

# Introduction to Diary of a Medical Student on the S.S. Kyle, 1945 — Ian E.L. Rusted

Brian Rusted

---

Volume 26, Number 1, Spring 2011

URI: [https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/nflds26\\_1doc01](https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/nflds26_1doc01)

[See table of contents](#)

---

Publisher(s)

Faculty of Arts, Memorial University

ISSN

0823-1737 (print)

1715-1430 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

---

Cite this document

Rusted, B. (2011). Introduction to Diary of a Medical Student on the S.S. Kyle, 1945 — Ian E.L. Rusted. *Newfoundland Studies*, 26(1), 87–90.

## DOCUMENT

# Diary of a Medical Student on the S.S. *Kyle*, 1945 — Ian E.L. Rusted

BRIAN RUSTED

## INTRODUCTION

But who, today, does not feel compelled to record his feelings, to write his memoirs — not only the most minor historical actor but also his witnesses, his spouse, and his doctor. (Nora, 1989: 14)

THE SUMMER OF 1945 marked a threshold for my father, Ian Rusted (1921-2007). He had completed an undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto and was two years into medical school at Dalhousie University when the opportunity to work as a medical officer on the S.S. *Kyle* became available. The contract was renewed for 1946, and taken together these summers frame a threshold to both personal and public transformations. Assuming the role of medical officer on a coastal steamer brought him face to face with the responsibilities on the front lines of Newfoundland's health needs. The country was crossing its own threshold, leaving a world war and a frayed economy in its wake. Although he did not reflect on these transfor-

mations explicitly, except in a brief description of V-J Day celebrations and mention of broadcasts regarding the United Nations, their presence and influence are palpable in his writing during these summers. These experiences and his subsequent role as a consultant with the Department of Health helped shape his vision of medical education for the country soon to become a province. Despite career opportunities elsewhere, he returned to Newfoundland after completing his medical and graduate training and by 1967 was appointed founding Dean of Medicine in Memorial University's new Faculty of Medicine.

This manuscript was among my father's papers and was something he had been preparing for publication late in 2006. He had drafted the essay from three primary sources: small, pocket-sized, daily diaries that he kept during the 1940s; a notebook where he recorded every patient interaction that he had during his two summers on the *Kyle*; and a small archive of 8mm home movies and snapshots that he made during the trips down the Newfoundland coast to Labrador. A fourth resource consisted of his embodied memories of these events. Although the diaries and notebooks were written and the images taken at the time he made these trips on the *Kyle*, they were shaped into this manuscript decades later. Each source bore marks of an ongoing engagement with this experience. On several occasions he attempted a narration for the edited film footage, and he annotated the diaries and the manuscript with details of the unfolding lives of particular individuals. The manuscript and its memories had an emergent vitality.

Despite or because of its innumerable annotations, corrections, and editorial remarks in his handwriting, the manuscript appears to be a final version. In readying it for publication, I have tried to respect these corrections and deletions. Where additional material has been added for the sake of clarity or continuity, it has been placed in square brackets. Only the events of his first summer on the *Kyle* have been included. He did draft a second part of the narrative covering events of 1946, but the typescript is incomplete and it has not been included here.

Although mention is made within the manuscript of photos and film footage taken during these trips, my father did not prepare the manuscript with photos. As with all good tourist and snapshot images, his provide a glimpse of the scenic (icebergs, sunsets, coastal landscapes), a hint of complex social networks (of family, friends, travellers, and other health-care professionals), and coincidentally they document the quotidian activities of the *Kyle* (unloading freight and mail, sunbathing on deck, community visits onshore).

Ian Rusted was not alone in writing about his experiences as a medical officer on the *Kyle*. A special issue in 1984 of the journal *Them Days* about the *Kyle* included brief memoirs from other medical officers: Dr. E. Peters, Dr. W. Drover, and Dr. D. Hawkins. My father's brother, Nigel, also had been medical officer on the *Kyle*, in 1930 and 1931 (Connor and Hyde, 2011; Hanrahan, 2007) and his memoir about travelling the south coast on the M.V. *Lady Anderson* several years later (N. Rusted, 1987) may have been the encouragement his younger brother needed to be-

gin writing about his *Kyle* experiences. The manuscript he produced about these experiences is neither diary nor memoir. Although it locates the reader in the present of the events it describes, it is not simply or merely a sequence of brief, daily jottings. The use of quotation marks in the manuscript identifies passages drawn directly from the diaries. The balance of the essay, though, is not a retrospective reflection on the past that artfully shapes selected events into a well-told tale. The reader is not asked to partake in such temporal distance. The unfolding day-to-day experience of the *Kyle*'s routine ports of call, the contingencies of weather, the details of patient cases (as many as 30 in a single day), the pranks, the sites seen through the eyes of tourists, and the richly intertwined social networks of acquaintances and colleagues are not judged, evaluated, or re-imagined in the light of recollection.

In trying to chart the contemporary relation to recollection and the past, sociologist Pierre Nora drew a firm and frequently contested distinction between history and memory. Put succinctly, he saw history as “a representation of the past” (Nora, 1989: 8) and opposed it to memory. Memory is alive, what some might now consider a non-representational practice (B. Rusted, 2010). It is the life of the past in the present, “a bond tying us to the eternal present” (Nora, 1989: 8). The writing in this manuscript seems to evoke this notion of memory. It assumes a reader who can share in the memory of the *Kyle*. The critic and visual scholar W.J.T. Mitchell has suggested that forms of life writing such as autobiography are intersubjective because they are fashioned to be read by someone else (Smith and Watson, 2001: 20). In this case, the intersubjective leaks into the character of the manuscript itself: the reader is given a glimpse of the way intersubjective networks form and dissolve during each trip, the way social visits pre-empt the ship's schedule, the way relationships and conversations resume on a subsequent voyage, and so forth.

A recurrent observation about autobiographical writing is that it “celebrates the autonomous individual” (ibid., 3). Nancy Pedrini (2010: 256) echoes this in suggesting that “both autobiography and photography make their living by laying claim to a transparent, authentic, truthful representation of self.” Clearly there is evidence here to support such assertions, yet aspects of this manuscript suggest a less unified self, one formed as autonomy is challenged. Although Ian Rusted was raised in communities like Upper Island Cove and Carbonear, the reader has the sense that the liminality of the *Kyle* and the social worlds he encountered further down the coast were neither uniform nor consistent with his social experiences to that point. He did have previous interactions with the Mi'kmaq community in Newfoundland when travelling as a guide through the island's interior in the late 1930s (MacLeod, 1999), and this seems to have translated into respect for the Inuit and Innu he met in Hopedale, Rigolet, and North West River.

Even before its final run as a coastal steamer in 1959, the *Kyle* had entered the region's folklore. In the decades since it has taken up residence in poetry, fiction, and the visual culture of the province, and has sacrificed its mobility to become, lit-

erally, a site of memory. “The moment of *lieux de mémoire*,” says Nora, “occurs at the same time that an immense and intimate fund of memory disappears, surviving only as a reconstituted object beneath the gaze of critical history” (Nora, 1989: 11-12). This manuscript and the *Kyle* itself provide an opportunity to reflect on this assertion. Perhaps it was this sense of the country’s lurching from a world of collective memory to one of critical history in the mid-1940s that sustained Ian Rusted’s interest in these recollections of the summer of 1945 on the *Kyle*.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Nigel Rusted and Christopher Rusted for their careful reading of and comments on this material. I would also like to express my gratitude to Stephanie Harlick, archivist with the Health Sciences Library at Memorial University of Newfoundland, for her work with the Faculty of Medicine Founders’ Archives.

