonar Law, November 22, 1916. During the summer and fall the government had repeatedly sought to charter the Hawk as the only available steamer for the Labrador service, but Bowring and Munn refused because it was up for sale. Grimes argued that the vessel should be commandeered, reasoning that "There are some 100,000 quintals of fish exported from the Labrador, and ... some 10,000 persons who [fish there] ... and if these are not to be equal with the firm of Bowring Bros., then ... this country has come to a pretty pass." Piccott had also pressed the matter but concluded "This is what we are up against." PHA 1917, Grimes, June 20, 1917, pp. 274-75; Ibid., Piccott, June 19, 1917, pp. 253-54.



the secretary of state objected and the government withdrew its permission.<sup>63</sup> Several other vessel owners were similarly denied, some for the second time.<sup>64</sup>

By the beginning of 1917 freight was again badly congested at Halifax and New York, and seventy-six carloads awaited trans-shipment at North Sydney. Prophetically, the Telegram asked what would happen in the event of the loss of the Florizel.<sup>65</sup> Given mounting awareness of the slender lifeline, the NPA set up in February a food committee chaired by Davidson. Its object was to relieve the tonnage situation in two ways — by improving production and curtailing demand.<sup>66</sup>

Unfortunately, its energies were confined mainly to St. John's,<sup>67</sup> and it was only marginally successful. The committee canvassed owners of vacant land and asked them to make lots available for cultivation, but of sixty landowners only eleven bothered to reply, eight in the affirmative. Only twenty-eight acres, including the land at Government House, were relinquished. The Telegram called the response

<sup>63</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf.; Davidson to Bonar Law, January 12, 1917; PANL, GN 9/1, January 12, 1917; above, p. 229.

<sup>64</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 233, Davidson to Bonar Law, December 28, 1916.

<sup>65</sup> Evening Telegram, February 21, March 24, 1917. The following winter the Florizel, the last link between St. John's and New York, ran aground off Ferryland district with a large loss of life. See below, p. 311. J.S. Munn and Thomas McNeil were among the dead.

<sup>66</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, February 27, 1917.

<sup>67</sup> Evening Telegram, April 26, May 12, 1917. Davidson conceded that outport fishermen lacked the necessary time to increase production. PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, April 30, 1917.

"disgusting," and recommended that holdings be commandeered and names published. As a result, several large employers agreed to make land available to trusted employees.<sup>68</sup> The AND Company offered to provide land, fencing and fertilizer to Grand Falls residents.<sup>69</sup> Fearful lest the potato market be glutted, farmers in Conception Bay asked for a guaranteed price of \$2 per barrel.<sup>70</sup>

The committee secured the support of church leaders, newspaper editors and the WPA and launched a massive publicity campaign, disseminating nutritional information, war recipes and menus. Presumably these aimed mainly at upper- and middle-class housewives since they bore little relation to what most St. John's residents ate. The majority of St. John's and outport households relied heavily on flour, and they were reluctant to cut back.<sup>71</sup> Scarce tactics were also employed: "We are busy trying to make their flesh creep," the governor recorded privately.<sup>72</sup> Although the production of potatoes jumped twenty-two per cent and hay eighteen per cent, outport residents reported marketing problems as a result of high freight rates to St. John's.<sup>73</sup> The Telegram

<sup>68</sup> Evening Telegram, April 21, 28, 1917.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., April 2, 1917.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., April 25-26, 1917.

<sup>71</sup> CO 194/297, Harris to Milner, December 22, 1919. Flour amounted to twenty per cent of the value of all imports. See also Evening Telegram, December 29, 1917; below, pp. 288-89.

<sup>72</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, March 19, 1917. See also a draft appeal contained in PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, reprinted in part above, p. 153, fn. 171.

<sup>73</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 112, Davidson to Long, August 15, 1917; PANL, GN 9/1, October 27, 1917.

also reported that government members were again neglecting their responsibility, "a responsibility from which they are not relieved because a few patriotic gentlemen have had more foresight than they and begun a much needed campaign."<sup>74</sup>

One of the major problems was a lack of restraint on the part of consumers. In spite of the contracting supply of essential items, the importation of luxuries continued and grew. The press constantly denounced luxury spending, the "reckless" importation of eggs, poultry, chocolates and other confectionaries, but particularly automobiles, which the Telegram maintained were no longer restricted to the wealthy classes.<sup>75</sup> Thus in St. John's and elsewhere conspicuous consumption was on the increase rather than decrease, much to the disgust of a few observers, and it was becoming clear that comprehensive government regulations were required.

The wave of profitable speculation in foodstuffs and other goods also continued and grew, and it was likewise becoming apparent that anti-profiteering measures must be enforced. By the spring of 1917 it had become popular to contrast the soldier and merchant, and the effect was devastating. Now, said the Telegram, was the time for an all-embracing inquiry into the importation, pricing and distribution of:

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<sup>74</sup> Evening Telegram, April 26, 1917.

<sup>75</sup> See, for example, Ibid., February 21, April 27, May 17, July 6, August 15, November 30, 1917 and *passim*. A Telegram correspondent claimed that of the 170 motor cars owned in the city, only thirty belonged to members of the mercantile class. The Telegram also reported that the majority of government members purchased cars during the war. See also Ibid., April 10-11, May 7, July 25, 1918.

goods, and for the introduction of an excess profits tax.<sup>76</sup> Public opinion supported this view, and on April 23 the government appointed a commission of inquiry into the high cost of living, an action which was undoubtedly related to the imminence of a general election. The commission was also empowered to recommend steps to ensure future supplies. It consisted of H.W. LeMessurier, T.A. Hall, C.H. Hutchings and W.J. Ellis, and was chaired by P.T. McGrath.<sup>77</sup>

The first report of the high cost of living commission, published on May 12, dealt with coal.<sup>78</sup> It was now selling for \$14 per ton and stocks were inadequate, although commissioners reported that coal prices had been strictly monitored since 1916 and that shortages were beyond the colony's control. They also reported that local sealing steamers were not suitable for the coal trade and were therefore unduly expensive, and recommended that the government assume direct responsibility for all facets of the coal trade, including the purchase or hire of its own vessel or vessels. The report also recommended that local vessel owners be denied the right to conclude any charter other than those directly associated with the colony's trade. The second report, released two days later, dealt with foodstuffs in general. It explained

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., April 12, 1917. See also Ibid., passim.

<sup>77</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, April 23, 1917. LeMessurier was deputy minister of customs, C.H. Hutchings deputy minister of justice and W.J. Ellis a building contractor. T.A. Hall was government engineer.

<sup>78</sup> The complete text of five interim reports can be located in Evening Telegram, May 12, 14, June 9, July 20, August 6, 1917. The fifth and final report covers the retail price of fresh meat, milk and butter, but is singularly uninformative.

shortages mainly in terms of diminishing world supplies and world-wide tonnage shortages. Commissioners therefore recommended a maximum price for local potatoes; increased production of foodstuffs; a prohibition on the killing of immature cattle and sheep; and an extensive home-growing campaign. Water Street was clearly relieved, and there was a "distinct improvement" in the atmosphere downtown. The Telegram congratulated commissioners on the wisdom of their findings and reiterated what it took to be their main point — that supply, not price, was the problem.<sup>79</sup> However, a third report released almost a month later dispelled this impression, and put an end forever to any lingering notion that patriotism and profiteering were mutually exclusive.

Taking flour as its first example, the report revealed that whereas rail rates between Montreal and Nova Scotia had risen by 2c to 4c per barrel since 1914, on the Reid Newfoundland system they had risen by \$1.08, an increase from between 400 and 600 per cent depending on the season. During the same period, the Furness Withy and Red Cross companies had raised their rates from Halifax and New York from 300 to 400 per cent. Officials of both companies argued that they were subject to increased operating expenses and could command higher prices elsewhere. However, the commissioners held that none of these increases were justifiable, and they therefore recommended that the government apply blue book rates<sup>80</sup> to the entire Newfoundland carrying trade. The

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., May 14, 1917. It is difficult to determine the political allegiance of the Telegram during this period, although in general it seems to have supported Water Street, and pressed for Bond's return.

<sup>80</sup> Blue book rates were rates fixed by the Admiralty and applied to all vessels carrying goods under consignment to the British government. By 1917 this included most British imports, and

report assumed throughout that had the steel steamers not been sold, many of these difficulties could have been avoided.

Regarding the retail flour trade, commissioners discovered that prices had been fixed at uniform levels irrespective of cost, and that they generally reflected the most expensive cargo. Merchants were making profits of between \$1.50 and \$4 per barrel, up from the normal profit level of 50¢. Dealers had argued that they were "following the market" and that only by this method could they preserve a "proper equilibrium" with a view to meeting subsequent losses. However, commissioners concluded "that if the ordinary ebb and flow of unrestricted competition [had] existed... flour would have been sold at a much lesser rate, ... and we think it is regrettable that this system of price-fixing to 'follow the markets' should have been put in operation resulting in so heavy a burden having been placed on the classes in the community least able to bear it."<sup>81</sup> Several suggestions for dealing with the situation had been considered by the commission. It had rejected as unwieldy one that the government commandeer all existing and incoming stocks, for it would involve constant monitoring, frequent price adjustments and eventually rationing. It also feared that importers would divert consignments en route in order to sell them elsewhere. It also rejected a second suggestion that the government assume direct responsibility for all facets of the trade, for the government would

thus the government was able to monitor both the disposition of tonnage and profits. Interestingly enough, the Reid's rail rates still remained within the limits set by their original government contract.

<sup>81</sup> Evening Telegram, June 9, 1917.

then have to control every commodity, involving millions of dollars, a vast administrative structure and the possibility of losses. Commissioners concluded, therefore, that while profits should be restricted, the ordinary business of buying and selling should not be taken out of the hands of "those who know it best." The report recommended the establishment of a food control board having authority over all food-stuffs, feeds and household commodities, with full powers to survey requirements and stocks; license distributors; guard against hoarding and stockpiling; ensure conservation; and establish fixed flour standards. The report also recommended the introduction of an excess profits tax.

A fourth report published on July 20, 1917 dealt with salt meat, tea, sugar and molasses. Commissioners discovered significant increases in import levels of salt meat, as well as most other commodities, from 1916 onwards. The report stated that while this increase was gratifying in view of existing shortages in Canada and the United States, it could also be regarded as a flagrant example of speculation. Freight rates had been increased by almost 500 per cent and profit levels by 300 to 400 per cent. Once again, dealers had protested they were following the market, but it was discovered that large stocks of salt meat remained on hand because consumers refused to pay the asking price. Sugar, tea and molasses were quickly disposed of. Profit margins on sugar had remained fairly constant, mainly because of the established practice of loss-leading in sugar and because supplies were readily available in New York, Boston and Halifax. The profit level on tea had also remained stable. However, the price of molasses, imported by schooners returning from the Caribbean, had been artificially

and uniformly inflated, as had the price of most other foodstuffs. The report concluded that the majority of findings with respect to flour also applied to them, and that in the main the same merchants were involved: "The result is that under conditions such as have applied here since the war began and especially during the past year, the opportunities for making large profits have been utilized very fully and the public has had to pay considerably more."<sup>82</sup>

Most major wholesale and retail merchants vigorously denied the existence of combines and the practice of price fixing.<sup>83</sup> The public, however, ignored their claims, and the government recognized that it must take decisive action. The people were tired of "patriotism that pays."<sup>84</sup> This was particularly so in the case of Water Street ship-owners who, having sold off their best vessels, were then able to recoup potential losses by pressing their wooden steamers back into service. It can safely be assumed that their rates reflected the rates of Furness Withy, Bowings and the Reids. The findings of the high cost of living commission also fuelled labour organizations, the most important of which was the Newfoundland Industrial Workers Association, founded in May 1917. Its establishment reflected the failure of wages to keep pace with prices.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., July 20, 1917.

<sup>83</sup> See, for example, Ibid., June 13, 1917. Major flour importers included: Campbell & McKay, Steer Bros., W.G. Gosling (Harvey & Co.), Jas. Beard Ltd., T. & M. Winter, Job's Stores Ltd., J.B. Urquhart, W.A. Munn and Ayre & Sons. For NFA connections, see Appendix E.

<sup>84</sup> Evening Telegram, April 28, August 8, 1918 and passim.

<sup>85</sup> In August 1917 McGrath estimated that in St. John's food prices had doubled while wages had increased by only seventy-five per cent. Ibid., August 18, 1917.



and the strengthened role of labour in the marketplace. In less than two months 700 members were enrolled in St. John's, including industry and trade representatives and employees of Water Street firms.<sup>86</sup> Up until this time, wage increases had been awarded on an ad hoc basis and strikes were isolated.<sup>87</sup> After July, the pace quickened and the working class made various gains.<sup>88</sup> However, most observers agreed that throughout 1917 and 1918 there was a widespread diffusion of relative affluence, most obvious in the case of Water Street merchants but nonetheless touching all classes, with the exception of those on fixed incomes.<sup>89</sup>

Exports and local manufacturing industries were equally affected by the lack of tonnage. In 1914 optimistic manufacturers had gained free entry for all materials used in the production of goods for war purposes,<sup>90</sup> and pressed the government for assistance in winning

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., June 9, July 20, 1917 and passim.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, Ibid., October 12, November 17, 1916, January 3, March 2, 24, 28, May 16, 1917 and passim.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., June 1, July 14, August 11, 15, November 17, 1917, January 31, February 2, 23, May 1, 18, June 6, 11, 21, 26, August 9, 13, 21-24, September 16, October 12, 1918 and passim. Five hundred Reid Newfoundland employees in St. John's went on strike in June 1917; this was followed by another walkout in March 1918. For further details, see CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918. Pay increases were also awarded to civil servants in 1918. See PANL, GN 9/1, October 5, 1918.

<sup>89</sup> Above, p. 171, fn. 237; PHA 1917, Higgins, May 30, 1917, p. 13; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918; CO 194/297, Harris to Milner, December 22, 1919. By the summer of 1918 journeymen coopers were earning \$3.30 per day; marine firemen \$85 per month all found; female stenographers \$50 per month; and public servants an average of between \$540 and \$720 per year. Evening Telegram, June 11, 21-22, September 21, 26, 1918.

<sup>90</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, November 23, December 14, 1914.

overseas supply contracts, including the right to supply the Regiment on a continuous basis. However, British officials blocked these attempts, presumably because local products were not competitive.<sup>91</sup> Within a short time, manufacturers were unable to meet the demands of the local consumer market because of world-wide shortages of raw materials. Export controls in the United Kingdom and United States compounded these problems, and existing industries were threatened.<sup>92</sup> However, two promising enterprises did take shape during the first year of the war--the supply of pit props and the manufacture of munitions. The first soon foundered on the shortage of vessels; the second on the shortage of raw materials and vessels.

Under ordinary circumstances Newfoundland timber was unable to compete in British and European markets owing to the nearness of German and Scandinavian supplies. Moreover, Newfoundland legislation prohibited the export of round timber in the interests of fishermen and in the hope of attracting foreign capital to the establishment of additional mills.<sup>93</sup> With the outbreak of war European sources dried

<sup>91</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, December 14, 1914; PANL, P8/B/9, file 22a, Davidson to Harcourt, October 21, 1914; Ibid., Harcourt to Davidson, November 10, 1914; PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.10, passim; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 15, Bennett to Davidson, February 2, 1915; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 21, Davidson to Harcourt, February 8, 1915; PANL, P8/B/9, file 22b, Davidson to Director of Army Contracts, April 3(?), 1915; Ibid., Director of Army Contracts to Davidson, April 19, 1915.

<sup>92</sup> See, for example, PANL, GN 2/14, box 3, file 5, passim; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 15, Davidson to Bonar Law, February 13, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 168, Long to Harris, February 11, 1918; Ibid., file 184, Harris to Long, February 19, 1918; Ibid., file 239, Harris to Long, February 26, 1918; Ibid., file 452, Long to Harris, April 17, 1918; Evening Telegram, November 10, 29, 1917; PANL, GN 9/1, April 10, 1916, February 28, 1918; PLC 1918, McGrath, May 1, 1918, p. 72.

<sup>93</sup> The following information derives mainly from PANL, GN 8/1, file 44; Ibid., file 61-9. Exporters included E.R. Bowring, W.A. Munn, R.F. Horwood, C.F. Steer, R.K. Bishop, A.J. and John Harvey, J.S. Munn and W.C. Job.

up, and in the fall of 1914 the house sanctioned the export of pit props for one year.<sup>94</sup> St. John's welcomed this measure as embodying the combined virtues of patriotism and profit, since it was expected to provide badly needed employment on the northeast coast, additional revenue for the government and a substantial return to Water Street investors, including key NPA members. Under pressure from British trade officials and St. John's entrepreneurs, the government soon extended the export deadline for an additional three months.<sup>95</sup> Outport fishermen objected that the cutting of timber for outside markets deprived them of necessary supplies of fuel and boat-building materials, particularly since timber was being cut within the traditional three-mile fishermen's limit. However, the house overruled these objections and in 1915 sanctioned the export of pit props to the end of 1916.<sup>96</sup> The Telegram commented that this act afforded "joy among friends of the government who have obtained timber limits since 1909."<sup>97</sup> Shortly afterwards, a

<sup>94</sup> Newfoundland Acts 1914, Exportation of Timber Act, 5 Geo. V, cap. 7. An export duty of \$1 per cord was imposed.

<sup>95</sup> Evening Telegram, September 21, 1914 which contains a copy of Harcourt to Davidson, September 17, 1914; PANL, GN 9/1, November 2, 1914; PLC 1915, McGrath, June 2, 1915, pp. 207-09; PANL, GN 8/1, file 44, passim.

<sup>96</sup> Evening Telegram, May 18, 1915; PHA 1915, Kent, April 12, 1915, p. 87; PLC 1915, McGrath, June 2, 1915, pp. 207-09; Newfoundland Acts 1915, Exportation of Timber Act (Amendment), 6 Geo. V, cap. 14. See also PANL, GN 9/1, October 18, 28, 1915; PANL, GN 8/1, file 44, passim.

<sup>97</sup> Evening Telegram, May 28, 1917. For further details, see Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 106-10; Evening Telegram, November 12, 1914.

further minute of council extended the deadline to six months following the end of hostilities.<sup>98</sup>

The cutting of timber, which had been widespread along the northeast coast during the winter of 1914-15, was even more extensive the following year.<sup>99</sup> This led to a full airing of opposing views during the 1916 legislative session, and to demands that the practice be halted. Members on both sides protested that outport fishermen were being robbed of their birthright by unscrupulous St. John's merchants and government inspectors.<sup>100</sup> Several weeks later, however, the government tabled correspondence from British officials which placed pit props in the category of vital supplies. The government convinced opponents of the trade to drop their objections in return for promises of strict enforcement of the regulations and a guaranteed price to cutters.<sup>101</sup>

In the meantime, St. John's exporters, having sold their only ocean-going steamers, began to experience transportation problems. In April 1916 a deputation from the Board of Trade approached Morris requesting that the Admiralty provide tonnage to carry an estimated

<sup>98</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, December 13, 1915.

