

Chapter Three



Making a Living in the Nineteenth Century

Introduction



Key Words for this chapter:

- Bank Fishery
- Consumer Economy
- Inshore Fishery
- Labrador Fishery
- Seal Fishery
- Subsistence Economy
- Truck System



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Self-Sufficient People



- ☞ Today we live in a **consumer economy** in which people use **money** to buy what they need.
- ☞ In the 19th century (1800s), Newfoundlanders and Labradorians lived in a **subsistence economy**, producing what they needed for their own consumption (use)
- ☞ They were more self-sufficient and independent back then.

Self-Sufficient People (2)



∞ Subsistence Economy:

- ∞ Aboriginal peoples obtained food, clothing, and shelter by hunting and gathering.
- ∞ Immigrants had to adapt to life in remote/rural places far away from the cities in Europe.
- ∞ In order to survive, families had to produce their own necessities.

Needs	19 th Century Subsistence Economy	Today's Consumer Economy
Home Heating	Cut firewood, burn blubber	Pay hydro bill
Housing	Build houses out of snow, make tents out of skins	Buy a house or rent apartment
Home Entertainment	Play musical instruments, tell stories	Watch TV, movies, play on the computer, video games, go shopping, read a book, etc.
Food	Milk a cow, grow a garden, fish, hunt, gather	Go grocery shopping at a supermarket

Chart Questions



- ☞ Turn to page 49.
- ☞ Look at the chart.
- ☞ Answer questions 1 a & b, 2, and 3.

The Inshore Fishery



- ∞ The **inshore fishery** took place near the shores of Newfoundland and Labrador.
- ∞ Men began fishing for cod at dawn and continued throughout the day.
- ∞ If fish were plentiful, men returned to shore several times a day to unload their catch.
- ∞ On shore, work continued with cleaning, splitting, salting and curing took place.

Cod Drying



The Inshore Fishery



- ☞ The entire family was involved in curing the fish.
- ☞ Women and children helped with the proper curing of the fish, which ensure that it was good quality and would receive the best grade and price.
- ☞ Families, especially women, juggled many tasks from gardening, feeding the animals, making dinner, and washing clothes without the modern conveniences we have today.



Inshore Fishery



- ☞ Men also had many tasks other than fishing.
 - ☞ During the late fall and winter, they had to mend and repair their fishing gear, boats, and buildings.
 - ☞ They hunted when fishing season was over.
 - ☞ They cut and hauled wood to use as fuel.



Labrador Fishery



- ❧ A migratory fishery conducted by non-residents.
- ❧ Every summer, thousands of Newfoundlanders moved north to fish along the Labrador coastline.
- ❧ Like the Labrador residents, these summertime visitors had to survive with few medical services and limited supplies.
- ❧ The trip in June and back in September was harsh. Families spent a week at sea in cramped vessels not designed for passengers.

Labrador Fishery



- Two groups of people at the Labrador Fishery:
 - Stationers:** Worked from the shore and salted/dried fish on their own premises. They went no further than Cape Harrison.
 - Floaters:** Stayed on their boats and moved around to various fishing grounds. The fish was heavily salted to preserve it because they didn't dry their fish until they returned to Newfoundland. They went as far north as Cape Chidley.



Cape Chidley (Floaters)

Cape Harrison (Stationers)

