

Louisa Catherine Pinsent
1.

Note on back of photograph from Newfoundland.

Louisa Catherine (Pynsent) wife of George Shea, died
17 March, 1890 at birth of her first child, a boy,
who died also.

(Note probably by hand of Lady Pinsent)
R.J.F.H.P.

For the Christmas Number EVENING TELEGRAM (circa 1890)

HON. MR JUSTICE PINSENT. D.C.L.

ROBERT JOHN PINSENT, the subject of the present memoir, and whose portrait appears in this number, was born at Port-de-Grave on the 27th July 1834.

He is a native of this country in the fourth generation, and his family has consequently been very long associated with Newfoundland. His ancestors, on the maternal side, (Williams) are of Welsh origin and came to this colony in the earlier half of the last century; his great grandfather was Chief Magistrate at St. John's and Judge of Assize, while that gentleman's brother (This Colonel Griffith Williams, a great enthusiast in agriculture, was the founder of the Grove Farm at Quidi Vidi (now partly occupied by Messrs. Woodley and Rutledge). He received a grant of this site (200 acres) in 1757, from Governor Edwards; and, having cultivated and built extensively upon it, lived there for many years. The place was called by him "golden Grove" after a family estate in Wales. When the French took St. John's, "Golden Grove" was pillaged and the buildings destroyed by the invaders, and the Colonel suffered a loss of £1500, but he restored the place. When absent on foreign service, but expecting to return, he wrote in 1779, to the Governor, as follows: "As soon as peace happens to this country, and I am in the land of the living, I shall return to "Golden Grove" and make it yet flourish, to the surprise of all mankind." Colonel Skinner, married to a member of this family, was founder of the place next west of the Grove Farm, called the "Cottage Farm" (now occupied by Mr Ross), the two estates occupying nearly the whole of the north side of Quidi Vidi Lake. Mr Thomas Williams raised, and was Captain of the largest Company of the Volunteer Force enlisted to aid in the defence of the Colony during the Napoleonic war. Colonial Records), was the Commandant of the Royal Artillery here for many years.

Among the children of the former were the eminent natives Colonel George Williams, M.P., a Magistrate for Lancashire, England, and Colonel Monier Williams, Surveyor General of Bombay (father of the present Sir Monier Williams, K.C.I.E. founder of the Indian Institute, University of Oxford). Mr Justice Pinsent is grandchild of their brother, Mr Thomas Williams, as were also the late Captain Hedley Vicars of Crimean fame, and the Lady Rayleigh, mother of the present Lord Rayleigh (a senior wrangler of Cambridge).

On the paternal side Judge Pinsent's family has not been so long connected with this colony; but his father, so well known to the older generation of Newfoundlers, died in England a few years ago, being retired Judge of the Court of Labrador and Magistrate for this colony. He had been nearly fifty years in the public service, and his father's firm (of which, in early life, the late Mr Pinsent was a member) was originally connected with the Island in the last century as "merchant adventurers" of London, sending out ships here, and afterwards establishing a local firm at Port-de-Grave.

100 In 1800 the records of this colony show that one of their ships was commissioned by the governor as a privateer (The ship WILLIAM, Hill, master, owned

/by John and William

by John and William Pinsent, of London, merchants of the burthen of 283 tons mounting twelve carronades (twelve pounders), and navigated with 25 men, received letters of Marque against France, Spain and the United Provinces - Records of Anno Domino 1800 -.), during the war.

Mr Broom, a great grandfather of the subject of our present article, is still remembered here by some of the oldest inhabitants. He was Chief Magistrate St. John's, and before that, during the latter days of the Surrogates, he was supreme Surrogate. His son, Admiral George Broom, (of the Brazilian and, previously of the British Navy), was another native of distinction. We mention these particulars as they are of interest, not only from their connection with the subject of our present sketch, but from their association with the history of our native colony for more than a century.