<sup>99</sup> Daily News, January 20, February 2, 1916.

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, FHA 1916, Lloyd, March 21, 1916, pp. 41-42; Ibid., Coaker, March 21, 1916, p. 51; Ibid., Jennings, March 22, 1916, pp. 64-67.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., Lloyd, April 28, 1916, p. 541; Evening Telegram, April 29, 1916. Members of the legislative council vigorously opposed the provision of a guaranteed price. See, for example, PLC 1916, Murphy, May 2, 1916, pp. 189-90; Ibid., Harvey, May 2, 1916, pp. 190-91; Ibid., Bishop, May 2, 1916, pp. 191-92.

150,000 to 200,000 cords, or roughly ninety small cargoes, to market. Failing this, the board asked that the British government arrange for the purchase of all existing stockpiles.<sup>102</sup> Davidson was abashed at this request, pointing out to Morris that tonnage was available if merchants were willing to pay the price, and predicted that British officials would not look favourably on either request.<sup>103</sup> Undeterred, merchants sought other channels. Bowring wrote Steel-Maitland and explained that existing stockpiles represented a financial outlay of \$1,200,000 on the part of local businessmen, and questioned the Admiralty's policy of transporting pit props from France and Scandinavian countries at blue book rates while refusing to extend the same courtesy to Newfoundland.<sup>104</sup> C.R. Steer was even more direct, referring first to the large number of men from the colony serving overseas, the cost of the war to the government and the number of fishermen employed, then to the fact that local entrepreneurs stood to withstand huge losses unless they made sales.<sup>105</sup> Both Bowring and Steer claimed to be acting on behalf of the Board of Trade, and copies of both letters were sent to Lambert, Steel-Maitland, Asquith, Bonar Law and Lloyd George.

<sup>102</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.9, Munn and Horwood to Government, April 8, 1916.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., Davidson to Morris, April 8, 1916. Davidson pointed out that the colony's influence had already been seriously undermined by the refusal of merchants to meet the price of vessels previously released by the Admiralty for the conveyance of coal and other incoming cargo. He believed that merchants had mistakenly assumed cheaper blue book rates would apply. See above, pp. 244, 250, 257.

<sup>104</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.9, Bowring to Steel-Maitland, April 14, 1916.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., Steer to Lambert (Colonial Office), April 20, 1916.

However, British officials were unimpressed by these arguments, pointing out that pit props were private property being conveyed under commercial conditions. They refused to render any material assistance except by refraining as far as possible from requisitioning vessels known to be engaged in the trade.<sup>106</sup> Exporters continued to hold imperial authorities responsible for their troubles. They put their case before the NPA and advised Morris they were unable to pay their cutters.<sup>107</sup> Outport residents reacted strongly. They claimed the pit props were rightfully theirs, and during the spring and summer of 1917 looted existing stockpiles. Two men were arrested in Twillingate, occasioning a riot in which, according to reports in the Telegram, a mob stormed the magistrate's office and tore down the flag. The government sent St. John's police to quell the disturbance. However, because the magistrate's office doubled as a recruiting centre, these differences were also related to the wider issues of opposition to the St. John's-dominated war effort, to the possibility of conscription and to resentment of the St. John's mercantile establishment.<sup>108</sup>

The only other addition to the export economy was munitions. Unlike Canada, however, Newfoundland lacked basic supplies

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., Greene (Admiralty) to Fiddes, May 17, 1916; Ibid., Rey (Board of Trade, London) to Fiddes, June 6, 1916; Ibid., Bonar Law to Davidson, June 21, 1916.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., Board of Trade (St. John's) to Morris, June 29, 1916; Ibid., file 44, Deputation of Exporters (Bowring, Horwood, Steer, Bishop, Job and Munn) to Morris, July 6, 1917; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, April 16, June 1, 1917. See also PANL, GN 9/1, April 30, 1917.

<sup>108</sup> Evening Telegram, June 6, 8, 11, 12, 1917; PHA 1917, June 7, 1917, pp. 83-94.

of raw materials and the latent industrial capacity to transform the venture into a lasting success. The unavailability of tonnage compounded these problems.

In the spring of 1915 F.W. Angel, one of the original fifty-five NPA members and a member of the musketry executive, called the government's attention to the flourishing Canadian munitions industry, which received substantial financial assistance from the British government. A local industry would help the unemployed work force in St. John's.<sup>109</sup> The government directed him to the Canadian Shell Committee which, though understandably reluctant to see contracts pass from Canadian hands,<sup>110</sup> granted Angel, after protracted negotiations, a contract for 20,000 small shells and promises of a further contract once the ability to turn them out had been demonstrated. Taken together, it was estimated that the two orders would yield a profit of \$35,000.<sup>111</sup> The significance of this news was not lost on the Telegram, which pointed out that until now the colony had concentrated on the provision of men and money, having "done more than was expected of us in this direction," while ignoring the war's more lucrative aspects. Nor was it lost on the government, which agreed to guarantee investors against loss. Angel and other interested Water Street parties drew up plans and formed the

<sup>109</sup> PANTL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4. Angel to Bennett, June 7, 1915. Most of the following information also derives from Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> See also Thompson, Harvests of War, p. 52.

<sup>111</sup> PANTL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4. Angel to Bennett, August 30, 1915; Evening Telegram, September 17, 1915; PANTL, GN 1/3/A, file 289, Davidson to Bonar Law, November 23, 1915.

Newfoundland Shell Company, which announced its intention of seeking \$50,000 in shared capital. The Board of Trade sponsored the first meeting. Because the enterprise was at once patriotic, profitable and safe, the Telegram claimed that the company would experience no difficulty in raising the amount.<sup>112</sup>

However, within a few weeks Angel approached the government with an altered version of his original proposal. Potential Water Street investors had demanded a plant with only one-half the proposed production capacity, a fifty per cent increase in guaranteed capital and assurances of additional contracts. For the most part the government agreed, but on condition that company books be subject to inspection, a government representative added to the board of directors and additional shares of \$50 each made available to the general public.<sup>113</sup> Provisional directors to November 1915 included M.G. Winter, A.J. Harvey, F.W. Angel, R.F. Horwood, R.K. Bishop, R.B. Job and S.O. Steele. Most major shareholders were also members of the NPA.<sup>114</sup>

By the end of March 1916 production was in progress and management hoped that the first order would be ready by mid-August.

<sup>112</sup> Evening Telegram, August 20, September 17, 1915.

<sup>113</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4, Angel to Bennett; October 27, November 3, 5, 1915; PANL, GN 9/1, November 18, 1915; Evening Telegram, November 25, 1915.

<sup>114</sup> Major shareholders to November 4, 1915 included the following: F.W. Angel, The Hon. James Angel (\$10,000); Reid Newfoundland Company (\$10,000); M.G. Winter (\$5,000); R.K. Bishop, R.F. Horwood (\$2,000); Harvey and Company (\$1,500); S.O. Steele, G.M. Barr, Job Brothers (\$1,000); George Knowing, David Biard, Jennie Angel, W.E. Grieve, F.H. Steer (\$500).



However, the Imperial Munitions Board (IMB), successor of the Shell Committee, held that the contract specified delivery in April, after which the price dropped by one-third. Although the board finally agreed to meet the full price, it declined to authorize a second order. Angel appealed to the government again, and questioned the justice of having to squeeze concessions from Canadian authorities.<sup>115</sup> Apparently the government was able to make a strong case along these lines, and production continued for some time. Nonetheless, the company consistently failed to meet production deadlines and quality-control standards, mainly because of its inability to secure the necessary raw materials, machinery and parts.<sup>116</sup> More readily available tonnage might have obviated some of these difficulties. However, far more disastrous was the lack of tonnage to transport finished shells to Great Britain, since the only available vessels were Furness Withy's, and their space was taken up by Canadian munitions and grain. The inability to get shells to market finally forced the company out of business months before the war was over, but not before investors had secured a substantial return.<sup>117</sup>

But of all problems that faced the colony none was more serious than the difficulty of getting saltfish to European markets.

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<sup>115</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4, Angel to Bennett, July 5, August 24, 1916.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., passim. IMB officials persisted in viewing the government as the contracting party, despite repeated attempts by the colonial secretary to dispel the impression. See, for example, Ibid., Bennett to IMB, December 31, 1915, May 7, 20, 1916.

<sup>117</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21d, Montgomerie to Bennett, March 23, 1917; Evening Telegram, March 23, May 16, June 23, 1918; PHA 1917 (Special Session), Clift, August 20, 1917, p. 20.

Some aspects were beyond Water Street's control, including a series of British embargoes on exports to Mediterranean areas in 1914 and 1915.

Concerted pressure on the government and Colonial Office eventually overcame these obstacles,<sup>118</sup> although in the meantime several merchants had circumvented the ban by diverting shipments through American brokers. At this the colonial secretary delivered them a stiff reminder of their patriotic duty.<sup>119</sup> Water Street also attempted to secure alternative markets for both primary and secondary fish products, a number of which had previously been shipped to Germany.<sup>120</sup> Nonetheless, Davidson reported that there were no serious losses, and that the bulk of the 1914 and 1915 fish catches had been sold to regular customers at a substantial profit.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>118</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 3, file 14, Davidson to Harcourt, August 13, 15, 21, 1914 and passim; Ibid., Bonar Law to Davidson, November 5, 1915; Evening Telegram, November 12, 16, 1915; PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.7. With regard to the ban on shipments to Greece in November 1915, and potential losses to the trade, fish exporters had several suggestions — that the British government purchase saltfish on the marketplace "in the interests of the Entente," that the International Commissariat for the Balkan Armies purchase it for distribution in Salonika, or that the French government remove tariff restrictions as a quid pro quo for the removal of export restrictions on Newfoundland round timber. All were either rejected or ignored.

<sup>119</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.7, Bennett to Board of Trade, December 14, 1915.

<sup>120</sup> See, for example, CO 194/288, Davidson to Harcourt, November 4, 1914 and enclosed correspondence from Morris and Job; PANL, GN 8/1, file 61.11, Davidson to Harcourt, January 22, 1915 and passim; Ibid., file 27; CO 194/290, Davidson to Bonar Law, August 19, 1915; CO 194/292, Davidson to Bonar Law, November 4, 1915; PANL, GN 8/1, file 57; Ibid., file 59; Evening Telegram, June 30, 1917.

<sup>121</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 186, Davidson to Bennett, December 28, 1914; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, April 3, 1916.

The demand for fish continued to grow and the price to increase, largely as a result of the absence of Norwegian and French competition.<sup>122</sup> However, with the drastic curtailment of regular trans-Atlantic steamship services and the sale of the steel steamers, transportation was soon a major problem. Around the beginning of 1916 individual fish exporters began purchasing sailing schooners in Canada and the United States. However, they were expensive and became increasingly difficult to obtain.<sup>123</sup> In the 1916 session the house increased shipbuilding subsidies and guaranteed a return of seven per cent on invested capital up to \$30,000 for fifteen years. This led to a revival of the local industry.<sup>124</sup> Because the professed aim of the government was to carry all fish to market in sailing vessels so as to avoid drawing on British tonnage, these steps passed off as part of the overall war effort.<sup>125</sup> Thus, by the end of 1916 Board of Trade

<sup>122</sup> CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, April 3, 1916; above, p. 113.

<sup>123</sup> Evening Telegram, May 15, 1916; January 13, 1917; PHA 1916, Coaker, March 21, 1916, p. 43; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>124</sup> Newfoundland Acts 1916, 6 Geo. V, cap. 20. For further details, see CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, May 11, 1916; Evening Telegram, September 19, 1916; January 31, June 9, 1917, July 26, 1918; PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 19, Davidson to Long, March 3, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 54, Harris to Long, April 20, 1918.

<sup>125</sup> Evening Telegram, January 25, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1918, file 158, Davidson to Long, October 6, 1917; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part." McGrath claimed that by the beginning of 1918 almost \$2,000,000 had been invested in the shipbuilding industry and 150 sailing vessels were engaged in transporting saltfish. Their owners had constructed them and McGrath hoped they would lay the basis for a sizeable merchant marine in the post-war period. Only a small proportion of this capital had been invested by Water Street. Evening Telegram, June 13, 1918.

members could congratulate themselves for having handled tonnage and marketing "in a very satisfactory manner."<sup>126</sup> The Telegram opined that the colony had not suffered as a result of the war, other than through the loss of lives.<sup>127</sup>

This was mainly because exporters continued to operate in a sellers', rather than a buyers' market,<sup>128</sup> and they grasped the advantage. In April 1916 the Portuguese government commandeered a large quantity of Newfoundland fish and established a fixed selling price. The Board of Trade repeatedly protested to the government and Colonial Office, so that the Portuguese government eventually agreed to adjust the price upwards and concluded a trade agreement giving the colony favoured nation status.<sup>129</sup> A second and third British blockade of Greek ports in June and August 1916 led to renewed Newfoundland protests. Eventually the British government established a special licencing system, allowing Newfoundland cargoes to proceed.<sup>130</sup> In November the Italian government began negotiations for the purchase of a large quantity of saltfish for army use, but word of the purchase prompted merchants to raise their price to such an extent that the Italians

<sup>126</sup> Evening Telegram, January 24, 1917, Board of Trade Annual Report.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., December 30, 1916; above, pp. 272 and passim.

<sup>128</sup> See, for example, CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, May 21, 1917.

<sup>129</sup> PANL, GN 8/1, file 53, passim; Evening Telegram, May 10, October 19, 1916.

<sup>130</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 3, file 14; Evening Telegram, September 12, 15, December 13, 1916.

decided to seek supplies elsewhere.<sup>131</sup> However, by the fall of 1917 local exporters were in such a strong marketing position that the Italian government was forced to come to terms. Subsequently, both the Italian and French governments negotiated purchases of Newfoundland fish through the British Food Ministry.<sup>132</sup> The colony also negotiated through the British government the sale of the entire output of whale and seal oil for British and allied use.<sup>133</sup>

But in early 1917 the tonnage situation became acute. Vessels and crews were scarce and insurance rates added enormously to the cost of getting fish to market.<sup>134</sup> Whereas only twelve local schooners had been sunk during all of 1916,<sup>135</sup> there was a rash of sinkings at the beginning of 1917.<sup>136</sup> An Admiralty directive advised

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<sup>131</sup> PAML, GN 2/14, box 3, file 5, Bonar Law to Davidson, November 1, 1916; *Ibid.*, Bonar Law to Davidson, December 7, 1916.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, box 8, file 7; CO 687/58, Harris to Long, September 20, 1918.

<sup>133</sup> However, in 1918 the government, led by Coaker, pushed the price of seal fat to such a level that the British food controller declined to conclude the purchase and merchants were forced to sell it in a falling American market. For further details, see CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, May 21, 1917; PAML, GN 2/14, box 7, file 5; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; PAML, GN 9/1, March 7, 26, June 1, 1918; *Evening Telegram*, March 30, April 1, 13, 24, 1918.

<sup>134</sup> According to Hickman, freight rates to Italy had risen from approximately \$2.30 per four-quintal cask in 1914 to \$48.50 by the summer of 1917. *PHA 1917*, Hickman, June 25, 1917, p. 327.

<sup>135</sup> *Evening Telegram*, January 13, 1917.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, January 13-April 24, 1917, *passim*. The annual report of the Newfoundland Marine Insurance Company for 1916 described war risk insurance as a very profitable business. Its board of directors

that the sending of sailing vessels into the Mediterranean beyond Alicante involved great risk to vessels and crews, and British insurance companies refused to underwrite the voyage. This did not apply to steamers, but they were unavailable at any price. Faced with the prospect of abandoning the Labrador fishery altogether, merchants decided to accept the risk and clung to the hope that insurance would be forthcoming in the end. "I marvel at ... [their] confidence," Davidson recorded.<sup>137</sup> This situation, followed by a voluntary embargo on the trans-shipment of goods through British ports, which effectively slowed the flow of fish to Liverpool via Furness Withy, presented "the most serious dilemma of the war" in everyone's view, and was a matter of "deepest anxiety" for Davidson.<sup>138</sup>

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included R.K. Bishop, A.F. Goodridge, M.G. Winter, C.P. Ayre, J.S. Munn, John Browning, A.J. Harvey and W.A. Munn. In 1917 the company apparently declined to insure local carriers. *Evening Telegram*, January 12, 1917; PANL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4, Davidson to Bennett, June 6, 1917.

<sup>137</sup> *Evening Telegram*, October 28, 1916; PANL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4, Long to Davidson, April 21, 1917; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Long, May 18, 1917; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Bennett, June 6, 1917; *Ibid.*, box 5, file 7, Board of Trade to Cashin, November 16, 1917. The Admiralty estimated that the degree of safety for schooners beyond Alicante was only fifty per cent during the summer months. Three-quarters of the Labrador catch went forward by schooner to either Italy or Greece.

<sup>138</sup> PANL, GN 2/14, box 1, file 4, Davidson to Bennett, June 6, 1917; *Ibid.*, file 7A, Long to Davidson, May 28, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 27, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3A, file 6, Memorandum by Harris, January 6, 1918.

By late 1915 it was clear that the unrestricted initiative of Water Street would no longer function in war as in peace when markets were steady and supplies certain, and the consumer at least marginally protected by competition. Merchants had been tried and found wanting, and the government was forced to monitor the price and ensure necessary supplies of coal. Thus the precedent of substituting administrative controls for the self-regulating process of supply and demand was firmly established by 1916. As a result, salt merchants were able to persuade the government in both 1916 and 1917 to grant them a virtual monopoly. Because there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the price of all incoming cargo continued to be artificially and unduly inflated, and because costs were fairly readily ascertainable, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the government was working hand-in-hand with the commercial establishment. Water Street's unabashed reliance on the government to further private interests with British officials does nothing to dispell this impression. It is impossible to assess the extent to which the Newfoundland trade suffered as a result of the sale of the steel steamers in 1915. This was all the more frustrating in a time of unprecedented marketing opportunities. A revival of the building of wooden schooners filled part of the void, although by the spring of 1917 it seemed that their usefulness as Mediterranean saltfish carriers had come to an end.

The fact that Water Street exploited wartime conditions assumed major importance principally because the commercial establishment was so closely identified with the war effort. Profiteering, after all, was a prominent feature of the home front in most belligerent

nations, and in periods of boom merchants are generally the chief beneficiaries. But claims that the wealthy, including the majority of MPA members, were prospering at home while the poor were dying overseas, coupled with the findings of the high cost of living commission, eventually had their effect. Demands for the conscription of manpower gave way to demands for the conscription of wealth. This, in conjunction with pressing tonnage and supply problems, meant the government had to step in. However, political circumstances did not favour the Morris administration, and it was clear that the situation required the resources of all three political parties.