Newfoundland and Labrador

Quebec

Gulf of St Lawrence

1 km
1 mi

Quebec City

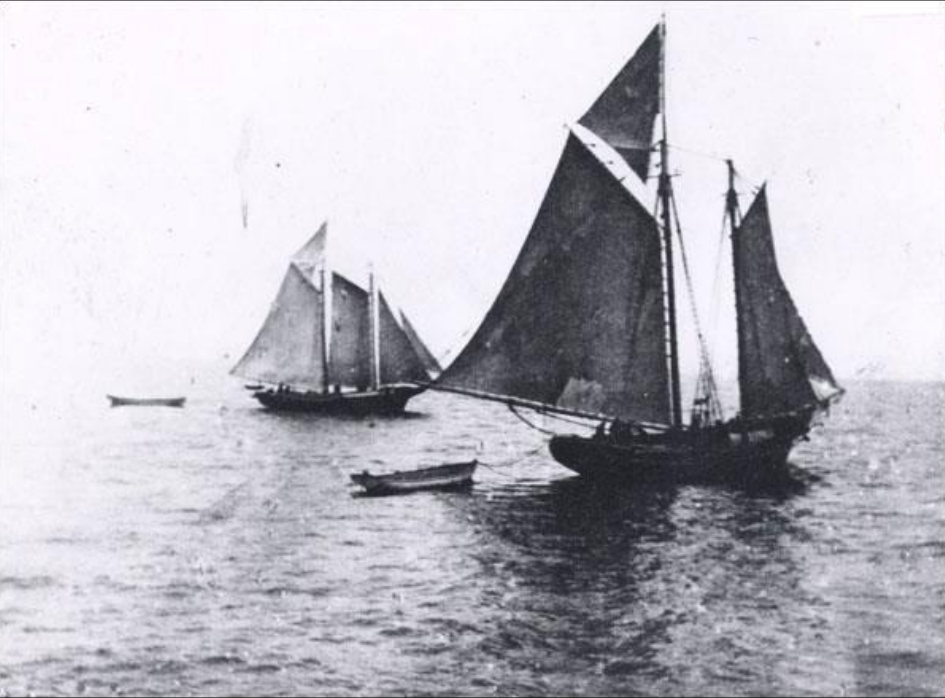
New Brunswick

St Pierre et Miquelon

The Bank Fishery



- ❧ In the Newfoundland **bank fishery**, large vessels called **schooners** carried crews to the banks. (Grand Banks, Rose Blanche Bank, St. Pierre Bank)
- ❧ Once on the banks, dories (smaller boats) were launched over the side of the schooner with two men inside.
- ❧ They would use long trawl lines and baited hooks to catch the fish.
- ❧ The men would go back and forth from the schooner to drop off their catch.



Newfoundland Schooner



Newfoundland Dory



The Bank Fishery



- ❧ With rough waters, the dory crews were in constant danger of being capsized, run down by other boats, or stranded away from the schooner.
- ❧ By the late 1800s the bank fishery had become a major industry on the Burin Peninsula and along the south/southwest coasts.
- ❧ The fishing season was extended later into the fall. As a result men had less time to cut firewood, which meant they needed to start **buying** coal for fuel and **buying** foods that they would have normally produced themselves.

Fish Merchants



- ❧ Fishermen's standard of living was often determined by their relationship with the local fish merchant.
- ❧ Historically, fish merchants are seen as villains who grew rich at the expense of fishermen and their families.
- ❧ The truth is that many fish merchants lost money and went bankrupt rather than made fortunes.

Fish Merchants



- ❧ The method of trade that existed between fishermen and merchants was called the **truck system**.
- ❧ The **truck system** was a cashless system whereby, in exchange for their season's catch, fishermen and their families received credit at the merchant's store, where they could then acquire items such as fishing gear, clothing, and food.

Fish Merchants



- ❧ Fish was measured and sold by quintal (roughly 220 pounds/100 kg.)
- ❧ A person called the **culler** graded it from 7 different grades.
 - ❧ The highest grade received the highest price.
 - ❧ The lowest grade was usually shipped to the West Indies, while the highest grade was sent to countries in Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Italy)

Fish Merchants



- ❧ The **truck system** allowed merchants to set the price of fish, as well as the prices of the goods in their stores.
- ❧ In many outports there was only one merchant, making it difficult for fishermen to negotiate or to try and get a better price on their catch.
- ❧ Many families fell into debt and it was impossible to escape it.

Fish Merchants



- ❧ Merchants faced financial risks because of changes in the price of fish and were sometimes unable to recover from the debt that was owed to them.
- ❧ Fish merchants often supported fishing families with food and good to help them get through the rough times. The truth was that the merchants needed the fishermen and the profit of the good years to ride out the bad years.

Questions!



- œ Page 57 of your textbook.
- œ Answer #2 in a **complete paragraph**. (No you do not have to present it to the class.)
- œ Answer #3 is a **complete paragraph**.
- œ 5-10 well developed sentences, guys!

Sealers



- Sealing was popular long before it developed into a major industry in the late 1800s.
- Today the sealing industry is *very* small compared to what it once was.



Sealers



- ∞ There were **two** branches of the commercial **seal fishery**:
 - ∞ The “**landsman’s hunt**” meaning they hunted seals by land and on packed ice.
 - ∞ The “**offshore hunt**” meaning they went offshore to search for seals along the coast. (This was the more popular way to hunt seals)

Sealers



- Seals were hunted for food, clothing and oil. Oil was the most prized seal product for the commercial seal fishery because it was used for lamps, machines, softening textiles (clothing material), and as an ingredient in explosives and margarine.
- In the mid nineteenth century, oil accounted for 84% of exported seal products.

