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# Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador

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**Volume One**

three and by 1940 the last family, Robinson, had moved from the Cove. From 1945 to 1966 no people were reported to be living in Bottle Cove itself and the people living on the Bottle Cove access road were included in the population reported for Littleport. In the late 1960s a Martin family moved to Bottle Cove to fish and after their home burned down their property was sold to a Vincent family (the population of four recorded in Bottle Cove in 1971). In 1972 the Government of Newfoundland expropriated land from the Darrigan family and built a picnic area and opened part of the Cove as a public beach. In 1981 part of the beach was still used by Littleport fishermen and the remaining land and shoreline were used for the picnic park and by people in privately-owned cottages. William S. Darrigan (interview, June 1981), Norman Lane (interview, June 1981), E.R. Seary (1960), Edward Wix (1836). *Census* (1901-1971). *JHA* (1857). JEMP

**BOTTLE-NOSED DIVER (SURF SCOTER).** See DUCKS, GEESE AND SWANS.

**BOTWOOD** (inc. 1960; pop. 1971, 4115). The town of Botwood lies on a ridge of land extending into the Bay of Exploits between Peter's Arm and Northern Arm on the northeast coast of Newfoundland. Its harbour offers deep water anchorage of 18-36 m (10-20 fathoms) and wharfage to ocean-going vessels. Bishop's Falls is 19 km (12 mi) away.

Captain David Buchan *qv* anchored his ship at what was to become Botwood harbour during the winter of 1810 while he and his party travelled up the Exploits River to the interior in an attempt to establish friendly relations with the Beothuk. It was also at this harbour that the young captive Beothuk girl, Demasduit *qv* (Mary March), died in 1820.

The community's first baby, Bertram Jewer, was born in 1881 when there were only four families there. It was called Ship Cove at that time. By the 1891 census it had been renamed Botwoodville in honour of Reverend Edward Botwood *qv*. In the early Twentieth Century the community's name was shortened to Botwood. In 1890 Botwoodville became one of Newfoundland's principal sawmill centres.



Botwood, 1890s

Botwood became an export base for the paper manufactured by the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company after it built its paper mill in Grand Falls *qv* in 1909. By May 1910 the first load of newsprint was shipped from Botwood. Also in 1910 the first \*Fishermen's Protective Union *qv* store was opened in the community. A local of the 'Long Shore-

man's Protective Union was formally established in August 1929.

In 1920 Major Sidney Cotton *qv* used Botwood as a base for his pioneer work in aviation. He formed the Aerial Survey (Newfoundland) Company there, and made important innovations in winter flying and aerial seal spotting. His pioneer aviation there was the first of its kind in Newfoundland and Canada, and, some believe, in the world. In the 1930s both the United States and the United Kingdom explored the possibility of using Botwood as a commercial transatlantic air base, with Ireland as the eastern terminus. In 1937 the Pan American *Clipper III* made the flight west to east, while the British Imperial *Caledonia* made the trip east to west. Botwood continued to be an air base until the 1940s, when Gander airport took over air traffic. During World War II Botwood became a coastal defence base for the Royal Canadian Air Force as well as for the Canadian Army and Navy.

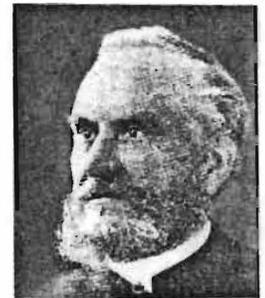
In the late 1950s Botwood became a year-round port, not only with icebreaker assistance but also with the help of observation aircraft, reliable weather reports and a good communications system. In 1980 Abitibi-Price Limited controlled both the mill at Grand Falls and the dock facilities at Botwood.

Botwood's basic economy is derived from its function as a port. The bulk of shipments from Botwood include paper manufactured by Abitibi-Price Company Limited in Grand Falls, along with lead, zinc and copper concentrates mined by the American Smelting and Refining Company at Buchans. Two oil companies, Golden Eagle Limited and Irving Oil Limited, use Botwood as a storage base and district service centre. Some imports which come through Botwood include Bunker "C" oil and clean fuels, sulphur, caustic soda and general cargo. The port is kept open year round with the aid of icebreakers in the winter.

