



CHAPTER FOUR

How the People Were Governed

Introduction

- **You will learn about:**
 - The evolution of responsible government
 - The major challenges and government responses (1855-1914)
 - Crisis of the 1890s
 - William Ford Coaker and the Fishermen's Protective Union.



The Evolution of Government 1800-1855

- In 1800, Newfoundland was a part of the British Empire, its people were governed from London, England.
- **Naval Governors to Crown Colony**
 - A **naval governor** who had the title of “Excellency” was appointed to run military, political, and law. He would remain in Newfoundland for the fishing season only.
 - Between 1816-1818, a large amount of immigrants arrived expecting to find jobs in the fishery, but jobs were difficult to find.
 - A series of hard winters and fires in St. John’s left many angry, which led to violence and unrest. This was known as the “Winter of the Rals.” The term “rals” was used to describe starving and homeless people who roamed the streets looking for food and shelter.

Naval Governors to Crown Colony Continued...

- The British government responded to the “Winter of the Rals” crisis by sending emergency relief money to help take care of the desperate conditions.
- Governor Sir Francis Pickmore was instructed to stay in Newfoundland year-round.
- The system of naval government came under criticism after 1815, since it did not suit a growing, settled colonial society.
- The British government eventually accepted that Newfoundland was no longer a fishing station, but home to a permanent population with about 50,000 people.

Naval Governors to Crown Colony Continued...

- Newfoundland was made a **Crown Colony** in 1824, meaning a governor represented the English government, and for the first time, Newfoundlanders had some say in the running of their affairs.
- The new **civil governor** could seek the advice of an appointed local council, but at this point did not have to use their recommendations, as he remained solely under the control of the British government.



Sir Thomas Cochrane: Newfoundland and Labrador's first civil governor (1825)

Representative Government

- Thanks to **reformers**, (a person who strives for political change) like Patrick Morris and William Carson, Britain granted **representative government** to Newfoundland in 1832, which was the same system of government that was put in place elsewhere in British North America.
- **Representative government:** Government elected (at least partially) by the people. Only elected officials could make laws (legislate) and institute taxes.
- It consisted of a **governor, a legislative council, and an assembly.**
 - **The Governor:** Appointed by the British government
 - **Legislative Council:** Appointed by the British government
 - **Assembly:** Elected by the people to represent them.