Robert John Pinsent was educated in this colony, principally at the Harb Grace Grammar School, of which he became a pupil on the day of its being opened in 1845, under Mr Roddick, the Principal, whose memory is so deservedly cherished by his old pupils, and all who knew his worth. Young Mr Pinsent entered upon his legal studies in St. John's in 1850, in the office of Mr (afterwards Sir Bryan) Robinson, Q.C. and in 1855 and 1856 he was duly admitted, respectively Solicitor and Barrister. He made an immediate mark in forensic practice, and from the fact that the old leaders of the Bar were taken up by the prosecution it fell to him in the first year of his practice to defend the accused, upon criminal information, for libel in a case of peculiar importance and delicacy. Amongst the counsel opposed to him were his late master, Robinson, Q.C. and Hoyles, Q.C. At the close of the trial, after four days, when the prosecution was abandoned, Chief Justice Brady addressed the crowded Court in the following terms:

"....I cannot allow the case to go off without expressing my admiration of the manner in which the defence has been conducted by the young counsel and of bearing my public testimony to the great zeal and distinguished ability displayed by him..."

From this time, and particularly from 1858, when Mr Robinson was raised to the Bench, Mr Pinsent secured, and held until his own elevation to the Bench, a place at least second to none at the Bar of this colony.

His professional eminence was immediately such, that upon a vacancy occurring in the Legislative Council in 1859, Mr Pinsent was appointed to a seat in that body and devoted himself to practical legislation, with the remarkable assiduity and skill which frequently received the warm acknowledgements of his colleagues, and largely contributed to the influence of that branch of the Legislature in the councils of the country.

In 1865 Mr Pinsent was called to the inner Bar, as a Queen's Counsel. In the same year, upon a vacancy occurring in the representation for Brigus and Port-de-Grave, by the death of Mr Leamon, and in view of the policy of Confederation, which was then being mooted, Mr Pinsent resigned his seat in the Council, stood for his native district and was returned without opposition. For the next three years, no constituency and its representative could have been better pleased with each other; and, as may be supposed, their member spared no pains about the affairs of his district.

cont'd./In 1869

In 1869 the delegates upon Confederation with the Dominion went to Canada, Mr Pinsent, during their absence, being acting Attorney General. In the autumn of that memorable year the question of Confederation went to the polls at a general election and suffered ignominious defeat. No district proved to be more hostile to it than Brigus and Port-de-Grave; the excitement became so intense that a detachment of troops had to be sent into the district, but the Anti majority was five or six to one.

Then Mr Pinsent was re-appointed to the Legislative Council under the outgoing Carter-Shea Government, and conducted the Confederate Opposition in that body, until 1873, when he severed his connection with that party.

It is not intended here to enter upon a discussion which would revive bitter party memories, or to enter, in any degree, into political controversy.

Suffice to say that circumstances and combinations were such that, in offering again at the polls, Mr Pinsent, fighting almost single-handed, lost more than one contest by small majorities against him. In effect, he was a very unfortunate politician, and his services were lost to the country in the Government and Legislature.

In the autumn of 1879 however, a vacancy occurring in the District of St. John's West, Mr Pinsent received by requisition a unanimous call from all classes and political parties to offer as a candidate for that district, which he consented to do. At this time there were vacancies about to arise on the Bench of the Supreme Court from the retirement of Chief Justice Hoyles and Mr Justice Sir Bryan Robinson, and while Sir F. Carter became successor to the first, Mr Pinsent was offered the second, and, in retiring from the candidature for St. John's West, he said "I accept the offer as due to my professional standing" and "regarding the severe disappointments I have suffered in political life, I prefer to take a place on the Bench to entering again into the contentions of politics."

In the spring of 1880 Judge Pinsent entered upon his judicial duties by presiding on Circuit at Harbor Grace. He there received addresses from the Circuit Bar, and from the inhabitants of Harbor Grace, and subsequently on Circuit in several of the outports. In the first named of these addresses the members of the Bar expressed themselves as follows:-

"Having regard to the eminent position which you had attained at the Bar, your advancement to the higher place which you now occupy has been as easy transition. Indeed, so easy had been that transition; so recently have you been of ourselves, identifying yourself with everything which tended to the elevation and advancement of the profession; and so genial and unostentatious has been your intercourse with its members, that we feel hampered by formality in expressing our sincere appreciation of your merits. It only remains for us to express our assurance that your new sphere of action will be distinguished and adorned by the same exhaustive learning, effective industry, and luminous intellect which have been as well the motive forces as the lights of your career; and our sincere trust that our pleasant and profitable intercourse

