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Governor Sir Humphrey Walwyn's Account of the 17 June 1939 Royal Visit to Newfoundland

Melvin Baker and Peter Neary

In December 1936, in a seismic constitutional event, King Edward VIII abdicated the British throne. He was succeeded as sovereign by his brother, the Duke of York, second son of King George V, who took the regnal name of George VI. The coronation of the new King, aged 41, followed on 12 May 1937; in 1939 George VI and his consort, Queen Elizabeth (née Bowes-Lyon), visited Canada (17 May–7 June, 12–15 June), the United States (8–11 June), and Newfoundland (Saturday, 17 June).¹ The Newfoundland visit was announced on 4 January 1939.²

The King had previously visited Newfoundland in June/July 1913 when he was 17 and serving as a naval cadet on HMS *Cumberland*. (Known at the time as Prince Albert, he became Duke of York in 1920.) With a party of other cadets, he landed at St. George's on 18 June.³ Hosted by Harry Duff Reid of the Reid Newfoundland Company, owner of the Newfoundland Railway, the visitors then fished in west coast rivers, making use of a special train provided for the occasion, with a crew that included Herbert J. Russell, a future general manager of the line.⁴ Following this outdoor idyll, the Prince visited St. John's, arriving there on 28 June and, accompanied by Captain Aubrey C.H. Smith of the *Cumberland*, landing at the King's Wharf

at 1 p.m. to an enthusiastic public reception.⁵ He was hosted in the city by Governor Walter E. Davidson and attended a luncheon with local dignitaries, visited the Nickel Theatre, toured Murray's Pond,⁶ a fox farm,⁷ and Bowring Park⁸ (driven about in Reid's Rolls Royce⁹), played tennis, and was feted in the afternoon of 1 July at a dance and garden party at Government House.¹⁰ The *Cumberland* sailed from St. John's the next morning.

In 1913 Newfoundland was a self-governing Dominion of the British Empire, but in 1939 the country was being administered by a British-appointed Commission of Government, which had been in office since 16 February 1934. Under the Commission system, forced on Newfoundland by the financial crisis of the Great Depression, there was a governor and six commissioners, three drawn from Newfoundland and three from the United Kingdom but all named by London. The Commission was chaired by the governor and had both executive and legislative authority. Commissioners had named portfolios, with economic and financial matters being kept firmly in British hands. The January 1939 announcement of the forthcoming royal visit was made by Governor Vice-Admiral Sir Humphrey Walwyn (1879–1957), who, along with his public-spirited wife, Eileen Mary, née van Straubenzee (1883–1973), had arrived in St. John's on 16 January 1936 to assume vice-regal duties.¹¹ By definition, Walwyn, who would have the longest stay in Government House on Military Road of any vice-regal representative in the twentieth century, was the leading figure in planning for the reception of the King and Queen on 17 June.

To get ready for the big day, the government formed a compact controlling committee and a larger central committee, which comprised representatives of religious denominations and a diverse range of other members, to a total of 33.¹² Walwyn chaired the controlling committee and the Commissioner for Home Affairs and Education, J.A. Winter, chaired the central committee.¹³ The Secretary of the Commission, W.J. Carew, arguably Newfoundland's foremost public servant in the twentieth century, was named "Secretary of 'The Royal Visit Committees.'"¹⁴

The plan for the royal visit was that the King and Queen would land from the RMS *Empress of Britain* at Holyrood on the morning of the seventeenth of June, be driven to St. John's, attend various events in the capital at Government House and elsewhere, and in the late afternoon depart from Portugal Cove for their awaiting transatlantic liner. The central committee divided its work as follows: Decorations and Arches Committee; Children's Committee; Committee on the Lining of the Streets; War Memorial Ceremony Committee; Publicity Committee; Music Committee; and Committee on Alternative Arrangements.¹⁵ Seven subcommittees likewise functioned: Decorations and Arches Committee (Holyrood to St. John's); Decorations and Arches Committee (St. John's to Portugal Cove); Arches Committee (within St. John's); Decorations Committee (within St. John's); Harbour Decorations Committee; Fireworks Committee; and Purchasing Committee.¹⁶

The planning that ensued was documented in granular detail, and the records produced and filed away constitute a rich vein for historians. In response to a request that a "typically Newfoundland child" be chosen to present flowers to the Queen at Holyrood, local magistrate Matthew Hawco put forward the name of Christina Barron, whose father worked as a railway section foreman; the family also had a commendable record of military service.¹⁷ In seeking approval for her selection — she was said to be "about nine years of age" — Hawco asked for direction on the kind of attire she should wear and the words she should use in making her presentation. He explained he was leaving the matter of whether the family could afford the clothes required for the occasion until he had received permission. A radio address the King, who had a speech impediment, was to give while in St. John's was limited to two minutes and the text carefully scrutinized and approved in correspondence between the governor and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, the British minister responsible for Newfoundland affairs.¹⁸ When prominent businessman Sir Eric Bowring, the Newfoundland Board of Trade, and the St. John's municipal council urged that the proposed itinerary for the royal couple be revised to include a visit to Bowring Park, the proposal was firmly rejected by the

government. The thinking on this matter was explained in a lengthy letter to the press by Commissioner for Justice L.E. Emerson, who feared trouble and arranged for the recruitment of 23 “permanent Special Constables” to help with policing during the royal visit.¹⁹ No reigning monarch had ever visited Newfoundland before, and the government had to take account of “entirely new” contingencies. Bowring Park was off limits because “no portion of the route” planned for the royal visitors called “for more professional units than this particular area.” “The trees, the shrubs, the winding paths, all of which go to make for its beauty,” Emerson cautioned, “cause the most alarm in my mind, for reasons I do not need to elaborate.” On 10 June, an act became law that banned, except under licence from the chief of police, the firing of guns — a traditional Newfoundland form of greeting — or the use of fireworks while the King and Queen were in the country.²⁰ To move the visitors about safely, comfortably, and efficiently, the government imported a specially equipped Humber car from England.²¹ This was provided free of charge (Newfoundland paid transportation costs) by the special services division of Rootes Ltd. and was returned to the company during the summer. The lists of those who attended events in honour of the royal visitors and of those singled out to be presented to them afford a window into the social structure of Newfoundland in the period.²² Handsomely produced, the official program for the royal visit was printed and distributed in good time.²³ In practice, the royal visit went smoothly, though the weather on the day of the visit — something no government could control — was decidedly mixed, with rain pelting down in the morning and mainly overcast conditions thereafter, with a brief burst of sunshine. As the weather closed in again in the afternoon, the exit of the royal couple from Portugal Cove had to be hastened.