## Works Cited

- Connor, Jennifer, and Angela Hyde. 2011. “Dr. Nigel Rusted, a *CMAJ* Centenary Reader,” *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 183, 7 (19 Apr.): E361-E365.
- Drover, W.H. 1984. “In Good Company,” *Them Days* 9, 4 (June): 44-46.
- Hanrahan, Maura. 2007. *The Alphabet Fleet: The Pride of the Newfoundland Coastal Service*. St. John’s: Flanker Press.
- Hawkins, David. 1984. “A While on the *Kyle*,” *Them Days* 9, 4 (June): 65-76.
- MacLeod, Malcolm, ed. 1999. *Crossroads Country: Memories of Pre-Confederation Newfoundland*. St. John’s: Breakwater.
- Nora, Pierre. 1989. “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire,” *Representations* 26 (Spring): 7-24.
- Pedriani, Nancy. 2010. “Snapshots and Other Forms of Dailiness in Three Newfoundland Memoirs,” *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 25, 2: 253-59.
- Peters, E.S. 1984. “Doctor at \$5.00 a Day,” *Them Days* 9, 4 (June): 42-44.
- Rusted, Brian. 2010. “How Memory Repeats Itself: Performance and Visual Culture,” *Theatre Annual* 63: 87-107.
- Rusted, Nigel. 1987. *It’s Devil Deep Down There: 50 Years Ago on the M.V. Lady Anderson, a Mobile Clinic on the S.W. Coast of Newfoundland*. 2nd ed. St. John’s: Creative.
- Smith, Sidonie, and Julia Watson. 2001. *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

**Diary of a Medical Student on the S.S. Kyle, 1945**

**Ian E.L. Rusted**

From 1939 to 1945 the earlier practice of having a physician or, more frequently, a medical student on the S.S. *Kyle* as it serviced northern Newfoundland and Labrador was discontinued because of the outbreak of war and, in part, because of the presence of German submarines.

Early in 1945, the Commissioner for Health and Welfare, Sir John Puddester, contacted Newfoundland medical students at Dalhousie University indicating that his department would endeavour to assist students in finding summer employment at one of the hospitals or in the public health laboratories.<sup>1</sup> As a result of this, I corresponded with the Director of Medical Services, Dr. Leonard Miller, and also sought the advice of my brother, Dr. Nigel Rusted, who had spent two summers on the S.S. *Kyle* in 1930 and 1931.

When my appointment as medical officer on the *Kyle* for the summer of 1945 was confirmed by Dr. Miller, I obtained permission to participate in several obstetrical deliveries at the Grace Hospital, Halifax, and also received instruction at the Dalhousie Dental and Public Health clinics in local and regional dental anaesthetic blocks; pediatrics (with Dr. Jean Murray and Dr. Barrie Coward); orthopedics (with Dr. Acker); psychiatry (with Dr. R.O. Jones); and also the surgical and VD clinics. This dentistry experience was later supplemented by several supervised sessions with Dr. M.F. Hogan in St. John's and Dr. Roy Goodwin in Harbour Grace. I also made certain that I was familiar with the common medications required for the most frequent digestive and respiratory disorders that would be encountered and was prepared to deal with the most common hand infections, either medically or surgically.

**PART 1: 1945**

*FIRST TRIP*

My first trip to Labrador on the S.S. *Kyle* was to have begun on May 24th but the boat had attempted one earlier trip to Southern Labrador and became stuck fast in the ice. It was, therefore, a week later — May 31st — before we actually departed. This delay provided an additional opportunity for me to have useful meetings with Dr. Leonard Miller and Dr. James McGrath, the Director and Assistant Director of Medical Services, as well as Sir John Puddester. I attended some of the general welfare clinics and went with Dr. McGrath to assist with community immunization programs against diphtheria: in one day, e.g., at Flatrock, 152 people were immunized, most of them children.



Figure 1. "Self and First Mate Jack Kean."

After stops at Brigus, Harbour Grace, and Carbonear the ship was fully loaded with fishing crews and supplies for Labrador. Throughout June 1st, 2nd, and the morning of the 3rd, we dealt with weather so stormy that the lifeboats in their davits on the upper deck would smack into the water as the ship rolled from side to side. We rode in circles (the “merry-go-round”) about 10 miles offshore from Battle Harbour for most of June 2nd. On the 3rd, Captain Connors decided to shelter in Lewis’s Bay. “I had 12 patients during the day — mostly people with cuts and various aches and pains and problems such as constipation and indigestion. One man was afraid he had heart trouble and I could only reassure him that I couldn’t find anything wrong from his history or from my examination with a stethoscope.” At that stage I had little confidence in my own ability to use a stethoscope.

Later, I played the piano in the music room, which soon filled with people. As it was Sunday, most of them wanted to sing hymns. This day was my first comfortable opportunity to enjoy a meal in the beautifully appointed dining room, sharing the centre table opposite Captain Connors with the purser, Mr. Gus Sparrow, and others more-or-less in order of seniority. On most occasions, Captain Connors ate in his cabin with the Chief Steward and two or three other stewards bringing his meal up to him, covered with fine silver platters. The first mate was Mr. Jack Kean and the assistant purser, Earl Windsor.

We remained in Lewis’s Bay until early morning on June 5th (i.e., 2 days), when we made a quick visit to Battle Harbour. “We next made a winding and beautiful trip up Lewis’s Bay for approximately 20 miles to Port Hope Simpson. This region will be even more beautiful later in the year when the numerous birches along the shoreline become green.”

We reached Francis Harbour Bight and Fishing Ships Harbour by nightfall and, from there, went to Ship Harbour. On June 6th we reached the final port of call for this trip, Venison Islands, where the largest group of people from Carbonear based their fishing activities.

We stopped at St. Anthony during the night of June 6th — our only port of call on the return journey, arriving at St. John’s on June 8th, obtaining a good look at the German submarine which had surrendered shortly after V-E day — said to be one of their most modern.

## *SECOND TRIP*

I joined the *Kyle* in Carbonear at 7 a.m. on June 13th. “The Carbonear telephone operator and the policeman on duty had kept a check on the ship’s position during the night so I was able to get some sleep.... I stayed up on deck talking to different people and watching the coastline as we passed by the settlements on the north shore of Conception Bay, then between Baccalieu Island and Grate’s Point and across the mouth of Trinity Bay.”



“The fishermen on board this trip were greatly different from those we had last time. Although the ship is more crowded, with some of them having to sleep in the music room, there is less noise and more important to me — they are not always bothering me for something for a cold or ‘something to loosen up the bowels’.”

**June 14th:** Saw a few people with minor cuts, etc. during the day and extracted my first tooth since being on the ship: a second right upper molar; the chap said he didn’t feel a thing! In spite of myself my hand trembled just a little as I was about to stick the needle in for the local anaesthetic but, once started, I didn’t even think of being nervous.

We arrived at Hawkes Harbour about 8 p.m., which provided a good view of the whaling factory and the large “slip” where the whales are pulled out of the water by a winch.

**June 15th:** “Today was about the most interesting one so far. I extracted two more teeth — the first a second upper right molar which had been attempted before by someone who had broken it off below the gum margin. I took each of the three roots out separately and once again no pain was felt. The second one was a third left lower molar in a girl who was extremely nervous. I put the first injection — my first unsupervised attempt at a mandibular block — into the parotid gland, but the second try was successful and the girl was pleased and relieved with the result.”