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CHAPTER IX  
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT  
AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE NPA

By the time the house opened at the end of May 1917 the government faced a number of major problems. The most pressing of all was the tonnage shortage which disrupted the flow of fish to markets. Rising prices and shortages of food and other essential supplies had already led to the establishment of the high cost of living commission. Party politics had again come to the fore since the existing administration was generally believed to be on its death-bed, demoralized and dishonest, and a general election was approaching in the fall. There were signs that the Liberal-Union alliance was breaking down and rumours of an impending coalition government as well.<sup>1</sup> Equally significant was the growing controversy over the NPA's administration of the war effort, the lack of recruits and the government's seeming indifference. Generally speaking, people felt that too much had been left undone. The government had still not introduced pension legislation, or resolved the matter of separation allowances, or granted pay increases, which had been promised, to naval reservists. There were serious shortcomings in medical care and civil re-establishment programs, and the proposed forestry service was proving a tremendous embarrassment. For the first

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, February 9, 22, 26, April 23, 1917.

time the opposition openly questioned the government's failure to account for these and other war-related matters in the house.<sup>2</sup>

The Patriotic Association remained immune from official criticism until Gibbs levied a series of specific and potentially explosive charges in the legislative council. The public had been gossiping for some time about the matters he raised, but the fact that they now came up in the legislature required that they be met head on. P.T. McGrath vigorously defended his own administration of the Patriotic Fund, the finance committee and the pay and pensions board, then gave vent to all the indignation and frustration surrounding the affairs of the standing committee.<sup>3</sup> The recruiting committee also came under attack; both E.P. Morris and Lloyd defended it in the house.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, within a matter of hours the administration of the war effort had been called into question, and it was clear to the government that the NPA had to go. As if these revelations were not enough, the government had also to contend with the highly inflammatory findings of the high cost of living commission which confirmed what had long been suspected, that many who administered the war effort on the one hand were reaping unconscionable war profits on the other. Morris' argument that these men had "practically sacrificed their own business ... interests" during three years of war work must have sounded very hollow indeed.<sup>5</sup> Moreover,

<sup>2</sup> PHA 1917, Lloyd, May 30, July 5, 1917, pp. 18-21; 430-32; Ibid., Coaker, May 31, June 14, 1917, pp. 44, 48, 170; Ibid., Clift, June 28, July 5, 1917, p. 411, 430-31; above, pp. 220, fn. 61, 223.

<sup>3</sup> Above, Chapters VI and VII, passim.

<sup>4</sup> PHA 1917, Morris, July 5, 1917, p. 431; Ibid., Lloyd, June 22, 1917, p. 313; above, pp. 169-70.

<sup>5</sup> PHA 1917, Morris, July 25, 1917, p. 517.

only fifty-seven men had enlisted in June; in July the trickle dried up completely and outpost recruiting stations closed.<sup>6</sup>

The leading authority on the political history of the period has argued that the establishment of the national government had little to do with conscription, and subsequent attempts to avoid conscription bear this out. McDonald maintains that the coalition came about as a result of the prime minister's bid to maintain his personal position.<sup>7</sup> The People's Party had been steadily losing ground to the Union Party since 1913. As a result, Morris became directly involved in an attempt to bring about confederation. He had already alienated the Water Street anti-confederates by placing the colony's finances in a position which rendered union a distinct possibility. Backed by the Reids, Morris attempted to convert Coaker and accordingly listened favourably to FPU legislative proposals during the 1915 and 1916 sessions. Apparently Coaker was convinced that Morris had deliberately courted financial ruin in order to further confederation, but preferred that to continued rule by the People's Party, which could lead to bankruptcy and reversion to crown colony status. Thus during the spring of 1915 he entered into discussions with Morris and Lloyd on the possibility of a coalition government. However, Cashin objected to the inclusion of

<sup>6</sup> Evening Telegram, July 6, 9, 1917; PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 3, 1917.

<sup>7</sup> McDonald, "FPU," p. 137. For a detailed analysis of the attempt to bring about both confederation and a coalition government, see *Ibid.*, Chapter IV. See also, CO 194/292, Davidson to Fiddes, December 27, 1916; CO 194/293, Davidson to Lambert, June 6, 1917; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Long, July 18, 1917.

the FPU, and Coaker gradually withdrew his support as the colony's economic outlook improved and the necessity of confederation receded. When in December 1916 Morris was invited to sit in the Imperial War Cabinet, Davidson, who did not wish to see Morris and his party face almost certain defeat in an election, thought the invitation sufficient excuse for resuming negotiations. Failing a satisfactory outcome, and rather than having to chance Coaker as a prime minister, Davidson was willing to see the legislative term extended, in spite of the "vicious character of the principle that any House should vote its own prolongation beyond the existing statutory limit."<sup>8</sup>

Morris certainly hoped that an election could be avoided, and during the spring of 1917 made few overt campaign moves beyond establishing the high cost of living commission and indicating the administration's willingness to supplement the pay of naval reservists and to introduce separation allowances. The opening days of the session were stormy as the opposition continued to demand an election and refused to grant supply, so that little business was conducted. On June 15 Morris finally announced that the government intended to extend the legislative term for a year. Coaker greeted this news with a storm of opposition in the Evening Advocate.<sup>9</sup> But since the prime minister, pleading the exigencies of the war effort, had already

<sup>8</sup> CO 194/292, Davidson to Fiddes, December 27, 1916 and enclosed memorandum.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Evening Advocate, June 28, 1917; see also Evening Telegram, January 15, 1918. Stating that "the attempt by Morris to take advantage of the war to keep himself in power would be fought to the last ditch" Coaker encouraged his followers to submit petitions demanding dissolution and an election. According to the Telegram, hundreds poured in. The Mail and Advocate became the Morning and Evening Advocate between December 1916 and January 1917.

secured the approval of the British government and the agreement of at least two of the three denominational leaders,<sup>10</sup> there was little Coaker could do but acquiesce. Nevertheless, speculation as to the eventual establishment of a coalition continued to dominate reports of the proceedings.<sup>11</sup> Following protracted negotiations between the government and the two opposition parties, agreement in principle was reached. It took several additional days to satisfy party claims, and on July 17 Morris finally announced the formation of a national government.<sup>12</sup> The executive council was increased from nine to twelve members, consisting of six People's Party representatives (E.P. Morris, Cashin, Bennetts, Squires, Crosbie and Gibbs) and six members of the combined opposition, four Liberal (Lloyd, Clift, Hickman and Ellis) and two Union (Coaker and Halfyard). Davidson accounted for the disproportionate number of Liberal as opposed to Union representatives on grounds that since most Union MHA's were employees of the FPU or Union Trading Company, it would

<sup>10</sup>CO 194/292, Davidson to Fiddes, December 27, 1916, attached minutes and draft telegram, Long to Davidson, January 20, 1917; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, June 15, 1917.

<sup>11</sup>See Evening Telegram, May 30-July 7, 1917; *passim*.

<sup>12</sup>This event signalled the end of a political era. With the establishment of the national government the bulk of the old guard of the People's Party disappeared from the political scene. C.H. Emerson had recently died, F.W. Morris was shortly appointed to the bench and A.J. Robinson became postmaster general. S.J. Blandford, R.K. Bishop and A.W. Piccott also retired, and Davidson reported that Woodford, Cashin and Bennett were planning to do so. Both Davidson and Morris urged that Cashin, Bennett and Bishop be knighted for "conspicuous public service." CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 11, 1917; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917; *Ibid.*, Davidson to Long, July 18, 1917; CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, September 7, 1917.

be improper to appoint them.<sup>13</sup> Morris claimed that the principal purpose of the coalition was to enable the colony to retain its imperial position, or in other words, to maintain the Regiment in the field.<sup>14</sup> He was not referring to conscription, but to a renewed voluntary service campaign with the full prestige of the national government behind it.

Following the establishment of the national government a committee of council consisting of Lloyd, Bennett and Clift met with the chairmen and secretaries of principal NPA committees to consider a draft bill constituting the department of militia, the first attempt to put the conduct of the war on a legal footing.<sup>15</sup> On July 20 the government announced its creation in the house, the first of four significant acts.<sup>16</sup> Several days later Bennett was officially appointed minister of militia. The Evening Telegram generously conceded that "no more popular

<sup>13</sup> The final breakdown of executive responsibility was as follows: E.P. Morris, prime minister; Cashin, finance minister; Bennett, minister of militia; Squires, colonial secretary; Crosbie, tonnage committee chairman; Lloyd, minister of justice; W.W. Halfyard, minister of agriculture; Gibbs, Clift, A.E. Hickman, Ellis and Coaker, ministers without portfolio. William Woodford (People's Party) and J.C. Stone (Union Party) were department heads but were not included in the executive. CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917; CO 194/292, Davidson to Fiddes, December 27, 1916 and enclosed memorandum.

<sup>14</sup> PHA 1917, Morris, July 17, 1917, pp. 469-70. See also Ibid., Morris, May 30, 1917, pp. 23-24.

<sup>15</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 8, Committee of Council (Lloyd, Bennett and Clift) to Chairmen and Secretaries, NPA Committees, July 20, 1917.

<sup>16</sup> For details of the other three, see below, pp. 286-93.

appointment could have been made and no more responsible person could be put at the head of this very necessary and very important department."<sup>17</sup>

By then everybody, it seems, recognized the necessity of the new department, because everybody recognized the irregular position of the NPA. All three leaders had broached the subject briefly at the beginning of the session,<sup>18</sup> but once the national government had been created these tentative overtures became a chorus. Members, including important NPA members, now unanimously agreed that it was wrong in principle for private citizens to spend public money, that it was unfair to ask them to do so, and that such matters should be accountable in the house. Changes, they said, were long overdue.<sup>19</sup> Presumably, members of the legislative council also welcomed the move,<sup>20</sup> although for the most part consideration of the department of militia gave way to concern for the business profits tax bill, which for them had a more immediate effect.

The governor's role evoked less public comment, although Davidson himself referred to his "anomalous position as Minister of

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<sup>17</sup> Evening Telegram, August 9, 1917.

<sup>18</sup> Above, p. 278, fn. 2. See also PHA 1917, Morris, May 30, July 5, 1917, pp. 22, 431.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, Ibid., Lloyd, July 25, 1917, pp. 514-515; Ibid., Clift, July 25, 1917, pp. 519-20; Ibid., Bennett, July 25, 1917, pp. 518-19.

<sup>20</sup> Note, for example, an earlier comment by the Hon. John Anderson expressing the view that there were too many committees and committee members "all good amateurs, ... but enough to form a regiment," whose principal speeches had been delivered "in bed, in clubs or on Water Street." PLC 1917, Anderson, July 2, 1917, p. 48.

Militia and general guide and director of war matters," and conceded that "with the establishment of a National government, a good opportunity is offered to regularize the position and to enable the government to assume full and direct responsibility."<sup>21</sup> Morris shared this view and informed the house:

His Excellency the Governor, who presided over the Association, made a new departure, because in taking upon himself the head of practically a public department he was coming in daily contact with the public and daily assuming responsibilities unusual for a Governor to assume.... Everybody knows the Constitutional law on this subject is that the Governor should perform no ~~act~~ without having Ministers behind him to shoulder the responsibility which may be incurred by his action. Now in this work there was no such support and he incurred considerable risk....<sup>22</sup>

Two months later the press announced that the governor was leaving. Davidson seems to have viewed his departure as timely. Although he had written in June that "Nearly one thousand of our golden youth have died more or less at my bidding and there has not been a murmur,"<sup>23</sup> three months later he recorded:

I have always mistrusted my own talents and not long since I wrote ... saying that I feared I might be outstaying my influence. That stage has not yet arrived and we will part company here on

<sup>21</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, Private, Davidson to Long, June 15, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917.

<sup>22</sup> PHA 1917, Morris, July 25, 1917, p. 517. See also PANL, PB/B/9, file 22c, Morris' London address, December 13, 1917.

<sup>23</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson to Long, June 15, 1917.



good terms. The fact is that the prominence which has been accorded to this little old colony has touched the cord of insular and collective pride which far exceeds the individual sorrow.<sup>24</sup>

It is probable that he also feared the effect of his presence on the smooth running of the national government, since he had never really settled his differences with Coaker.

For the most part, the NPA relinquished the reins of authority quietly and with grace.<sup>25</sup> Most members were undoubtedly relieved, with the exception of members of the recruiting committee, who were determined to place on record their views on conscription. In St. John's conscription had been the most talked about subject during the spring and summer, everywhere, that is, but in the house. As the Telegram explained, "all but one or two [St. John's members] are afraid to touch it."<sup>26</sup> Thus, in an attempt to force consideration of "the most important question that confronts the country today," the recruiting committee in July formally endorsed conscription and requested a NPA meeting.<sup>27</sup> However, the NPA executive ignored this request, so members of the recruiting committee took their case to the press, "in order not to be blamed for neglect in discharge ... of a trust confined to their care." As the Telegram pointed out, by doing so they not only absolved

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., Private, September 18, 1917.

<sup>25</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 10, 1917; below, p. 294.

<sup>26</sup> Evening Telegram, July 20, 1917. See also Ibid., November 14, 1917.

<sup>27</sup> The following information derives from Ibid., July 31, 1917, which includes a letter from W.B. Grieve.

themselves from any blame in the eventual extinction of the Regiment, but placed it where it properly belonged, on the minister of militia and government. The result of this action was a hastily convened meeting of the Association on August 3.

At this meeting W.B. Grieve announced that the recruiting committee could do no more, and that the Regiment could be maintained only if some form of selective conscription were adopted. Mindful of opinion outside St. John's, Morris challenged this view, and maintained that compulsion should not be employed until voluntary methods had proven inadequate. A resolution was drafted, followed by a vote. The results were forty to zero in favour of conscription, members of the legislature abstaining with the exception of F.W. Morris and A.W. Piccott.<sup>28</sup> This development, along with similar resolutions by the Methodist Conference and the Newfoundland Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and a vote on conscription in the Canadian parliament,<sup>29</sup> showed how things tended. But the house continued to ignore the issue.

This was partly because house members were attending to other important matters, including the creation of a new tonnage

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<sup>28</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 3, 1917; Evening Telegram, August 4, 1917. P.T. McGrath was absent, but the Herald opposed conscription. See, for example, Evening Herald, July 10, 1917.

<sup>29</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917 which includes a copy of the Methodist Conference resolution; Day, "A Well Run Dry," p. 21; Evening Telegram, July 6, 1917. The Telegram called Canada the "last gap ... in Empire solidarity" except for Newfoundland, conveniently ignoring South Africa and the unsuccessful conscription referendum in Australia in September 1916. A second followed in December 1917.

committee, a food control board and the introduction of a tax on business profits. All signalled the active intervention of government in the traditional spheres of Water Street, and came about as a result of Water Street's failure to deal honestly and effectively with wartime economic conditions. A minute of council authorized the tonnage committee to inquire into all aspects of incoming and outgoing trade and gave it power to direct all local traffic.<sup>30</sup> Unlike the committee it replaced, it included only three government members — Crosbie, Coaker and Hickman. One of the committee's first steps was to place all foreign-going merchant ~~seamen~~ on an equal footing with members of other forces with respect to pensions and benefits.<sup>31</sup> A second step was to underwrite insurance for shipowners who bought fish at a fixed minimum price,<sup>32</sup> a significant advance for the FPU. The committee subsequently assumed direct responsibility for all incoming goods, purchased and chartered vessels, arranged for the trans-shipment of fish and negotiated foreign sales.<sup>33</sup> The committee eventually became a shipping ministry.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, July 19, 1917.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., August 28, 1917. In 1918 the government rejected an Admiralty request that it arm vessels sailing into the Mediterranean on grounds that it would deter seamen from signing on. Ibid., April 2, 1918.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., October 16, 1917.

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, Ibid., July 25, 31, August 14, September 4, 8, 1917, January 12, 1918; PANL, GN 2/14, box 2; file 7, Crosbie to Government, October 8, 1917. Although a trans-shipment officer was posted at Gibraltar, several exporters continued to authorize schooners to proceed, contrary to the wishes of the Admiralty and at great risk to their crews. The government rejected an Admiralty request that they be prohibited from doing so and continued to underwrite insurance. PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 6, memorandum by Harris, January 6, 1918; Evening Telegram, February 13, 21, 1918.

<sup>34</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, January 18, 1918.

The legislature created the food control board on the heels of the high cost of living commission, and after Morris' scathing indictment, in the house, of unscrupulous monopolists.<sup>35</sup> The original proposal had been followed by a barrage of claims and counterclaims, and by vigorous lobbying on the part of both labour and Water Street for control.<sup>36</sup> However, the government finally settled on McGrath (chairman), LeMessurier and George Grimes, MHA, and gave them powers similar to those of food controllers in other countries.<sup>37</sup> Although the ostensible purpose of the board was to control prices, its true function was to ensure an adequate supply of essential products.

In the fall of 1917 McGrath wrung major concessions from Canadian and American food controllers who agreed to maintain the regular flow of goods during the winter in order to give local officials time to fashion economies in line with those existing elsewhere.<sup>38</sup> At home, McGrath referred constantly to the fact that any show of extravagance would be met with curtailment at source. However, board members complained that merchants continued to exaggerate their requirements and that the population had lost both the ability and desire to provide for itself.<sup>39</sup> Governor Harris recorded that Newfoundlanders were among

<sup>35</sup> Newfoundland Acts 1917, Food Control Act, 8 Geo. V, cap. 18; PHA 1917, Morris, July 21, 1917, pp. 482-84.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, June 13, 16, 1917.

<sup>37</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, August 17, 1917.

<sup>38</sup> H.W. LeMessurier, "Food Supplies," Newfoundland Quarterly, April, 1918, p. 12; PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part."

<sup>39</sup> See Evening Telegram, September 2, 1917—April 4, 1918, passim.

the most copious and fastidious consumers of flour in the western hemisphere, demanding huge quantities of the highest quality product as a basic right.<sup>40</sup> In fact, most responsible observers despaired of real economy until the spring of 1918, when the Canadian and American governments announced that exports to Newfoundland would be drastically cut, and that local regulations must now match theirs.<sup>41</sup> Although the board gradually tightened controls and enacted compulsory pricing and rationing,<sup>42</sup> visiting Canadian food board officials continued to believe that they were neither vigorously applied nor enforced. Newfoundlanders generally agreed that they had escaped many of the hardships Canada and the United States experienced during the war.<sup>43</sup>

Far more serious for Water Street was the government's introduction on July 26, 1917 of a business tax bill, and it was to this challenge that the legislative council responded. Having been among the vigorous proponents of the conscription of manpower,<sup>44</sup> members of the mercantile establishment now came face to face with its corollary — the conscription of wealth. The major political obstacles fell with

<sup>40</sup>CO 194/297, Harris to Milner, December 22, 1919.