In 1981 Botwood had a number of medical, educational and recreational facilities: a cottage hospital, schools, a volunteer fire brigade, an artificial ice rink, and a swimming pool and playground provided by the Botwood Lion's Club. There were churches of seven religious denominations in Botwood. Mrs. A. Rowsell (letter, April 1979), Roderick Woolridge (1976). Map F. CMB

**BOTWOOD, ARCHDEACON EDWARD** (1828-1901). Clergyman.

Born England. Botwood came to Newfoundland in 1858, entered Queen's College in St. John's where he was ordained a Deacon of the Church of England in 1860 and Priest in 1862. He was Minister at Exploits Bay after this, and while there helped to establish a large lumber company. He was incumbent of St. Mary's Church, St. John's, 1867-1877, and Rector, 1877-1901. In 1870 Botwood exhibited a collection of specimens of Newfoundland's flora, fauna, its manufactures, as well as old books, manuscripts, pictures and paintings. The exhibition, the first of its kind to be held in the city, was opened in St. John's by Governor Sir Stephen Hill *qv*, and the proceeds from the exhibition were used to repair St. Mary's Church.



Archdeacon Botwood

From 1879 to 1901 Botwood was Episcopal Commissary

Company constructed the airstrip on Bell Island in the early 1950s. The original runway was an 823 m (2700 ft) gravel-surfaced strip. The facility was turned over to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in the mid-1970s. In 1978 the runway was paved to a length of 762 m (2500 ft) and a width of 23 m (75 ft). It is located 137 m (450 ft) above sea level. In 1981 there were no facilities provided for refueling, servicing or storage of aircraft, and there were no regularly scheduled flights.

**BONAVISTA AIRSTRIP.** Located south of the town of Bonavista, this unlicensed airstrip was in 1981 operated by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. There was one runway, surfaced with asphalt, 610 m (2000 ft) long, 23 m (75 ft) wide and 46 m (150 ft) above sea level. In that year there were no refueling or storage facilities but lighting could be provided upon request. The airstrip was constructed in 1972.

#### BOTWOOD SEA-PLANE BASE.

Major Sydney Cotton *qv* established the first facilities for aircraft at Botwood during 1921-1922 as headquarters for his Aerial Survey (Newfoundland) Company. There he constructed hangars for his planes, a de Havilland 9, a Rolls-Royce powered Martinside and a Westland Napier. The planes were equipped with locally made skis for winter flying and used the frozen Exploits River as a runway. In other seasons the planes were equipped with pontoons. Cotton remained at Botwood for only two to three years and after he left his facilities fell into disuse.

In 1935 the United States and British Governments chose Botwood as a landing base for their trans-Atlantic flying boats. They reactivated Cotton's hangars, added facilities for refuelling, communications, weather observations and aircraft maintenance. On July 5, 1937 the first transatlantic experimental commercial flight, the Pan American *Clipper III*,



Cotton's hangar at Botwood. 1921.

flying boat, under the command of Captain A.S. Wilcockson, left Foynes for Botwood. It landed July 6, 1937 at 7:36 a.m. This marked the beginning of transatlantic commercial flights.

With the construction of the land-based airport at Gander (1936-39) Botwood lost its prominent role in the transatlantic corridor. During World War II the facility was outfitted as a Royal Canadian Air Force base accommodating the coastal defence anti-submarine patrol squadron using PBY-5A Canso amphibians. A large concrete slipway was constructed and an ammunition depot was built on Killick Island. After the war the facility was closed and the equipment removed. On July 12, 1969 a plaque was unveiled in Botwood commemorating the inauguration of commercial air service across the Atlantic Ocean.

**BUCHANS AIRSTRIP.** In 1942 the Canadian Government built an airstrip 5 km (3 mi) east of Buchans as an emergency landing strip. At the end of World War II the facilities came under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Department of Transport. The field was not used frequently by aircraft but there were radio range towers which served in directing aircraft and keeping them on course. The Canadian Government phased out the operation in 1965 and the facilities have not been maintained. There were two runways, each approximately 1219 m (4000 ft) long and 30.5 m (100 ft) wide; the surface was crushed rock. The field was 283 m (927 ft) above sea level and was unlicensed. The Buchans Task Force (1976) recommended upgrading and reactivation of the airstrip to serve the people of the Buchans area.