At Spotted Islands a baby had been bitten in the head by one of their Labrador huskies. I went to see her and to check on a woman suspected by the Health Department of being a source of syphilis acquired by airmen stationed on the island during the previous year. I had been sitting in the bow of the boat with my back to the fishing stage where we were to land but, as I looked up, the faces of six or eight huskies were staring down at me. I wondered about the safety of my own scalp but it apparently did not tempt the dogs. The baby’s scalp was healing well without my help. When I visited the home of the woman in question, there were nearly twenty others of mixed Newfoundland/Eskimo<sup>2</sup> lineage in the kitchen/living room. Nobody spoke a word as I entered — all of them simply stared. I asked for Mrs. R. and a girl who seemed to me about 30 years old (although I later learned that she was 45 or more) came forward. I told her that I had a message from St. John’s which had to be given her in private. We went into one of the two bedrooms and I told her that I wanted a sample of her blood to take back to St. John’s to be examined. To my relief, her reaction was one of pleasure that some of her blood should be going all the way to St. John’s. She is married and has two or more children but has not lived with her husband (an old man) for several years.”

**June 16th:** We arrived at Cartwright, a beautiful place with the red roofs and white facings of the houses showing up nicely against the green background of the

well-wooded mountains. We did not remain there long as the Captain was anxious to get back to St. John's as quickly as possible.

As we neared the northern tip of Newfoundland I was surprised that we could see both Cape Norman and Cape Bauld at the same time. We reached St. Anthony at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 17th. After we left there the Reverend Fred Kirby who, with his wife, Stella, we had picked up at Cartwright, held quite a nice service in the music room. I played for the hymns and the congregation consisted of two passengers and those crew members who were not on watch — 12 altogether. After the service we went through the hymnbook singing every hymn known to this small group.

We arrived in St. John's at 4 p.m. on Monday, June 18th, ending another trip made in record time.

I met with Len Miller the following morning to discuss the various questions on my mind — e.g., whether or not to charge people for services done and for medicines given. He thought that the money involved was too small to bother about. I mentioned that the Captain had suggested I should “sign articles”<sup>3</sup> as medical officer of the ship — probably testing me. Len assured me that I had been right in refusing to do so. I stayed on the ship the two nights that we were in St. John's.

### *THIRD TRIP*

**June 20th (Wednesday):** We left on a very foggy morning, so it was 11 a.m. when we got to Conception Harbour but we were able to see several porpoises swimming alongside the ship and leaping out of the water from time to time.

While we were at Conception Harbour, my father unexpectedly appeared on board: he had been in St. John's for Synod but was driving to Carbonear with Eric Cook (later Senator Cook) to perform the wedding ceremony of Louise Pike of Carbonear and Gordon Garner, which I attended — as well as the reception afterwards at Pike's Hotel in Harbour Grace, with Mickey Duggan's orchestra playing at the dance which followed dinner and went on until 1:30 a.m.

The *Kyle* arrived in Carbonear early in the morning but, because of fog and low tide, did not leave until 11:00 a.m. I stayed on deck talking to various people, including Gerald Hayden from Harbour Grace whose conversation I enjoyed. He remembered me from having seen me play in the Avalon Tennis Championships on July 12th (between 1936 and 1940). He is going to the whaling station at Hawkes Harbour for the summer as Chief Cook. At night he produced a guitar and played and sang quite well. “There is a lot of drinking on this trip — especially on the part of one chap from Bay Roberts who brought a case of rum with him. It looks as if it won't last long.”

The next two days must have been busy because there is no entry in my diary.

**June 24th.** “Slept in until about 11:00 a.m., by which time we had left Pack’s Harbour and were on our way across the bay to Indian Harbour and Smokey, where we stayed for the rest of the day. Because it was Sunday, I obtained — from the Chief Steward — the keys to the music room and piano (which the Captain had ordered to be locked — his cabin being located immediately above) and played hymns and songs for an hour or more.”

**June 25th.** “When I got up we had just reached Emily Harbour, where there is still an RCAF radar station in addition to the homes of the “liveryers” and fishermen. We were there all morning and then went on to Houlton where we spent the afternoon and, because Houlton has a poor harbour with several shoals, we returned to Emily Harbour for the night. The bosun was taken ill last night with vomiting and diarrhea, temp. 99.6 to 100, pulse 96, cramps in the legs, headache and profuse sweating. The three possibilities I have in mind are intestinal flu, paratyphoid fever, or food poisoning. I gave him some soda bicarb and told him to lay off solid food for awhile and, later in the day, all symptoms had stopped except the low-grade fever.”

**June 26th.** “I woke this morning with a grinding sound in my ears. A look through the porthole showed that we were steaming through slob ice. I hurried up on deck and it was quite exciting to watch the curved bow of the ship creep on to the ice pans and then the weight of the ship would either split them or push them aside. We were trying to go through the ‘run’ between the Ragged Islands and the mainland, but the ice was so thick that the Captain gave up and turned back to Cape Harrison. There he wired St. John’s and told them the ice was too thick to go to Hopedale. In fact, we could have gone outside the Ragged Islands and avoided the ice but the Captain wanted to turn back — in fact he had not wanted to go to Hopedale until next trip. A strong wind sprang up, so we had to spend the whole day at Cape Harrison. Another crew member was ill and, during the evening, I extracted two teeth for one of the stewards. In the evening I listened in the smoke room to the speeches of the closing session of the United Nations Conference, San Francisco. Jan Masaryk was the most impressive and Jan Smuts the most lucid: he said that the Charter was a good, practical one, but far from perfect and there would be no peace if there was no will for it.”

**June 27th.** “I spent most of the day on the bridge and now feel quite capable of taking the ship up Gros Water Bay to Rigolet! There were hundreds of ducks and gulls flying around one of the two islands known as The Sisters. The mate tells me that the young ducks, as soon as they take to the water, are snatched off and devoured by the gulls.

“At Cartwright the weather was lovely again — although the flies were far too affectionate. I went ashore with Dr. Gareth Forsythe and met his wife, Clayre, a nurse. Over a cool drink we talked about their work at the Mission — more particu-

larly about their boarding school with more than 30 students in all grades at the present time. They have sent one unusually bright girl (Joan Pilgrim, 11 years old) to the United States. We also took time for a little music, so it was 1:30 a.m. when I got back to the ship.”

**June 28th:** “Uncle George Mullett (my helper) woke me when we got to Grady at 5:30 a.m. When I got up again we were leaving Indian Tickle. I was kept fairly busy during the day: some people with colds; a girl with a sprained ankle (accompanied by the girl whose wisdom tooth I had taken out); a girl with a badly infected right index finger — about twice its normal size, with swelling extending over the back of her hand. She didn’t want to go to hospital so I advised heat and gave her sulfadiazine — and worried about it for hours afterwards. Another girl came on board at Square Islands, complaining of pain around the heart and shortness of breath, but the Captain was in a hurry and kept the engines running so there was not much point in my attempting auscultation — and she did not seem ill. We picked up another man with an infected finger and swollen, hard leg. He wanted a medical pass to return home, which I did not consider necessary — unless one of the doctors at St. Anthony thought so. However, his skipper promptly produced the fare. Grace Layman, who was at Memorial with me, joined the ship at Cartwright where she has been a teacher at the Mission School for four years since her Master’s degree (in Education) from Columbia University, and for two years before that. We played rook at night with Ranger Clarke’s wife and Mr. Patten, the C of E school teacher at Cartwright for the past sixteen years. He was at Bishop Field College with Nigel.”