/with you may be

with you may be long continued." In the address from the people of Harbor Grace, they said, amongst other things, "We avail ourselves, with much pleasure, of this the earliest opportunity afforded us of cordially congratulating your Lordship upon your promotion to the Bench of the Supreme Court, and also of extending to you a hearty welcome to this, the town we may almost say of your nativity - the town in which were spent the happy days of youth - where were formed those habits of persevering study, which, in conjunction with much natural ability, and strength of character, have ever made you an ornament to your profession, and have just received suitable and gratifying recognition at the hands of your country. We feel confident that the same dignity, forensic ability and uniform courtesy which marked your career at the Bar, will characterize your discharge of the higher and more important functions of the Bench." It is needless to say how fully the expectations of the Bar and Public have been fulfilled, and how prominent a figure in the administration of justice by the Supreme Court^{the} Judge has been from the day of his appointment to the Bench; and circumstances, amongst others the frequent periods of Administration of the Government by the Chief Justice, have cast upon Mr Pinsent a more than ordinary responsibility; notably, amongst others, the first prosecutions connected with the fatal Harbor Grace riots of 1883, and, more recently, the celebrated Railway cases, in which Mr Justice Pinsent prepared and delivered the written judgment of the Supreme Court, which, as to the construction of the charter, was confirmed on appeal to the Privy Council. The Press, as well as the public, has constantly borne tribute to this; none more than the Evening TELEGRAM which has frequently expressed itself in such terms as these, "We congratulate the country upon the possession of such a talented native, and earnestly hope that the learned Judge may be spared many years to adorn the highest judicial tribunal by his erudition, eloquence, independence and impartiality."

Six years out of eight that the Judge has been on the Bench, he has covered a Circuit; on two of these occasions taking both the Northern and Southern Circuits and making the whole round of the Island. Here his power of organization, and despatch of business, and also the use he has made of his opportunities in acquiring practical acquaintance with the resources, condition and wants of the colony, are too well known to require further description. He carries this acquaintance of country into private life, as may be seen in the endeavour to develop the attractions of country life in the valley of Salmonier, where at "Woodland" he spends with the family all his available leisure. In the social life of the community, in active participation in nearly all movements and institutions for the public advancement, Judge Pinsent has ever been at the front. He was not unknown to the public platform in his student days. He was one of the chief promoters of the Young Men's Literary and Scientific Institute, and of the Athenaeum, into which that Institute merged. He has been Vice-President and President of these for many years. President of the old Agricultural Society and Vice-Patron of the present one. He was member of the Synod of the Church of England from its foundation, and one of the Executive of that body under three successive Bishops, and, until his appointment to the Bench, when he resigned that place; and Vice-President (the Bishop being President) of the Colonial and Continental Church Society here. In recognition of his valuable services to these bodies, he received special resolutions of thanks, and a year after his

/appointment to the

Hon. Mr Justice Pinsent

appointment to the Bench the Degree of Doctor of the Civil Law was, on the recommendation of the Bishop, for these and other reasons, conferred upon him by the Archbishop of Canterbury. When in practice, Mr Pinsent was President of the Law School, and afterwards lectured for the law-moot on the eve of his appointment to the Bench, when the President (Mr Boone) said, "It would also be our privilege to accord to Mr Pinsent, Q.C. our congratulations upon his accession to the Bench, our admiration of his brilliant career as an advocate, and our sincere gratitude for his hearty interest in our legal welfare. We shall never forget that, himself at the top of the profession, he had never been known to spare time or trouble in guiding, correcting, and encouraging our humble endeavours."

At the inauguration of the Methodist College, in 1887, Mr Justice Pinsent, at the request of the governing body, took part with the Governor (Sir W. DesVoeux) in the ceremonies of the day, and he discharged the duty in a manner which received the highest encomiums of the press and people. The Judge has been almost from its foundation a Fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute, and in the year 1884 read at a meeting of that body (the Marquis of Lorne in the chair) a very elaborate and carefully prepared paper upon "Newfoundland: our oldest Colony." This lecture, which is an epitome of the history, trade, and resources of the country, attracted much favourable comment in the English press. These few facts are named as examples of the Judge's active and patriotic interest in all matters concerning the good of his native land; and with this we close this sketch of the past life of one of those whose portraits appear in this CHRISTMAS NUMBER OF THE EVENING TELEGRAM.

Sir Robert Pinsent.

EVENING TELEGRAM 1893SIR ROBERT PINSENT INTERVIEWED

The inside of today's TELEGRAM contains the result of an interview with Sir Robert Pinsent, by a representative of Reuter's Agency, on the subject of fisheries dispute.

As the interviewer rightly states. "Sir Robert is perhaps one of the best living authorities on the question", and is familiar with it in all its phrases, both in a judicial and legislative capacity.