The events of 17 June in Newfoundland attracted extensive press coverage, both at home and abroad, and because the 1939 royal tour of North America came not long before the outbreak of war between Great Britain and her allies and Germany in September 1939, it remains a magnet for historians. As recently as 2012, the film *Hyde Park*

on Hudson made much of the visit of George VI and Queen Elizabeth to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt and family at Hyde Park, New York, while in the United States. Several commemorative volumes were published in the aftermath of the royal tour; one of them, compiled and printed by A.L. Barrett of Curling, Newfoundland, and dated 1942, featured reports from Canadian weekly newspapers.²⁴ In 1942 also, C.J. Burchell, the first High Commissioner of Canada to Newfoundland,²⁵ asked Walwyn for comment on a draft chapter about events in Newfoundland from an official history of the royal tour being written by Gustave Lanctot, Dominion Archivist in Ottawa.²⁶ Lanctot's chapter found its way to W.J. Carew, who was "rather ruthless" in his emendations and concerned about one matter in particular: "This country has been cursed so long by misleading descriptions of the climate that I think in a work which is likely to be widely read, reference to the weather which prevailed during the Royal Visit should be suppressed. As a matter of fact, if the King and Queen had come the preceding day they would have enjoyed a gloriously warm and sunny holiday."²⁷ Carew need not have worried: Lanctot's account, *The Royal Tour of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in Canada and the United States of America 1939*, did not find its way into print until 1964, when an abridgement was brought out by the E.P. Taylor Foundation of Toronto.

Among the invitees to the grounds of Government House on the afternoon of the royal visit were Joseph Roberts Smallwood, who on 1 April 1949 would become the first premier of the new Canadian province of Newfoundland, and his wife, Clara (née Oates). He appeared in formal attire and wore a top hat; she wore a long dress and sported a shoulder fur.²⁸ At the time, Joe Smallwood was seeking to publish a withering account of the Commission of Government — "Newfoundland with the Lid Off" — he had written earlier in the year.²⁹ He made the invitation list thanks to his service on the Publicity Committee, chaired by J.S. Currie of the St. John's *Daily News*. Since 1937, Smallwood had acquired a large radio audience for his "Barrelman" program, heard nightly, Monday–Saturday, from 6:45 to 7:00 p.m. As he always was in search of material for the program (he scripted each broadcast),

the royal visit was tailor-made for his purpose. On the evening of 19 June, he gave his listeners a rapturous account of the King and Queen:

Well, the great event has come and gone — Newfoundland has had the privilege of seeing, greeting and cheering the king and queen. It's an event that will be remembered and talked about for years to come. . . . I've never seen or heard such enthusiasm in Newfoundland before. . . . We had all read and heard, of course, of how natural and gracious the king and queen are — how relaxed and human they are — but I can't think any of us were prepared for what we actually saw. Why, ladies and gentlemen, if you saw the king walking down the street some night, and didn't know who he was, you'd have taken him for an ordinary young man — striking, handsome, a little serious-looking, no doubt, but anything rather than the mental picture most of us have of the King of England and emperor of India. As for the queen — well, of course, she captured everybody's heart, men, women and children. As the Americans would say, as they have said — she's a natural.³⁰

Radical in his political and economic thinking, Smallwood was also an anglophile (he had been named in honour of Joseph Chamberlain and Field Marshal Lord Roberts) and was drawn to titles, honours, awards, and pomp and circumstance. Having known many ups and downs in life and by nature a pied piper, he was adept at getting along by going along.

In his admirable 2009 memoir, the Newfoundland writer, traveller, art collector, and wit, Cyril J. Fox (1931–2018), also wrote memorably of the impression made by Queen Elizabeth:

On June 17, 1939, . . . I was perched on the tall green gates comprising the rear entrance to the garden of our house in St. John's, Newfoundland. It was a typical June in these North Atlantic climes — cold and grey. But I was gleefully

waving from on high to a gracious, 38-year-old Scottish matron riding in an open car next to a morose-looking thin man in an admiral's uniform of the Royal Navy. My semaphore conveyed all the excitement of an eight-year-old-going-on-nine caught up in a great occasion. Wonder of wonders, the lady — looking straight at me and positively beaming — returned my waves before her Humber convertible proceeded on down Military Road, through a traditional Newfoundland “green bough” arch of welcome and into Government House. For this was Queen Elizabeth and the admiral beside her King George VI. Their one-day visit to St. John's was rounding out a big North American tour that was supposed to have cemented British relations with the United States, Canada and the still separate colony of Newfoundland as war all too obviously loomed in Europe.

But “cementing relations” be damned. It was the regal smile, meant for me and me alone, that justified the Royal Tour of 1939 in my eyes and had me, even 50 years later, sending Elizabeth the Queen Mother a birthday card every August with a reminder of that split-second of gestural communing we'd experienced one June day in St. John's. I never put a return address on my greetings, so I never had a reply — or a visit from the Special Branch.³¹

The organizers of the event had worked a kind of magic.

On 26 June 1939, Governor Walwyn devoted his entire quarterly despatch to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs Sir Thomas Inskip to the royal visit. His positive account of events was well received in London and duly filed. The archival reference for the document at The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, United Kingdom, is DO35/725/N8/18, Walwyn to Inskip, 26 June 1939, No. 193.³² It is reprinted here, with permission, as a contribution to the understanding of the history of Newfoundland in a pivotal year. In editing the despatch for publication, we have corrected obvious errors and, in the interest of easy reading, lightly added punctuation, but without changing meaning. Readers of

Walwyn's clubby insider account should remember that, at the time of the celebratory events it describes, Newfoundland was still in the grip of the Great Depression; in April 1939 there were almost as many people living on relief (about a quarter of the population) as there had been in March 1934, the month after the Commission of Government was inaugurated.³³

A very different note from that of Governor Walwyn was struck by a correspondent ("W.J.K.") of the *Evening Telegram* who, in a letter published on 22 June, reflected on "the lack of cheering and of visible enthusiasm, the silence that was observed at times in the crowds that lined the route along which their Majesties passed."³⁴ According to another letter writer ("X.Y.Z."), the King and Queen had been whisked about at high speed with only a glimpse of them possible; this had produced "disappointment too deep to be understood by any who did not witness it."³⁵ The royal visit highlighted Newfoundland's enduring British connection, but in retrospect that too was illusory. In the decade that followed the spectacle and rituals of 17 June 1939, the curtain would fall on the British Empire in Newfoundland. Humphrey Walwyn's successor at Government House in St. John's, Sir Gordon Macdonald, would be the last British-appointed governor (1946–49) to live there.

DOCUMENT

NEWFOUNDLAND.
CONFIDENTIAL.
No. 193. 26th June, 1939.

Government House,
St. John's,

Sir,

I have the honour to submit herewith my Report for the period commencing 9th May and ending the 1st July, 1939.

In comparison with the importance of the Royal visit other events fade into insignificance.

As you will appreciate, the late Spring made it difficult to inspect the roads and wharves at Holyrood and Portugal Cove until after my return.³⁶ This left a comparatively short time for the extensive repairs to be effected before they could be in condition worthy of the occasion.

In addition, several of the sub-Committees formed had achieved very little. One outstanding exception, however, was the Committee presided over by His Worship The Mayor,³⁷ who was largely responsible for the large number of Arches of Welcome erected along the route.

The indisposition of the Honourable J.A. Winter,³⁸ Chairman of the Central Committee, and of Mr. W.J. Carew, C.B.E., the Secretary of the Controlling and Central Committees, also caused a certain amount of delay as well, throwing additional work on my Private Secretary.³⁹

In spite of these difficulties it was possible to issue the Official Programme for sale about June 13th and copies of this Programme were sent to you direct. It had been suggested that the covers and the printing might have been done elsewhere, for as you know, Newfoundland has its limitations; but I am pleased to say that the eventual production was entirely Newfoundland and has on the whole evoked favourable comment.