**June 29th:** At St. Anthony, Dorothy Tucker, who had been a passenger during my first trip — came on board for a visit. The stop there on this occasion was brief. We picked up two other school teachers who, in chatting with the Purser, were told that his assistant (Earl Windsor) was an expert in telling fortunes. He in turn told them that I was even better at this. Before the boat left the community where they had been teaching we chatted with an individual who was able to give us several facts about them. As a result, we established ourselves as fortune tellers that evening. The ship was rolling quite a bit so the girls had to retire to their cabin and the ship, once we had crossed Trinity Bay, remained on the merry-go-round waiting for daylight before entering Harbour Grace. It was foggy and Mother Carey’s chickens were flying around the ship in swarms. They are attracted by the light, so Earl Windsor opened the doors and collected several of them. They have a strong odour and, according to Earl, are usually alive with vermin. He put one of them in the postal officer’s bed where it laid an egg, which broke. He took two of the birds [in] his hand and placed them [in] the cabin where the cook was sleeping soundly. The cook woke to find the two of them picking at his bald head. Two of them also flew into the ladies’ cabin and brought them out screaming into the hallway. The Captain rang to see if someone had fallen overboard. I had not been able to keep up with

Earl's movements so I carefully looked through my own cabin when I returned to it — and discovered one of the birds between my sheets with a nice little deposit in the centre! I stayed up until 4:00 or 5:00 a.m. (on July 1st) at which time the ship headed towards Harbour Grace. I went ashore and began to walk the four miles to Carbonear. However, it began to rain almost immediately so I took shelter in a doorway on Harvey Street and was fortunate to hail a passing taxi and was able to slip quietly into our house (whose doors were always open) without waking my parents — who were surprised to see my coat and other belongings in the hall when they came downstairs.

My dietitian sister, Win, arrived in St. John's today (July 2nd) by RCAF bomber. She is now a Squadron Officer (Squadron Leader) in the Air Force. Si Moores brought her to Carbonear but, because he had also brought his daughter, Megan (who had arrived by TransCanada Airlines following a visit with Sybil, my other (nurse) sister), they stopped at Si's summer place on the Hodgewater Line, which meant that it was 10:00 p.m. when they reached Carbonear. This gave us only a few hours to talk that night and the following morning. I heard on the radio at 2:00 p.m. that the *Kyle* would be leaving St. John's at noon the next day (July 4th) so I took the train at 3:30 p.m. "This was the first time I had taken the train trip around the bay in summer and the scenery was really beautiful. After yesterday's rain, everything was fresh and all the trees — which are far thicker than I had thought, based on their winter appearance — looked very cleanly beautiful. I telephoned Nigel from the station in St. John's and he came down for me (I had a large package of eggs for different people — too large for me to carry). The two of us went out to Murray's Pond and I rowed the boat while he fished, asking him questions about my various patients. (He caught two rainbows and one native mud trout.)"

#### *FOURTH TRIP*

**July 4th:** "The boat was supposed to sail at noon, but there was a lot of heavy machinery to take to Hawkes Harbour, some of the crates weighing about 5 tons. This meant that it was nearly 4:00 p.m. when we left. I had hoped to have our evening meal at the Benville Tea Rooms in Brigus with Win and our parents, but it was too late for that. Win was there, however, so we all went by car to Carbonear, taking Barbara Morris (my cousin) and her new husband, Ralph Stone, with us. We stayed up all night waiting for the boat and alternated between eating and playing bridge. We saw the lights of the ship as she entered Harbour Grace about 1:00 a.m. but she didn't reappear so at 6:00 a.m. we got Jack Finn (a taxi driver and merchant) out of bed and drove to Harbour Grace and discovered — as we had suspected — that the ship was stuck hard and fast on the sandbar in the middle of the harbour. We got a boat to take us out and I went up to see poor old Captain Connors on the bridge. He said that the iron works for the life rafts on the bridge had been removed from only one side, thus throwing his compass off. He tried to minimize the whole thing and

said he would be in Carbonear by evening — which he was. Before leaving Carbonear we took some movies on the bridge with the Captain.”

**July 8th:** We reached St. Anthony this morning and I met Dr. & Mrs. Curtis. I had met him only briefly before. This time he showed me through the hospital, which impressed me as being extremely well planned. He pointed out the various patients and their most interesting features. They also have a T.B. annex with 25 patients in it as well as numerous cases with T.B. in the main hospital — a striking number of them with T.B. joints, including one child with involvement of the fingers, which is rare. I also met Dr. & Mrs. Robert Miller (from Summit, N.J., USA) and two Toronto lads who are there for the summer: Bob Salter and Archie MacKinley. Dr. Miller was quite enthusiastic about a patient with a liver abscess which he had opened by cutting out two inches of the sixth and seventh ribs and going down through the diaphragm to establish drainage.

After leaving St. Anthony, we stopped at Belle Isle — in the Straits. It looked rather picturesque with all the schooners anchored very close to the high, rugged cliffs. It was foggy around Battle Harbour and we had to wait several hours before it was safe to get in there.

**July 9th:** I got up soon after we left Battle Harbour in order to see Max Earle (of Carbonear) at Spear Harbour to tell him about his mother’s funeral. There were many small boats around the *Kyle* and he did not come on board; I didn’t like to shout out the information to him so I gave a few of the details to Tom Earle (Max’s uncle), who was in a boat closer to where I was standing, and asked him to pass on the information to the boys.

At Port Hope Simpson, as before, the weather and scenery were beautiful. The three Grenfell WOPS (workers without pay) and I lay out on the bridge and sunbathed — none of us noticing that there was a partial eclipse of the sun, which we heard about later.

At Venison Islands, Roy M. came to see me and I thought he might have diabetes as a urine test, using Benedict’s solution, was weakly positive.

At Hawkes Harbour, Gerald Hayden came on board and took me ashore to go through the whaling plant, where they boil out the fat and then make guana or fertilizer out of the remnants. I first treated about 15 patients there, including one man who had fallen about 20 feet and was afraid he had broken his leg (which I did not think was the case). I saw my first whale: a hump-back, about 50 feet long, and got Walter Turnbull (the caretaker, mechanic, and general handyman) to take several of us out to where it was moored; its skin was very rubbery in texture and its fins almost like the wings of a plane.

**July 10th:** It was 6:30 a.m. before we left Hawkes Harbour. At every stop along the way I had one or more patients — about 15 altogether for the day. “One which



Figure 2. Unidentified flensers at the Newfoundland Whaling Company plant, Hawkes Harbour, August 1945.

worries me a bit was a woman who had been seized with a pain in the umbilical region accompanied by vomiting, about five hours previously. She came to us in a boat from Comfort Bight although we had just left there after spending half a day in the place. I sent her off with a bottle of Mistura Stomachic but almost immediately began to worry that her symptoms might be due to atypical early appendicitis.”

“At Domino, where we anchored at night, the man who had brought out the girl with a badly infected finger last trip came aboard and wanted me to go to Sand Banks with him to see his son who had “caught a cold on top of a cold”. His temperature had been 104 degrees for about 5 days, dropping slightly today. I went ashore with him and was surprised at how comfortable their house was. The island, too, was well drained and dry. His son has had pneumonia (with large amounts of rusty sputum) but seems out of danger now. The girl to whom I had given sulfadiazine for her infected finger was, I was relieved to see, much better.”

**July 11th:** Uncle George woke me as we were going into Indian Tickle, but there were no patients so I stayed in bed until breakfast time, when we were getting close to Black Island.

We reached Cartwright at dinner time and I discussed several of my more serious cases with Dr. Forsythe. He approved of everything I had done and greatly relieved my mind.

Most of the first-class passengers got off at Cartwright so it was rather quiet during the afternoon and I relieved the monotony by playing the piano. Dick White’s daughter, Pauline (by his second Eskimo wife), is 17 years old and plays

well herself — chiefly popular songs. She generously said that my playing would be an inspiration for her to work harder at her music. I believe she has an older sister who has studied music in England and has married an Englishman. (Pauline later became a nurse at the Montreal General Hospital and now lives in Ottawa, temporarily, I believe while her son is at university.)

**July 12th:** This, my birthday, was a bit lonely — although the Captain, Earl Windsor, and Uncle George, the only ones who knew of the occasion, extended their good wishes. My luck at cards was terrible, but the day brightened at night (paradoxically) when I went ashore at Makkovik with Mr. Grubb, Sr. the Moravian Missionary there. I met his wife (a second marriage) and examined their maid who was afraid she had appendicitis. From them I learned that there are about 700 Eskimos on the coast, not many of them full-blooded now. Their standard of living, for the most part, is terrible. Usually only one out of every four children survives: the mother often continues to suckle the first one at the expense of those that follow, until the first child is two to four years old. Some moral standards are significantly different, especially when two or more families live in one shack.

