

HARRY'S HARBOUR

Harry's Harbour is an attractive community located on the southern side of Western Arm. To put an actual date on the beginning of this settlement is difficult. The first time it appears in the Provincial Census is 1874, but many people feel it started much earlier. Some sources suggest Harry's Harbour started as early as 1825, while others say 1840.

It is believed the first settler was Harry Hewlett, a fisherman from England. Some presume this is how the community got its name. Certain reference material, however, lists Jeremiah Upwards as the earliest homesteader.

Harry's Harbour is situated around a deep harbour, with fairly good fishing grounds in close proximity. This proved highly beneficial for the early settlers. At first the fishery was a way of putting food on the table. In later years though, fishing became a more economically feasible endeavour. Not only was there the small boat inshore effort, but several residents ventured into the northern cod

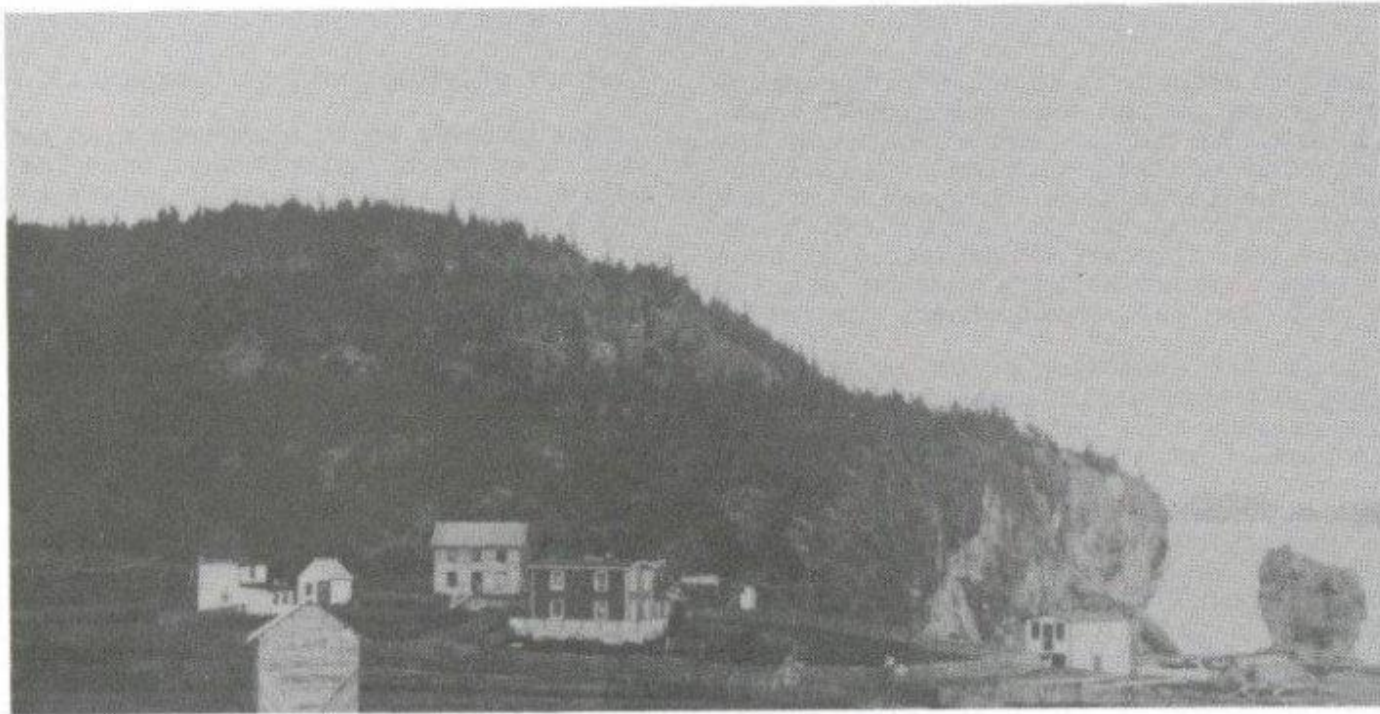
fishery off the coast of Labrador.