<sup>41</sup>Evening Telegram, February 11, 1918; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918.

<sup>42</sup>See PANL, GN 9/1, December 10, 1917-October 8, 1918, passim, particularly January 12, February 16, July 9, August 14, 1918.

<sup>43</sup>PANL, GN 1/1/7, no. 107, Harris to Long, August 19, 1918; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918; Evening Telegram, May 15-August 22, 1918, passim; particularly June 20, July 10, 15, August 21, 1918; Evening Advocate, June 22, 1918; PHA 1918, Currie, April 23, 1918, p. 20.

<sup>44</sup>PHA 1917 (Special Session), Crosbie, August 17, 1917, p. 18.

the release of the findings of the high cost of living commission and the establishment of the national government. Davidson explained the tax's necessity as "due to an ebullition of feeling against 'privilege' or vested interests," mainly as a result of the war but also because of a general feeling that members of the mercantile community had accumulated vast fortunes as supply merchants without incurring any corresponding public responsibility.<sup>45</sup> The fact that many of the same men who were exacting unconscionable war profits were administering key aspects of the war effort, and daily making decisions that affected the lives and well-being of a significant proportion of the population, was an equally compelling factor. In its original form, the bill provided for a universal tax of twenty-five per cent on all business earnings. However, it was greeted by a storm of public protest, principally because it failed to distinguish between legitimate and excessive wartime profits.<sup>46</sup> Consequently, the government withdrew the bill to meet several outstanding objections,<sup>47</sup> and three days later introduced a new one. It raised the minimum level of taxable earnings from \$2000 to \$3000, reduced the rate to twenty per cent, and included a new tax of one-half per cent on all banking deposits, save those held in the Government Savings Bank. But it also eliminated an initial six per

<sup>45</sup>CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, August 9, 1917; Ibid., Davidson to Long, August 16, 1917.

<sup>46</sup>Opponents ranged from members of the Board of Trade to the Newfoundland Industrial Workers Association. For further details, see Evening Telegram, July 27-August 2, 1917.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., August 2, 1917.

cent tax-free exemption, an omission which in the eyes of major merchants violated the sacred principle of leaving capital untouched.

No one expected opposition in the legislative council since it was widely understood that some form of taxation was inevitable. Davidson recorded that any member who rejected the bill would labour under the imputation of having done so purely on account of "personal pecuniary interests," and all would avoid a direct confrontation.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, the bill passed the lower house in less than one hour on August 2, then went to the upper chamber tied to the revenue bill. The government made plans to prorogue the house.<sup>49</sup> Unexpectedly, legislative councillors blocked the bill, claiming that it had no other discernible motive than "the notorious personal vindictiveness" of certain government members towards the mercantile community, and that the commercial life of the colony was at stake. Following arguments that under a national government it behoved them to act as a legislative opposition, councillors rejected the bill by a vote of nine to seven.<sup>50</sup> Morris reacted strongly, calling it a "declaration by the monied interests" and a "deliberate

<sup>48</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, August 9, 1917.

<sup>49</sup> Evening Telegram, August 3-4, 1917.

<sup>50</sup> Details of the debate can be located in FLC 1917, August 3-7, 1917, pp. 195-246. See also Evening Telegram, July 30-August 14, 1917; CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 31, August 8-18, 1917. Opponents of the bill included Harvey, Bowring, Winter, Knowing, Goodridge, Anderson, Grieve and Job, although neither Grieve nor Anderson were present for the vote. All were large suppliers or general importers, and all were influential NPA members.

challenge" to the public and house, then asked how he could be expected to conscript men without conscripting money first.<sup>51</sup> Amidst rumours that the upper house would be brought to its knees, the government prorogued the legislature for one week.

By the end of this period the Business Profits Tax Bill had become the single most controversial topic of the war.<sup>52</sup> On grounds that the council was interfering with a basic prerogative of the house, Morris refused to consider any amendment. In order to resolve the impasse and to satisfy public demands for measures to clip the wings of the upper chamber, he sought and received the Colonial Office's permission to fill four council vacancies,<sup>53</sup> assuring the necessary pro-government majority. When the assembly reconvened on August 16 the government reintroduced the bill, and along with it, its version of the Parliament Act of 1911, limiting the power of the Lords. The local bill eliminated forever the prospect of the upper house rejecting a money bill and curtailed its power over all other legislation. Members of the house emphasized the fact that the new tax was intended for the maintenance

<sup>51</sup> Evening Telegram, August 9, 1917.

<sup>52</sup> See Ibid., August 7-17, 1917, for example. Councillors eventually agreed to waive all objections on condition that the original tax-free return of six per cent on invested capital be allowed. Davidson nonetheless continued to believe that opposition to the bill was actuated "mainly by the desire to escape taxation" and that the claim by some councillors to have merely registered a protest by voting against it was an "indulgent view which is not likely to pass current" in the colony." CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, August 9, 18, 1917.

<sup>53</sup> See CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, August 8, 9, 16, 1917 and enclosed minutes. The four new members were businessmen Tasker Cook, Frank McNamara, Sam Bell, and editor of the Morning and Evening Advocate, Alexander Mews.



of the Regiment, and spoke much of the mercantile establishment's sham patriotism.<sup>54</sup> In the event, the addition of the four new councillors proved superfluous since opponents of the bill absented themselves from the chamber during the vote.<sup>55</sup> Davidson recorded that the government had the support of the overwhelming majority of the electorate.<sup>56</sup>

Clearly the bill itself and the events which followed, had been inspired more by political than financial pressures, although the latter were also real. The new tax did yield \$640,451 during the 1917-18 fiscal year, and almost \$1,000,000 in 1918-19. In 1918 the government introduced retroactive income tax. It yielded \$49,882 for the year ending in June 1918, and \$64,537 for the next. It also levied export duties on fish and oil during the same session; these produced \$43,916 to the end of the fiscal year and \$496,013 the following year.<sup>57</sup> Before this, the colony had borrowed money in London and New York to finance the war. It was not until 1918 when foreign sources dried up that the government agreed to float a local victory loan, a course upon which Morris had consistently refused to embark because he feared the local population would refuse to invest.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> For further details, see PHA 1917 (Special Session), August 16 - 20, 1917, pp. 4-34.

<sup>55</sup> Evening Telegram, August 21, 1917.

<sup>56</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, August 21, 1917.

<sup>57</sup> CO 194/297, Harris to Milner, March 18, 1919 in Ibid., Harris to Milner, December 22, 1919.

<sup>58</sup> Evening Telegram, October 9, 1915; CO 194/291, Davidson to Bonar Law, March 28, 1916; PANL, GN 1/3/A, 1915, Private, Davidson

The establishment of the department of militia did not end the practical work of NPA committees. Although the object of the Militia Act was to transfer to a "regularly constituted department" all the administrative work previously carried out by them, it failed to specify how or when this transfer was to take place, or what responsibilities, if any, were to remain with the NPA.<sup>59</sup> Thus although officers and committees formally tendered their resignations to the minister, they were never accepted. Because all but members of the recruiting committee stated they were willing to continue in office,<sup>60</sup> most major committees continued to function for various lengths of time. Although their status was never clarified,<sup>61</sup> they got tacit approval from section seven of the act, which provided for the establishment of such advisory committees as the minister saw fit.

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to Long, March 19, 1917. For further details of wartime financing, see CO 194/291-295, passim. The government passed the victory loan over to a quasi-NPA committee, which received full support from the press. Two million dollars was advertised for subscription locally, but within six days St. John's had subscribed most of it. The government extended the limit, and eventually the committee raised almost \$3,509,000, representing a \$15 per capita investment. Over 1800 persons applied, a large number of whom were outport residents. The average individual investment was around \$2000, including a variety of large organizations. The government also advertised an additional \$4,000,000 through Canadian financial houses. For further details, see PANL, GN 9/1, May 27, June 9, 1918; Evening Telegram, June 7-August 16, 1918, passim; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, August 19, 1918.

<sup>59</sup> See PHA 1917, Lloyd, July 25, 1917, pp. 514-17. This was done deliberately, so that "adjustments" could be made as the need arose. See also CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917.

<sup>60</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, August 10, 1917.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., file 23, draft reports, 1917-19. Harris seems to have been unaware of the continued existence of the several committees, recording that "matters were left a good deal in the air instead of being squared off in a businesslike manner ... there [being] some vague idea that certain of the committees retained their functions." See also CO 194/296, Harris to Long, March 29, 1919; PANL, GN 2/5, Colonial Secretary's Office, Special Subject Files, file 379, War File, 1917-19, Emerson and Adams to Cashin, January 6, 1919.

Thus the finance committee continued to oversee regimental expenses until June 30, 1918 when this responsibility finally passed to the department. Over a four-year period, the committee had authorized expenditures of approximately \$3,500,000,<sup>62</sup> although clearly this constituted but a fraction of total war expenditures. Although the Pensions Act had provided for a permanent board of pension commissioners,<sup>63</sup> the government did not appoint it until February 1918.<sup>64</sup> Even then, "various causes" combined to prolong the life of the existing NPA board, and it continued to administer the pension scheme and most other aspects of civil re-establishment until July 1918.<sup>65</sup> The government then divided its responsibilities between the new board of pension commissioners and the newly created civil re-establishment committee, the duties of which were to advise the government as to the care and re-education of soldiers and sailors unable to return to their former occupations, to provide and administer vocational training programs and to secure employment for the physically fit.<sup>66</sup> Eventually, the government also

<sup>62</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 38, Bowring to Brittain, May 14, 1931.

<sup>63</sup> Newfoundland Acts 1917, The War Pensions' Act, 8 Geo. V, cap. 13; above, p. 220.

<sup>64</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, February 7, 1918. Pensions commissioners consisted of McGrath (chairman), Clift and Dr. W.H. Parsons.

<sup>65</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 18e, Report of the Pensions and Disabilities Board, July 10, 1918.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., file 16, Initial Report of the Civil Re-establishment Committee, undated. It also absorbed the functions of the NPA employment committee, and consisted of Justice J.M. Kent, R.B. Job, H.E. Cowan, McGrath, Cashin, J.G. Stone, MHA, Montgomerie, Macpherson, Burke, Curtis and Blackall. See also JHA 1919, Report of the Civil Re-establishment Committee, April, 1919, pp. 565-92; PANL, P8/B/9, file 15, Civil Re-establishment Committee: Minutes.

appointed a board of military hospital commissioners to administer all aspects of medical care, superseding the variety of NPA committees that had existed before.<sup>67</sup> Members of all three committees were now paid.

Members of the standing and recruiting committees were in a somewhat different position. Following the creation of the department of militia, the standing committee disappeared altogether and was never mentioned again. However, the Militia Act had expressly provided for an advisory military board which, under the minister's direction, was to assume some of the functions of the old standing committee.<sup>68</sup> But Bennett was unwilling to risk any further inference in regimental affairs and it was not until June 1918 that the government, under pressure from senior brigade officers and others, appointed the board during his absence from the colony.<sup>69</sup> It consisted of four government and four local military representatives, including Montgomerie, Macpherson and Parsons. On his return, Bennett objected to the inclusion of non-political representatives on grounds that they should not be involved in the discussion of regimental or policy matters.<sup>70</sup> Bennett prevailed, although the issue did not come to a head until December 1918 when Montgomerie resigned from the board.

<sup>67</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, file 26, Department of Militia, Kent, Chairman, Civil Re-establishment Committee to Lt. Col. W.F. Rendell, Chief Staff Officer, Department of Militia (date uncertain).

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., file 23, draft reports, 1917-19.

<sup>69</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, June 8, 1918.

<sup>70</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21e, Bennett to Cashin, August 17, 1918.

having unsuccessfully urged that it either meet or disband.<sup>71</sup> Bennett not only accepted Montgomerie's resignation, but demanded Macpherson's as well.<sup>72</sup> Apparently, Bennett's attitude also held for the board of military hospital commissioners<sup>73</sup> and for the NPA itself.<sup>74</sup> The recruiting committee was a special case because its members had publicly differed with the government on the matter of conscription and had specifically asked to be relieved of their duties. Although members continued to regard conscription as necessary, they did agree to act in an advisory capacity during the government's fall campaign.<sup>75</sup> However, for all practical purposes, the committee ceased to exist, except for a brief period when the government resurrected it in the spring of 1918.<sup>76</sup>

Trustees of the Patriotic Fund were in a unique position. Because an act of the legislature had duly incorporated the Fund, its

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., file 16, Montgomerie to Bennett, December 5, 1918; Ibid., Bennett to Montgomerie, December 5, 1918.

<sup>72</sup>PANL, GN 2/14, box 8, file "Paper Re: Department of Militia," Bennett to Montgomerie, Macpherson and Parsons, December 26, 1918 and passim. Bennett claimed that he had no authority over Parsons, since as a pension commissioner, he held a separate commission. Macpherson also resigned as district medical officer and from the civil re-establishment committee.

<sup>73</sup>PANL, P8/B/9, file 26, Kent to W.F. Rendell (date uncertain). Kent complained that the government consistently refused to convene the board. See also Ibid., file 27, Clift to Squires, February 17, 1921.

<sup>74</sup>Below, p. 301.

<sup>75</sup>JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 530; above, pp. 285-86, 294.

<sup>76</sup>Below, p. 311.

officials continued to discharge their responsibilities until 1931 when they passed over the few remaining beneficiaries to a committee of the Great War Veterans Association. Although the Fund's resources had long since been exhausted, it had continued in existence through government support. In seventeen years it contributed to the support of 1185 families and paid out over \$157,000 in benefits, including the cost of administration, which amounted to two per cent of the total.<sup>77</sup>

The NPA itself met in two special sessions during the fall of 1917 to pay tribute to Davidson,<sup>78</sup> who was leaving to take up the governorship of New South Wales. Davidson proudly recorded that, even Coaker expressed a desire to contribute to the watch he received.<sup>79</sup> In making the presentation, Bowring conceded that at public meetings and behind the scenes there had been "misapprehension, if not mistrust," but that the governor's "unfailing courtesy, patience and tact" had smoothed over these differences. Davidson responded, and spoke of the difficulty of fulfilling two roles — one as a constitutional governor of a self-governing colony and the other as a representative of the British government. He claimed that his duty had been to harmonize the good of both countries so that "lines parallel and are mutually sustaining."

<sup>77</sup> PANL, PB/E/9, file 38, McGrath to Bennett, November 4, 1924. See also Ibid., file 1, December 29, 1919 and additional correspondence contained in Ibid., file 38. The Canadian Patriotic Fund, by way of contrast, had disbursed over \$48,000,000 by 1921. Morris, Canadian Patriotic Fund, p. 26.

<sup>78</sup> Evening Telegram, September 25, October 20, 1917.

<sup>79</sup> CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917.

"The Prime Minister knows," he continued, "how strictly I have interpreted ... [my] function... My constant aim has been to discharge ... my strictly defined duty in the running of the constitutional machine."<sup>80</sup> In requesting that Davidson receive the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (GCMG) for wartime service, Chief Justice Horwood had this to say:

In my opinion His Excellency's administration of this Government is deserving of the praise bestowed by the Ministry, as well as by the NPA, the Board of Trade and other public bodies. His work has been quite exceptional. Upon outbreak, His Excellency ... was able to inspire, initiate and organize the Colony's effort on behalf of the war. The Prime Minister by his co-operation made this practicable.... For more than three years this work has been personally directed in every detail by His Excellency.... His labours, without precedent and quite unique in a democratic and self-governing community, has [sic] been performed with general approval.<sup>81</sup>

The Colonial Office ignored this request, but the Newfoundland government made Davidson honorary colonel of the Regiment.<sup>82</sup>

Davidson in turn pressed for special recognition of the Regiment and prime minister. In September he requested that in view of

<sup>80</sup> Evening Telegram, October 20, 1917.

<sup>81</sup> CO 447/99, Horwood to Long, November 3, 1917, which also includes a copy of a minute of council dated October 18, 1917. Even McGrath, who had no great love for the governor, conceded: "The Davidsons ... have done fine service ... giving us a very necessary and useful lead in war work ... though of course they did not hit it off with everybody.... Still, on the whole, we have had few, if any occupants of Government House who have given us a better example of the high class of public service, which the best type of British officials are noted for in the various Colonies." McGrath Papers, McGrath to Hugh Anderson, October 16, 1917.

<sup>82</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, October 9, 1917.

his impending departure the Regiment be designated "Royal".<sup>83</sup> Three months later the War Office approved this, a singular achievement since no other regiment received a similar honour during the course of the war.<sup>84</sup> One of the governor's last acts was to propose the unprecedented honour of a hereditary peerage for Morris, a proposal he described as "very near my heart." In supporting this claim, Davidson advanced the prime minister's devotion to public service, his outstanding war-time contribution and the fact that such an honour would be interpreted as a tribute to the entire colony, and could therefore be counted upon to produce "far reaching effects."<sup>85</sup> In January 1918 the British government approved this also.<sup>86</sup>

Having lost its rationale in August 1917 and its presiding genius two months later, the NPA did not meet again until May 1918 when the new governor accepted the chair. However, Sir Alexander Harris was a more cautious man than Davidson, and, mindful of the incongruity of his predecessor's position, did so on condition that where his role as governor threatened to conflict with his role as chairman he be allowed to step aside. Generally speaking, members of the Association wanted

<sup>83</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., Davidson to Long, September 3, 1917.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, Tel., Long to Davidson, December 19, 1917; L.S. Kern (War Office) to Sir Leonard Outerbridge, January 31, 1963 in Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, p. 424. The award was officially related to the Regiment's service at Ypres and Cambrai. But see also *Evening Telegram*, December 22, 31, 1917 which suggests that it was also intended to goad the government to decisive action on the Regiment's behalf.

<sup>85</sup> PANL, GN 1/1/7, Conf., September 17, 1917; CO 448/12, Davidson to Long, October 22, 1917.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309.



it to continue, and there was a great deal of discussion as to the role it should play. A suggestion that the NPA devote itself to "philanthropic and kindred activities" evoked little enthusiasm. Harris described the existing state of affairs as "inconclusive," suggesting that a committee be appointed to confer with the government.<sup>87</sup> The committee reported to the NPA in July, stating that the minister of militia had refused to specify any worthwhile purpose the Association could serve. Several members of the government stated that as far as they knew, the government wished the Association to continue, and someone proposed that a special committee confer with denominational leaders regarding a special anniversary service on August 4. However McGrath objected, arguing that no committee should be allowed to decide a matter of such momentous importance, certainly a surprising view in light of the events of the preceding three years. Thus it is not surprising that a motion to defer the Association's future carried.<sup>88</sup> The NPA did not meet again until January 1919.