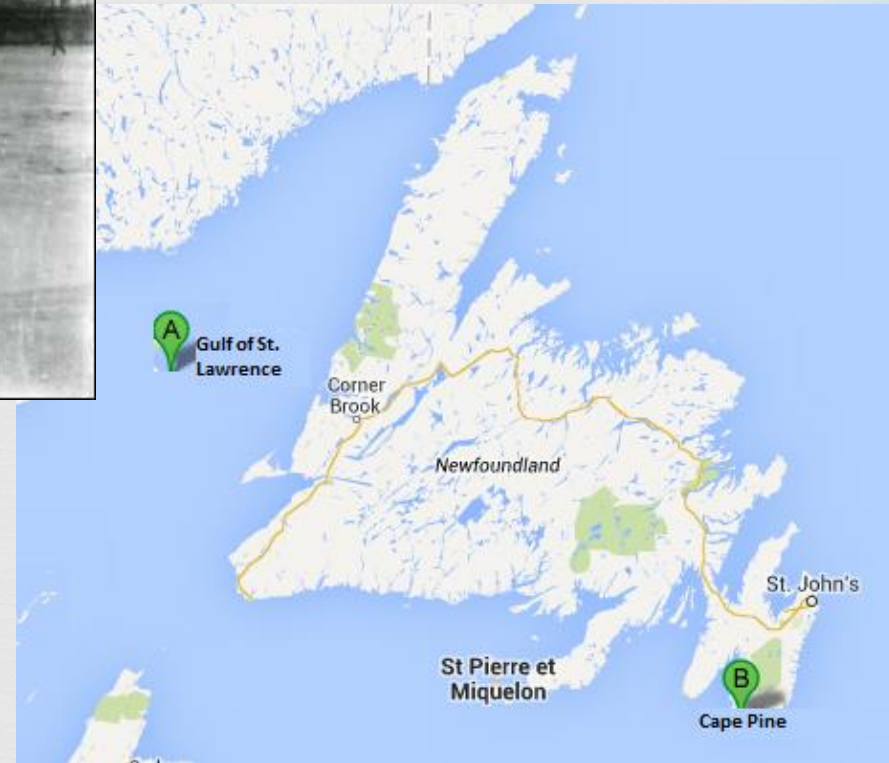
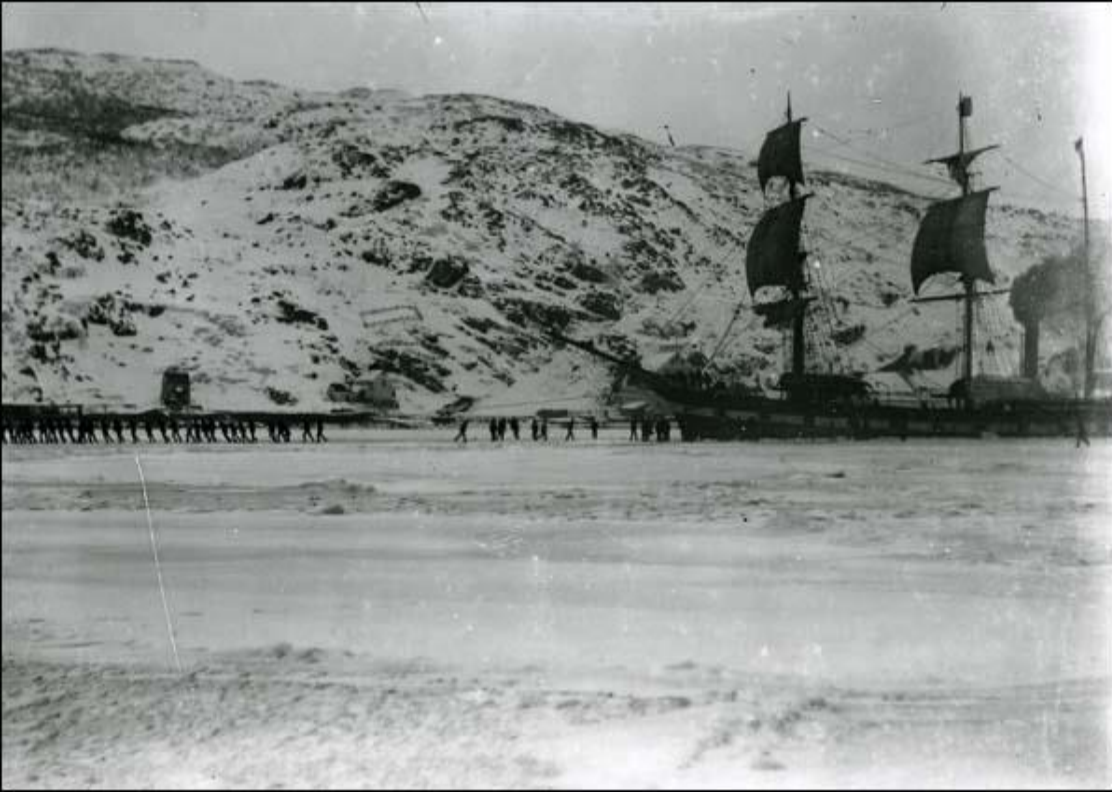
Sealers



❧ The *Southern Cross* Disaster of 1914

❧ The seal fishery was more dangerous than any other types of fisheries because of the location of the seals, the season of the hunt, and the ways seals were hunted.