**July 13th:** Had a busy and interesting day: we arrived at Hopedale about 10:00 a.m. and the Moravian Missionaries, Mr. Harp (a short bundle of energy) and Fred Grubb (son of the missionary at Makkovik), brought their patients out to the boat for me to see: one girl with severe and extensive burns; another with a palpable



Figure 3. “Eskimos, their home, and one of their huskies — Hopedale.”



tumour in her abdomen;<sup>4</sup> another with a hardened mass in her breast, nodes in her axilla, and an ulcerating node at her elbow: almost [certainly] metastatic cancer; another with gallbladder symptoms; another with renal or ureteral colic; a little boy with very bad tonsils; a little girl with club foot; and several T.B. cases. ("All the above are my own diagnoses and will therefore probably be changed in some cases.")

I went ashore with Mr. Harp and saw two more patients and then visited the Loders. He is the government agent and his wife, Millicent, is a nurse. The mission house and church are built according to German traditions, with wooden pins used instead of nails or spikes. They gave me a copy of St. Mark's gospel with Eskimo on one side and English on the other and I intend to try to figure out some of the language. The alphabet is practically the same but with two k's and no q, y, or z. I had dinner at the mission house, although we had to rush in order to get to the ship before the Captain left, although he has been very accommodating.

At Aillik, there were several more patients and I needed to do a fairly thorough examination of one lady. "A Ranger (Newfoundland's equivalent of the Mounties) came on board to look after one young man, Jack S., who was Captain of his father's schooner (from Bonavista Bay) and 'went crazy' (probably manic psychosis) about 10 days ago. The Ranger had him in a strait jacket, but — after we left Aillik — I went down to the 'steerage' where he was in one of the bunks and talked to him just as I would to anyone else; took off the strait jacket, and encouraged him to eat — he had scarcely touched any food for several days before this. I then let him wash and shave himself. Later I got him to go to sleep without any drugs — something he had not done for 10 days, during which time he has been talking continuously and wildly. He also told me a few things about the worries which are probably the basis of his trouble: his mother's refusal to get along with his young wife (they had a baby shortly after they were married)."

**July 14th:** Quite a busy day — especially in the evening: extracted 13 teeth while I was at Indian Tickle. Later the Purser and I found time with one or two others to fry up some caplin in the galley.

**July 15th:** I got little sleep during the night, with Uncle George coming down for me on four occasions. "At 6:30 a.m., in Batteau, I extracted a tooth and saw a few other patients. Lloyd G. told me I had fixed him up last trip: he did have worms! We got as far as Hawkes Harbour and then got stuck in the fog. We passed the evening with a musical quiz: I played songs on the piano while the others tried to see who would be first to guess the title.

**July 16th:** Got up at 3:30 a.m. to see Roy M. at Venison Islands and advised him because of a slightly positive Benedict's test for sugar in the urine to come on to St. Anthony for a blood sugar (which proved to be normal). Had to get up again at Francis Harbour. At Spear Harbour I saw Max Earle and gave him the book which my

father had given me for him. At St. Anthony, I spent the evening, with the Purser, at Dorothy Smythe's cottage and then, at the hospital, with Bruce Miller's sister, Edith, and Bob Salter and Connie ———. It was a treat to have a glass of fresh milk from the mission's dairy of 25 [pure]bred cows.

**July 17th:** We did not leave St. Anthony until breakfast time and reached Englee just as we were finishing dinner. Oscar Marshall from Carbonear, who is working on a building that Saunders & Howell are erecting, came to see me because he had got cement in his eyes. Englee and its surroundings looked much prettier today, in fine weather, than the last time we were here. Later, three of us produced quite nice music with violin, piano, and guitar.

**July 18th:** A bit rough today. Our only stops between Twillingate and St. John's were at Catalina and Bay Roberts. While at Catalina I took out a very soft and broken up tooth for one of the stewards, Steve.

**July 19th:** When I woke up we were at the dock in St. John's. Jack S.'s father was there to meet him and was naturally upset at finding his son in such a state. Nigel came down for me and signed the additional papers necessary for J.S. to enter the mental hospital. Afterwards, I went with Nigel to the General Hospital and saw all his patients there with him. While we were in the pediatrics ward, a little fellow (named Tony) held out his arms to me and, when I got near, put them around my neck and clung tightly for a minute or two — obviously lonely for affection.

In the afternoon, I walked up to the boat and, on the way, met a lot of people that I knew: Jeanette Parmiter, Joan and Julia Kavanagh, Phyllis Roswell, Lucy Noonan, Abe Levitz, Tommy Lawlor, the Purser, P.E. Outerbridge, and others.

**July 20th:** At St. John's. I did my first real surgical assist this morning — an appendectomy with Nigel. I don't know that I was of much help, but it was definitely a helpful experience for me.

**July 21st:** Had a long talk with Len Miller about some of my cases and whether or not I was doing what they expected. He was very nice and as helpful as anyone could be. I went to the General Hospital with Tom Sellers in one of the department cars to get a few things that I needed on the boat. After that, I went with Nigel to the Grace Hospital to see a man with the usual symptoms of appendicitis but he also had a cough and a few rattles over his lungs. Nigel said that pneumonia in the apical region of the lungs may mimic the symptoms of appendicitis. He gave a spinal anaesthetic and then opened the abdomen, with me assisting once again, and found a black, gangrenous appendix with the omentum fastened to part of it. In case the appendix had ruptured into the omentum, he cut out a piece of it and removed it with the appendix. We later visited George<sup>5</sup> and Frances Clarke, whose first child — a

## *104 Rusted*

son — Nigel had delivered about a month ago. Don Penney (brother of Frances) was there with his new wife.

### *FIFTH TRIP*

**July 28th:** Joined the *Kyle* at Carbonear about 8:00 p.m. We have a new Captain now: Edward (Ned) O'Keefe, a young man (about 38) who seems determined to behave in a completely different way from Connors. The first thing I noticed was that the piano was going as well as the radio and that people were no longer talking in subdued tones.

**July 29th (Sunday):** In the morning, Mrs. Bernard Norris (I believe she has her ATCM<sup>6</sup>) played the piano and had a sing-song with several RCAF men who are going to Brig Harbour in Labrador. After dinner, I took over and played for about three hours after which Mrs. Norris and I played one of a book of duets Flora Parsons had given me. It was after midnight, as usual, when we got to Twillingate.

**July 30th:** We were at Coachman's Cove in Green Bay when I got up for breakfast. This was a new stop for us, made chiefly to let Bernard Norris and his wife and daughter off. We again stopped at Englee and then on to St. Anthony, where I went through the hospital again. A bit later, back at the boat, I had several visitors, including Dorothy Tucker. We crossed the Straits at night and stopped at Belle Isle at 3:00 a.m. — although the Captain had had a few drinks too many and fell asleep before we got there. On the way I chatted with Marjorie Andrews, wife of Don Andrews who — with his brother Bernard (a magistrate) and their parents have been family friends for many years. Mr. Andrews Sr. has been a merchant in Port de Grave.

**July 31st:** At Francis Harbour a man with bad teeth (he had come on board once before) emphasized that he has previously had teeth extracted by three different people but that nobody has been able to produce anaesthesia. I finally succeeded, although it took me nearly an hour to remove his four remaining teeth, which appeared to please him greatly.

At Port Hope Simpson, Clarence and Marney Mercer and Miss Hallett came on board and Clarence brought a lovely string of trout each weighing between one and two pounds. We enjoyed them for our evening meal.