<sup>87</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, May 13, 1918. In addition, Harris was critical of the fact that Davidson submitted yearly reports to the legislature in his capacity as chairman, thereby disassociating himself from his position as governor, and maintained that the proper course was for the Association's officers to lay reports before the Association itself. See *Ibid.*, file 23, draft reports, 1917-19; *Ibid.*, file 18g, V.P. Burke, 1920, Harris to Outerbridge, February 2, 1920. He also believed that Davidson had compromised himself by failing to issue writs of election for filling vacancies, a view fully shared by the opposition press. See CO 194/295, Harris to Long, April 29, 1918 and attached minutes; *Evening Telegram*, January 8, 1918.

<sup>88</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, July 26, 1918; *Evening Telegram*, July 27, 1918; PANL, P8/B/9, file 23, draft reports, 1917-19. Bennett stated that with the exception of the work of the war history committee, officials of his department were administering all aspects of the war effort. The NPA had established the war history committee in January

For most practical purposes the NPA ceased to exist with the creation of the department of militia in July 1917. Established at the outset of war in hopes of uniting the colony in a way the Morris administration could not, its usefulness in this respect had apparently come to an end. Although it had been remarkably successful in removing party politics from the war, it had exacerbated religious, geographical, social, and class tensions. The combined effect of the high cost of living commission which revealed the soft underbelly of patriotism, and the exceedingly frank discussion of a number of war-related issues in the legislative council, had rendered the Association a distinct political liability. Because the Water Street establishment was so closely identified with the war effort and the NPA with St. John's, they had not only exhausted their own credibility, but very nearly the government's as well. The fact that, generally speaking, St. John's supported conscription and the outports did not meant that the capital had further isolated itself. To have expected a St. John's-based body to act as a cohesive force was simply to have ignored the depths of the divisions within the colony. With the establishment of the national government, the principal justification for the Patriotic Association in theory dissolved.

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1917 for the purpose of compiling an authoritative record of the NPA, the War Contingent Association, the Regiment and Naval Reserve. The committee considered a number of proposals over the ensuing few years and approved several, though only one or two reached fruition. Funding was the principal stumbling-block. For further information, see *Ibid.*, file 1, January 19-August 3, 1917, *passim*; JHA 1917, Report of the War History Committee, May, 1917, in NPA Report, 1917, pp. 371-72; PANL, PB/B/9, file 10, War History Committee; *Ibid.*, file 23, which contains what appears to be the committee's final report. See also PANL, GN 2/5, file 379, which contains a great deal of post-war correspondence and a manuscript by former Daily Mail (London) columnist F.A. MacKenzie, "Newfoundland in the Great War."

Nevertheless, the NPA's administrative arms, the individual committees, with the exception of the standing committee, had proved far too valuable to be immediately dispensed with. Thus while the government stripped the Association of its powers, it left most committees intact and continued to use them. Eventually government-appointed bodies replaced them, although this sometimes involved little more than a change of name.

To attempt a final assessment of the NPA at this point would be misleading for two reasons. First, it could be argued that the NPA was ultimately unsuccessful because it failed to maintain the required rate of voluntary enlistment. By the summer of 1917 it seemed in theory that conscription must come. But this argument ignores the absence of government and opposition support for outport recruiting campaigns and the fact that conscription was in force in most other countries. It also ignores the fact that conscription was never imposed. Second, and perhaps more important, once the NPA vanished from the scene politics again came to the fore, and dominated the war effort for the first time since August 1914, quite independent of the conscription issue. Although conscription became a political rallying point, there was no intention to defeat it. For this, if for no other reason, it is instructive to look at the post-NPA period as illustrative of the Association's ultimate value, and as illustrative of the turn events might have taken had it never existed.

CHAPTER X  
CONSCRIPTION AND CONCLUSION

A great deal has been written about the Canadian conscription crisis; little about a similar crisis in Newfoundland.<sup>1</sup> Early Canadian research emphasized the ethnic basis of the struggle, although later studies, particularly regional ones, have placed almost equal weight on the opposition of farmers and organized labour. Generally, rural Newfoundlanders resisted, but did not actively oppose conscription, despite attempts by certain politicians to stir them up. For though political parties no longer existed, political considerations remained.

The major unresolved matter in the fall of 1917 was the future of the Regiment. Although extension of the legislative term and a coalition administration did enable the government to impose conscription, it decided to appeal directly to the outport population in the hope of avoiding this drastic action.<sup>2</sup> Even this had previously been considered too risky. Bennett and Montgomerie, now district commanding officer and de facto deputy minister of militia, met with members of the recruiting committee and persuaded them to act in an advisory capacity for the time being. Bennett then issued his new

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<sup>1</sup>There are two exceptions: McDonald, "FFU" and Day, "A Well Run Dry." However, the following analysis differs from each of these in several important respects.

<sup>2</sup>CO 194/293, Davidson to Long, July 17, 1917.

appeal with a warning that unless the necessary recruits were forthcoming either the Regiment must be withdrawn or "other means" adopted to ensure its survival.<sup>3</sup> Following this, both Bennett and Morris left for London.

The campaign differed little from previous ones except that now the threat of conscription was in the open. Sixty returned soldiers toured the island and Labrador,<sup>4</sup> while in St. John's government members, including Coaker, referred freely to the fact that if voluntary methods failed to provide 500 men by the end of the year, conscription would follow. Lloyd addressed an FPU convention at Catalina and said the same thing.<sup>5</sup> Although St. John's editors had unanimously agreed to support the campaign and the government's policy, the Evening Telegram broke ranks on November 6. It began by pointing to the deficiencies of the existing campaign, then followed with a vigorous assault on the government and a demand for conscription. The Telegram maintained that it no longer felt bound by its original commitment because in continuing to absent themselves from outport districts, MHAs had not been bound by theirs.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 528-30. The campaign did not begin until mid-October.

<sup>4</sup> For further details, see Ibid., pp. 530-32.

<sup>5</sup> Evening Telegram, November 7, 17, 1917, January 11, 14, 1918.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., November 6-20, 1917, passim, particularly November 10, 1917. The Advocate and Herald struggled to maintain the united press front.

By this time, feelings were running high throughout the colony. Telegram editorials were deliberately designed to stir up opposition to the outposts, and even the mails became the medium of a hate campaign, complete with white feathers by post. In Harbour Grace a grand jury took the unusual step of advocating compulsory service, while the Grand Falls Patriotic Association conducted a secret ballot, with the results 160 in favour of conscription, 124 against.<sup>7</sup> This was in stark contrast to opinion in most outpost communities. McGrath later reported that opposition to conscription was so strong in many settlements that recruiters were denied accommodation.<sup>8</sup> In the midst of these events, the Star and Herald both published a letter from a Blue Puttee, who referred at length to all the old issues surrounding discrimination between officers and men at the depot, on furlough in Great Britain and St. John's, and at the front.<sup>9</sup> Bennett called the resulting furor the most serious incident of its type since the war began.<sup>10</sup> The situation was heightened by the fact that in spite of the introduction

<sup>7</sup> See Evening Telegram, October 30, 1917-January 2, 1918, passim, particularly November 12, 16, 24, 1917.

<sup>8</sup> PLC 1918, McGrath, May 1, 1918, p. 71. For a summary of fall recruiting reports, see JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919 in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 533-34.

<sup>9</sup> Daily Star, November 30, 1917; Evening Herald, December 1, 1917. Among other things, the letter stated that able-bodied young officers performed minor services at the depot, that they were unnecessarily detailed for special duties and training classes and that they received extended furloughs, while medically unfit men were forced to return to the front. A 'Blue Puttee' was a member of the original 540-man contingent. See above, p. 74.

<sup>10</sup> See Evening Telegram, December 3, 7, 12, 1917.

of separation allowances<sup>11</sup> and lowered physical requirements,<sup>12</sup> fewer than 350 men had been accepted into the Regiment by the end of December, 150 short of the mark. Describing the results as "altogether disproportionate to the effort," Montgomerie also concluded, like the recruiting committee before him, that conscription must come.<sup>13</sup> However, these matters were overshadowed shortly thereafter by a crisis in political affairs. Subsequent events were to reveal the extent to which some politicians were willing to use conscription to further political, as opposed to military ends.

Morris had suddenly resigned. He had promised both Coaker and Lloyd, as part of the price of opposition support for a national government, that he would resign in Lloyd's favour before the end of the year, while assuring members of his own party that he would not.<sup>14</sup> In September he had left for Great Britain for good, believing that he was about to be appointed Newfoundland high commissioner. On December 24 he wrote to both Squires and Gibbs informing them of his intention to resign. He did not anticipate the bitter shock and outrage this would create in his party, one member of which stated that he would "resign and break up the National Government" rather than see

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<sup>11</sup>Above, p. 211.

<sup>12</sup>JHA-1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, January 4, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 534. See Appendix I for the unusually high proportion of men accepted. A large number came from the Grand Falls area.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 532, 534.

<sup>14</sup>For a more detailed summary of the following events, see McDonald, "FPU," pp. 150-57.

TABLE 3

## ENLISTMENT STATISTICS BY DISTRICT TO FEBRUARY 9, 1918

District	Total Population	Male Population	Newfoundland Regiment	Newfoundland* Naval Reserve	Newfoundland Forestry Companies	Total	Percentage of Male Population
St. John's	45,685	22,233	1,428	229	141	1,798	8.08
-East & West	22,705	11,875	528	93	120	741	6.24
Twillingate	21,788	11,372	401	202	41	644	5.65
Trinity	11,861	6,225	165	125	29	319	5.12
St. George's	6,986	3,601	122	54	7	183	5.08
Port de Grave	10,481	5,578	121	88	23	232	4.14
St. Barbe	22,895	11,972	295	110	23	428	3.57
Ronavista	8,257	4,388	92	45	14	151	3.44
Fogo	9,471	4,940	107	47	10	164	3.31
Harbour Main	16,099	8,368	163	96	6	265	3.16
Placentia	9,989	5,209	116	22	7	143	2.77
-St. Mary's	3,793	2,032	66	13	5	84	2.77
Fortune	3,949	2,052	45	8	-	53	2.58
Ferryland	11,616	5,850	118	22	6	146	2.48
Labrador	11,925	5,987	72	76	4	152	2.54
Burin	7,793	4,095	81	15	2	98	2.39
Harbour Grace	5,114	2,567	30	24	-	54	2.103
Burgo-La Paille	10,213	5,289	60	12	7	79	1.49
Carbonear	-	-	137	6	7	150	-
Bay de Verde	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	242,620	124,630	4,147	1,287	452	5,886	-

Source: Evening Telegram, February 23, 1918.

\*Statistics do not include the approximately 500 men enrolled in the Naval Reserve pre-August 1914. See above, p. 101, fn. 135.



Morris enjoy the fruits of his scheme.<sup>15</sup> Within days the press announced the prime minister's peerage, which came as a great surprise and a further blow to his followers. Morris informed the London Times that he was making room for others more capable than he of furthering the cause of recruitment and conscription, and so better serving his country.<sup>16</sup>

In fact Squires, Gibbs and Bennett did resign, since all had leadership aspirations of their own. Lloyd took the news of their defection badly at first, then announced he would take advantage of the opportunity to reduce the cabinet to its former size. The revolt collapsed.<sup>17</sup> Bennett sued to return to the fold<sup>18</sup> and was reinstated. Squires and Gibbs remained on the outside to form the nucleus of opposition to the national government, based on the contention that it was not truly national but dominated by Coaker and the FPU.

<sup>15</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, January 7, 8, 1918; CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918.

<sup>16</sup> Reprinted from the Montreal Star in Evening Herald, January 10, 1918. According to Harris, Morris' statement "merely provoked a smile in Newfoundland," and the attitude of his remaining ministers was summed up thus: "We knew Morris could pull the wool over our eyes, but we did not think he was so smart as to pull the wool over the eyes of the Imperial Government." The public and press chose to regard the peerage as a tribute to the Regiment and colony as a whole. CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918. See also Evening Telegram, December 29-May 10, 1918, *passim*, particularly January 3, 9, 15, 20, March 15, 1918 for a measure of the backlash against Morris personally. Eventually Bowring was appointed high commissioner. PANL, GN 9/1, November 25, 1918.

<sup>17</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, January 7, 8, 1918.

<sup>18</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21a, Bennett to Lloyd, January 8, 1918.

The Roman Catholic archbishop supported them, if in fact he did not incite them.<sup>19</sup> The archbishop's backing brought along J.S. Currie and W.J. Walsh, representatives, formerly in the People's Party, of heavily Catholic districts. Among them they controlled three newspapers — the Daily Star, the Daily News, and the weekly Plainsdealer (which Gibbs controlled) — and were thus in a position of considerable influence. The telegram by now generally supported the News.<sup>20</sup> Since conscription was the most logical way to discredit Coaker among his outport followers, the opposition press was to cynically manipulate it to the fullest extent. The ensuing conscription 'crisis' must be viewed against this background.

The intrusion of politics deprived the government of the liberty to carry through with conscription, or at least a vigorous 'win the war' policy,<sup>21</sup> and forced it to follow a more circumspect route. On January 10, 1918 Coaker stated his latest views on compulsory service. Although he had previously agreed to support conscription should the target of 500 men fail to be realized by the end of the fall, he now

<sup>19</sup> CO 537/1167, Harris to Long, March 23, 1918; CO 195/295, Harris to Long, April 27, 1918; McDonald, "FPU," pp. 151-53 and passim.

<sup>20</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 466, Harris to Long, April 29, 1918. The Advocate and Herald now constituted the government press.

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, Evening Herald, January 14, 1918. See also PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 452, Harris to Long, April 8, 1918, which states that fall recruiting reports were another factor.

claimed that a referendum should decide the issue.<sup>22</sup> Undoubtedly the administration as a whole was unwilling to face this test, and in order to stall for additional time announced one last attempt at voluntary recruitment,<sup>23</sup> the prime minister explaining that the effective strength of the Regiment plus reserves was sufficient until August. He consulted the recruiting committee, which pledged its support,<sup>24</sup> and thereby placed the opposition press in a difficult position. The Telegram, now edited by C.T. James, maintained that the recruiting committee was no longer representative since only five members present at the meeting still had sons overseas, and commented that the news that the Regiment was up to strength would be greeted with surprise by those who had sons wounded in October and almost immediately forced back into battle.<sup>25</sup> However, attention soon turned to the sinking of the Florizel and the ensuing inquiry, which was sufficient to buy still more time.

<sup>22</sup> Evening Advocate, January 10, 1917. In an editorial titled "Water Street Demands Conscription," apparently a reference to the recruiting committee's resolution the previous July, Coaker maintained that it was he who prevented the introduction of conscription in August. The Telegram pointed out that only four or five members of the recruiting committee, which included the present prime minister, were part of the Water Street establishment. Evening Telegram, January 11, 1918.

<sup>23</sup> Evening Herald, February 15, 1918.

<sup>24</sup> Evening Telegram, February 22, 1918.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., February 23, 1918. See also Ibid., January 17, March 25, 1918. Generally speaking, the Advocate and Herald opposed conscription, while the Telegram and Star supported it. The News was circumspect. For the most compelling argument against conscription, see Evening Herald, April 5, 1918; for the most compelling argument in its favour, Evening Telegram, April 6, 1918.

Thus by the spring it had become clear that only the gravest crisis could force the government to adopt a policy for which it had so little stomach. However, the crisis did come, and it had three distinct components. The first was the imminent demise of the Regiment as a fighting force, the second the strong lobby organized by returned soldiers and the third the serious, and potentially disastrous reverses suffered by the Allies in April 1918.

The Regiment was in serious trouble. In August 1917 it had gone into action near the Steenbeek River and during the fall found itself more or less constantly in the trenches in the vicinity of the Broenbeek River and Cambrai. By December the Regiment could muster only 250 men.<sup>26</sup> The first three months of 1918 yielded only ninety-three recruits, and in March the Regiment was sent back into action again.<sup>27</sup> Even the Herald now conceded that voluntary enlistment was dead, and that the government must take the necessary steps regardless of consequences.<sup>28</sup> On March 30 the secretary of state telegraphed the government urging that it "reinforce its heroic troops in the fullest possible manner and with the smallest possible delay," and referred to the stringent measures presently being adopted in Great Britain.<sup>29</sup> A

<sup>26</sup> Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 404.

<sup>27</sup> Evening Telegram, March 25, 27, 1918.

<sup>28</sup> Evening Herald, March 26, April 1, 1918.

<sup>29</sup> See Evening Telegram, April 1, 1918 which carries the exchange of telegrams between Long and Harris. Harris meekly replied that his government "for some time past has been arranging a fresh strong recruiting campaign, opening this week," which prompted the

second telegram followed on April 9 stating that the Regiment, including reserves, was short its authorized establishment by 170 men; it needed 300 men immediately and sixty per month thereafter.<sup>30</sup> At the time, only fifty-five men were in training in St. John's.<sup>31</sup>

In the meantime the administration had launched its latest campaign and immediately confronted yet another sign that it was about to be backed into a corner. At the opening meeting on April 3, a group of returned soldiers so insistently heckled Lloyd that he was forced to take a stand. He maintained that although he was in favour of compulsory service, outport public opinion was not, and that it could not be enforced until the majority of the population came round.<sup>32</sup> As a result, the returned men immediately set out to organize in a serious fashion and announced their intention of mounting a pro-conscription campaign. They formally resolved that all eligible men be prohibited from leaving the colony, that a registry of names be compiled, and that MHAs busy themselves in their districts.<sup>33</sup> Moved to support the veterans, a variety of St. John's-based organizations,

Telegram's comment: "One cannot help thinking that had the Recruiting Committee been under the Patriotic Association [these past weeks], they [sic] would have been busy enough, but under a Government they cannot stir.... Some people are beginning to think that Lord Morris knew a thing or two when he persistently kept the Regiment as far from the politicians as possible." Ibid., April 2, 1918.

<sup>30</sup> See Ibid., April 11, 1918.

<sup>31</sup> PHA 1918, Bennett, May 11, 1918, p. 165.

<sup>32</sup> Evening Telegram, April 4-5, 1918.

<sup>33</sup> PANL, PB/B/9, File 21e, Soldiers' Memorial to Government, April 4, 1918; Evening Telegram, April 6, 1918 containing a letter to the editor from Harold Mitchell.

including the Loyal Orange Lodge, the Anglican-sponsored Society of United Fishermen and the executive committee of the Presbyterian Church, along with the citizens of Harbour Grace and Grand Falls, passed resolutions in favour of conscription.<sup>34</sup> Harris was able to convince the men that it was a wasteful duplication of effort to conduct two campaigns, and that the one would tend to discredit the other. They accordingly agreed to support voluntary recruitment on the clear understanding that if sufficient reinforcements were not forthcoming conscription would then follow.<sup>35</sup> Since it was inconceivable not to support the veterans' efforts, the opposition press also swung round. Within days, the men met again to form the Returned Soldiers and Rejected Volunteers' Association (RSRVA), pledged to the maintenance of the Regiment at the front.<sup>36</sup>

Events at the front almost immediately overtook these efforts. On April 9 the German army launched a final offensive, which in a matter of days threatened to turn into a rout. On April 11 the government closed the borders to unmarried men of military age and two days later announced that the legislature would convene in ten

<sup>34</sup> Evening Telegram, April 10-12, 19, 24, 1918; McDonald, "FPU," p. 160; PAMEL, PB/5/9, file 21e, Resolution of the Executive Committee of the Diocesan Synod of St. John's, April 21, 1918.