❧ The *Southern Cross* was a wooden steam-driven ship that had been sealing for 13 years. On March 31, 1914, on its way back to St. John's, it met a blizzard that lasted all day and night. The last report was received at Cape Pine. None of the 173 crew members survived.



The *Southern Cross* Disaster of 1914

Trappers



- ❧ Traditional lifestyles of the Aboriginal peoples were changing during the 1800s.
- ❧ Changing from a subsistence economy to one of trapping and commercial endeavours (consumer economy) resulted in people becoming more dependent on other people and on forces beyond their control.

Trappers



-
- ❧ In Labrador, the demand for beaver and fox furs increased, so Innu focused on using their skills to trap for trading rather than food.
 - ❧ Trapping was a lonely lifestyle. Men tended their traplines for months at a time, far away from home, where the women remained.

Trappers



☞ In the 1830s, the **Hudson Bay Company (HBC)** expanded into Labrador, putting small traders out of business. At this time, the HBC had been operating as a fur trading company for 160 years! Many Innu traded solely with the HBC.



HUDSON'S BAY CO.

Trappers

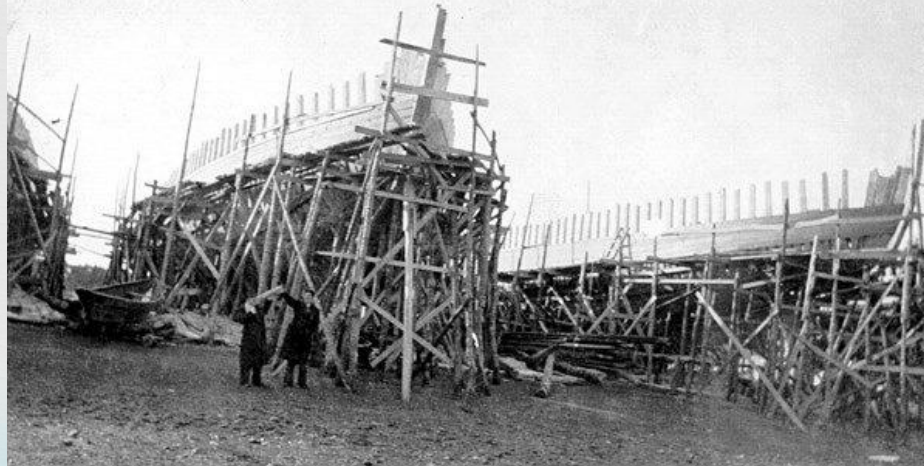


- ❧ The Inuit traded with **Moravian mission stations** further north along the coast.
- ❧ The **Moravians** used a similar cashless system like the truck system to trade with the Inuit.
- ❧ The **Moravians** provided important services to the Inuit that other merchants did not, such as education and health care. They believed they were protecting the Inuit from other merchants who would trade for harmful substances like alcohol.

Shipbuilders and Other Occupations



- Boats were the primary means of transportation in nineteenth century Newfoundland. Most men built their own boats and schooners.
- Shipbuilding became an industry as the population grew, and between 1820 and 1920 almost 10,000 vessels of 30 tons or more were built. (BIG ships!)



Michael Kearney (1811-1885)



- ❧ Michael Kearney may have been Newfoundland's greatest shipbuilder. He was born in Ferryland and descended from one of Newfoundland's oldest Irish families.
- ❧ He learned shipbuilding in Waterford and Youghal, Ireland.
- ❧ His ships were noted for their strength, speed and beauty.
- ❧ One of his ships, the *Ida*, made a record breaking round trip from St. John's to Bristol, England in 26 days.

Michael Kearney



- ❧ Kearney was praised for his public service and was referred to as a “man of the people” by the residents of Ferryland.
- ❧ He was elected to the House of Assembly in 1865. He held the post until 1869.
- ❧ Kearney died in St. John’s in 1885. In his last days he was lending his shipbuilding expertise to the shipbuilders who were constructing the *Shamrock*.

Twentieth Century



- By the beginning of the twentieth century (1900s), the fishing industry no longer dominated the Newfoundland economy.
- Although the number of people working in the fishing industry remained high, other industries such as mining, railway and forestry, provided jobs for the growing population

Occupations in 1891

Occupation	Number of employees
Merchants and Traders	767
Clerks and Shop assistants	1948
Mechanics (Manual Labourers)	2681
Factory workers	1058
Lumberers and Miners	1923
Fishermen	53, 502
Farmers	1545
Clergymen	180
Teachers	601
Lawyers	43
Doctors	62
Government officials	608