**August 1st:** I got up at Snug Harbour, approximately 4:00 a.m., and remained up until we got to Venison Islands at 4:30 a.m. Arthur M. came on board complaining of pains that could mean anything and said he wanted to go home to Carbonear. I suspect that, the fishery being poor, he wants to get home for nothing. At Hawkes Harbour I went ashore and took a movie of a whale they had on the slip and of the

process of cutting and pulling it apart. Sarah T., a patient I had seen previously, is — as I had suspected — pregnant but because of her cough I took her on board to go to Cartwright for a chest x-ray. At Comfort Bight I was too busy to go ashore as the Andrews had invited me to do. At Seal Island the mother and stepfather of a boy with epilepsy asked me to arrange for him to be taken to an institution as, they say, he is a bad influence on the other boys — especially sexually. His father died last year.

I went ashore at Indian Tickle to see a man who was sure he was going to die and wanted to go home — said he had rheumatic fever two years ago and now has pains all over and hasn't eaten for a week. I suspected he was shamming for the most part but that he might have T.B. and I therefore took him on to Cartwright, where we arrived at 1:00 a.m.

The journey from Cartwright to Rigolet and then the several hours steaming between the heavily wooded hills on either side of Hamilton Inlet, the relatively narrow entrance to Lake Melville, and then on towards North West River provided an absolutely beautiful journey. A noteworthy event at Rigolet was the opportunity to meet Kerkina. As this remarkable lady walked from the community along the wharf, I was able to take a movie of her upper body and, as she came closer, to lower the camera to show that she was walking on the stumps of her thighs — the result of her father having had to amputate both legs when, as a small child (age 2 yrs.), both limbs had become frozen and gangrenous. After he had cut off both limbs, her father packed the stumps in grease. Another version of the story is that he used caribou sinews as sutures and a boiled juniper or fir mixture to control bleeding. Later, one of Grenfell's staff, Dr. John Macpherson (based at Battle Harbour), removed the protruding bones and created a skin flap to cover the wound properly. He later took her with him to New York and had artificial limbs made and also sent her to school there. She appeared with Grenfell at many of his lectures. She is now a grandmother and approximately 50 years old — or slightly more.

During the evening — and it did not become dark until nearly midnight — as many of us as could be accommodated sat up on the top bridge singing as we steamed along towards North West River. Quite a few of the passengers were very musical, e.g., Jean Johnston, Cath Fraser (of Bay Roberts but nursing at the mental hospital), Mr. and Mrs. Orr of Philadelphia and their daughter Dinty — Mrs. Orr is a former opera singer (a contralto) and her husband plays the violin (which he brought with him) and Steve Hamilton, an artist from Amherst, Massachusetts. The Captain joined in and sang "The Rose of Trallee" and recited "The Wreck of the Hesperus" while the Second Engineer, reinforced with a couple of drinks and urged on by the Captain and Chief Engineer, sang a Newfoundland song.

**August 4th:** After only two hours' sleep and some breakfast I went ashore with the Captain and others to explore North West River. We first visited the Grenfell handi-craft store and then the hospital where I met Nurse Byerly from Ohio and Randy

——, a glamorous creature from Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Paddon, also a nurse, who has been carrying the main responsibility regarding health matters throughout the winter and therefore welcomed me as if I were an experienced physician. Her husband, Dr. Harry Paddon, died in 1939 and their son, Dr. Tony Paddon, is in the Navy and will, she hopes, be released later this year to return to North West River. I examined one girl with rheumatic fever and promised the nurse to try and get her to St. Anthony. Several sandy roads have been created throughout the community, most of them lined by trees. The nurse took me along all of them and then to the Paddon's house — a comfortable and nicely appointed place. Jack Watts later took us across in [a] boat to where the Northern Montagnais Indians were camped. We met the fine old lady, Penamie McKenzie, who is more or less a delegate of Father O'Brien. He has spent several summers with them and arrived with us by the *Kyle* in time to christen two sets of twins — a most unusual occurrence. I took photographs and movies of this occasion and of the women smoking their pipes, as well as views of their large, but still overcrowded tents. We were amused at the vigorous way the babies were swung back and forth in slings attached, like hammocks, to the tent poles. Before we left I showed the nurse around the ship, including patients in my hospital.



Mrs. Hiscock, Jack Watts (manager of the Grenfell Station at North West River), unidentified mother and children, Penamie McKenzie, and Captain Ned O'Keefe, August 1945.

**August 4th:** Nothing very exciting happened until we got to Cape Harrison and received a message that the master of a schooner at Ragged Islands was very ill. When we got there his crew came on board and I went back to the schooner with them. The elderly man (Mr. W.) had had a stroke nearly two weeks ago and is paralyzed on one side. They dressed him and we placed him in their motor boat and headed back to the *Kyle*. The sea was rough and we had some exciting moments, especially while passing through a narrow opening of about 20 feet with a shoal in the centre of it. Everything was obscured by the breakers but we got through safely and reached the ship with nothing more than a thorough soaking from the spray. It was impossible to get the patient up the ladder, even on the lea side, but we managed finally by placing him in the freight sling and hoisting him over the side.

We reached Hopedale at 8:00 p.m. Saturday (August 4th). After seeing all their patients I went ashore with the missionaries and then walked over to Bob Stevenson's neat house adjacent to the wireless station of which he is the operator. Bob was not there but I met his part-Eskimo wife and two of his children. All three are nice-looking and pleasant individuals. Mr. Harp showed several of us through a small park which they had built behind the settlement. The M.V. *Winnifred Lee* was at Hopedale waiting for us and Frank Hickey (who had just completed first-year medicine at Dalhousie) was acting as medical officer but was giving up after only one trip. He said this was because he had to get his tonsils removed before going back to Dal but, after a look at the tiny room in which he had to sleep, keep his medications, and do his work, I felt that one trip would be more than enough. He said he had taken out a lot of teeth but had been afraid to touch the really bad ones and had not learned to do nerve blocks. I visited Julianna Winters and had the difficult task of telling her that her breast cancer was too far advanced for anything to be done at Cartwright or St. Anthony. Pearl S., an unmarried girl of 17, seven and a half months pregnant, had come in an open boat from Davis Inlet (about 70 miles away). She was having paroxysms of coughing and the missionaries and Frank Hickey were sure she had advanced T.B. I wasn't at all sure, but the vile smell of the sputum immediately reminded me of a girl with a lung abscess shown us last year by Dr. Corston in Halifax. In that case the sputum had also been chocolate-coloured from old blood. Anyhow, I decided to take the girl to Cartwright hospital in the hope that even if she died, her baby could be saved.

**August 6th:** When we got to Makkovik there was just time for me to get ashore and take some pictures (both still and movies) of the place and of Mr. and Mrs. Grubb and their baby, John. I asked Mr. Grubb to show the round-trippers the church and school (a boarding school with three teachers when they can get them).

At Emily Harbour we picked up 18 airmen returning home after a year in Labrador. One of them, "Pop" LeBlanc, father of 10 children, played jigs on the piano better than anyone I've ever heard.

At Cartwright, Mrs. Forsyth took one look at Pearl S. and said, "What on earth did you bring that up to us for?" I told her why and that it was chiefly because of the baby — but I do hope she turns out to have a lung abscess.

We went ashore, and because it was the Captain's birthday today and Mrs. Forsyth's tomorrow (the 7th) everybody had a couple of drinks — but only a small one for me. Mr. C., the man from Indian Tickle, returned with us. Doctor Forsyth could find nothing wrong with him and agreed with me that he was probably shamming. I meant to get his skipper to provide his fare home, if he wished to go, but nobody woke me (it was 5:00 a.m. when we arrived at Indian Tickle) and the Purser made him go ashore.

I was kept very busy all the way back. Patients included a man at Venison Islands (J.T.) with an orchitis which could be from mumps but I was concerned about tuberculosis. I prescribed a support and will see him again next trip.