<sup>35</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918.

<sup>36</sup> Evening Telegram, April 13, 1918. The Association pledged to remain independent of politics unless a conscription election were held.

days.<sup>37</sup> Details of the impending Military Service Bill were widely known by the opening day of the session,<sup>38</sup> and in order to facilitate its passage the governor, in a secret session, apprised members of both chambers of the true proportions of the military crisis.<sup>39</sup> But since Coaker, deeply affected by the gravity of the news from the front, had already announced his support,<sup>40</sup> its passage in the house was assured.

However, the government had tied the Military Service Bill to the Extension Bill, and there was a great deal of objection to the latter. Both the opposition press and members of the legislative council vigorously protested the prolongation of the life of the assembly for a full year after the war's end.<sup>41</sup> This was backed up by a particularly virulent edition of the Plainsdealer which termed it a "gross violation of the fundamental principles of Responsible Government" and in retaliation, urged an immediate appeal against the Military Service Bill. It also played up the position of Roman Catholic outport representatives, claiming that Cashin and Moore of Ferryland and LeFeuvre

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., April 11, 15, 1918. According to McDonald, Lloyd first announced his intention of holding a conscription referendum, but changed his mind almost immediately. Possibly this was because the Regiment sustained 195 casualties the same day. McDonald, "FPU," pp. 158-59; JHA 1919, Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 512.

<sup>38</sup> See, for example, PLC 1918, Mews, April 23, 1918, p. 17.

<sup>39</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, April 21, 1918; Ibid., Long to Harris, April 23, 1918.

<sup>40</sup> McDonald, "FPU," pp. 159, 163. See also PHA 1918, Grimes, April 23, 1918, p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 567, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; Ibid., file 568, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918. For further details, see Evening Telegram, April 22-May 6, 1918, passim.

of Placentia had sold out, while Walsh and Currie had stood firm. Predictably, the main thrust was directed against Coaker for having reneged on his earlier promise to support a referendum.<sup>42</sup> Opposition to conscription was thought to be so strong in the outports that Lloyd feared both bills were in jeopardy and, on these grounds, suppressed the Plaindealer.<sup>43</sup>

Although conscription and extension passed easily in the house, extension was blocked in the legislative council, which objected that the house was no longer representative, particularly since only Bennett and Higgins, who was now speaker, could speak for St. John's.<sup>44</sup> However, the government overcame the opposition by agreeing to certain modifications in both bills, which included limiting the life of the assembly to April 30, 1919, promulgating the Military Service Act immediately, fixing a date of registration for all first class men (May 24, 1918); and establishing an independent military service board with power to place all classes on active service. Squires had proposed the last three of these, capitalizing on a legitimate fear that the government did not intend to enforce

<sup>42</sup> Plaindealer (St. John's), April 27, 1918, a copy of which can be located in CO 194/295, Harris to Long, April 27, 1918. Two weeks later Coaker admitted that conscription would have been defeated by a vote of two to one. PHA 1918, Coaker, May 11, 1918, p. 169.

<sup>43</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, April 27, 1918.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, PLC 1918, Milley, May 6, 1918, p. 87.



conscription until after the fishing season in the fall.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, it had come out in debate that the British command had withdrawn the Regiment from the lines and removed it from the 29th Division. In addition, the British government had hinted that if the colony were to win further concessions in tonnage and supplies, it must send more men for the common defence.<sup>46</sup> As a result, both acts received royal assent on May 11. The governor viewed the Military Service Act as an isolated example of his ministers "taking a broader view of their responsibility," and expressed himself "satisfied Ministers are doing [with respect to extension] what in the first place is ... best for the Empire and what in the second place they are freely entitled to do so long as they have their present majority."<sup>47</sup>

In forcing the government's hand on conscription, Squires was trying mainly to embarrass Coaker, of course. (His 'modifications' to the Military Service Bill were totally unrealistic, as will be shown

<sup>45</sup> For further details, see PHA 1918, PLC 1918, April 25-May 11, 1918, passim, in particular PHA 1918, Lloyd, April 25, May 11, 1918, pp. 43, 166-67; Ibid., Coaker, April 25, 1918, p. 50; Ibid., Currie, May 11, 1918, p. 174. Also see CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 567; Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; Ibid., file 568, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; McDonald, "PFU," pp. 166-67; Evening Telegram, May 2, 4, 1918.

<sup>46</sup> Evening Telegram, May 2-3, 1918; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 488. See also Evening Telegram, May 10, 1918 for a copy of Coaker's circular letter which warns that the Canadian and American governments had also threatened to withhold supplies.

<sup>47</sup> CO 448/15, Harris to Long, June 14, 1918; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918.

later). Coaker was aware of Squires' purpose,<sup>48</sup> but hoped that the mere passage of the act would be sufficient to stimulate voluntary enlistment. Thus, on April 26, he had addressed a circular letter to all FPU members stating that if a sufficient number of men responded voluntarily, there would be no need for compulsory service. Asking that "every man ... have fullest confidence in me, I know what I'm doing," he urged that 1000 men enlist immediately.<sup>49</sup> At a time when the belligerent atmosphere demanded that each individual be on either one side or the other, it was an extremely unpopular stance and was greeted by a storm of protest from both camps. The opposition press demanded his immediate resignation and many an outport fisherman wished him dead.<sup>50</sup> According to the Telegram, there were rumours of anti-conscription riots in the north.<sup>51</sup> A north-east coast correspondent informed the News that "disgraceful" events were taking place.<sup>52</sup> The Advocate maintained that the opposition press was visibly "gloating" over such isolated and unfounded reports.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> PHA 1918, Coaker, May 11, 1918, pp. 167-72.

<sup>49</sup> The full text can be located in Evening Telegram, May 10, 1918. Harris had approved the draft. See CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; Ibid., Harris to Long, June 16, 1918. The idea that the mere passage of the act would stimulate voluntary recruitment had been current for some time. See, for example, Evening Telegram, November 10, 1917, April 5, 1918.

<sup>50</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; CO 537/1170, Harris to Long, September 30, 1918; McDonald, "FPU," pp. 163-70, passim.

<sup>51</sup> Evening Telegram, May 16, 1918.

<sup>52</sup> Daily News, May 15, 1918.

<sup>53</sup> Evening Advocate, May 17, 1918.

Notwithstanding the continuing controversy, Coaker was right; within six weeks enough men signed up to ensure the future of the Regiment. Between the start of the veterans' campaign at the beginning of April and the day on which the Military Service Act received royal assent (May 11), over 600 men enlisted, sufficient recruits to meet the demands of the Army Council until the end of September.<sup>54</sup> The veterans' campaign, which continued unabated until the end of May, probably brought this about. Also, most men, now convinced that the alternative to voluntary service was compulsory service, preferred the former.<sup>55</sup> The veterans had begun with a show of strength in the capital on April 12, which left little doubt as to where the loyalty of St. John's men lay, and carried their message to the outposts shortly thereafter.<sup>56</sup> Because the emphasis was clearly on voluntary enlistment, there were indications that the RSRVA had reached an agreement with Coaker. The opposition press mentioned this briefly<sup>57</sup> but did not pursue it. In the meantime, the Regiment had been reassigned guard duty at Haig's headquarters, where it continued

<sup>54</sup> PHA 1918, Bennett, May 11, 1918, p. 165.

<sup>55</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918; PLC 1918, McGrath, May 1, 1918, pp. 66-67.

<sup>56</sup> For details, see Evening Telegram, April 13, 1918 ff. See also PANL, CN 1/3/A, file 567, Harris to Long, May 14, 1918. In order to remain independent of government, the RSRVA appealed to the public for funds. In less than three weeks \$1,500 had been subscribed, but the most worthwhile contribution came in the form of extremely effective, privately-sponsored newspaper advertisements.

<sup>57</sup> See, for example, Evening Telegram, May 15, 1918.

to receive a trickle of reinforcements from the depot during the summer.<sup>58</sup> Simultaneously, the government settled the composition of the military service board,<sup>59</sup> and shortly thereafter both Bennett and Lloyd left for Great Britain. The newly-styled Great War Veterans Association (GWVA) angrily denounced Bennett's departure and demanded his immediate return, arguing that he was the only member of the board responsible to the house. Although Harris responded that the minister had left in order to visit the new depot at Winchester and to ensure that the Regiment returned to the front, he seems privately to have agreed with his remaining ministers that "both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Militia ... managed to get out of Newfoundland at an extremely disagreeable time."<sup>60</sup>

Subsequent events are confusing. Researchers have relied too heavily on department of militia statistics which show that over 1000 men enlisted between May 11, the day of the Military Service Act's passage, and November 11, the day the war came to an end. Although they

<sup>58</sup> Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, pp. 459-61. The Army Council responded favourably to anxious requests that it eventually be restored to the 29th Division. See, for example, PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 488, Long to Harris, May 15, 1918; *Ibid.*, Long to Harris, May 27, 1918; *Evening Telegram*, May 30, 1918.

<sup>59</sup> PANL, GN 9/1, May 11, 1918. It consisted of the minister of militia, J.R. Bennett (registrar and chief executive officer), A.J. Montgomerie (deputy registrar), R.G. Rendell (chairman), P.J. Summers, deputy minister of justice, and Majors G. Carty (RNRR) and C.H. Hutchings, inspector general of the constabulary.

<sup>60</sup> PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 608, Resolution of the GWVA, May 20, 1918; *Ibid.*, Harris to GWVA, May 25, 1918; *Ibid.*, file 496, Harris to Long, May 28, 1918; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918. Bennett returned in August. Lloyd had still not returned by the end of September. *Evening Telegram*, September 23, 1918.

have accepted the evidence of contemporary sources that no conscripted men served overseas,<sup>61</sup> they have mistakenly assumed that these men had been drafted and were en route.<sup>62</sup> In fact, the act itself merely required all unmarried men between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five either to register or apply for exemption before May 24, 1918, "or within such further time, if any, as may be permitted by the [exemption] tribunal." Until such time as they were either placed on active service (i.e. required to report for duty at headquarters), at a date to be fixed by the military service board, or granted official exemption, they were deemed to be "enlisted men on leave of absence without pay."

But, to begin with, the May 24 deadline was unrealistic. Although the act outlined basic grounds for exemption and provided for a panel of supreme court judges to hear claims,<sup>63</sup> a great many questions remained unresolved. This was mainly because opponents of the government

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<sup>61</sup> See PANL, GN 1/1/7, Secr., February 2, 1918, McGrath, "Newfoundland's Part;" JHA 1919, Montgomerie to Bennett, May 2, 1919, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, p. 521.

<sup>62</sup> See Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlander*, p. 439; McDonald, "FFU," p. 165; Noel, *Politics in Newfoundland*, p. 127. Presumably they have interpreted the term "be placed on active service" to mean be placed on active service in France. In fact, it referred to the date upon which men were required to report for duty at St. John's headquarters. This distinction becomes clear later on.

<sup>63</sup> These and most other provisions were patterned on the Canadian act, except that there was no right of appeal and no specific exemption based on grounds of "exceptional financial or business obligations." Instead, the tribunal devised a special exemption category and many used it. For further details, see *Newfoundland Acts 1918*, Military Service Act, 1918, 8-9 Geo. V, cap. 26; PANL, PB/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919; *PLC 1918*, McGrath, May 1, 1918, pp. 62-73.

in the legislative council had forced the issue,<sup>64</sup> so that a process that had required over six months in Canada (and had been preceded there by registration) was supposed to get underway here in two weeks.<sup>65</sup> Thus, although the tribunal began hearings in St. John's on May 13,<sup>66</sup> and took outport claims first because the summer fishing season was at hand,<sup>67</sup> it was immediately overwhelmed by the number and nature of cases before it. As each applicant raised new problems, it was able to decide only a few claims.<sup>68</sup> The timing could not have been worse; schooners

<sup>64</sup> See PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 5; above, pp. 316-18.

<sup>65</sup> The Canadian Military Service Act had been introduced in May 1917, became law in August, and was proclaimed in October, fixing the exemption deadline for November. In January 1918 the men were placed on active service. See PLC 1918, McGrath, May 1, 1918, p. 62.

<sup>66</sup> The tribunal sat in St. John's from May 13, shifted to various outport locations during August and September, and was still sitting in November. Outport magistrates were permitted to hear claims based on grounds other than "national interest." For further details, see Evening Telegram, May 11-August 15, 1918, passim.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., June 11, 1918.

<sup>68</sup> May 22 is a case in point. Of the sixty-three applications scheduled to be heard, only twenty-four were decided. Ibid., May 23, 1918. For an indication of the wide-ranging problems before the tribunal, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, pp. 5-9, passim. By far the most serious was the eligibility of young men transporting fish to foreign markets and engaged at the fishery. In the case of the former, it was decided to issue permits allowing seamen to proceed, conditional on their reporting for service on their return. The case of the latter was more difficult, since to exempt fishermen was to render the whole process a farce. Thus a long line of fishermen came to St. John's where the tribunal heard the by-now familiar arguments of trappers whose absence would spell ruin to family production units and vessel masters and owners who were unable to secure the necessary crews. Those wishing to enlist in the Naval Reserve were told this was no longer possible. For further information, see Ibid.; Daily Star, May 23, 28, June 23,

congested the harbour waiting to learn if they could proceed with the voyage, the start of which had already been delayed. This and other considerations — What about men in remote outposts who had not heard of the act?<sup>69</sup> — led both the board and tribunal to extend the registration and exemption deadlines on at least three occasions. Finally, on June 15 the exemption tribunal put back the deadline for exemption until the military service board placed eligible men on active service.<sup>70</sup>

In the meantime, those who had registered for service had been told to report for duty on September 1. This was roughly what the government had intended all along,<sup>71</sup> but the congestion of voluntary recruits at headquarters made it feasible, if not necessary.<sup>72</sup> Then Bennett, on his return from Great Britain in August, announced that because the Regiment was presently at full strength and enjoying a

1918; Evening Herald, April 8, 1918; PLC 1918, Goodridge, April 30, 1918, p. 50; PANL, P8/B/9, file 21e, John T.-Roberts, Badger's Quay, to Lloyd (date uncertain); PANL, GN 2/14, box 18, Joseph Seviour, Harbour Main, to Halfyard, June 4, 1918; McDonald, "FPU," p. 162.

<sup>69</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> See Evening Telegram, May 25, June 1, 15, 1918. According to Harris (CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918), the registration deadline passed sometime in August. However, this is questionable. For additional information, see Daily Star, June 23, 1918 containing a letter from A.B. Morine; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 741, Morine to Star, June 27, 1918 and passim.

<sup>71</sup> See above, p. 317, fn. 45.

<sup>72</sup> See JHA 1919, Quartermaster's Report, in Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 535-36; PLC 1918, Ellis, April 30, 1918, p. 49; Ibid., McGrath, May 1, 1918, p. 72; Daily Star, May 28, 1918. Public health was another factor.

"well-earned" rest behind the lines, because the fishing season was backward and the voyage not yet cured, and because there were already sufficient reserves in training at Winchester and St. John's, the military service board had decided to grant all registered men a leave of absence without pay until October 15.<sup>73</sup> Although the British command unexpectedly recalled the Regiment to the front lines in early September,<sup>74</sup> the decision held. By the time the October 15 deadline came round, an epidemic of influenza was raging so that the board granted a further leave of absence until November 15. Four days before this date, the war was over. All first class men were granted indefinite leave, and the Military Service Act became a thing of the past.<sup>75</sup>

Unfortunately, however, all these events had taken place in an atmosphere of bitterness, confusion and impending disaster, although censorship kept its full measure from public view. The May 23 and May 28 editions of the Daily Star, which contained articles deliberately designed to stir up opposition to the administration of the act, had precipitated the crisis and led to the government's decision to stifle all forms of criticism. It maintained that the articles had been written, and circulated free of charge, for "sinister political purposes," and in a surprise move invoked the War Measures Act to halt

<sup>73</sup> Evening Telegram, August 19, 1918 (Military Order no. 16); PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup> It had been attached to the 9th, rather than the 29th Division. Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlanders, p. 475.

<sup>75</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 4.



publication of the Star for good. The Star appealed to the courts. Many, including the governor, felt that the government had exceeded the bounds of legitimate censorship, and in early June the chief justice authorized the Star to resume publication.<sup>76</sup> The government responded by authorizing the press censor to immediately proscribe the publication without prior government approval of any information regarding conscription, tonnage, the proposed local loan and the conduct of military and naval affairs.<sup>77</sup> These regulations had the desired effect of halting all criticism of the war effort, including the operation of the military service board and exemption tribunal and the apparently illegal round-ups of potentially eligible recruits that took place from July onwards.

This latter thankless task fell to local police and regimental officials under the direction of the constabulary, and followed from a series of regulations intended to force compliance with the provisions of the act.<sup>78</sup> The most important of these was a regulation requiring young men to carry some proof of their exempt status after July 1, failure to produce which could result in prosecution.<sup>79</sup>

<sup>76</sup>For further details, see CO 194/295, Harris to Long, June 8, 1918; Evening Telegram, June 6-7, August 9, 1918. See also PANL, CN 1/3/A, file 548; PANL, CN 9/1, May 29, 1918.

<sup>77</sup>Evening Telegram, June 5, 8, 15, 1918.

<sup>78</sup>See PANL, P8/B/9, file 22c, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 6; Evening Telegram, June 24, July 1, 1918 and passim; Newfoundland Quarterly, Summer 1918, pp. 44-45. See also PANL, P8/B/9, file 26.

<sup>79</sup>After this date, it was also deemed a punishable offence to employ or supply anyone who might "reasonably" be suspected of evading the act.

Technically, this requirement could not legally be enforced since any man who was eligible under the act but who had not registered could still claim that he intended to submit an exemption application, the deadline for which had not yet passed.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, during the summer and fall armed squads proceeded around the island and along the Labrador coast seizing likely-looking young men and demanding proof of their status. Generally, news of their impending arrival was sufficient to force recalcitrants either to register or submit an exemption claim. Those who refused were brought before local justices of the peace and given the option of enlisting or going to gaol. A few were then brought forcibly to St. John's, but the majority were released and instructed to complete the summer fishing voyage.<sup>81</sup> Harris attributed the relative calm of the summer months mainly to Coaker,<sup>82</sup> but admitted that his influence with his followers waned dramatically as a result.<sup>83</sup> Although

<sup>80</sup> For clarification, see Daily Star, June 23, 1918; PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 741, Morine to Star, June 27, 1918.