About the beginning of the month, the question of suitable anchor berths for the Royal Liner and escorting Cruisers was raised, and after some commendable work by District Magistrate Hawco⁴⁰ (who before becoming a Magistrate was a Harbour Construction Engineer), Captain M.G. Dalton,⁴¹ M.B.E., the Marine Superintendent, and Captain J.J. Whelan,⁴² Coastal Preventive Officer, a suitable berth was selected about one mile and a quarter from Holyrood Pier, and buoys were laid so as to indicate safe water for the extreme swinging space.

In order to make quite certain that the Vice-Admiral commanding the Royal Yachts should be in no doubt as to the position of this berth nor as to any other local navigational information, I sent Captain Dalton, the Marine Superintendent, overland on June 11th to join the "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" at Halifax to place his services at the disposal of the Vice-Admiral for journey from Halifax to Holyrood.

Although for reasons which I will explain later, R.M.S. "EM-PRESS OF BRITAIN" did not occupy this specially selected berth, Captain Dalton's services were much appreciated and His Majesty was graciously pleased to present him with a tie pin.

On June 13th the Commander-in-Chief of the North American and West Indies⁴³ arrived in his Flag Ship, H.M.S. "BERWICK", and after a delay of about eight hours, due to fog, anchored at Holyrood during the course of the evening.

On the next day, June 14th, it had been planned to carry out a rehearsal of the various functions to take place on the 17th and so I was pleased, not only to meet the Commander-in-Chief and Lady Meyrick, but to be able to avail myself of their kind services to take the place of the King and Queen in the rehearsal.

Owing to reports that ice might be expected off Cape St. Francis and that fog was likely, the Customs Cutter, "SHULAMITE", was sent out as far as Cape Race and came back to St. John's by 2.30 p.m. on Friday 16th and the Customs Cutter "MARVITA" left on Friday for Holyrood Bay via Cape St. Francis. Both these vessels were able to give accurate reports of fog and ice conditions which were passed on to the Royal Liner.

When the Commander-in-Chief sailed on Friday evening to meet R.M.S. "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" at sea the weather was lovely and the waters over Conception Bay as smooth as a mirror.

In the process of working out the detailed programme it was evident that delay was an even more difficult factor to provide for than rain and in consequence, though full provision had been made for any eventuality, it was with great relief that I heard that R.M.S. "EM-PRESS OF BRITAIN" would steam over 20 knots so as to reach Conception Bay on the Friday night. This also eliminated the danger of delay but there was still the danger of heavy rain.

Of the welcome that would be extended, there was no doubt; of the completion of the innumerable preparations there was no question; on one point only was there a feeling of grave anxiety and that was the weather, for the barometer was falling.

It was with keen disappointment but with little surprise, therefore, that I left Government House at 8 a.m. on Saturday morning amidst overcast skies, a heavy Scotch mist and intermittent showers of rain.

For purposes of convenience, all cars destined to take part in the Royal Procession, left Government House at 8 a.m. and travelled to Holyrood in the same formation as shown on page 6 of the Official Programme.

During the course of this journey it rained heavily, and by the time I had reached Holyrood Pier, the rain and the mist were so thick that it was difficult to see R.M.S. "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN," which had anchored $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles away from the Pier instead of in a berth specially selected for her.

The Pier itself was gaily decorated with flags and a special shelter had been erected at the end so as to cover the steps as well as an adequate portion of the top of the Pier.

On the Pier were drawn up Guards of Honour from the Newfoundland Constabulary and the Newfoundland Ranger Force under the command of Major F. Anderton.⁴⁴ There has always been some controversy as to the relations between the two forces and I was therefore pleased to be informed that they would work as one unit on that day, an arrangement which proved to be eminently successful.

Round the Pier were thousands of people, many of whom had come in from the Outports or from the settlements along the route in order to witness the Royal landing.

At 9.15 a.m. a motor boat from H.M.S. "GLASGOW" was sent to Holyrood Pier and, accompanied by my Private Secretary, I left for R.M.S. "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" to welcome Their Majesties.

During this journey, which took 20 minutes, it was raining heavily. On arrival on board I was received by the Vice-Admiral Commanding the Royal Yachts,⁴⁵ the Captain of the Liner⁴⁶ and members of His Majesty's Suite.

His Majesty received me in audience for about ten minutes.

About a quarter to ten I left R.M.S. "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" to return to Holyrood Pier which was reached shortly after 10 o'clock.

By this time a slight breeze had sprung up and the rain was ceasing.

On the Pier, Honourable Commissioners, and their wives, District Magistrate Hawco and Mrs. Hawco,⁴⁷ the Parish Priest,⁴⁸ and the little Holyrood girl⁴⁹ with her bouquet, were drawn up. At the head of the Pier, just beyond a large archway of fir boughs, were five motor cars headed by the Royal Car, and just above them, the other side of the Railway, were the remaining six cars forming the Royal Procession.

At every point of vantage photographers and Press Correspondents were busily taking photographs, and any and every moment of those connected with the function was being broadcast.

Shortly after returning to Holyrood Pier the motor boat with the majority of the Royal Suite arrived and these gentlemen and the Honourable Commissioners and their wives were introduced to each other.

Almost before these introductions were complete, one could see looking out through the lane of schooners belonging to the Coasters and Seamens Association,⁵⁰ the Royal Barge approaching, followed by another motor boat in attendance.

As Their Majesties reached the top of the steps alongside the Pier, the Guards of Honour came to the Royal Salute and the Band played the National Anthem,⁵¹ after which I advanced towards the King and in the name of the people of Newfoundland, the Commission of Government and myself, extended to Their Majesties our warmest welcome to our shores. After shaking hands with the King and Queen, I presented Lady Walwyn and then asked for permission to present the Honourable Commissioners and their wives and others, which was readily conceded.

At the conclusion of this Ceremony, Miss Christina Barron tendered the Queen a bouquet and the Royal Party moved off the Pier. On the way off the Pier His Majesty was pleased to inspect the two Guards of Honour and to speak to Major Anderton, the Commanding Officer, commenting favourably on their appearance.

Passing under the large arch of welcome covered with fir boughs, Their Majesties entered the Royal Car which had been provided free of charge except transport charges by Messrs. Rootes of Piccadilly and upon which Her Majesty later commented favourably in stating

that with indifferent weather and with any distance to travel it provided more protection and more comfort than the more exposed ones provided in Canada.

As the Royal procession moved off, the crowd cheered unceasingly.

By now the weather was improving slightly, though it was still overcast and liable to rain intermittently. Nevertheless, Their Majesties permitted the back of the car to remain open during the entire journey.

I enclose with despatch a blue print of a special plan most artistically prepared by Mr. W.B. Titford⁵² of the Department of Natural Resources of which His Majesty had the original copy.⁵³

This plan indicates the route from Holyrood to St. John's and from St. John's to Portugal Cove. It also indicates the various positions of the Arches and the points at which the people would be congregated.

As the Royal Car reached each settlement, it slowed down to receive the ovation of the people, more particularly so in the case of school children who had been provided with flags which they waved while cheering lustily.



Christina Barron of Holyrood, Conception Bay, ready to present her bouquet to Queen Elizabeth, 17 June 1939 (The Rooms Provincial Archives, A1-69).

About 11.35, at the junction of Hamilton Avenue and LeMarchant Road, the Royal Procession arrived opposite the Pavilion, where a very large number people were collected who cheered Their Majesties to an echo.