**CARTWRIGHT AIRSTRIP.** The construction of the airstrip at Cartwright was originally planned during 1977-1978 as a joint project to be financed by the Government of Canada's Federal Financial Airport Assistance Program and by oil companies drilling near Cartwright off the Labrador coast. This proposal collapsed when the oil companies suspended drilling operations and moved elsewhere. Some federal money materialized, but the major cost of the construction of the airstrip was borne by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, which had invested over one million dollars in the project by 1978. The runway is 899 m (2950 ft) long and 23 m (75 ft) wide. It is situated 12 m (39 ft) above sea level and has a gravel surface. In 1981 there were no fixed base facilities.

**CHURCHILL FALLS AIRPORT.** In 1958 a small airstrip was constructed at Twin Falls, 37 km (23 mi) from the site of the Churchill Falls development. Originally used to bring people and supplies to the hydro-electric project under construction there, it soon became evident that the location was inconvenient and the facility inadequate to meet the growing needs of the project. The Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation began work on a new airport for the area in the spring and summer of 1968, located across from Mount Hyde Lake, 8 km (5 mi) west of the Churchill Falls site. It was ready for use by the fall of that year. The single runway was 1676 m (5500 ft) long and 46 m (150 ft) wide. It was built up from a .9 m (3 ft) deep excavation which was then filled with 61 cm (24 in) of crushed rock, 23 cm (9 in) of finer crushed rock and 9 cm (3.5 in) of asphalt. A makeshift terminal building was constructed of plywood and two trailers. A new terminal was opened in April 1969. It contained a waiting area and offices for Eastern Provincial Airways. On March 31, 1969 the Canadian Department of Transport began operating a weather of-



Caledonia docking at Botwood Seaplane Base. 1937.

landed at Botwood from New York via Shediac, New Brunswick. The next day the *Clipper III*, a Sikorsky 42 aircraft piloted by Captain Harold Gray, left Botwood for Foynes, Ireland. The same day the *Caledonia*, a Short Empire Class

waited three weeks for proper weather. Eight hours after their departure Queen Elizabeth II, on her way to Newfoundland, radioed them a salutation. After four days and twenty-four minutes in the air they came down off the coast of Brittany, 2846 km (1768 mi) from their starting point. A 2.5 m (8 ft) rip in the inner helium-filled bag of the hot-air balloon, combined with unpredictable weather and winds, forced them to abort their flight 185 km (115 mi) from the coast. A French trawler, *Elsinor*, brought Cameron, Davey and the 4.5 m (15 ft) gondola to Concareau, a small fishing port in France.

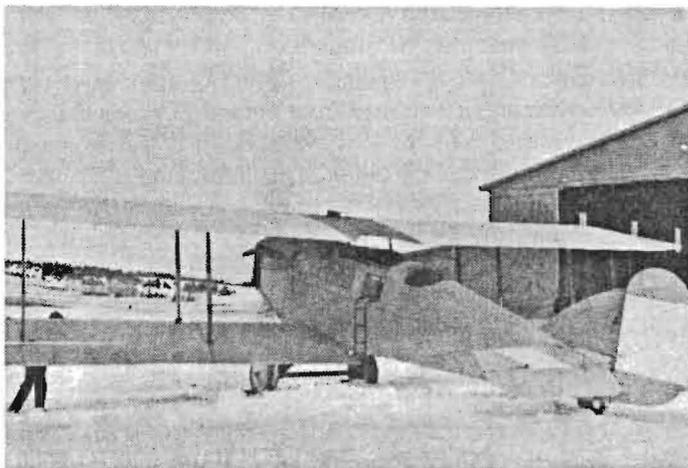
The first successful transatlantic balloon crossing was made by three Americans, Maxie Anderson, Ben Abruzzo and Larry Newman when they sailed from Maine and landed in a wheat field in Miserey, France, August 18, 1978.

**CIVIL AVIATION.** In a speech delivered on April 23, 1920 in the Newfoundland House of Assembly J.R. Bennett noted that in his previous capacity in the Colonial Secretary's office when "the British Government or the British Admiralty offered us [Newfoundland] one hundred airplanes we flatly turned down their offer, telling them we had no earthly need of them" (*PHA*: April 23, 1920). Bennett preferred marine tugboats to airplanes. However, as a result of growing interest in aviation the Newfoundland government had passed its first Aerial Mail Service Act (9-10 Geo. V, c.5) on June 5, 1919. The Act, anticipating large scale transatlantic and transcontinental air mail and passenger services, contracted an English firm, the Aircraft Manufacturing Company, to establish regular air passenger, freight and mail service between the Island and "such routes as may be agreed upon from time to time." As well as providing ample grants of land and tariff-free entry for company equipment the Act provided for the preferential hiring of Newfoundland labour in the venture.