<sup>81</sup> There were only two attempts at organized resistance, one at Bonavista and the other in the neighbourhood of Torbay and Flatrock. Both Gibbs and Father Ashley, recently relocated from his Placentia Bay parish, were involved in the second incident. For further details, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, pp. 6-7; CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918; Evening Telegram, July 12-October 25, 1918, *passim*; Evening Herald, July 23, 1918. It was with a grim sense of satisfaction that the Telegram reported the number of "defaulters" who were brought in on any given day. The board's report cites only one case of conscientious objection.

<sup>82</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* See also CO 537/1170, Harris to Long, September 30, 1918; McDonald, "FPU," pp. 163 ff; Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, p. 127.

Harris continued to object to the heavy-handed and arbitrary approach of the government in stifling legitimate criticism, he nonetheless maintained:

So far as I have been able to observe the administration of the Act by the Board [and] ... Tribunal has been quite satisfactory.... I think it may be said generally that in spite of certain predictions to the contrary any brief trouble with regard to the operation of the Act has been overcome.<sup>84</sup>

Nor can it be said that the act itself was a failure, since it produced an even larger number of recruits than was generally expected. The government had estimated that approximately 10,000 unmarried men between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five remained in the colony at the time of the act's passage. The authorities hoped to garner 1000 of these.<sup>85</sup> In fact, approximately 1200 men were accepted into the Regiment between May 11 and November. A total of 8816 men complied with the provisions of the act, of whom 4183 registered for service and 4633 applied for exemption, leaving only a small number who did neither. Of the 4633 applications for exemption, 1997 were allowed, 899 rejected, 1010 granted on a conditional basis and 248 withdrawn. An additional 488 claims remained unheard at war's end.<sup>86</sup> The status of the roughly 1000 men whose names appear on the rolls of

<sup>84</sup> CO 194/295, Harris to Long, September 28, 1918. See also PANL, GN 1/3/A, file 741, Harris to Halfyard, August 8, 1918, attached memorandum, and *passim*.

<sup>85</sup> PLC 1918, Ellis, April 30, 1918, p. 49; PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, p. 9.

<sup>86</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 22e, Report of the Military Service Board, April 1, 1919, pp. 9-10.

TABLE 4  
REPORTS FOR SERVICE/APPLICATIONS FOR EXEMPTION BY DISTRICT

District	Reports for Service	Applications for Exemption			
		Received	Disallowed	Pending	Total
Bay de Verde	152	244	55	21	396
Bonavista	361	358	81	30	719
Burgo-la Poile	144	152	33	11	296
Burin	187	181	52	41	370
Carbonear	49	87	15	11	136
Ferryland	100	136	31	20	236
Pogo	176	167	78	5	343
Fortune	270	211	74	31	481
Harbour Grace	126	193	49	5	319
Harbour Main	111	195	51	17	306
Placentia-St. Mary's	411	403	115	29	814
Port de Grave	71	169	30	14	240
St. Barbe	254	215	70	15	469
St. George's	184	276	55	61	460
St. John's East	296	299	54	19	595
St. John's West	356	266	35	12	622
Trinity	372	505	121	31	877
Twillingate	490	538	62	87	1028
Labrador	73	36	9	5	109
Total	4183	4633	1070	465	8816

Source: PANL, P8/3/9, file 37a (n.d.). This table does not in all respects coincide with statistics on the previous page.

the Regiment after May 24, 1918 is ambiguous. While these men may not have been volunteers in the truest sense, neither were they conscripts. Their standing lies somewhere between the two.

In the meantime, the NPA had literally faded away, although the process took another several years to complete. In January 1919 the Association met for the first time in six months, but by this time the war was over and attitudes had changed. Suddenly St. John's confronted a large number of dissatisfied and disgruntled returned men and faced all the difficulties of civil re-establishment in the midst of an economic depression. Although Harris urged members to devote themselves to the problems of reconstruction, the Association felt this was the government's responsibility. It therefore decided to address the more "practical" matter of a war memorial.<sup>87</sup> The controversies over this in the next five and a half years reflected many of the basic problems of the war years, although the underlying atmosphere of drift and caution was new.<sup>88</sup> Finally, after countless setbacks and several

<sup>87</sup> For further information, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, January 22, 1919; *Ibid.*, file 23, draft reports, 1917-19; CO 194/296, Harris to Milner, March 29, 1919; CO 194/297, Harris to Milner, December 31, 1919.

<sup>88</sup> For details, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 7, War Graves and War Memorials Committee; *Ibid.*, file 1, December 29, 1919, March 11, 29, August 17, November 9, 1920; *Ibid.*, file 18f, V.P. Burke, 1919, Harris to Burke, December 30, 1919; *Ibid.*, file 22a, Memorandum by Harris, December 30, 1919; *Ibid.*, file 21h, Prime Minister's Correspondence, 1921, Burke to Squires, October 21, 1921; H.A. Anderson, "The War Memorial," *The Veteran Magazine* (St. John's), April 1921, pp. 70-71; *Ibid.*, April 1923, p. 49, July 1923, pp. 47-48 and *passim*; PANL, GN 49, War Memorial; *Evening Telegram*, July 3, 1924; Nicholson, *Fighting Newfoundlanders*, pp. 513-17.

successive committees, on July 1, 1924, Field Marshall Earl Douglas Haig, former commander-in-chief of British forces in France, unveiled a national war memorial in St. John's. (Ironically, Haig was the man responsible for the appalling number of casualties.<sup>89</sup>) The memorial paid tribute to the 1300 men of the Regiment, 192 of the Naval Reserve, 117 of the merchant marine and the countless other Newfoundlanders serving in British and Canadian forces who lost their lives.

In addition, there were numerous other St. John's memorials. In 1924 the colony's first normal school for teachers opened and was named in 1925 Memorial College,<sup>90</sup> forerunner of the present-day Memorial University. There was also a sergeants memorial, a grade school, two magnificent bronze statues designed by British sculptor Basil Gatto and plaques in most St. John's churches and schools. Notre Dame Memorial Hospital opened its doors in 1924,<sup>91</sup> and memorials were unveiled in various other outport communities. Overseas, the Newfoundland and French governments placed tablets and flags in French churches, and the Newfoundland government erected four specially-commissioned granite crosses in close proximity to Newfoundland graves at Gallipoli, London's Brookfield Cemetery, Ayr and

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<sup>89</sup> This claim is somewhat controversial. But see, for example, Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 12 and passim.

<sup>90</sup> This institution was a direct result of the NPA's efforts, although it was funded wholly by the government. Why it was not immediately named Memorial College is unclear. For details, see PANL, P8/B/9, file 1, December 29, 1919-November 9, 1920, passim. The national war memorial was funded partly by the government and partly by subscription.

<sup>91</sup> See "A Short History of Twillingate" published by the local tourist authority (n.p., n.d.).

Winchester.<sup>92</sup> In addition, the government created five European parks, each centred around Gotto's bronze caribou, which in its originality surpasses any of the countless memorials on the western front.<sup>93</sup> Haig opened the Newfoundland War Memorial Park at Beaumont Hamel in 1925. It covers forty acres. No other world war I regiment was as commemorated as the Newfoundland Regiment, a measure of the esteem it commanded in St. John's and throughout the colony. It was also a measure of the success of the NPA.

Any further assessment of the NPA must take into account the purposes for which it was originally intended. As has already been noted, it was remarkably successful in nullifying political opposition. For over three years it had smoothed over the underlying dissatisfaction with the Morris administration and its domestic policies, and fostered political unanimity. With the establishment of the national government the Patriotic Association virtually vanished from the scene, since, supposedly, the administration's hands were now freed to pursue a vigorous 'win the war' policy without fear of its political consequences. However, this prospect failed to take into account the strenuous opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to Coaker, and the leadership

<sup>92</sup> PANL, P8/B/9, file 21f, Squires to Nangle, December 31, 1919.

<sup>93</sup> Nicholson concurs. See Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 516. As far as can be determined, Major Father Nangle, Commanding Officer of Graves and Monuments, Director of Graves Registration and Enquiry and the colony's representative on the Imperial War Graves Commission, was responsible for the parks.

aspirations of Squires, Gibbs and possibly Currie. Although a great deal of criticism can be directed at the Association in other respects, it is probable that the political truce during its tenure enabled the colony to avoid something akin to the Canadian experience, which saw conscription give rise to exceedingly bitter divisions from which the country has never fully recovered. Unlike Canada where, as many have argued, a discredited party unscrupulously exploited conscription to maintain itself in power,<sup>94</sup> the Newfoundland government introduced its Military Service Act in fear, without anticipating consequences. Surrounded by opposition on all sides and feeling increasingly insecure because its sole mandate for enforcing conscription was its own vote for extension, the administration adopted a policy of rigid censorship. In an effort to avoid political disaster in the outports, it then embarked on a series of delays which had the effect of forestalling conscription. In order to appease St. John's, it simultaneously permitted armed squads to proceed around the island in an attempt to enforce compliance with the provisions of the act. Yet, despite all provocations, antagonisms to the government remained at a simmer throughout 1918, and to the end there was a majority conviction that the Regiment must be maintained. Thus conscription, such as it was, amounted to little more than a scheme of fraud and moral blackmail, which under the circumstances constituted an astute piece of political strategy. Nonetheless, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that had both the government and opposition parties

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<sup>94</sup> Berger, *Conscription 1917*, p. ix. A.M. Willsms, however, has attempted to refute this. See A.M. Willsms, "Conscription 1917," pp. 1-14.



backed the efforts of the NPA recruiting committee at the time, the Military Service Act would not have been necessary.

The hope that the NPA would mitigate sectarian, social and geographic conflict was never fully borne out. Although the support of church leaders for the war effort was unequivocal, the fact that the St. John's elite was predominantly Protestant and controlled all regimental appointments gave rise to widespread resentment among the Roman Catholic and outport populations. Moreover, many of its members, through their commercial activities, proved time and time again that they were incapable of placing the public interest above private interests, and that they had little claim to either moral or practical leadership. The devotion of the St. John's elite to its own interests, to the interests of St. John's at the expense of the outports, to the Regiment at the expense of the Naval Reserve and to a resulting policy of conscription, all indicated that the population might emerge from the war even more divided than before. However, these generally reflected traditional stresses, which the common bond of the Regiment tended to ease.

The Patriotic Association was also devised to overcome serious administrative obstacles, which included the lack of military expertise, a regular militia department or an adequate administrative structure beyond the confines of the capital. The NPA successfully mustered the first and established itself as the second, both at a considerable saving to the public treasury.<sup>95</sup> In addition, through

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<sup>95</sup> Interestingly enough, as long as the Patriotic Association was in control the voluntary principle remained in tact, but once the department of militia was created a number of individuals and

their charitable activities the NPA and WPA were reasonably successful in substituting the voluntary principle and civilian control for government inaction. The NPA was less successful in establishing and maintaining a reliable network of outpost branches, and where generating support for the war effort, it was effective only in the St. John's area. It most certainly was incapable of handling any form of registration or conscription.

Two questions remain. To what extent was the NPA successful in meeting the colony's military and naval obligations, and why was the determination to maintain the Regiment so strong? Local and regimental historians have erroneously maintained that by the spring of 1918, just before the introduction of the Military Service Act, Newfoundland had a greater per capita enlistment rate than any other part of the British empire, excluding only the United Kingdom.<sup>96</sup> The statistics, even including enlistments in British and Canadian forces, fail to bear this out.<sup>97</sup> However, to be fair, the overwhelming majority of Newfoundland recruits were native-born, whereas in Canada and elsewhere

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organizations submitted claims for services previously rendered. For additional detail and several examples, see PLC 1917, McGrath, July 3, 1917, pp. 77-80; PLC 1918, Anderson, May 1, 1918, p. 73; PANL, P8/5/9, file 26, passim; Ibid., file Miscellaneous, passim; Ibid., file 15, passim.

<sup>96</sup> See McDonald, "FPU," p. 158; Day, "A Well Run Dry," pp. 12-13; Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, p. 126; Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 439.

<sup>97</sup> See Nicholas Mansergh, The Commonwealth Experience (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1969), p. 167; Keith, War Government, pp. 105-06; JHA 1919, Department of Militia Report, pp. 513-19. Approximately 3000 Newfoundlanders served in Canadian forces.

an exceedingly high percentage of recruits were British-born.<sup>98</sup> Also, the number of Newfoundland fatalities in proportion to men serving was significantly higher than elsewhere.<sup>99</sup> Even assuming that under the circumstances — which must include financial circumstances and the rural nature of the economy — the colony's contribution was an adequate one, there is still the question of what sustained the Regiment.

From the very beginning of the war the Regiment had symbolized the colony's distinct and separate identity. The attention and honours bestowed upon the Regiment, particularly after July 1, 1916,<sup>100</sup>

<sup>98</sup> By the end of the war, and following the imposition of conscription, only fifty-one per cent of the CEF was native-born. J.L. Granatstein and J.M. Hixman, Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 23-24.

<sup>99</sup> See fn. 95, previous page; also Nicholson, Fighting Newfoundlander, p. 509.

<sup>100</sup> Note, for example, the following statements: "The work of our boys in France and elsewhere has done more ... to give Newfoundland a place amongst the Dominions of the Empire than anything else in our history;" "As far as most of the world is concerned, Newfoundland dates from the formation of the Newfoundland Regiment;" "The Newfoundland Regiment has made Newfoundland, and put her in a position which she never occupied before, and which the most sanguine of her sons never thought that she would occupy;" "The splendid fighting qualities of our men have attained for Newfoundland ... a notoriety and measure of appreciation that would otherwise not have come to us;" respectively, PHA 1917, Higgins, May 30, 1917, p. 12; PLC 1918, Mews, April 23, 1918, p. 17; PHA 1918, Bennett, April 25, 1918, p. 43; PHA 1919, Downey, April 2, 1919, p. 7. See also McDonald, "FPU," pp. 159-60. From worrying about whether the colony would be included in "what is certain to be a radical readjustment of ... inter-Imperial relationships" in the spring of 1916, the press took to speaking of its "rightful" place from the fall of 1916. Compare, for example, Evening Telegram, June 22, 1916 to Ibid., October 6, December 27, 1916, May 1, 1917.

strengthened this feeling. The colony gathered a number of honours — including a peerage for its ex-prime minister, admission to the Imperial War Cabinet and elevation to the status of a first-class dominion under the Governor's Pension Act — precisely because of the Regiment.<sup>101</sup> St. John's NPA members garnered individual honours also.<sup>102</sup> In April 1918, in a mood of considerable self-assurance, the Newfoundland government officially adopted the title 'dominion'.<sup>103</sup> In spite of the often self-interested enthusiasm of St. John's, and in spite of the bloody carnage on the western front, the population maintained the Regiment out of pride. The Regiment had instilled, for the first time, a truly national purpose and sense of identity, and this applied beyond St. John's to the outports. Notwithstanding the NPAs many shortcomings, this was its greatest single achievement, for without the one there would not have been the other. Unfortunately, the confident expectations to which the Regiment gave rise at the time were not borne out in succeeding years. The overwhelming financial burden of the war, the capitalized cost of which was expected to reach \$35,000,000,<sup>104</sup> the staggering loss of life, the unhealthy expansion in the fishing industry<sup>105</sup> and the fact

<sup>101</sup> See Newfoundland Quarterly, Christmas 1918, p. 12.

<sup>102</sup> See Appendix F. A number of WPA members received honours also. In 1919 there were several male outport recipients.

<sup>103</sup> Noel, Politics in Newfoundland, pp. 130-31. The use of the word dominion was discontinued within two years.

<sup>104</sup> PANL, CN 8/3, W.F. Lloyd's Papers, file Misc., F.C. Berteau to Cashin, January 3, 1919 and enclosed statement.

<sup>105</sup> CO 194/301, Harris to Milner, January 4, 1921; McDonald, "FFU," pp. 219 and passim.

that, unlike Canada, the colony had not been in a position to broaden its basic productive capacity, all took their toll in the ensuing eras of economic nationalism and world-wide depression.

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## APPENDIX A

## ENLISTMENTS IN NEWFOUNDLAND REGIMENT BY MONTH, 1914-1918

Year	Month	Accepted	Rejected	Total
1914	September	757	248	1,005
	October		No Recruiting	
	November		No Recruiting	
		757	248	1,005
1915	December [1914]			
	January	583	611	1,194
	February			
	March	170	90	260
	April	142	92	234
	May	83	154	237
	June	75	82	157
	July	80	41	121
	August	53	31	84
	September	67	59	126
	October	76	64	140
	November	50	55	105
	December	39	47	86
		1,418	1,326	2,744
1916	January	27	38	65
	February	92	46	138
	March	174	127	301
	April	169	283	452
	May	169	131	300
	June	78	61	139
	July	76	70	146
	August	44	69	113
	September	22	33	55
	October	62	87	149
	November	98	71	169
	December	76	107	183
		1,087	1,123	2,210
1917	January	85	60	145
	February	41	35	76
	March	68	125	193
	April	143	334	477
	May	119	93	212

continued...



## APPENDIX A (continued)

Year	Month	Accepted	Rejected	Total
1917	June	57	43	100
	July	39	39	78
	*August	18	27	45
	September	117	34	151
	October	104	70	174
	November	144	75	219
	December	96	39	135
		<u>1,031</u>	<u>974</u>	<u>2,005</u>
	1918- January	45	32	77
	February	21	9	30
	March	22	14	36
	April	323	402	725
	May	684	603	1,287
	June	268	336	604
	July	138	221	359
	August	264	197	461
	September	83	330	413
	October	127	295	422
	November	9	74	83
		<u>1,984</u>	<u>2,513</u>	<u>4,497</u>
<u>Totals</u>				
To July 31, 1917		3,814	3,426	7,240
August 1-April 30, 1917		890	702	1,592
May 1, 1917-November 11, 1918		1,573	2,056	3,629
		<u>6,277</u>	<u>6,184</u>	<u>12,461</u>

\* Department of Militia formed; Militia Act passed August 11.

^ Military Service Act passed May 11.

Source: JHA 1919, Department of Militia Report, 1919, pp. 514-15.  
Totals given at the end of each calendar year are annual totals.