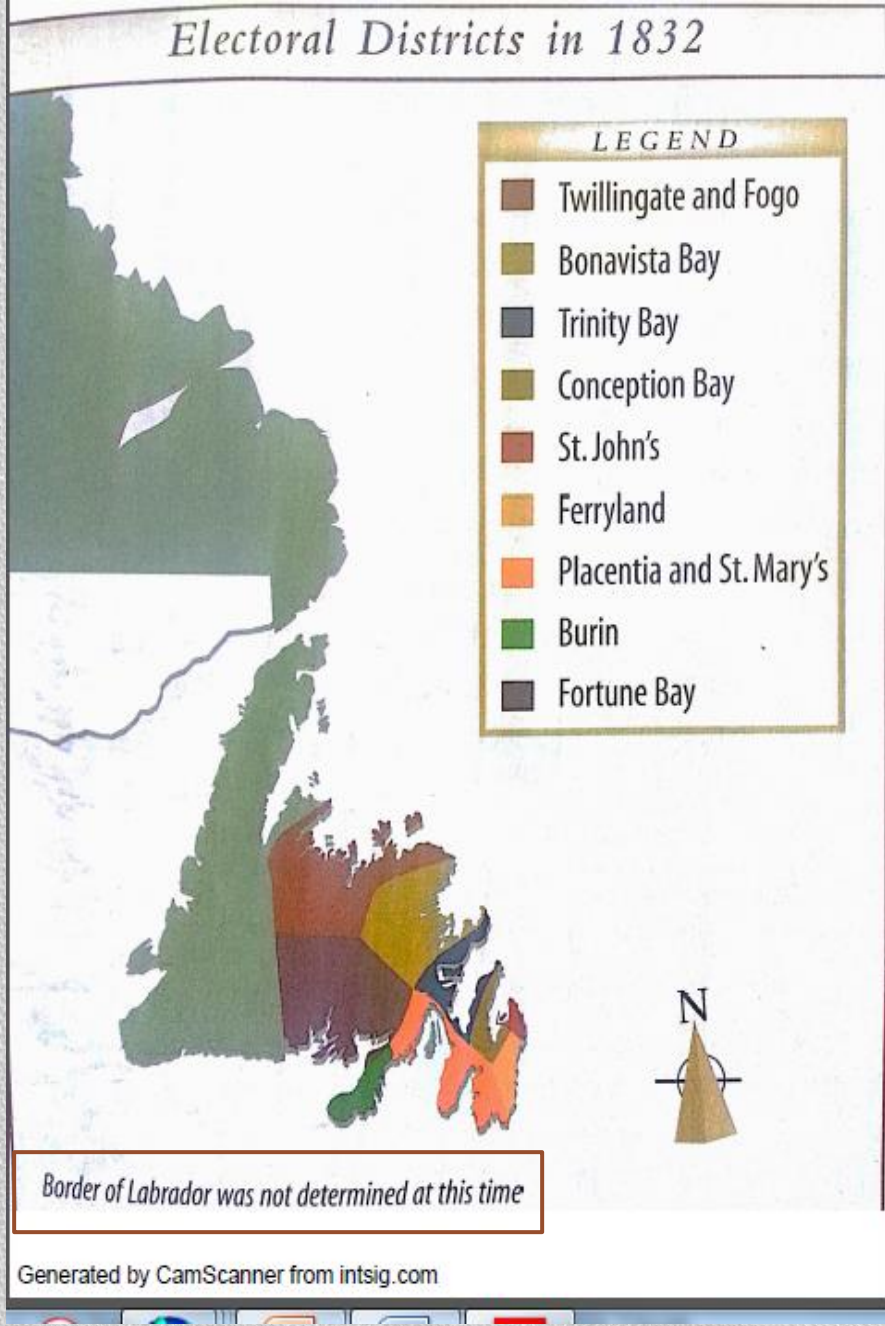
Representative Government Continued...

- Men over the age of 21 and who had lived in Newfoundland for one year could vote.
- The assembly had little authority and could only suggest new laws for the approval by the council and governor. Therefore, the governor and the council were in fact “The government.”
- The first House of Assembly was elected in 1832 with 15 members representing 9 **electoral districts**.

Electoral Districts 1832

The entire west and southwest coast, as well as Labrador had no representation!

Women and the poor were **disenfranchised**, meaning they did not have the right to vote.



Responsible Government

- There were serious limitations in the system of **representative government**. The appointed (chosen) council, and not the *elected* assembly held most of the power, and there issues between the council and the assembly.
- The members of the council represented the wealthy merchants, who were mainly English and belonged to the Church of England.
- The members of the assembly represented the poor people and fishers, who were mainly Irish Roman Catholics and Methodists.
- The council and the assembly would fight so much that little work could be done.

Responsible Government Continued...

- At election time, when voters had to stand and be counted, there were opportunities for intimidation and violence.
- Political cartoons, which made fun of political issues, became popular.
- → John Doyle's "The speaker Putting the Question" 1832.



Responsible Government Continued...

- The reformers realized that they had to find a way to make the governor and council listen to the wishes of the elected assembly.
- Under **responsible government**, the governor would have no real power. He would have to follow the advice of the executive council, which was chosen by the governor from the elected assembly.
- The executive council, now called a cabinet, was chosen from members of whichever political party had the most seats in the assembly. The leader of that party was the premier.
- The legislative council and the assembly made laws which the executive council enforced. This would place the real power in the hands of the people.

Responsible Government Continued...

- The reformer tried to convince the British government to allow responsible government, but the governor (who had all the power) and the members of the executive council didn't agree with it because they didn't want to lose their power.
- After several years, the British government agreed with the reformers, and in **1855** Newfoundland was granted responsible government.
- **Philip Francis Little**, a lawyer, became Newfoundland's first premiere.
- This system of government remained in place until **1934**.

Government Assignment

- Use your text book (Pages 70-75) to complete the assignment!
- Please work individually!!