After alighting, I presented His Worship the Mayor and Mrs. Carnell to Their Majesties and the Mayor then proceeded to read the Address of Welcome on behalf of the citizens of St. John's. A copy of this is enclosed with this Despatch.⁵⁴ As soon as he had finished reading the Address, the Mayor tendered to His Majesty a Casket containing the Address itself which was beautifully illuminated. The Casket was made of silver, mounted on an ebony base bearing in raised silver lettering "June 17th, 1939". The body of the Casket was plain but with a raised silver border around the edge, there being a raised shamrock, rose, thistle and leek in each corner. The centre of the cover is overlaid with an oval slab of labradorite on which is shown, in raised silver, the Coat of Arms of St. John's City.



King George VI and Queen Elizabeth being welcomed to St. John's by Mayor Andrew Carnell, 17 June 1939 (The Rooms Provincial Archives, A54-166).

I then asked His Majesty whether he would permit the Mayor to present the members of the Municipal Council and their wives. On the conclusion of this function, Their Majesties accompanied by Lady Walwyn, myself, the Royal Suite and my Staff walked to the Pavilion from which His Majesty, in admirably clear and forceful tones, broadcast a Message to his people in this Island.

During this period, the enthusiasm of the crowd was making it more and more difficult for the limited number of police to retain control, but the Royal Procession restarted its progress to Government House passing slowly down LeMarchant Road along the north side of which thousands of school children were enthusiastically cheering and waving flags.

At Garrison Hill an escort of the Mounted Police joined the Royal Procession and rode ahead as far as the entrance at Government House.

To those waiting in Government House grounds there was ample warning that the Royal Car was approaching, for the roars of cheering by the enthusiastic crowds steadily increased until it reached its height as the Royal Car entered the Western Gate passing under the fine green boughed arch which had been erected there. As Their Majesties entered Government House grounds, the Royal Standard was broken at the Flag Staff Head and the Union Jack hauled down.

On arrival at the front door, the King and Queen stepped out of the Royal Car and while the Queen remained with Lady Walwyn I proceeded with His Majesty to inspect the King's and the Regimental Colours of the late Royal Newfoundland Regiment, the Colour Party and the Guard which had been drawn up under the command of Major J.W. March, M.C.⁵⁵

After passing through the ranks, the King shook hands warmly with and spoke to Sergeant T. Ricketts, V.C.⁵⁶ The Royal Party then entered Government House.

As soon as the King and Queen had enjoyed a few minutes rest, they graciously consented to take up a position in the Ballroom where the following were presented to them: -

The Chief Justice⁵⁷
The Heads of the various Denominations⁵⁸
The Judges of the Supreme Court⁵⁹
The Consul General for the United States⁶⁰
The Consul for France⁶¹
Ex-Prime Ministers⁶²
His Excellency's Staff and Honorary Staff⁶³

Wives were also presented.

As each presentation was made, those presented passed into the Drawing room where they were introduced to members of the Royal Suite.

Immediately on the conclusion of the Presentation, His Majesty commanded that His Worship The Mayor should be brought up to him and presented His Worship with a signed photograph of Their Majesties.

This gift was entirely unexpected and has evoked great appreciation.

Leaving Government House at 12.30, the Royal Procession proceeded through wildly enthusiastic crowds to the base of the War Memorial.

In order to facilitate the description of what took place here, I attach a copy of a special plan issued to those responsible for the procedure.⁶⁴

Leaving the Royal car at the East flank of the ex-Service men lined up on Water Street, the King and Queen walked slowly through their ranks picking out Veterans here and there for a hand shake and for an informal conversation. The enthusiasm was intense and it was as much as the police officers and the Staff could do to keep the ranks from closing together.

As the King and Queen reached the West approach to the Memorial, I escorted Their Majesties up the approach to the Memorial and presented Major F.W. Marshall,⁶⁵ M.B.E., Dominion President and Captain W.D. Edwards,⁶⁶ the St. John's President of the Great War Veterans' Association.

By now the weather had still further improved and although still overcast there was reason to hope that the sun might shine.

Their Majesties walked up the steps of the War Memorial but only the King stepped on to the platform. As His Majesty did so, the Guard came to the Royal Salute and the Band played the National Anthem, after which His Majesty was handed a Wreath which he placed at the foot of the cenotaph. On the conclusion of this ceremony, which was hailed with tremendous ovation from the crowd, Their Majesties descended the steps of the War Memorial and proceeded to the site in the eastern grounds of the Memorial where, at the invitation of His Worship The Mayor, the King planted an oak tree. Passing across to the western site, a similar ceremony was performed by Her Majesty and the Royal Party then re-entered the ranks of the ex-service men and continued to the western flank. By now the eagerness and enthusiasm of the crowd to see as much as they could of the King and Queen made it extremely difficult to keep adequate space open around them, and it was only due to the general air of good nature that it was possible to prevent children and others cutting off Their Majesties from the Royal Car. However, the Procession managed to re-commence its journey, though with difficulty. The rear cars managed gradually to close up on the Royal Car and shortly after 1.15 p.m. all had returned to Government House.



George VI placing a wreath at the National War Memorial, St. John's, 17 June 1939 (The Rooms Provincial Archives, A86-104).

The luncheon party was confined to the Royal Party, guests in the house, amongst whom were included Dr. C.S. Curtis,⁶⁷ Head of the Grenfell Association and his wife,⁶⁸ and members of my staff. It was a delightfully informal function with Their Majesties in the best of good humour, most gracious and happy.

After luncheon Their Majesties passed into the Drawing room where he and the Queen spent some time talking to guests, the King in particular talking to Sir Sydney Meyrick for about 10 minutes.

At about 2.40 His Majesty commanded me to appear before him in my study and was pleased to invest me with the Honour of a Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George. Following this, His Majesty was graciously pleased to confer upon captain C.M.R. Schwerdt⁶⁹ the Honour of Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

During this time all those who had been present at lunch had taken their seats for the photograph outside the front door.⁷⁰ On being joined by Their Majesties and Lady Walwyn and myself, a photograph was taken which despite the lack of sunlight proved to be a satisfactory one.

By now the majority of close on 1300 guests invited was pouring into the garden and about 200 guests for Presentation to Their Majesties⁷¹ were being marshalled in the Reception room in readiness for that function.

The afternoon presentation commenced shortly after 3 p.m. and finished about 3.35. It had been suggested that in view of the full programme Their Majesties might care to sit and not to shake hands, but the King and Queen remained standing and shook hands with everyone of those presented.

By now the sun had shown signs of coming out and it seemed fairly certain that the weather would remain fine for the next hour or two. At 3.30 at any rate the sun shone brightly as the King and Queen stepped out of the sun parlour and stood at the top of the steps leading into the garden while the National Anthem was being played. Passing down amongst the guests Their Majesties spoke to numerous people on the way round the paths leading to a Royal Pavilion which had

been specially erected facing the house. Just before entering the Pavilion, the King and Queen moved out close to the fence round Government House and to the great satisfaction of the crowd acknowledged the enthusiastic cheers.