"One time we would heave the fish away, what they catch today," says one elderly native of Harry's Harbour in reference to how large the cod used to be.

It was not only cod, though, which was taken from local waters. During the period between 1891 and 1911 the lobster fishery became more prominent. A series of small factories throughout Harry's Harbour processed lobster. After 1911 only one main lobster factory remained, and this provided very little employment.

Herring, a by-catch for the cod fishermen, provided a limited amount of employment. The Redman Brothers, from Ireland, set up a herring factory in Harry's Harbour which lasted from 1911 to 1940. Although this factory was in operation for a considerable length of time, the Redman Brothers were not the only people to pack local herring. After their departure, Roland Evans took over the herring enterprise, thus maintaining the

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Harry's Harbour before WWI.

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Harry's Harbour just after WWII.

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industry. Evans' herring was preserved through a method called scotch packed, a process by which the fish was gutted and stored directly in barrels with salt. Adopted from Scottish practice, this was often called scotch cure.

During the early spring there was basically only one aspect of the fishery which was operational - hunting seals. Times were lean at this time of year; one basically survived on provisions saved from more prosperous seasons. The seal hunt served a dual purpose for the residents of Harry's Harbour. In addition to providing meat, the animals were skinned and their pelts sold to help supplement people's incomes. The seal hunt was a virtual Godsend during this difficult period.

There were other endeavours to help the community members survive the winter. Trapping, again for both food and pelts, was common to this area. Species such as lynx, fox and weasel were mainstays in the trapping industry. Rabbit catching played a significant role in the winter economy as well. People left the town by dogteam to travel to various rabbit camps. They would return with 300 to 400 brace (a pair of rabbits) which they would sell to a Rattling Brook merchant named Frank Bartlett. Mr. Bartlett canned the rabbit to sell to other markets.

Local farming, raising livestock and growing vegetables, was similar to most

communities in Green Bay during this era. Residents farmed out of necessity. The livestock kept fresh meat and milk in supply, while vegetables helped provide the people with the nutrients needed for their survival. Neither of these farming methods was for profit; they helped people make it through everyday life.

With the fishing season coming to a close, some people relied on the logging industry to make ends meet during the winter. They would travel to different woods camps and stay for extended periods of time. This industry was an essential part of some townspeople's lives.

Another industry very important to this area was schooner building. Several boats were constructed in Harry's Harbour. Some of the larger vessels were built by James Norris, such as the Annie Maud, the Loyalty, and the Mary R. Many other schooners were built in this industrious little town, including: the Lotus by Augustus Goodridge, the Harp by John Evans, and the Metropolis by George Pelley.

Harry's Harbour had its share of early entrepreneurs. By 1911 there were four merchants: Roland Evans, John White, Robert Upward and John Upward. One resident recalls that during his early childhood Roland Evans operated a store. Evans carried mostly fishing equipment, whereas Ken Green ran a business which provided

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the necessary provisions for survival. Today there is very little commercial enterprise in Harry's Harbour. Only two small confectionaries are located there.

For the most part, early religion in this community was predominantly Church of England. There was no formal church, but a visiting clergyman would hold services. When the Methodist Revival started spreading throughout Green Bay, Harry's Harbour fell under its influence. The majority of the population had changed their faith to Methodism by 1877.

The first minister stationed in the area was Rev. George Bond and on May 22, 1927 the United Church was formally dedicated for worship. By 1907 a new faith was introduced to this small town - the Salvation Army. After 1911, with a new church built, the Army began to take hold and it became a major part of the lives of the townspeople.

Education in Harry's Harbour has a distinct history as well. The Methodists were key proponents of early education. By 1880 a Methodist one-room school had been built. This served both as a place to learn and a place to worship. There were 34 students under the guidance of one teacher, Miss Elizabeth Churchill. With a growing population though, the necessity for a new school became evident. Around 1907 the Methodists built a new one-room school. Years later, known as the United

Church, members of this denomination constructed a larger one-room facility, and brought the first library to Harry's Harbour. It is not really certain when members of the Salvation Army congregation started their first school, but by 1911 they had a small structure with nine pupils.

