

Notes and Comments

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Volume 18, numéro 2, fall 2002

The New Early Modern Newfoundland: Part One

URI : https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/nflds18_2nc01

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Faculty of Arts, Memorial University

ISSN

1198-8614 (imprimé)

1715-1430 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cette note

Hiller, J. K. (2002). Notes and Comments. *Newfoundland Studies*, 18(2), 335–337.

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Maritime History Archive

BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES IN NEWFOUNDLAND NEWSPAPERS, 1810-1890

The Maritime History Archive (MHA) at Memorial University announces the publication of a CD entitled *Births, Deaths and Marriages in Newfoundland Newspapers, 1810-1890*. It is the culmination of Gertrude Crosbie's great volunteer research project to preserve the Newfoundland genealogical record.

The CD contains more than 40,000 entries for births, deaths and marriages transcribed from 44 Newfoundland newspapers. The database includes 36 searchable fields such as first and last names, age, place of residence, date of event, parents' names, and cause of death. There is also a note field containing more detailed information. The database is flexible, allowing for queries on any field or combination of fields. *Births, Deaths and Marriages* is a valuable resource for many types of researchers including genealogists, medical and legal historians, cultural geographers and folklorists. Available April 2004 - \$49.95 per CD.

VIRTUAL EXHIBITS

The Archive is also preparing two virtual exhibits — *Resettlement in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1950-1970*, and *Protest in Newfoundland and Labrador: A Legacy of Dissent, 1900-1970* — to be posted on its web page in summer 2004. Funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Association of Newfoundland and Labrador Archives, the MHA is currently conducting research and collecting images for the exhibits. Each exhibit will contain approximately 300 images, many rarely seen before.

Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives

THOMAS PEYTON'S LAND SURVEYS

THE PEYTON FAMILY fonds in the Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Queen Elizabeth II Library, consists of a variety of private papers and records created by and documenting the activities of four generations of the Peyton Family of Exploits and Twillingate, Newfoundland. Included recently are approximately 900 documents related to land survey work carried out by Thomas Peyton in his capacity as government-appointed surveyor and magistrate for the Twillingate area.

These documents are of three types: eighteen licenses (1892-1906) granting residents permission to clear land; 46 petitions (1892-1909) from area residents requesting grants of land; and 833 land surveys (1862-1910) documenting size, location and title to land. They are all textual documents, although the surveys do contain drawings of the land grants.

The Peyton family has been resident in Newfoundland since 1770 when John Peyton (1747-1829) of Dorset, England, first settled in the Exploits area of Notre Dame Bay. He soon became one of the most successful and controversial settlers in all of Newfoundland, and is best known for his contentious dealings with the Beothuk. Thomas Peyton (1828-1912) was one of John Peyton's grandsons. He became a deputy government surveyor for Notre Dame Bay in the 1860s. In 1893, after serving a single four-year term in the House of Assembly, he was appointed as magistrate at Pilley's Island, a booming mining town in the western part of the bay.

It was in his capacity as deputy surveyor that Thomas Peyton came to create the land surveys and other documents found in this fonds. The surveys are unique and rare documents, as duplicate copies that may have been made at the time have not survived in the government's land deed registry, if, indeed, copies were ever deposited there. The documents provide valuable information about settlement and land use patterns in Notre Dame Bay, and testify to the ownership of land, the division of land among family members, and the sale of, and financial value assigned to property. In most cases the surveys correspond with the petitions for the land. The fact that they document a specific geographical area and were created by a single individual increases their documentary and research value.

The Peyton fonds is of considerable interest to genealogists, historians, lawyers and title searchers. These surveys are aesthetically pleasing documents, and all the documents are in remarkably good condition.

Conference Notice

NEWFOUNDLAND AND THE ENTENTE CORDIALE, 1904-2004

A CONFERENCE on this theme will take place at The Rooms on 18-19 September 2004, continuing at Corner Brook on 20-21 September. The event is being organized by a committee representing the Newfoundland Historical Society, Memorial University, the Provincial Archives, and the Department of Tourism. For further information, contact Christopher English at the Department of History, Memorial University.