The next twenty years did not diminish Newfoundland's role as the primary refueling point for further transatlantic, transcontinental and circumnavigational attempts.

In 1921 Captain Sidney Cotton *qv*, an Australian airman who had formerly flown with the Royal Flying Corps in World War I, came to Newfoundland. The next year he started an aviation enterprise called the Aerial Survey Company (Newfoundland) Limited. His associates were Lt. David Plaistowe, a friend and flying veteran of World War I, and Captain Sydney Bennett, a Newfoundland pilot.

Although it is assumed that the three pilots had become engaged in air post activities during this period it was not until February 1921 that a postal agreement was made to fly mail to St. Anthony and later to Fogo. The flight was made by Cotton, with Plaistowe and Captain Kean, who flew the *de Havilland* to Fogo delivering mail on March 28, 1921 from Botwood. From April 1921 until February 1922 the group successfully completed several mail drops and as a result "by February 1922 the Postal Authorities had made a contract with Cotton and Bennett's Aerial Survey Co." (Dalwick and Harmer: 1953). Cotton, however, achieved further commercial recognition as a result of a flight from Botwood to Cartwright Harbour where he arrived on March 4, 1922. According to Captain W.R. Landis (letter, May 17, 1961) Cotton penetrated farther north than any airman before him. The company, contracted to survey the coast of Labrador from the air, now owned Cotton's Martynside biplane and two Napier and Rolls Wesland aircraft, which the July 1923 issue of the *Newfoundland Quarterly* maintained could accommodate



Cotton's Martynside Biplane, *Quidi Vidi*.

"twelve passengers besides the three pilots, and fly completely equipped with living gear for use in the event of a forced landing."

According to A.B. Perlin (1922) Cotton, backed by associates A.S. Butler and Captain V.S. Bennett, demonstrated in 1922 that a passenger could be landed safely at Alexander Bay from St. John's and that "when railway communication was interrupted and Harbour Grace, Carbonear, Bay Roberts, and other Conception Bay towns were completely isolated . . . Major Cotton visited them all, landed mails and passengers, took return mails and arrived back in the city after accomplishing in two hours what . . . would have taken at least five" (*NQ*: April 1922). Cotton also approached sealing companies offering his services to find "the main patch" at both the 1920 and 1921 seal hunts. By 1923 this unsuccessful venture was behind him and his crew, and the distinction of being the first successful pilot to spot seals went to a Roy S. Grandy at the March hunt of 1924. Grandy, a native Newfoundlander and former sealing captain, persuaded the St. John's firms of Job Brothers and Bowrings to use his plane on the *S.S. Eagle*, and he successfully spotted a patch of an estimated 125,000 seals. According to Frank H. Ellis (1954) the Aerial Survey (Newfoundland) Company's activities in seal spotting ended in the late 1920s. The last plane privately contracted for spotting crashed near St. Anthony during the 1929 seal hunt. Cotton had left in 1923.

In October 1930 Newfoundlanders Captain Douglas C. Frazer and Arthur D. Sullivan, flying partners in Sullivan's



Sullivan and Frazer.

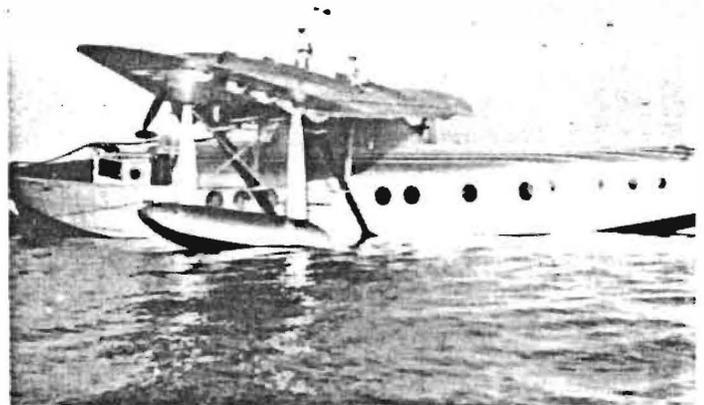
company, Newfoundland Airways Ltd., received a contract to air-lift mail to and from Newfoundland ports of call during the winter. Their successful landing at Mount Pearl on November 19, 1930 with the first air mail from Toronto, Canada to Newfoundland earned them the local contract which was to consist of "six flights at weekly intervals, commencing in January. The company to receive \$150 subsidy per round trip, the route being St. John's to St. Anthony via Hampden, Western Arm and Conche — a distance of about 660 miles" (Dalwick and Harmer: 1953). The first local postal flights started on January 29, 1931 with Sullivan at the controls. Because of a series of breakdowns the plane, a Gypsy Moth, did not arrive at its destination, St. Anthony, until February 13. Sullivan, however, delivered mail at Hampden and Western Arm as he flew northward. On the return flight he delivered the remaining mail to Conche.