This being the case, it is not surprising that news agents should take advantage of the learned Judge's present trip to Europe to elicit his views on this very important question.

Whether Sir Robert's opinions, as expressed in the article to which we refer, shall have any influence on the settlement of the difficulty one way or the other, we are unable to say; but certain it is that his utterances on this subject are not without weight with the Imperial authorities.

We may just add that Sir Robert Pinsent's name is mentioned at Downing Street in connection with a certain colonial governorship, and also with the vacant consul-generalship at Constantinople. Our informant intimates that Sir Robert is in a fair way to receive Imperial recognition.

St. John's, April 28, 1893.

DEATH OF THE HON. SIR ROBERT PINSENT.

The community was startled this forenoon by cable-messages stating that the Hon. Sir Robert Pinsent, D.C.L., who has been on a visit to his friends in England, was dead - that he had died last night.

Sir Robert was a gentleman of fine physique and, when he left here, appeared to be in excellent health and to give promise of many years of usefulness. Indeed, it was not generally known that he was unwell at all, until yesterday, when a telegram conveyed to us the intelligence of his serious illness.

Even then, his friends believed that the fine vigorous constitution he possessed would enable him to pull through, and no serious apprehensions were felt. However, in spite of this circumstance, he soon succumbed to the fatal mady with which he was afflicted, and today the colony mourns the loss of a gifted son, and our Supreme Bench one of the ablest Judges that has ever occupied a seat there.

/With Sir Robert P.T.O.

With Sir Robert Pinsent's public career most of our readers are already acquainted. Therefore, it is not necessary to refer to it here. He was born at Port-de-Grave on the 27th July 1834. His Lordship was a native of this country in the fourth generation, and his family has consequently been very long associated with Newfoundland.

His ancestors, on the maternal side (Williams) were of Welsh origin and came to this colony in the earlier half of last century. His grandfather was Chief Magistrate of St. John's and Judge of the Assize, while that gentleman's brother was Commandant of the Royal Artillery here for many years.

Among the children of the former were the eminent natives Colonel George Williams, M.P., a Magistrate for Lancashire, England, and Colonel Monier Williams, Surveyor General of Bombay (father of the present Sir Monier Williams, K.C.I.E., founder of the Indian Institute, University of Oxford.).

Mr Justice Pinsent was grandchild of their brother, Mr Thomas Williams, as were also the late Captain Hedley Vicars, of Crimean fame, and the Lady Rayleigh, mother of the present Lord Rayleigh (a senior wrangler of Cambridge).

On the paternal side, Judge Pinsent's family has not been so long connected with this colony, but his father, so well known to the older generation of Newfoundlers, and especially by Harbor Gracians, died in England a few years ago, being retired Judge of the Court of Labrador and Magistrate for this colony. He had been nearly fifty years in the public service.

It is somewhat remarkable that both father and son, at the close of life's journey, should go to the home of their ancestors to die. On behalf of the colony, we tender to the bereaved family the people's heartfelt sympathy.

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DEATH OF SIR R.J. PINSENT. D.C.L.

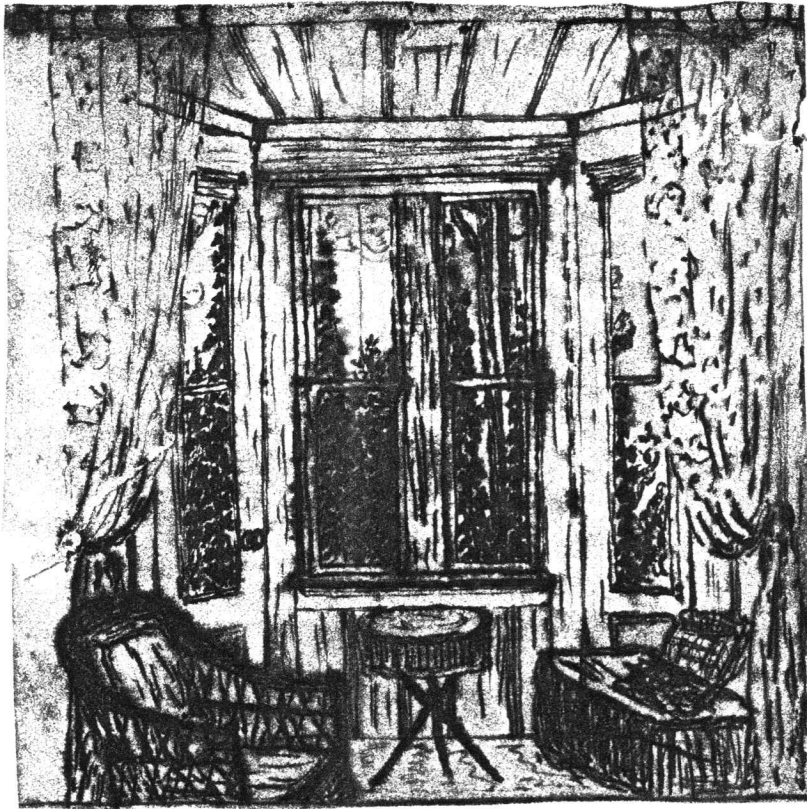
Yesterday a cable message flashed the news from Lord Ripon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the Governor, that Sir Robert Pinsent was seriously ill.