On arrival at the Pavilion, a number of selected guests were brought up for presentation in turn, and each had the great honour of a few minutes conversation either with the King or the Queen or both. A list of those invited to be presented is attached.⁷² Two of these,



Luncheon party, Government House, St. John's, 17 June 1939. "Seated, left to right—1. Miss [Sybil] Ridley 2. Mrs. Charles S. Curtis 3. The Earl of Airlie, 4. Lady Katharine Seymour 5. The Earl of Eldon 6. Lady Walwyn 7. His Majesty the King 8. His Excellency the Governor 9. Her Majesty the Queen 10 Vice-Admiral Sir Sidney J. Meyrick 11. Lady Nunburnholme 12. Vice-Admiral Sir Dudley B. North 13. Mrs. C.M.R. Schwerdt 14. Mrs. L.C. Outerbridge. Standing, left to right—1. Lt. Col. Piers Legh 2. Lt. Col. L.C. Outerbridge 3. Surgeon Capt. H.E.Y. White 4. Dr. Charles S. Curtis 5. Sir Alan Lascelles 6. Capt. C.M.R. Schwerdt 7. G.F. Steward, Esq. 8. Capt. M. Adeane 9. Commander E.M.C. Abel-Smith 10. Duncan B. Fletcher, Esq." (Photograph: The Rooms Provincial Archives, C5-18; list of names: *Among the Deep-Sea Fishers* 37, no. 3 [Oct. 1939]: frontispiece and 86). Nobody in the photograph was born in Newfoundland.

although in receipt of full details and instructions, could not be found by the Honorary A.D.C.s⁷³ and therefore missed their opportunity.

About 4.20 the Investiture of six persons on whom Honours had been bestowed took place in front of the pavilion in full view of the guests. This procedure aroused the intense interest of the Press Representatives including those from Canada and the United States. Some of these had been sent over particularly to obtain photographs of and give a description of the Investiture as it was considered to be a function without precedent.

At a given signal, the Honourable J.C. Puddester⁷⁴ stepped forward and knelt down on a foot stool on one knee. At the same time, I handed my sword to The King who touched him on both shoulders thus dubbing him a Knight.

Next came His Worship The Mayor and Mr. H.J. Russell,⁷⁵ the Manager of the Railway, who became Commanders of the Order of the British Empire, then Mr. Jack Turner,⁷⁶ who became Officer of the British Empire, and, finally, Mr. A.W. Shano⁷⁷ and Mr. Gabriel S. Fudge⁷⁸ who were created Members of the Order of the British Empire.

The crowd watched this unique ceremony eagerly, and it is noteworthy that His Majesty himself commented on it favourably afterwards.

Shortly after 4.30, the Investiture having been completed Their Majesties passed out of the enclosure and mounted the steps leading into Government House. As they reached the top step, the band played the "Ode to Newfoundland"⁷⁹ and in answer to my call the assembled gathering gave three hearty cheers for the King and the Queen.

Tea was another informal function to which the Chief Justice Sir William Horwood⁸⁰ and Lady Horwood⁸¹ were the only guests invited outside the Government House party. About this time members of the suite and Honourable Commissioners were leaving for Portugal Cove in order to be on the Pier when Their Majesties arrived.

About 5 p.m. Their Majesties passed through the front hall where they shook hands with the Honorary A.D.C.s, members of the Staff and other guests in the house.

As His Majesty passed out through the front door, before entering

his car he shook hands with the members of the Central Committee⁸² who had been lined up to bid him farewell, and then joining the Queen the Royal Procession left Government House by the West gate for the Feildian Athletic Grounds.

At this point the crowd was so dense that it was impossible to keep the procession closed up. Cheer after cheer went up and the crowd was able to keep pace with the cars as they passed down Bannerman Road at walking speed. At the entrance to the Feildian Athletic Grounds, the crowd was so thick that only the Royal Car could enter.

Although time would have permitted Their Majesties to alight and walk round the Units of the Church Lads' Brigade,⁸³ The Boy Scouts, The Girl Guides and The Salvation Army Life Guards,⁸⁴ drawn up in the form of a square, the weather had by now once again become so threatening that it was obviously advisable that Their Majesties' re-embarkation from Portugal Cove should not be delayed. In consequence, the arrival at Portugal Cove was slightly earlier than anticipated but the time was more than taken up with the gracious and cordial way in which Their Majesties received representatives of Portugal Cove and Bell Island presented to them and bid farewell to Honourable Commissioners and their wives.

Shortly after the arrival at Portugal Cove, the Vice-Admiral Commanding the Royal Yachts⁸⁵ had informed me that he did not think it desirable that Their Majesties should use the "SOUTHAMPTON'S" Motor Boat. Fortunately, I had caused arrangements to be made for S.S. "MANECO"⁸⁶ to be available and through the courtesy of The Bell Island Steamship Co. Limited this vessel had been re-painted and redecorated and was moored alongside the Pier, the opposite side to the specially constructed steps.

The Royal Party was escorted on board and entered a commodious deck cabin from which the benches had been removed and which had been fitted out as a drawing room. As the S.S. "MANECO" moved off from the Pier, the Band struck up "Auld Lang Syne" and the Queen stood framed in the doorway of the Saloon to receive the cheers which spanned the ever widening bridge between the ship and the shore.⁸⁷

I know that Their Majesties intended to visit H.M. Ships “BERWICK”, “SOUTHAMPTON” and “GLASGOW”, and it was with great regret that I have been informed that the Royal Barge fouled her propellers in a fishing net causing Their Majesties some inconvenience; also that a seaman from R.M.S. “EMPRESS OF BRITAIN” fell overboard and was drowned.⁸⁸

I enclose copies of my telegrams of welcome and farewell and Their Majesties gracious replies to the latter, both personal and official.⁸⁹

As is to be expected, it was impossible to avoid some disappointments.

Sir Edgar Bowring⁹⁰ was most insistent that Their Majesties should be taken through Bowring Park, which could not be arranged for reasons given by the Honourable L.E. Emerson in the enclosed newspaper cutting.⁹¹

Archbishop Roche,⁹² whose health prevented him from being present, ruled that he should be represented by Monsignor Kitchen⁹³ instead of the next senior Bishop, namely, Bishop Renouf⁹⁴ of the Diocese of St. George’s.⁹⁵

After ceaseless efforts by the Honourable L.E. Emerson to get these Prelates to reach some understanding, Bishop Renouf having returned his presentation card, the Archbishop’s ruling was followed.

However, the Royal Visit has been hailed on all sides as an unqualified success.

An excellent example of the effect of the visit is given by the Editor of the Evening Telegram in his leading article for the 20th June and reads as follows: -

“Saturday’s memorable event found us a united people, one in the enthusiasm so effectively expressed, one in our feelings of regard and respect for our King and Queen and one in a demonstration of the strength of our loyalty to the British Crown.

Such a spirit vigorously applied to the affairs upon which Newfoundland so vitally depends to see it safely through its difficulties would go far towards the accomplishment of that object. In many ways there could be less concern displayed for personal interest and more for those interests which are of a national character. Loyalty to our own country calls for practical demonstration — not in recrimination and useless criticism, and not in waiting for someone else to do what awaits doing, but in suggestions that have the merit of feasibility and in earnest individual effort to hasten the improved times which everyone desires.”

I cannot close this Despatch without inviting your attention to the accounts which have appeared in the two leading newspapers.

Though the reproductions of the photographs might be better, the illustrations are numerous and the account on the whole commendably accurate.