During 1931 Frazer started a company which he called Old Colony Airways delivering mail to Burin, and on July 16, 1931 he delivered the first air mail to Corner Brook in his new Curtis-Reid seaplane CF-ACK. Although no longer with Sullivan's company (Sullivan was killed in a plane crash near St. Anthony in 1932) Frazer continued to pursue government mail and private contracts. He also flew missions for the Geodetic Survey of Canada from 1934 to 1942, meteorological observation flights at Gander and Norris Arm, and extensive aerial surveys of the Stephenville and Argentinia areas. On July 12, 1933 Charles Lindbergh arrived at Quidi Vidi Lake. Lindbergh and his wife Anne flew immediately to Bay Bulls Big Pond. On July 14 the Lindberghs flew to the seaplane base at Botwood where they refueled for a flight to Cartwright the same day. Lindbergh's flights to Newfoundland were specifically made to survey aerial routes across the Atlantic. Lindbergh's extensive surveys from Newfoundland, Labrador, Greenland, Shetland Islands, and Denmark resulted in the inauguration of the first transatlantic commercial passenger service. The first regular transatlantic airmail service was a joint venture of British Imperial Airways and Pan American Airways inaugurated in 1937. Pan Am *Clipper III*, piloted by Captain Harold Gray, left New York on July 3, 1937 landing at Botwood the same day. On July 5, 1937 it left Botwood arriving at Foynes, Ireland, on July 6, 1937.

The British Imperial Airways *Caledonia*, piloted by Captain A.S. Wilcockson, made the east-west flight from Foynes also on July 5, 1937. It arrived at Botwood on July 6, 1937



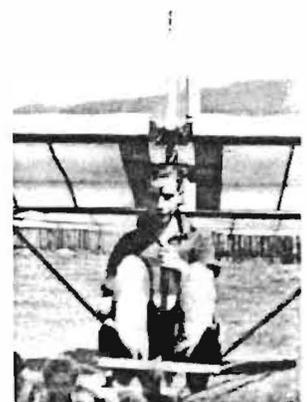
Charles and Anne Lindbergh.  
Botwood



Pan American Clipper III at Botwood, 1937.

continuing on to New York on July 8-9, 1937. The success of the *Clipper III* and the *Caledonia* resulted in the expansion of the transatlantic air operation to accommodate weekly flights to Montreal from Botwood connecting Europe and the United States. By 1939 the *Caribou*, *Connemara*, *Cabot*, *Clyde* and three commercial Handley Page Harrow flying boats and tankers were operating from Botwood and Gander. (Don Morris: 1976). Substantial strides in aviation had been made during the period between 1919 and 1939 and this was especially true of flying time and comfort for the passengers. Indeed, the flying boats "had plenty of cabin space and one could move about as in the lounge of a small steamer. There was a bar which opened at 10:00 am and which helped many passengers to find an excuse for airsickness . . . on a flying boat which could not fly above the weather and often rocked with the motion of a ship in a tidy swell" (Newfoundland Historical Society: Aviation).

GLIDING. J. Hebbard formed the Newfoundland Aero Club which met at the Oak Building in St. John's during 1937. The club consisting of Hebbard (President), J. Mercer (Secretary), S. Mills (Treasurer); R. Yetman, H. Brownrigg and F. Noseworthy purchased a Slingsby English glider for \$350 in that year and in early May 1938 Hebbard completed the first glider flight in Newfoundland; it lasted thirty seconds.



J. Hebbard in his glider.

The club's patrons, Montgomery-Ward and Crosbie's Margarine Company, planned to utilize the glider in an advertising venture for Crosbie's "Solo" Margarine. From 1938 until the beginning of the war the Newfoundland Aero Club completed more than 100 flights from Lester's Field, the site of Alcock and Brown's historic take-off.

POST-1940. During World War II the Governments of Can-