Today the whole community was thrilled with the news of the Judge's sudden death. "Verily, in the midst of life we are in death". It comes as an awful shock to many of us who knew and loved him, that our brilliant lawyer, statesman, judge, speaker writer, was taken from us, that all the activity and energy of his fine intellectual life, is closed in forever. Above all, that one so amiable, so affectionate, so universally beloved, should be cut off in the midst of his days, in the very flower of his manhood.

/There is no

Sir Robert Pinsent.

There is no need to tell our readers how, unaided, he rose to the very highest position at the bar. His professional acquirements would have given him a position anywhere. Just now we do not think of the talent or the learning of our cherished friend, our hearts are too full of the irreparable loss we have all sustained. To the loved wife, the true companion and help-meet, to all his sorrowing relatives, we tender our heartfelt sympathy.



Dining Room.
Woodlands. Salmonier
Newfoundland.
June 1892.

'Tilt' by
Salmonier River at
Puisent's Falls. June 1892

These sketches, photographs
and newspaper cuttings
were from a scrapbook
prepared by Lady Puisent.



Sketches by Francis W.H. Puisent, son of Sir Robert P.
June & November 1892.

Sir Robert Pinsent

Telegram Staff Feature

One of the most remarkable men that Port De Grave ever gave the world was Sir Robert J. Pinsent. Born in that town in 1834 he came to St. John's and began the study of law under Sir Byron Robinson when he was sixteen years old. He completed his course and was appointed solicitor at the age of 21. His ability in Court drew the attention of the authorities, and he was appointed to the Upper House with the title of Honourable when he was but 25.

This was but one of his appointments to that chamber. After some years he decided that he would like to move down, so he resigned his seat in the Legislative Council and offered himself as a candidate in the Liberal cause for the District of Harbour Grace which he won easily.

Except that he was a Liberal his policy was not very clear at the time of the election. But he soon made himself clear when he got in the House. It was the time when the Eastern provinces of Canada were talking Confederation and Mr. Pinsent saw a good future for Newfoundland as the most eastern

of the provinces. He was very outspoken in his support. When he went back to Harbour Grace to stump for the next election—that was in 1869—many of his former friends were his bitterest enemies. Someone had told the people that they would be "taxed to death" in Confederation, and Mr. Pinsent was consequently voted out of the House. Harbour Grace at that time proved to be one of the most anti-confederate districts.

He was again appointed to the Legislative Council, in which his voice was heard for the next ten years. Then he was requisitioned by the people of St. John's West to contest that district. This he declined but accepted an appointment as Judge of the Supreme Court the same year, a position which he held with distinction. Mr. Pinsent had considerable literary ability. He read a paper before the Royal Colonial Institute in 1884 that brought him recognition throughout the Empire. It was entitled "Newfoundland Our Oldest Colony." In 1890 he was knighted and lived for three years to enjoy his title.



Robert J. Pinsent

STARTLING NEWS.

Judge Pinsent Dead.

A Sketch of His Career.

To-day the community was shocked to hear of the sudden death in England of Sir Robert Pinsent. Yesterday, His Excellency the Governor received a message from Lord Ripon to say that the Judge was seriously ill, and to-day a cablegram from the same source conveyed the intelligence of his death.

Judge Pinsent was a native of the colony, and one whom natives felt proud of. During his occupation of the Judicial Bench he has shown by his judgments that he was possessed of no mean legal ability, and his courteous and affable manner made friends for him among all classes of our citizens.