As these may help to fill in any gaps in my own account, I enclose copies of the ‘Evening Telegram’ and ‘Daily News’ of June 19th and 20th respectively.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

HUMPHREY WALWYN

Governor.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful for editorial advice and research assistance to Jock Bates of Victoria, British Columbia; Colleen Field, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University Libraries, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador; and Augustus G. Lilly, KC LLD, also of St. John's.

Notes

- 1 For an overview, see Carolyn Harris, "1939 Royal Tour," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/1939-royal-tour?gclid=CjwKCAiA55mPBhBOEiwANmzoQh-J3TIL73rEVzu0h3lknMqXG_lthXy3UC70xZkxbFoJWQqg-HAuf5XR0c12cQAvD_BwE). For the place of the royal tour in Canadian history, see Mary Vipond, "The Royal Tour of 1939 as a Media Event," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 35, no. 1 (2010): 149–72 ([xhttps://cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2217/2160](https://cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/view/2217/2160)).
- 2 *Evening Telegram*, 4 Jan. 1939, 5.
- 3 *Western Star*, 25 June 1913, 1.
- 4 *Ibid.*, and 19 Oct. 1938, 1.
- 5 *Evening Telegram*, 28 June 1913, 4.
- 6 The Murray's Pond Fishing and Country Club, opened in 1895 and located on Portugal Cove Road, was a favourite destination for elite St. John's. See Cyril F. Poole and Robert H. Cuff, eds., *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, vol. 3 (St. John's: Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation, 1991), 659.
- 7 According to Governor Davidson's diary, the black fox farm was another Reid enterprise. See The Rooms Provincial Archives (RPA), St. John's, MG136 (Sir Walter Davidson Papers), box 1, folder "June 1–30, 1913," entry for 29 June.
- 8 In 1911, to mark the centenary of its operations in Newfoundland, Bowring Brothers Limited gifted \$50,000 "to create a permanent memorial to commemorate the occasion and to benefit the community of St. John's." The benefaction was used to purchase land and develop a

- park in the western outskirts of the city. Bowring Park was officially opened on 15 July 1914 by H.R.H. Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught. See Joseph R. Smallwood, editor-in-chief, and Robert D.W. Pitt, ed., *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, vol. 1 (St. John's: Newfoundland Book Publishers (1967), 1981), 234–35.
- 9 Also noted in Davidson's diary for 29 June 1913. See RPA, MG136 (Sir Walter Davidson Papers), box 1, folder "June 1–30, 1913."
- 10 *Evening Telegram*, 30 June 1913, 3.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 16 Jan. 1936, 6.
- 12 RPA, GN1/3/A (Governor's Office Correspondence), box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939," minutes of the first meeting of the Controlling Committee, 17 Jan. 1939.
- 13 *Ibid.*
- 14 *Ibid.* William James Carew (1890–1990) was born in Portugal Cove and attended St. Patrick's Hall School, St. John's. He joined the staff of the prime minister's office in 1909 and from 1914 to 1934 was secretary to successive prime ministers. He was secretary of the Commission of Government from 1934 to 1949 and from 1949 to 1956 was clerk of the Executive Council of the Canadian province of Newfoundland. He was succeeded in his final appointment by his brother-in-law, James Gregory Channing (1913–1982). Carew's son, Archbishop William Aquin Carew (1922–2012), served as a Vatican diplomat; his daughter, Helen Carew, worked for many years as a key assistant in the president's office at Memorial University and for a time served as secretary to that institution's board of regents.
- 15 The members of the organizing committees and the convenors of the subcommittees are listed in the official program of the royal visit. There are copies of the program in RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939," and in box 213, file 927/38.
- 16 *Ibid.*
- 17 *Ibid.*, Hawco to Carew, 16 May 1939. Matthew Edgar Hawco (1882–1962) had been appointed magistrate at Holyrood in 1928. Christina Barron's parents were Peter and Lucy Barron.
- 18 See RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939," Secretary of State to Governor, 5 Apr. 1939.
- 19 *Evening Telegram*, 6 June 1939, 5. Lewis Edward Emerson (1890–1949)

- was Commissioner for Justice, 1937–40, and Commissioner for Justice and Defence, 1940–44. He was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland, 1944–49.
- 20 *Acts of the Honourable Commission of Government of Newfoundland 1939* (St. John's, 1939), 76.
- 21 For relevant correspondence, see RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939," folder "Royal Car," Roach to Schwerdt, 24 May 1939, and Curtis to Roach, 22 June 1939.
- 22 For the list (with biographical information) of those to be presented, see RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939."
- 23 See above, note 14.
- 24 Andrew L. Barrett (1877–1960) was editor of the *Western Star*, 1912–41. See Ursula Kelly, *The Foresters' Scribe* (St. John's: ISER Books, 2020), 50. A copy of Barrett's book, *The Royal Visit: Canada United States of America Newfoundland 1939*, is in the holdings of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University Libraries.
- 25 He served as High Commissioner 1941–44 and 1948–49.
- 26 RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939," Burchell to Walwyn, 6 Jan. 1942.
- 27 *Ibid.*, RPA, Carew to Fanning-Evans, 13 Jan. 1942. In his preface to the 1964 work, Lanctot gave this explanation: "The author was the official historian of the royal tour. Before his full account could be published, however, September 1939 [i.e., the outbreak of war] intervened. It was not until 1963, when the E.P. Taylor Foundation learned of it, that the publication of the account was undertaken. Because of the lapse of time since the tour, it was decided that an abridged version would be more appropriate than the complete one. The condensation and editing have been done by Mrs. Barbara Urquhart."
- 28 For a photograph of them in their finery, see Melvin Baker and Peter Neary, *Joseph Roberts Smallwood: Masthead Newfoundlander, 1900–1949* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2021), 93.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 89–92.
- 30 Memorial University Libraries, Archives and Special Collections, COLL-028 (The Barrelman Radio Program Papers), script for 19 June 1939.

- 31 C.J. Fox, *New World, Old World: Bridging the North Atlantic* (Victoria, BC: University of Victoria Special Collections, 2009), 63.
- 32 Uncorrected file copies are in RPA, GN1/3/A, box 207, file 108/38, Quarterly Reports, Feb '38–Oct '40, Confidential Despatch No. 193, and in box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939."
- 33 See Peter Neary, "P.A. Clutterbuck on Morley Richards and the Record of the Commission of Government, 1939," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 27, no. 1 (2012): 79–98.
- 34 *Evening Telegram*, 22 June 1939, 5–6. Perhaps written by William Joseph Keough (1913–71), a cooperative worker and future provincial cabinet minister.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 23 June 1939, 6.
- 36 He and Lady Walwyn had been in England on annual leave, departing St. John's on 5 March and arriving back on 5 May. Chief Justice William Henry Horwood (1862–1945) was sworn in as Administrator of the Government on 6 March. See RPA, GN1/3/A, box 207, file 108/38, Quarterly Reports, Feb '38–Oct '40, Walwyn to Inskip, 12 May 1939, despatch No. 170.
- 37 Andrew Greene Carnell (1877–1951), Acting Mayor of St. John's, 1932–33; Mayor, 1933–49.
- 38 James Alexander Winter (1886–1971) was Commissioner for Home Affairs and Education, 1936–41.
- 39 Charles Maxwell Richard Schwerdt (1889–1968), a Royal Navy Captain.
- 40 Of Holyrood.
- 41 Martin Gilbert Dalton (1889–1965). A master mariner, he had been Marine Superintendent of the Newfoundland Railway since 1924.
- 42 Jack J. Whelan (1887–1972), Inspector of Preventive Services. See Ronald F. Whelan, "Captain Jack Whelan," in Paul Johnson, ed., *God Guard Thee Newfoundland, Searching for Meaning: An Anthology* (St. John's: Flanker Press, 2009), 108–11.
- 43 Vice-Admiral Sir Sidney Julius Meyrick (1879–1973). He had been Commander-in-Chief of the North America and West Indies Station since 1937.
- 44 Frederick Anderton (1889–1974), Acting Chief Ranger, 1936–37, and Chief Ranger, 1937–39. He had been seconded from the Royal