Getting into St. Anthony was quite a feat of navigation: the fog was so thick that the Cape could not be seen until we were almost on top of it. We could hear the breakers before we could see them. Even in the harbour we were only about 25 yards from the wharf when we first saw it. Dr. Curtis showed Ralph Parsons (returning from Cartwright and Paradise River to Bay Roberts) and me his favourite pets: 25-30 [pure]bred Holstein cows and 1 bull — all donated by dairies or individuals in the U.S.A. The 80 children in the orphanage get at least one and a half pints of milk every day. The cow barn is a far better building than most homes in Newfoundland and includes an automatic device which provides drinking water to each cow simply by the animal pressing downwards on the ring-like device. The mission also has 150 pigs. After some conversation with Edith Miller, I went back to the ship. Edith showed me the first tooth she had extracted! A second tooth and a piece of the maxilla (jaw) came with it!

Between St. Anthony and Twillingate, Uncle George and I decided that Mr. W., the skipper who had had a stroke, should have an enema — the first I had ever given. Since the poor man had not had a movement for a week or more, the enema produced a veritable Niagara Falls — and he felt much better! At Twillingate, I went over to the hospital (the Notre Dame Bay Memorial Hospital) with Mr. W. and again met Dr. Olds, who showed me through the hospital, which was very full. They are just completing a nice-looking staff house. It was quite a day for Twillingate: Sir John and Lady Puddester and Drs. Miller and J.B. O'Reilly were at the hospital for a meeting and, besides the *Kyle*, the *Glencoe*, *Northern Ranger*, and an American ship were in port. There was quite a bit of drinking between the different ships, including some of our own officers. I played bridge with Bishop O'Neill against Father Hennebury of Conche and Joe Ryan — in the Smoking Room — (which is also the Radio Room) where I was the only one not smoking!

At Trinity I had time to visit my grandmother Hollands and my mother's sister (Mrs. Fred Morris). We reached Carbonear towards midnight on Saturday, August 11th. My parents were there to meet me and, after helping Mrs. Parsons, a patient

with incurable cancer who was coming home from St. Anthony hospital to spend her last days with her family, I walked home with my parents. On Sunday afternoon I decided, on the spur of the moment, to save \$3.00 taxi money and drove to St. John's with Doris Moores (dietitian at the General Hospital — later Doris Allderdice) and Helen Ash. Next day I delivered my report to Dr. Miller at the Department of Health.

**August 14th (Tuesday):** V.J. Day. The surrender of Japan was finally and officially announced today. Phyl Rowsell and I had set out for a walk about 9:00 p.m. when we heard whistles and horns going so headed back to her house and from there to Nigel's and then on to the apartment of the Wilsons (who used to live in Bay Roberts). After a couple of hours of tooting of horns and with seemingly all the population of St. John's out on the streets, with occasional rockets lighting up the sky, the city gradually quieted down. Having seen Phyl home I walked back to Nigel's apartment — only to find he had given me the wrong key. Since it was 2:00 a.m. and the *Kyle* was leaving the next morning I walked all the way from Devon Row to the dock and managed to get a few hours' sleep on the boat.

### *SIXTH TRIP*

**August 15th:** Left St. John's at 10:30 a.m. In Bay Roberts, walked down to Cable Avenue to visit Marcella Lee and Joe Williams and their children. As a result we (I was accompanied by Julia and Joan Kavanagh) managed to miss the boat but took a taxi to Harbour Grace where we ran into my parents and many others attending a wedding reception for Clarie Garland and Ben Davis. My mother had decided that this was a good opportunity to travel on the *Kyle* with me to visit her mother in Trinity, whose health is increasingly frail (she was in her mid-80s at this time). We arrived there fairly early next morning, after a moderately rough crossing of Trinity Bay. After breakfast I turned in and slept until we were nearing Twillingate around 6:00 p.m. Nurse Barnes, who had been a nurse on the *Kyle* for one summer, was a passenger going to Englee, but was taken with severe epigastric pain and — following consultation with Dr. E.S. Peters (Director of the Avalon T.B. Unit at Hr. Grace) who, with his wife, were making the round trip — we decided this was a gallbladder attack. I gave her one-sixth grain of morphine and we took her on to St. Anthony, where she had also nursed in the past. We arrived there at 11:00 p.m.

**August 17th:** At Paquet, we landed two sailors coming home on leave from duty with the Navy. Their reception gave me a real thrill. Paquet was only a small community, but the flags were up and boats circled around and around the *Kyle* with their occupants firing muzzle-loading guns into the air. His brother and father kissed him warmly and all the boats then headed for shore.



**August 18th:** We were at Belle Isle when I got up for breakfast and reached Battle Harbour two hours later. At Spear Harbour I handed over several parcels and some newspapers and magazines which I had brought (from my father) for the Earles and George Poole.

At Port Hope Simpson, Clarence and Marney Mercer, Nurse Butler and her aide, Dawson Sweetapple, and several others came out and were most friendly. After I had seen several patients for the nurse I went ashore accompanied by the Captain, Chief Engineer, and several others. The three of us went first to Mr. Sweetapple's house and met his family.

Next, we went to the staff house, where J.O. Williams (who had been a passenger on the boat) had already installed himself. The others drank some rum — in fact they drank a whole bottle of rum. J.O. Williams told me that he has mortgaged his house to the hilt and put every cent he owns (about \$75,000) into this logging venture. If it pays, it will be about the fourth fortune that he has made — and lost. I went to the little cottage which they call their hospital and thence, accompanied by the nurse, First Mate, and Purser, to their small but adequate hall where a square dance was in progress. We returned to the ship about 1:00 a.m.

**August 19th:** We were at Francis Harbour when I got up for breakfast. At Fishing Ship's Harbour I took out two teeth for a man who, like many others now, told me he was pleasantly surprised there was so little pain. However, with my next patient at Venison Islands, I only managed to get one of the two upper teeth that a man wished to have removed; the other was so badly decayed that nothing projected below the gum margin. To make matters worse, the Captain was tooting the whistle and the engines were running so I told the chap I would see him on our return trip. Again, at Comfort Bight, I removed a tooth for one of Colin Storey's men — but left a piece of one root behind. I then removed one for Reuben Snow of Bay Roberts, who was extremely nervous at first but was so pleased with the results that, when I refused payment, he offered to get me a bottle of bakeapples.

At Hawkes Harbour I went ashore with Gerald Hayden (who gave me some whale's teeth and a bottle of bakeapples) and met their Scottish chemist, Mr. Squire. He says that whale's liver is very high in Vitamin A but low in Vitamin D. They have caught only one sperm whale, but from its head they pumped 15 barrels of oil. He gave me a spirit lamp from his laboratory — something I had been unable to obtain in St. John's.

At Comfort Bight, "Pete" (Dr. Peters) and Ruth, the Captain, and Jean Boyd and I went ashore with Don and Marj Andrews. Colin Storey (Ruth's brother) was also there. We had some interesting conversation for a couple of hours during which time they consumed a few drinks. I contented myself with some toast and coffee.

Uncle George woke me at Frenchman's Island but I did not need to get up until we reached Batteau. Later, at Spotted Islands, they brought out a woman who was losing a lot of blood "down below."

**August 23rd:** I actually had an opportunity to catch up on a little of my lost sleep during the morning. Although there was a heavy swell I was able to eat heartily and, during the afternoon, read for a couple of hours in the music room. Marjorie Hiscock, of Brigus, joined me there but left the ship at Indian Harbour to spend two weeks with Graham Hiscock, whose fishing operation is based at Smokey.

At Emily Harbour (on the opposite side of the island from Brig Harbour) we took on board the airmen who had been replaced by the 18 we had brought down with us. This group [was] returning to Canada after 14 months at Brig Harbour. They assured us that this was one of the happiest days of their lives.