KEEP
CALM
AND
DO YOUR
ASSIGNMENT

Challenges and Government Responses: 1855-1914

- Political parties were at first largely based on religious affiliation.
 - The Liberal party, which formed the first responsible government, was largely Roman Catholic.
 - The Conservatives were mainly Protestants.
- In 1861 the governor dismissed the Liberal government and installed the Conservatives. This caused new elections and a major political crisis, resulting in a riot in St. John's where 3 people were killed.
- Public outrage started an attempt to remove religious rivalries from politics and led to a denomination compromise. Political and religious leaders agreed that cabinet positions and jobs in the public service would be shared among the respective denominations.

Denominational Compromise

- By 1874 a school system organized on the basis of religious denominations was fully in place.
- This was known as **denominational school system**, which the government supported by granting public funds to the churches that ran the separate schools, which included:
 - The Roman Catholic Church
 - The Church of England
 - The Methodist Church
- The Denominational school system educated students for over 100 years, until a non-denominational school system came into being in 1997.

How is this classroom similar to or different from your classroom? Would you like to have been a student in this class?



Confederation

- 10 years after the introduction of **responsible government**, Newfoundlanders debated the issue of **Confederation**, or joining Canada.
- Arguments for and against confederation were passionate following the creation of the Dominion of Canada on July 1, 1867 (or when Canada became one unified country.)
- Newfoundland premiere at the time, Frederic Carter felt that joining Canada could bring positive developments for Newfoundland.

Confederation Continued...

- The issue of confederation was resolved when Charles Fox Bennet and the Anti-Confederates (people who did not want to join Canada) won an impressive victory by taking 21 seats to the 9 of the Confederates.
- This rejection of confederation secured the country's independence for the next 80 years.

Page 80-81

- 1. Look for evidence showing how the writer characterizes Confederates and Anti-Confederates. Make a list of the words used to describe each group:

Confederates	Anti-Confederates

The Building of the Railway

- After confederation had been rejected, Newfoundland faced serious economic difficulties in the 1880s.
- Market prices for fish and seal products declined and catches were unreliable from year to year. The population was growing rapidly, but with few job opportunities other than fishing, people started to leave Newfoundland.
- The idea that a railway may keep Newfoundlanders from leaving sparked the decision to build a trans-island railway.

Railway Continued

- The construction of Newfoundland's first railway began in 1881.

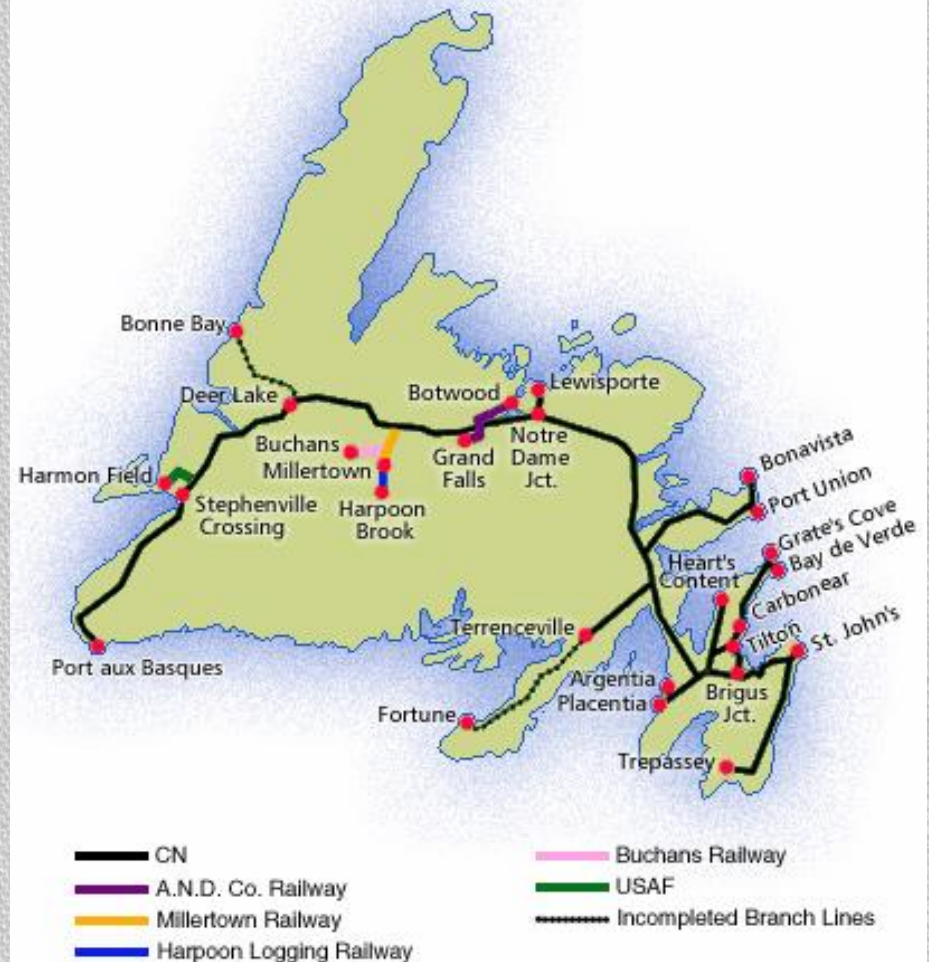
By 1884, trains were running between St. John's and Harbour Grace.