- Canadian Mounted Police. For the history of the Ranger force, see Marilyn Tuck, "The Newfoundland Ranger Force, 1935–1950" (MA thesis, Memorial University, 1983); Harold Horwood, *A History of the Newfoundland Ranger Force* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1986); Darrin McGrath, Robert Smith, Ches Parsons, and Norman Crane, *The Newfoundland Rangers* (St. John's: DRC Publishing, 2005); <https://newfoundlandrangerforce.org/>.
- 45 Vice-Admiral Sir Dudley Burton Napier North (1881–1961).
- 46 Charles Howard Sapsworth (1883–1958). The *Empress of Britain* was the flagship of the Canadian Pacific fleet.
- 47 Mary Anne Hawco, née Kennedy (b. 1883).
- 48 Joseph William Peddle (1904–76). See Francis A. Coady, ed., *Lives Recalled: Deceased Catholic Priests Who Worked in Newfoundland, Mini Biographies: 1627–2010* (St. John's: Terra Nova Council 1452, Knights of Columbus, 2011), 510–12. We are grateful to Denise Howse, Diocese of Grand Falls, for assistance with this note.
- 49 Christina Barron.
- 50 Referred to in *Evening Telegram*, 19 June 1935, 5, as "the Coasters' and Seamen's Association." Vessels belonging to the association formed a welcoming flotilla at Holyrood. For this initiative, see RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939," Whelan to Penson, 17 May 1939.
- 51 *God Save the King*.
- 52 William B. Titford (1905–82) was a draftsman with the Department of Natural Resources.
- 53 The plan is not included here. For a copy, see RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939."
- 54 Not included here.
- 55 John Wesley March (1878–1947) had served with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in the Great War and was awarded the Military Cross for action at Guedecourt on 12 Oct. 1916. See *Evening Telegram*, 11 July 1947, 1, 2; *The Veteran* (Dec. 1947), 28–33; and Leo Murphy's tribute to March in the *Daily News*, 14 July 1947, 7.
- 56 Thomas R. Ricketts (1901–1967). He served with the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in the Great War and was awarded the Victoria Cross for bravery in action at Ledeghem, near Ypres, Belgium, in

1918. He was 17 at the time and was the youngest winner of the Victoria Cross in the 1914–18 conflict. He was also awarded the Croix de Guerre. In 1939 he was operating a drugstore at the corner of Water and Job Streets in St. John's. See Joy B. Cave, *Two Newfoundland V.C.s* (St. John's: Creative Printers and Publishers, 1984) and his attestation papers at <https://www.therooms.ca/thegreatwar/in-depth/military-service-files/database>.
- 57 William Henry Horwood was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland, 1902–44. See his obituary in the *Daily News*, 9 Apr. 1945, 1.
- 58 Philip Selwyn Abraham (1897–1955), Church of England coadjutor Bishop of Newfoundland, 1937–42, and Bishop, 1942–55; Rev. A. Roland Baggs (1899–1960), President, Newfoundland United Church Conference, 1939–40. See Smallwood, editor-in-chief, and Pitt, ed., *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, vol.1, 2, 108; *Observer's Weekly*, 13 June 1939, 22. Other religious leaders, including Brigadier Eliza Jane (Jennie) Fagner (1886–1966) of the Salvation Army (Grace Hospital), were presented in the afternoon event on the grounds of Government House.
- 59 James Mary Kent (1872–1939), who served on the Supreme Court, 1916–39, and William John Higgins (1880–1943), who served, 1928–43.
- 60 Harold Barlow Quarton (1889–1981). He had been appointed in 1934 (RPA, GN1/3/A, box 162, file 216/34, "Consular Appointments," Thomas to Anderson, 25 Oct. 1934, despatch no. 333; *Daily News*, 11 July 1941, 1).
- 61 Edouard F. Rosset.
- 62 Albert Edgar Hickman (1875–1942), prime minister in 1924, and Walter Stanley Monroe (1871–1952), prime minister, 1924–28. Sir Richard Squires (1880–1940), prime minister, 1919–23 and 1928–32, had been invited but was out of the country at the time.
- 63 C.M.R. Schwerdt (private secretary); Duncan Baxter Fletcher (aide-de-camp); and Leonard C. Outerbridge (honorary private secretary). Outerbridge (1888–1986), a prominent St. John's businessman, had served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the Great War. Fletcher (1908–88) had served in the Palestine police. In

- December 1939 he became the son-in-law of William R. Howley (1875–1941), Commissioner for Justice, 1934–38, and Registrar of the Supreme Court, 1938–41.
- 64 Not included here.
- 65 Frederick Walter Marshall (1891–1959), owner of Marshall Motors Ltd and Dominion President of the Great War Veterans' Association, 1935–37.
- 66 William Dowden Edwards (1890–1954) served in the Royal Newfoundland Regiment in the Great War and was by profession a realtor and auctioneer (see his entry in the 1937 St. John's telephone directory).
- 67 Charles Samuel Curtis (1887–1963). A Harvard medical graduate, he had come to Labrador in 1915. He was medical superintendent of the International Grenfell Association, 1934–53.
- 68 Harriot Curtis, née Houghteling (1890–1951). See Ronald Rompkey, *Grenfell of Labrador: A Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 300.
- 69 Walwyn's private secretary.
- 70 For the photograph with explanatory caption, see *Among the Deep Sea Fishers* 37, no. 3 (Oct. 1939): frontispiece and 86. See also RPA, GN1/3/A, box 212, file 927/38, "Royal Visit, Jan–July 1939, Seating plan for photograph of royal group."
- 71 See note 21.
- 72 Twelve persons were to be presented to the King and eleven to the Queen. The list of those to be presented to George VI included Major General Sir Henry Hugh Tudor (1871–1965), commander of the Black and Tans in Ireland after the Great War. He had been living in Newfoundland since 1925.
- 73 Honorary aides-de-camp.
- 74 John Charles Puddester (1881–1947), Commissioner for Public Health and Welfare, 1934–46.
- 75 As noted, Russell (1890–1949) had been a crew member on the special train provided for the King during his 1913 visit as a naval cadet to the west coast of Newfoundland. For his biography, see Paul J. Johnson and Harry A. Cuff, *Herbert J. Russell, C.B.E.: The Man, His Work, His Words* (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 2004).
- 76 Jack Turner (1887–1948) was Chief Forester, Department of Natural