**August 24th:** At Cartwright, Dr. Forsythe brought Mrs. W. back on board to return home to Brigus. Some of the placenta had not come away and she is still taking ergot and sulfadiazine as her temp is hovering around 100 degrees.

Mr. Hayward Parsons, of the Hudson's Bay Company (brother of Ralph Parsons), had arranged for me to buy 50 pounds of white sugar, which was brought on board for me to take home to Carbonear, since sugar is still rationed in Newfoundland but not in Labrador. My parents have so many visitors that this will be a great boon to them.

At Wolf Islands I went on board a schooner, the *Hunter*, to see a man who appeared to have had a slight stroke, although he was young for this. He had improved greatly after only three hours and his blood pressure was normal so I decided to let him remain where he was since there was nothing specific that anyone would be able to do at either St. Anthony or St. John's.

We are taking on a large number of fishermen now, going home because the fishery is so poor. This means that our progress along the coast has been slowed down. I stayed up until we reached Batteau at about 5:00 a.m. and was rewarded by obtaining nearly two gallons of bakeapples — a delicacy to most Newfoundlanders.

**August 25th:** We were leaving Sandy Islands when I got up for breakfast. It was noon when we reached Comfort Bight, where we spent the entire afternoon taking on board barrels of herring. We then took a new route to Hawkes Harbour, going through Squasho Run — a narrow, pretty channel which goes inside Hawkes Island. I had several patients at Hawkes Harbour, including a girl with a beautiful set of teeth who wanted one of them extracted — which I refused to do, but gave her some oil of cloves to use if she should have a toothache.

At Venison Islands I took J.T. into the ship's hospital until we get to St. Anthony as his orchitis is not improving and is probably tuberculosis.

**August 26th** (Sunday): We reached Port Hope Simpson at 6:00 p.m. Mr. S. told me his daughter, Louise, had another attack of right-sided abdominal pain and, as I had suggested, he was sending her to St. John's and asked me to look after her (she is 16 and attractive). Others making the trip included Marney Mercer, J.O. Williams, and two women who were at full-term in their pregnancies. Mrs. W. bled a little today, perhaps because I had discontinued her ergot.

At Spear Harbour I did some fast work and extracted three teeth for a man, F., from Carbonear and one for one of George Poole's men as well as looking after three other patients. Max Earle brought me out a bottle of bakeapples and another from Mrs. John Chubbs for my father.

At Battle Harbour the church bell was ringing but there were swarms of people out around the ship. I removed a tooth for one man from a schooner.

The fog was very thick so the Captain did a tricky bit of navigation through an inside run to Cape Charles where we spent most of the night.

**August 27th**: At St. Anthony, since this was my final trip, I visited their handicrafts store and bought gifts for various members of my family and friends — after having first taken J.T. to the hospital. Dr. Curtis agreed with my probable diagnosis. Dr. Miller, who will shortly be returning to New Jersey, gave me his address. He came down to the boat and I learned quite a lot from his conversation with Dr. Peters about tuberculosis in Newfoundland.

I had given up my cabin to L.S. and Marney Mercer because the ship was overcrowded. However, my mother rejoined the boat at Trinity and needed the cabin between there and Carbonear as the crossing was quite rough. I stayed up on the bridge and enjoyed myself, in spite of getting wet occasionally when the spray would come up over us.

My father was waiting for us with a taxi in Carbonear. I brought some cream back to the boat with me which the two Air Force girls, the Purser, the Captain, and I consumed, with bakeapples in the Mate's cabin, which is being used by the two Air Force girls, one of whom is Vi Adams from St. Anthony and the other her cousin.

**August 31st**: Got to St. John's about 4:00 a.m. I went to the Health Department and discussed the summer's work with Len Miller, who told me that the same job would be open for me again next summer if I wanted it. They paid me from May 22nd and threw in a war bonus for a total of \$564.84. Sir John repeated Len's invitation for next summer. Afterwards, I went back to the boat with Nigel and made a list of the supplies which are to be turned back to the department as well as others that will be left on the boat for Uncle George to use during the remaining trips of the *Kyle* in the autumn months.

**September 1st** (Saturday): At 9:30 a.m. a department car called for me and took me to the boat, where we removed the medical supplies that Uncle George will not be

needing. At the department I thanked Jim McGrath for having done so much for me at the beginning of the summer. He gave me some additional information about the ship which it is hoped can be built as a hospital ship for Northern Labrador — something Len and Sir John had mentioned. It is to be well equipped, including x-ray. If a graduate physician does not apply for the job, Jim McGrath says that it would be mine for the asking, next summer. Nigel came to the boat with me, and we took some movies of the officers and of the ship's departure, after I had said good-bye to just about everybody on board. All of them were extremely nice, not the least being Uncle George, whose parting words were "Good Luck — and I'll never forget ye."

At night I stayed in and read poetry<sup>7</sup> as we listened to the formal surrender of Japan to the Allies aboard the U.S. Battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.

**[Manuscript of 1945 trips ends.]**

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Diary, March 15, 1945: dinner at Lord Nelson Hotel with Sir John, given by J.M.C. Stewart, one of the Board of Governors at Dal, and Chief Justice Sir Jos. Chisholm and Deans of Medicine, Law, and Dentistry plus five Newfoundland students: Peter Loder, Charlie Henderson, Jim Darcy, Ted King, and I as representatives of Newfoundland students.

<sup>2</sup>The term "Inuit" was not in use in 1945.

<sup>3</sup>The captain's suggestion that Ian Rusted "sign articles" refers to the practice common in the merchant marine to sign a document when hiring on as a member of the crew that indicates willingness to respect the authority of the captain and the ship's chain of command.

<sup>4</sup>In later communication with Mr. Harp I mentioned that if this lady had not been a widow, I would have considered early pregnancy as the diagnosis. "Pay no attention to that," was his response.

<sup>5</sup>At various times teacher, magistrate, and speaker in the legislature.

<sup>6</sup>Associate, Toronto Conservatory of Music. In 1947, it became known as the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto. See entry by Green, Wardrop, and Higgs, at: <[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=U1ARTU0003050](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=U1ARTU0003050)>.

<sup>7</sup>*Flint and Feather* by Pauline Johnson.



*Acadiensis* is a journal of regional history devoted to the study of Atlantic Canada. The essential source for reading and research on the region, *Acadiensis* is one of Canada's leading scholarly

journals. Original research articles present the most recent findings and interpretations by scholars in regional studies, including history, geography, political science, folklore, literature, sociology, economics and other areas. *Acadiensis* currently publishes twice a year, in the Autumn and in the Spring. Visit us at [www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Acadiensis](http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Acadiensis)

## *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*



is a bi-annual interdisciplinary journal devoted to publishing original essays in either English or French about the society and culture of Newfoundland and Labrador, past and present. The editorial goal is to publish essays which are likely to be of general as well as scholarly interest. Visit us at [www.mun.ca/nls/](http://www.mun.ca/nls/)

### Subscription Rates

*Acadiensis* individual subscription **\$25.00** (Canadian)

*Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*  
individual subscription **\$20.00** (Canadian)

**A special offer is now available to Canadian subscribers – individual subscriptions to both journals for a combined price of only \$35.00**

TO SUBSCRIBE FOR THIS JOINT OFFER, CONTACT:

Josephine Thompson, *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, e-mail:

[nlstudies@mun.ca](mailto:nlstudies@mun.ca)

website: [www.mun.ca/nls/](http://www.mun.ca/nls/)

OR Beckey Daniel, *Acadiensis*, e-mail: [acadnsis@unb.ca](mailto:acadnsis@unb.ca)

website: [www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Acadiensis](http://www.lib.unb.ca/Texts/Acadiensis)