Construction was put on hold until 1890 for political and financial reasons.

The line across the island was completed in 1897.

Newfoundland's government initially planned to have the railway end at St. Georges rather than Port aux Basque, but since St. George's was located on the French Shore, it was vetoed by the British government.

Newfoundland Railway Mainline and Branch Lines



Railway Continued

- While the Mi'kmaq helped with building the railway line, its completion brought a heavy price.
- The railway gave settlers access to caribou herds in the interior of the island, which were vital to Mi'kmaq way of life.
- Due to more people hunting, the size of the caribou herd declined dramatically and the effect on the Mi'kmaq was catastrophic.
- The railway stayed operational until 1988.

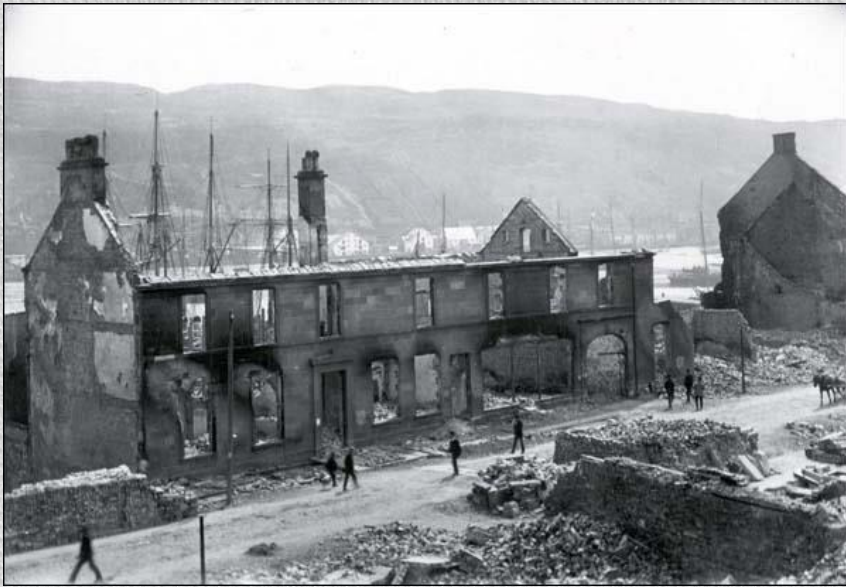
St. John's Fire of 1892

- Since most of the buildings were made of wood and often joined, fires were a constant threat in the nineteenth century.
- St. John's was hit with 3 major fires in the nineteenth century and Harbour Grace suffered a major fire in 1832.



St. John's Fire Continued...

- The first fire in 1817 left $\frac{1}{4}$ of the townspeople homeless, while the 1846 and 1892 fires destroyed an even larger area.
- Somehow only 5 people were killed in all 3 fires.



French Shore Crisis

- Under **responsible government**, NL's foreign affairs were controlled by the British government.
- Under treaties signed in the 18th century, French fishers had the right to use the coast in summer between Cape St. John and Cape Ray.
- The population in NL was increasing and Newfoundlanders wanted to develop the resources of the west coast.
- It was not until the late 19th century that settlers on the French Shore encountered policemen, and began to pay taxes and send representatives to the House of Assembly.