- Resources. He had served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in the Great War and been awarded the Military Cross. See Melvin Baker and Janet Miller Pitt, *By Wise and Prudent Measures: The Development of Forestry on the Salmonier Line* (St. John's: Department of Forest Resources and Agrifoods, 1998), 19.
- 77 Arthur William Shano (1873–1975) was Newfoundland postal agent at North Sydney, Nova Scotia, 1906–38.
- 78 Gabriel Silas Fudge (1889–1959) was captain of the government bait vessel S.S. *Malakoff*.
- 79 “Ode to Newfoundland.” The words were by Governor Sir Cavendish Boyle (1849–1916). They were set to music by Sir Hubert Parry (1848–1918), best known for his setting of William Blake’s “Jerusalem.” For Boyle’s life, see Frank W. Graham, “*We Love Thee Newfoundland*”: *Biography of Sir Cavendish Boyle, k.c.m.g., Governor of Newfoundland, 1901–1904* (St. John's: The Author, 1979).
- 80 William Henry Horwood was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland, 1902–44. See his obituary in the *Daily News*, 9 Apr. 1945, 1.
- 81 Julia Horwood, née Hutchinson (1869–1959). See *Daily News*, 5 Oct. 1959, 16.
- 82 They were Hon. J.A. Winter (chair), Edith Alderdice (representing the Girl Guides, widow of former Prime Minister Frederick C. Alderdice), Charles B. Archibald (manager, Dominion Steel and Coal Corp., Ltd., Bell Island), Ronald H. Ayre (businessman, representing the Boy Scouts Association), John R. Bennett (representing the Masonic Association, former politician, businessman, Newfoundland High Commissioner in London, 1928), Kenneth M. Brown (president of the Fishermen’s Protective Union), W.J. Browne (a judge active in the civil service co-operative movement), William B. Comerford (businessman), Mabel E. Carnell (née Payne, spouse of Mayor Carnell), James Crawford (representing the Church Lads’ Brigade), P. Wellington Crummey (representing the Loyal Orange Association), J.S. Currie (*Daily News*), Alphonsus G. Duggan (president of the Trades and Labour Council of Newfoundland), Brian E.S. Dunfield (secretary, Department of Justice), Cyril J. Fox (lawyer and president, Newfoundland Board of Trade), Claude Fraser (secretary, Department

- of Natural Resources), Robert S. Furlong (lawyer), S.G. Garland (clergyman), Wallace R. Goobie (Newfoundland Industrial Association, managing director Purity Factories), Malcolm Hollett (magistrate on Bell Island), Matthew E. Hawco, Charles E.A. Jeffrey (*Evening Telegram*), F.W. Marshall, Walter M. Marshall (secretary, Department of Finance), H.M. Mosdell (medical doctor and secretary, Department of Public Health and Welfare), T.H. O'Neill (president of the Benevolent Irish Society), H.A. Outerbridge (businessman), Leonard C. Outerbridge, Michael Power (Truckmen's Protective Union), W.F. Rendell, Herbert J. Russell, L.W. Shaw (general superintendent, Department of Education), William Sullivan (Longshoremens's Protective Union), Robert A. Templeton (businessman), and Charles Woodland (Salvation Army officer). See RPA, GN2/1/A (Home Affairs), vol. 7, June 1937 to Nov. 1939, Walwyn to Currie et al., 21 Jan. 1939. Under Commission of Government, the top public servant in a department (equivalent to deputy minister under responsible government) was known as secretary.
- 83 A Church of England male youth organization founded in 1892. For its history, see Geoff Peddle, *The Church Lads' Brigade in Newfoundland: A People's Story, 1892–2017* (St. John's: Flanker Press, 2016).
- 84 The Salvation Army Life Saving Guards was a girls' organization with roots in England and patterned on the Girl Guides (<https://www.vintagekidstuff.org/salvation-army-girl-guards>).
- 85 Vice-Admiral Sir Dudley North.
- 86 Used on the Bell Island–Portugal Cove ferry service.
- 87 A plaque to mark the event was later placed on the *Maneco*. On 12 Nov. 1951, after touring Canada, Princess Elizabeth (from 1952 Queen Elizabeth II) and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, were transported, also on the *Maneco*, from Portugal Cove out into the tickle between Bell Island and Portugal Cove and so to the *Empress of Scotland*. They departed on a memorably windswept day, captured in the 1951 National Film Board documentary, *The Royal Journey* (https://www.nfb.ca/film/royal_journey/). Renamed the *Terra Nova* and used in the seal fishery, the old *Maneco* foundered in 1964 at 50.18 N. latitude and 55.07 W. longitude and was declared a total loss (https://mha.mun.ca/mha/pviewphoto/Record_ID/5514). We are

grateful to Jean Pierre Andrieux of St. John's for assistance with this note.

- 88 Samuel Batt, aged 23, of Benoit's Cove, Bay of Islands, Newfoundland (*Daily News*, 19 June 1939, 6). In a letter written from Conception Bay on 17 June, Commander Sapsworth gave the victim's parents, George and Mary Batt, this account of the tragedy:

You have now been informed by telegram of the sad loss of your son Samuel and, in extending you the heartfelt sympathy of myself and the ship's company, I feel you would like also to know the details of this sad occurrence.

Your son was working on the upper deck when, for reasons unknown, he was seen to fall overboard. The ship was proceeding slowly at the time and the fall from the upper deck to the water would be about 80 feet. Men in the vicinity threw over lifebuoys and then manned an Emergency Sea Boat which was immediately lowered and the search commenced. Within a few minutes your son's cap was recovered quite close to the nearest lifebuoy but although the lifeboat, by this time assisted by the other boats from the ship and escorting Cruisers, was on the spot and remained searching for an hour and a half no sign of your son was found.

The sea surface was quite calm and any object in the water could be observed for a long distance. The exact position of the ship was midway between Bell Isle and Little Bell Isle, within a mile of our anchorage.

It is my belief that, due to the fall, your son Samuel was unconscious immediately on impact with the water and sank without being able to make any attempt to remain afloat. There is little doubt in my mind that if such were not the case he would easily have been rescued.

I am retaining his personal belongings until the ship's return to Quebec about the 6th July, when steps will be taken to return these to you through the Company's Agents.

Your son was very highly respected on board as an excellent seaman and a good shipmate, and we share with you the sadness of this sudden bereavement.

Samuel Batt had joined the *Empress of Britain* in September 1938 and had then been on a world cruise, returning to Southampton on 20 May 1939. He was lost on the liner's "Voyage 120" (*Western Star*, 12 July 1939, 1). In the 1935 Newfoundland census, George Batt was recorded as having been born in England.

- 89 Not included here.
- 90 Sir Edgar Bowring (1858–1943) had been Newfoundland High Commissioner in London, 1918–22, and 1933–34. For the office of High Commissioner, see RPA, GN13/1/B (Department of Justice files) box 317, Anderson to Thomas, 25 May 1934.
- 91 Not included here.
- 92 Edward Patrick Roche (1874–1950) was Roman Catholic Archbishop of St. John's and Metropolitan of Newfoundland, 1915–50.
- 93 William Philip Hogan Kitchen (1879–1946), Vicar General of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. John's and acting administrator of the Cathedral Parish. See Coady, ed., *Lives Recalled*, 295–96. We are grateful to Katie Griffin, Archdiocese of St. John's, for assistance with this note.
- 94 Henry Thomas Renouf (1872–1941) was the Roman Catholic Bishop of St. George's, 1920–41.
- 95 On the west coast of Newfoundland, far from St. John's.