With a thirst for knowledge and a growing population, Harry's Harbour eventually needed better schooling facilities. In 1958 the United Church enlarged its school to a two-room structure. Still, this building was not sufficient to handle the growing population of students. In 1965 Harbour View Academy was opened. As one resident says, "It had all the conveniences that should go into a modern school." Harry's Harbour had entered the modern age of education.

For many years, this school handled both elementary and secondary students. Actually, elementary and secondary students from Harry's Harbour and Jackson's Cove alternated from year to year between the schools of each town. By 1984 high school students travelled to King's Point to attend classes. Harbour View Academy became strictly an elementary institution, which served communities along all of the areas's coastline.

To help supplement their educational resources, Harry's Harbour was fortunate enough to have a public library. In 1948

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Above - Harry's Harbour
Methodist School picture
in 1906.
Left - Methodist school
years later.

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a public library committee was formed. Between 1948 and 1950, a small room in the school served as the book lending outlet. Many books were donated by members of the community and additional volumes were obtained through various other sources. By 1952 this local institution was registered as a branch of the Gosling Regional Library. Harry's Harbour's public library had become a reality.

While the school and church were places where people congregated, these did not constitute all of Harry's Harbour's social amenities. In 1904 the Loyal Orange Association was established and it was not long after that an Orange lodge was erected. This provided another venue for social gatherings in this close-knit community. The docking of a schooner usually meant a festive time was in the making. A square dance would be held to celebrate the vessel's arrival. Later, before a schooner left port, there would be another dance party to send her off. As well, there were always plenty of special occasions, such as Christmas, where residents could enjoy a grand scoff or time.

Medical services in Harry's Harbour were virtually the same as most isolated communities of the era. The Christmas Seal would visit every spring to administer to those in need. During the remainder of the year, people were left to rely on their own wits, or on home remedies, to treat various maladies. If someone was serious-