APPENDIX B  
DENOMINATIONAL BREAKDOWN BY DISTRICT, 1911

District	Population	Church of England	Roman Catholic	Methodist	Salvation Army	Presbyterian	Congregationalist	Other
Twillingate	22,705	3,777	2,424	13,144	3,100	161	48	51
Fogo	8,257	3,075	1,148	3,567	460	6	-	1
Bonaville	22,894	9,451	3,201	8,563	1,660	12	-	7
Trinity	21,788	10,508	1,525	8,390	1,294	14	32	25
Bay de Verde	10,213	591	2,294	7,324	2	1	-	1
Carbonear	5,114	880	1,288	2,707	237	2	-	-
Harbour Grace	11,925	6,965	2,544	1,910	385	110	-	11
Port de Grave	6,986	2,653	1,794	2,332	190	13	-	4
Harbour Main	9,471	2,543	6,626	214	1	1	-	13
Ferryland	5,793	149	5,639	-	1	1	-	3
Placentia-St. Mary's	16,099	1,812	12,985	1,077	210	12	-	3
Burin	11,616	2,026	4,023	4,804	759	-	1	3
Fortune Bay	9,989	6,739	2,204	294	276	-	476	-
Burgeo-La Poile	7,793	6,298	134	1,276	52	9	4	-
St. George's	11,861	3,571	7,265	722	91	204	-	8
St. Barbe	10,481	4,645	2,411	2,951	413	24	2	35
Labrador	3,949	1,541	346	732	5	8	5	1,312
St. John's West	20,550	4,778	10,357	3,971	637	569	142	96
St. John's East	25,138	6,614	12,949	4,064	295	729	303	181
Total	242,619	78,616	81,177	68,042	10,141	1,876	1,013	1,754
% of Total Population	100.00	32.4	33.5	28.0	4.2	.8	.4	.7

Source: Census of Newfoundland and Labrador 1911, Vol. 1, pp. xv, xviii-xix.

## APPENDIX C

GOVERNMENT REVENUE, EXPENDITURE AND  
NEWFOUNDLAND PUBLIC DEBT,  
1914-15 TO 1918-19

Year	Revenue	Expenditure	Public Debt
1914-15	\$3,950,790*	\$4,008,622	\$31,454,678.45
1915-16	4,600,271	4,110,885	34,489,665.60
1916-17	5,206,647	4,554,890	34,489,765.60
1917-18	6,540,082	5,369,454	34,489,955.60
1918-19	9,535,725	6,766,430	42,032,785.60

\* Figure includes a \$500,000 Bank of Montreal loan and \$198,158 taken from the Reserve Trust Fund.

Source: McDonald, "FPU," pp. 361-62.

## APPENDIX D

IMPORTS/EXPORTS/TOTAL VOLUME FOREIGN TRADE,  
1914-15 TO 1918-19

Year	Imports	Exports	Total Foreign Trade	Index (%)
1914-15	\$12,350,000	\$13,136,000	\$25,486,000	172.0*
1915-16	16,427,000	18,969,000	35,386,000	238.8
1916-17	21,318,000	22,381,000	43,699,000	294.9
1917-18	26,892,000	30,153,000	57,045,000	385.0
1918-19	33,297,000	36,784,000	70,081,000	473.0

\* Base year 1888.

Source: McDonald, "FPU," p. 363.

APPENDIX E  
SALT COD FISH EXPORTS  
(QUANTITY AND PRICE), 1914-1918

Year	Quintals	Index (%)	Export Value per Quintal	Index (%)
1914	1,094,122	102.4*	\$ 6.70	139.3*
1915	1,421,014	133.0	7.31	152.0
1916	1,568,055	146.8	8.21	170.2
1917	1,821,206	170.4	10.33	214.8
1918	1,681,730	157.4	14.46	300.6

\* Base year 1876.

Source: McDonald, "FFU," p. 366.

## APPENDIX F.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE<sup>1</sup>  
NEWFOUNDLAND PATRIOTIC ASSOCIATION

Adams, George J.	[Registrar of Deeds ?]; Conception Bay Recruiting Committee, Chairman; War History Committee, Vice-Chairman
Anderson, John	MLC; John Anderson & Co. (dry goods); Employment Committee
*Angel, F.W. <sup>2</sup>	Engineer; St. John's Iron Foundry; Jas. Angel & Co. (machinists); Wm. Heap & Co.; Exec. St. John's Rifle Club; Musketry Committee, Hon. Sec.; M.B.E. 1918
*Ayre, C.P.	Ayre & Sons Ltd. (export/import); Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Pensions and Disabilities Board; Committee of Control, Jensen Camp; War Memorial Committee 1920; M.B.E. [1920 ?]
Ayre, Eric	Ayre & Sons Ltd. (export/import); Offr. MGB; RNR; <sup>3</sup> Reserve Force/Standing Committee
Ayre, F.W.	Ayre & Sons Ltd. (export/import); Employment Committee
*Baird, David	Jas. Baird Ltd; Jas. C. Baird Ltd. (export/import); Exec. St. John's Ambulance Association; Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Imperial Red Cross Committee; Employment Committee

<sup>1</sup> This list is selective, but includes major NPA members along with their occupation and principal committee affiliations. Wherever applicable and known, para-military affiliations and regimental positions (honourary and otherwise) are also included. Temporary regimental appointments have been ignored because the necessary information is often difficult to locate or missing. The list of honours may be incomplete as there is no single source for any one year. The information has been culled from sources in the Bibliography. Where sources conflict, an effort has been made to resolve differences.

<sup>2</sup> An asterisk (\*) denotes a member of the original Patriotic Committee. (above, pp. 36-39).

<sup>3</sup> Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

\*Bennett, John R. MHA St. John's West (People's Party); Colonial Secretary 1914; Minister of Militia 1917; Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Proclamation Committee; Officers Selection Committee; Food Committee

\*Blackall, W.W. Superintendent Anglican School Board; Recruiting Committee; Employment Committee; War Memorial Committee 1920; M.B.E. 1918

Blandford, S.D. MLC; K.C.; Food Committee

Bowring, E.A. Bowring Bros. Ltd. (export/import); Finance Committee 1917, Hon. Treas.; Patriotic Fund 1917, Hon. Treas.; Employment Committee; Committee of Control, Convalescent Hospital

\*Bowring, Sir Edgar R. <sup>4</sup> MLC; Bowring Bros. Ltd. (export/import); Red Cross Steamship Company; Finance Committee, Chairman; Patriotic Fund, Chairman; Proclamation Committee; Nfld. War Contingent Association 1916, Chairman; Committee of Control, Convalescent Hospital

\*Browning, John G. Browning & Son (manufacturing interests); Finance Committee; Patriotic Committee (including Relief Committee); Ad Hoc Committee to confer with Government May 1918

\*Burke, Vincent P. LL.D.; Superintendent Roman Catholic School Board; Offr. CCC; NPA, Hon. Sec.; Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Reserve Force/Standing Committee, Hon. Sec.; Proclamation Committee; Officers Selection Committee; Recruiting Committee; Employment Committee; War Memorial Committee 1920; M.B.E. 1918

Carty, George T. Offr. CCC; Exec. St. John's Rifle Club; RNR; Recruiting Committee August 1914; Pensions and Disabilities Board; Committee of Control, Convalescent Hospital

\*Cashin, Michael P. MHA Ferryland (People's Party); Minister of Finance and Customs; Finance Committee, Vice-Chairman; Patriotic Fund, Vice-Chairman; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Proclamation Committee; Transport Committee 1915; Employment

- Committee; Pensions and Disabilities Board; Victory Loan Committee; K.B.E. 1918.
- \*Clift, J.A. K.C.; MHA Twillingate (Liberal); Reserve Force/Standing Committee, Deputy Chairman; Nominating Committee; Aeroplane Committee, Hon. Treas.; Imperial Red Cross Committee, Hon. Treas.; Public Safety Committee 1915; Pensions and Disabilities Board; C.B.E. 1918
- \*Conroy, C. O'Neil K.C.; C.O. CGC; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Officers Selection Committee; Militia Committee 1915; Victory Loan Committee; O.B.E. 1918
- Cowan, H.E. [Cowan and Andrews (general merchants) ?]; Pensions and Disabilities Board
- Crosbie, John MHA Bay de Verde (People's Party); Newfoundland Produce Company; Crosbie & Co. (export/import); Employment Committee; Victory Loan Committee; K.B.E. 1919
- Curtis, Levi Superintendent Methodist School Board; Recruiting Committee; Employment Committee; War Memorial Committee 1920; M.B.E. 1918
- Davidson, Sir W.E. Governor, 1913-17; Lt.-Col. (Col. 1916; Hon. Col. 1917) RNR; NPA 1914-17, Chairman; Officers Selection Committee, Chairman; Food Committee, Chairman
- Edens, T.J. Thos. J. Edens (groceries and provisions); Reserve Force/Standing Committee May 1916; War Memorial Committee 1920
- \*Ellis, W.J. W.J. Ellis (building contractors); Ex-St. John's Mayor; Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Nominating Committee
- Emerson, L.E. K.C.; War History Committee, Hon. Sec.
- Fenelon, John J. K.C.; Reserve Force/Standing Committee May 1916; Imperial Red Cross Committee
- Franklin, William H. Franklin Agencies; C.O. CLB 1903-04; RNR; Recruiting Committee August 1914; C.B.E. [1919 ?]
- Fraser, N.S. M.D.; Standing Medical Board; Chairman
- \*Gosling, William G. Harvey & Co. (export/import); Municipal Commission 1914, Chairman; St. John's Mayor



1916; Patriotic Fund; Recruiting Committee January 1917; Aeroplane Committee, Chairman; Imperial Red Cross Committee, Chairman; Employment Committee; War Memorial Committee 1920, Chairman

Green, W.H. Architect; Exec. St. John's Rifle Club; RNR (Hon. Maj.); Musketry Committee 1914, Chairman; O.B.E. [1920 ?]

\*Grieve, W.B. Baine Johnston & Co. (export/import); Finance Committee, Acting Chairman 1917; Patriotic Fund, Acting Chairman 1917 (also Relief Committee); Recruiting Committee 1916, Hon. Sec.; Forestry Committee, Chairman; War Memorial Committee 1919, Chairman; O.B.E. 1918; C.B.E. 1918

Grimes, George MHA Port de Grave (Union); Employment Committee

Harris, Sir Charles A. Governor 1917; NPA 1918, Chairman

\*Harris, John MLC; Hearn & Co. (wholesale provisions); Board of Managers, CCC, Chairman; Finance Committee (also Pension Committee March 1915, Convenor); Patriotic Fund; Proclamation Committee

Harvey, A.J. A. Harvey & Co. (steamship agents); Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Transport Committee 1914, Convenor; War Memorial Committee 1919, Acting Chairman

\*Harvey, C.M. H.J. Stabb & Co. (commission merchants); Committee of Control, Convalescent Hospital, Hon. Treas.

\*Harvey, John MLC; Harvey & Co. (export/import); Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Proclamation Committee; Home Defence Committee 1914, Convenor; Public Safety Committee 1915; Victory Loan Committee

Hickman, A.E. MHA Bay de Verde (Liberal); Smith Co. Ltd. (fish exporters); Employment Committee

Higgins, W.J. K.C.; MHA St. John's East (People's Party); Reserve Force/Standing Committee, Asst. Hon. Sec.; Musketry Committee

Horwood, R.F. Horwood Lumber Co.; Forestry Committee; Pensions and Disabilities Board; Committee of Control, Jensen Camp, Chairman; M.B.E. 1919

Horwood, Sir William	Chief Justice, Supreme Court; Horwood Lumber Co.; Patriotic Fund; Non-Combatant Selection Committee; Chairman; Cot Fund, Chairman; Joint Committee, Red Cross-St. John's Ambulance Association, Chairman; Committee of Control, Convalescent Hospital
Howley, W.R.	K.C.; Reserve Force/Standing Committee May 1916; Ad Hoc Committee to confer with Government May 1918
Hunt, C.E.	K.C.; War Memorial Committee 1920
*Hutchings, C.H.	K.C.; Deputy Minister Justice 1914; Inspector General, Newfoundland Constabulary 1917; C.O. MGB; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Officers Selection Committee; Recruiting Committee August 1914; Militia Committee 1915; O.B.E. 1919
Job, R.B.	Job Bros.; Job Stores (export-import); Employment Committee; Ad Hoc Committee to confer with Government May 1918
*Job, W.C.	MLC; Job Bros.; Job Stores (export/import); Recruiting Committee December 1914, Chairman
Johnstone, J.W.N.	Reid Newfoundland Co.; Reserve Force/Standing Committee
*Kent, J.M.	K.C.; MHA St. John's East (Liberal); Justice, Supreme Court 1916; Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Employment Committee, Chairman
*Knowing, George	MLC; George Knowing (general merchants); Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Employment Committee
*Lloyd, W.F.	MHA Trinity (Liberal); Ed. Evening Telegram 1914-16; Prime Minister 1918; Recruiting Committee 1916, Hon. Sec.; Food Committee; K.C.M.G. 1919
*MacDermott, Anthony	Lt.-Commander, Royal Naval Reserve; [honour unknown]
*Macpherson, Archibald	Royal Stores Ltd. (manufacturers, export/import, general merchants); Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund
*Macpherson, Cluny	M.D.; Royal Stores Ltd. (manufacturers, export/import, general merchants); Surg. Capt. MGB 1905-11; Vice-Pres. St. John's Ambulance

Association; RAMC; RNR, Director Medical Services; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Physical Fitness Committee; Standing Medical Board, Sec.; C.M.G. 1918

Macpherson, Harold      Royal Stores Ltd. (manufacturers, export/import, general merchants); Food Committee

MacNab, T.A.      T.A. MacNab & Co. (commission merchants); Recruiting Committee

\*McGrath, Patrick T.      MLC; Man. Dir. Evening Herald; Finance Committee, Hon. Sec.; Patriotic Fund, Hon. Sec.; Non-Combatant Selection Committee, Hon. Sec.; Aeroplane Fund; Recruiting Committee 1916; Pensions and Disabilities Board, Chairman; Forestry Committee; Joint Committee, Red Cross-St. John's Ambulance Association; Ad Hoc Committee to confer with Government May 1918; Victory Loan Committee; K.B.E. 1918

McKay, J.J.      Campbell & McKay (commission merchants); Offr. Nfld. Highlanders; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Non-Combatant Selection Committee; War Memorial Committee 1919, Hon. Sec.; War Memorial Committee 1920, Convenor, Hon. Sec.

\*McNeil, Thomas      T. McMurdo & Co. (pharmaceutical, manufacturers agent); C.O. Nfld. Highlanders 1907-12; Recruiting Committee

Monroe, W.J.      Monroe & Co.; Monroe Export (export/import); Employment Committee

Montgomerie, A.J.      Mgt., Furness Withy Co.; [Offr. Nfld. Highlanders ?]; RNR; C.O. Headquarters, St. John's (Hon. Maj.); Finance Committee; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Transport Committee 1914; Recruiting Committee August 1914; Militia Committee 1915; O.B.E. 1918; C.B.E. 1919

Morris, Sir Edward P.      K.C.; MHA St. John's West (People's Party); Prime Minister; 1909-17; War History Committee, Chairman; Created Baron Morris 1918

\*Morris, F.J.      K.C.; MHA Placentia-St. Mary's (People's Party); Justice, Central District Court 1917; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Nominating Committee; Recruiting Committee December 1914; Recruiting Committee 1916, Chairman; War Memorial Committee 1920; O.B.E. 1919

\*Morris, J.W. Reid Newfoundland Co.; Exec. St. John's Rifle Club; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Musketry Committee; Militia Committee 1915; M.B.E. 1918

\*Munn, J.S. Bowring Bros. (export/import); Red Cross Steamship Co.; Finance Committee 1914-17, Hon. Treas.; Patriotic Fund 1914-17, Hon. Treas.

Munn, W.A. W.A. Munn (flour and general commission merchant); Recruited briefly January 1915

Outerbridge, Herbert Harvey & Co. (export/import); RNR; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Equipment Committee 1914-16, Chairman; M.B.E. 1919\*

\*Outerbridge, Sir J. Harvey & Co. (export/import); C.O. CLB 1901-03; NFA, Vice-Chairman; Reserve Force/Standing Committee, Chairman; Transport Committee 1915; Officers Selection Committee

\*Paterson, Lamont M.D.; Reid Newfoundland Co. (medical superintendent); C.O. Nfld. Highlanders; RAMC ([Hon. ?] Maj); RNR, Deputy Director Medical Services; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Physical Fitness Committee; Officers Selection Committee; Non-Combatant Selection Committee; Standing Medical Board; O.B.E. 1919

Peters, J.E.P. Peters & Sons (manufacturers' agents); Reserve Force/Standing Committee May 1916

Piccott, A.W. MHA Harbour Grace (People's Party); Minister of Marine and Fisheries 1914-17; Recruiting Committee December 1914; Employment Committee

Pratt, J.C. Direct Agencies; Reserve Force/Standing Committee May 1916

Reid, R.G. Reid Newfoundland Co.; Employment Committee

\*Reid, Sir W.D.<sup>5</sup> Reid Newfoundland Co.; Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Reserve Force/Standing Committee

\*Rendell, R.G. R.G. Rendell & Co. (general importers and provision dealers); C.O. CLB; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Transport Committee 1915,

<sup>5</sup> K.B.E. 1916.

Chairman; Officers Selection Committee; Militia Committee 1915; Joint Committee, Red Cross-St. John's Ambulance Association; Ad Hoc Committee to confer with Government May 1918; War Memorial Committee 1920; O.B.E. 1918; C.B.E. 1919

\*Rennie, W.H. St. John's Gas Light Co.; Exec. St. John's Rifle Club; RNR (Hon. Capt.); Reserve Force/ Standing Committee; Musketry Committee, Convenor (1915 Chairman); Militia Committee 1915; M.B.E. 1918

\*Robinson, J.A. MLC: Prop. Daily News; Mayolind Fund; Employment Committee; Food Committee; M.B.E. 1919

\*Ryan, J.D. MLC: Jas. D. Ryan (grocery and provision dealers); Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund

Shea, George Shea & Co. (steamship and insurance agents); Transport Committee 1914; Employment Committee

Steer, C.R. Steer Bros. (importers and general merchants); Aeroplane Committee, Sec.; Imperial Red Cross Committee, Hon. Sec.; Employment Committee; M.B.E. 1919

Steer, F.H. Steer Bros. (importers and general merchants); Imperial Red Cross Committee, Treas.; Joint Committee, Red Cross-St. John's Ambulance Association, Hon. Sec. Treas.; War Memorial Committee 1920; M.B.E. 1918

Tait, J.S. M.D.; Standing Medical Board, Chairman

Templeton, R.A. Robert Templeton (export/import); Pensions and Disabilities Board; Committee of Control, Jensen Camp

Timewell, H.A. G.N. Read, Son and Watson (accountants); RNR (Hon. Maj.), Milid. Pay and Record Office, London; Finance Committee; O.B.E. [1919 ?]

Urquhart, J.B. J.B. Urquhart (manufacturers' agents); RNR (Hon. Lt.), Quartermaster's Dept, Headquarters, St. John's; Reserve Force/Standing Committee; Equipment Committee 1916, Chairman

Warren, W.R. K.C.; Reserve Force/Standing Committee May 1916; Ad Hoc Committee to confer with Government May 1918

\*Winter, M.G.

MLC; T. & M. Winter (export/import); Finance Committee; Patriotic Fund; Pensions and Disabilities Board; Committee of Control, Convalescent Hospital, Chairman; Victory Loan Committee; C.B.E. 1919

Withers, J.W.

King's Printer; Recruiting Committee January 1917; Food Committee