French Shore Continued

- In the 1890s the French claimed they had a right to participate in lobster fisheries, but the Newfoundlanders objected, saying that the French treaties only gave the French the right to take fish, and not lobsters!
- The French continued to protest against the development of the French Shore until they agreed in 1904 to give up their treaty rights in exchange for financial compensation, and territory in West Africa.
- This convention was part of the famous *entente cordiale* between Britain and France. (An alliance that stretched into WWI)

The 1894 Bank Crash

- December 10, 1894 – “Black Monday” – the Commercial Bank could not open because it didn’t have any money to pay its depositors!
- Although the economy was expanding and diversifying, it was still heavily dependent on the fishery. The fishery accounted for approximately 90% of NL’s exports.
- By 1894 there was already evidence of a decline in the salt fish and sealing industries.
- In 1893 the seal fishery experienced its worst year in 3 decades.

Continued

- With the Newfoundland government having no money to operate or pay its debts, chaos ensued. People and businesses fell into financial ruin, there was mass unemployment and mob activity and looting in St. John's.
- The NL government, led by Premier Whiteway, initiated confederation talks with the Canadian government as a solution to the desperate financial situation. The talks failed.
- Canadian banks moved in to replace the bankrupted NL banks and the Canadian dollar became legal tender.

Newfoundland Money



William Ford Coaker and the Fishermen's Protective Union

- Has anybody in your family ever been affected by the actions of unionized? If so, you have observed an aspect of NL life common to our history.
- One of the challenges faced by government before 1914 was the growing political and economic dominance of St. John's, which caused considerable resentment in rural Newfoundland.
- This challenge was spearheaded by William Ford Coaker, a name synonymous with Fishermen's Protective Union (FPU)



Continued...

- In signing up 19 fishermen as Herring Neck in 1908, Coaker established the FPU with the aim of giving working-class people a greater share of the wealth their labour produced.
- By 1914 he had built a membership of 20,000.
- Coaker's beliefs of the FPU were reflected in the union's motto, *Cuique Suum*, "To each their own."
- The organization's goals included reforming the truck system, which Coaker believed left fishermen powerless, and reforming government, which was controlled by wealthy men whom Coaker thought had little understanding of the needs of working people.

Continued...

- The FPU posed a very real threat to the power of the Roman Catholic Church, led by Archbishop Howley, and to the denominational school system.
- Coaker also founded the town of Port Union and set up a successful trading company to import goods and supplies needed by fishermen.



Continued...

- Coaker realized that the FPU needed political representation in order to influence government decisions, and by 1913, the union had 8 elected members in the House of Assembly.
- Its set of political objectives, known as the **Bonavista Platform**, called for reform in 3 major areas:
 - The Fishery
 - Social policy
 - Governance



Creating a Timeline Project

- Using the information given to you, complete your timeline.
- Be sure to be **neat**, add colour and pictures to make yours stand out!

COOL JAZZ

Cool Jazz was the result of an influx of Californian jazz musicians (mostly white) to New York City. These musicians mixed with the (mostly black) Bebop Musicians.

ALMOST BLUE
Almost Blue

CHET BAKER
Baker established a large following, based in part on his "matinee idol" beau...

ART BLAKEY
Along with Kenny Clarke and Max Roach, he was one of the inventors of...

DESPITE ITS BEGINNING IN NEW YORK, COOL JAZZ LATER BECAME IDENTIFIED WITH WEST COAST JAZZ.

Billy Taylor Explains Cool Jazz

Jazz Interpretation

1950
1954

A Timeline

Birth of Ramesses II, c 1302BC

Viking invasion of Britain, 793 AD

Start of French Revolution, 1789

First World War 1914-1918

Roman invasion of Britain, 55BC

Columbus reaches America, 1492

Victoria becomes Queen, 1837

B.C

A.D

1815 - 1834

1834 - 1850

1850 - 1880

1880 - 1914

1914 - 1918

1918 - 1939

1939 - 1945

1945 - 1960

1960 - 2000