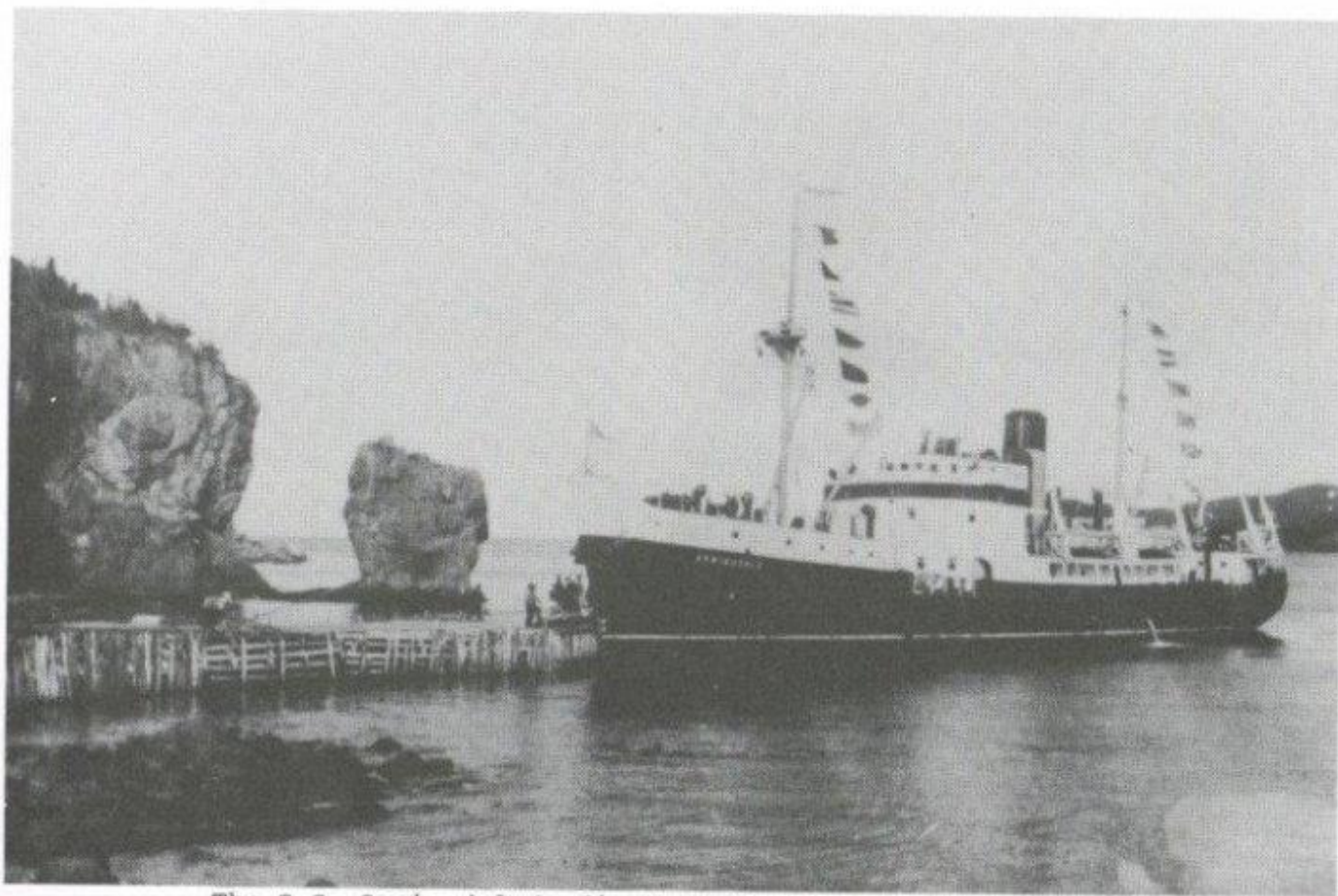
ly ill, the closest hospital was in Twillingate. Most smaller towns however had at least one person they relied on in times of medical need. Midwives were common at this time and two well known midwives from Harry's Harbour were Fannie Prouse and Mary King.

After the thaw, coastal boats would visit the community bringing necessary supplies and mail to the residents. This was their main contact with the outside world. After summer passed, it was very difficult for anyone to move outside of the immediate area. The only method of transportation in winter was by dogteam, or horse and sleigh. Mail was delivered by dogteam.

It wasn't too long after its founding that Harry's Harbour started developing some of the more modern conveniences. One source lists a John White as the community's wireless operator, starting in the early 1900's. The 1900 Newfoundland Yearbook and Almanac cites Robert Upward as postmaster with the closest actual post office located in either Jackson's Cove or Little Bay. Today, postal services are handled through a local business, Betty Moore's Grocery Store.

A small isolated community during its early settlement, Harry's Harbour was almost completely free from modernization. However, by 1958 a change had begun. This was the year the settlement became

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The S.S. Springdale's first visit to Harry's Harbour.

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Reflections of the style of dress in turn of the century Green Bay. These former residents of Harry's Harbour have not been identified, with the exception of the lady above far left - Jane White.



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connected to the rest of Newfoundland by a road. Other modern-day conveniences were soon to follow. In 1968 Harry's Harbour received electrical power, which was provided by a diesel plant. By 1972 it was connected with the Hydro grid, and in 1969 a telephone system was introduced. A place virtually free from outside influences was now open to the rest of the province.

Two more advancements which improved aspects of the fishery in Harry's Harbour occurred in 1976 and 1977. In 1976 a wharf was constructed to meet the needs of the area, and in 1977 a stage was built. The latter project included five compart-

ments, where 15 fishermen could work comfortably. This made the processing of fish easier and faster.

Nowadays there is not much industry left in Harry's Harbour. The fish are basically gone and most people rely on surrounding communities for their employment. People travel to King's Point and Springdale to work in such areas as logging, mining and the service sector.

Harry's Harbour is a scenic community with a distinct history. Its people have endured many hardships and survived to become integral parts of Green Bay and the rest of Newfoundland.