Sir Robert Pinsent, D.C.L., K.C.B., was born in Port-de-Grave, on the 27th July, 1834, and was educated in this colony, principally at the Harbor Grace Grammar School, under Mr. Roddick. He entered upon his legal studies in St. John's in 1850, in the office of Mr. (after Sir Bryan) Robnson, Q. C., and in 1855 and 1856 he was duly admitted, respectively, Solicitor and Barrister. He made an immediate mark in forensic practice; and when Mr. Robnson was raised to the Bench, Mr. Pinsent secured, and held until his own elevation to the Bench, a place at least second to none at the Bar of this colony. In 1859 he was appointed to a seat in the Legislative Council, and in 1865 he was called to the inner Bar, as a Queen's Counsel. The same year he resigned his seat in that branch of the Legislature, and was returned for the district of Port-de-Grave, his birth-place, which seat he filled with great satisfaction to his constituents until the election of 1869, when he was defeated on the question of Confederation, and was again appointed to a seat in the Legislative Council, which he held until the autumn of 1879.

At this time there were vacancies about to arise on the Bench of the Supreme Court, from the retirement of Chief Justice Hoyles and Mr. Justice Sir Bryan Robnson, and while Sir F. B. T. Carter became successor to the first, Mr. Pinsent was offered the second, and, in the spring of 1880, Judge Pinsent entered upon his judicial duties, he presiding on Circuit at Harbor Grace. During the time that the Judge has been on the bench, he has conducted the majority of the Circuit Courts, and on two occasions took both the Northern and Southern Circuits, making the whole round of the Island. Here his power of organization, and dispatch of business, and also the use he has made of his opportunities in acquiring practical acquaintance with the resources, condition and wants of the colony, are too well known to require further description.

He carried his love of country into private life, as may be seen by his work at Salmonier. In the social life of the community, in active participation in nearly all movements and institutions for the public advancement, Judge Pinsent was ever at the front.

He was not unknown to the public platform in his student days. He was one of the chief promoters of the Young Men's Literary and Scientific Institute, and of the Athenæum, into which that institute emerged. He was President and Vice President of these for many years. President of the old Agricultural Society, and Vice-Patron of the more recent one. He was a member of the Synod of the Church of England from its foundation, and one of the Executive of that body under three successive Bishops, and, until his appointment to the Bench, when he resigned the place; and Vice-President of the Colonial and Continental Church Society here. In recognition of his valuable services to these bodies, he received special resolutions of thanks, and a year after his appointment to the Bench the degree of Doctor of the Civil Law was, on the recommendation of the Bishop, for these and other reasons, conferred upon him by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In 1890, Her Majesty was pleased to confer upon Judge Pinsent the order of Knighthood, as a recognition of his able and judicial services. The Judge, almost from its foundation, has been a Fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute, and in the year 1884 read at a meeting of that body (the Marquis of Lorne in the chair) a very elaborate and carefully prepared paper upon "Newfoundland: our oldest colony." This paper attracted much attention in the English press, and was only one of many efforts on his part to bring before the outside world the resources of his native land, and the disadvantages under which it labored.

The country generally will sincerely mourn the loss of such a talented native, one who has adorned the highest judicial tribunal in his native land by his erudition, independence, and impartiality.

*Sir R. Pinsent died
from Pneumonia after
Influenza -
April 27th 1893.*

In Memoriam.

Mourn, Terra Nova, mourn,
Thy gifted son is dead;
Bow to the dust thy stately form,
Strew ashes on thy head.

Well mayst thou mourn, loved Isle,
This favored child of thine,
And with the names of honored dead
The name of Pinsent twine.

His tongue and pen no more
Shall laud his native soil,
No more to learn its checkered past
Burns low the midnight oil.

That brain observant, fertile, keen,
No more shall grasp the clue
That bared the mazes of the law
To common laic view.

Hushed is that voice, forever hushed,
Whose mellow accents fell
In Forum, Senate, Halls of Art,
On ears that knew their spell.

But more than all we miss its tones
When as a man he spoke
Whose sympathies spread wider far
Than Littleton or Coke.

A memory now, the warm hand clasp;
The pleasant smile is fled;
And men all round this sea-girt Isle
Mourn Justice Pinsent dead.

And ask with feeling in each voice:
How shall we fill the place
Of the good Judge, our countryman,
Who just has run his race?

JESMA.

From the Westward

The death of Sir Robert Pinsent, which occurred at his father-in-law's rectory in Norfolk on Thursday, will be a great loss to Newfoundland. Sir Robert was hardly sixty, and was one of the best authorities on the vexed fisheries question. He was called to the Newfoundland Bar in 1856, and was appointed a Member of the Legislative Council three years later. Subsequently he became successively Attorney-General and Solicitor-General, and in 1880 he became a Puisne Judge, a position which he held till his death. Sir Robert was a son of the late Judge Pinsent, of the Court of Labrador, was a thoroughly sound lawyer and painstaking Judge, and was cordially esteemed by all who knew him.

April 27th 1893.

Extract from 'Who's Who in and from Newfoundland. 1927'
Published by R.Hibbs. St.John's, Newfoundland.

P.259.

PINSENT, Earl Speare - Barrister, Solicitor and Notary Public. Director The Harbour Grace Boot and Shoe Manufacturing Company, Ltd. Born November 9th, 1897, at St.John's Newfoundland., the son of Charles Speare and Blanche Pinsent. Educated at Bishop Feild College, St.John's. Married September 7th, 1916, to Miss Augusta Beatrice Dickinson. Children: Three, Pamela Gertrude, Charles Douglas and Ethel Reynetta. Society: Masonic A.F. & A.M. Clubs: Murray's Pond, Bally Haly and City. Recreations: Golf, fishing and hunting. Religion: Church of England. Residence: 78 Circular Road, St.John's, Nfld.

On the death of his first wife he married Phyllis

He died without further issue on

History of Newfoundland. Prowse D.W.
Macmillan 1895.

P.98. Footnote to chapter on earliest settlement in Newfoundland.

'...There has been considerable misapprehension regarding the site of Guy's settlement; in most Newfoundland histories Mosquito Cove is named as the locality; all doubts about the locality are set at rest by the English Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Service. These volumes have been of inestimable value to me in preparing this work; it is a great misfortune that our own records have not been published in the admirable way General Lefroy has written the Chronicles of Bermuda. The late Sir R.J.Pinsent, D.C.L., was for some time engaged on this work in Newfoundland. I hope some one may eventually give the public the benefit of all the labour he has bestowed on our Colonial Calendar....'

P.296. From chapter relating to events during the reign of George III.

'...Lieutenant Griffith Williams, R.A., who was stationed at Carbonear Island in 1745 (afterwards promoted to St.John's, where he lived for some twelve or fourteen years), was a very active, enterprising young officer. He cleared the present Grove Farm, Quidi Vidi, and obtained a grant of two hundred acres. Subsequently he served in the American war and attained the rank of general. He was connected with the old family of Williams in this Colony; the late Sir Robert Pinsent, D.C.L., and the distinguished Sir Monier-Williams are his collateral descendents...'

P.531. Reign of Victoria. Obituary paragraph with photograph.

'....The year 1893 was saddened by the untimely deaths of Sir R.J.Pinsent, D.C.L., on April 28th, and the Most Rev.Dr T.J.Power, Roman Catholic Bishop of St.John's, on December 4th. Sir Robert was a native that any Colony might be proud of; he was not only an able lawyer and a distinguished judge, he took a deep interest in all that concerned the welfare of the Colony, and was active in every good work to promote the best interests of his native land; his mild amiable character and his polished courtesy made many friends; few men in the Colony were more beloved, few who are more missed. His clear intellect, his untiring industry, and his intense love of his profession, combined to make a lawyer who would have been an ornament to the Bench and the Bar of any portion of Her Majesty's dominions. Sir Robert's courtesy and kindness to the Bar were proverbial. He had all the qualities of an able judge, strong in his law, clear in the marshalling of his facts; always prompt in his decisions, no charge could ever be laid against him of that terrible delay which is a practical denial of justice...'

P.663. Chronological Table of the Newfoundland Judiciary.

14. '...Sir R.J.Pinsent, D.C.L. made Judge of the Supreme Court on the 20th May, 1880,
died April 1893.

History of Newfoundland. D.W.Prowse.

Macmillan. 1895.

(Extracts from copy presented to F.W.H. Pinsent by the Author).

1813
'Pinson'

P.393.

'...In 1813 a very large Commission of the Peace was issued under which the following gentlemen were appointed Justices:- Coote, Broommagistrates for St.John ...Pinsent and S.Prowse for Labrador.....'

P.601.

'....About this period also the West Country houses, besides Noble and Pinson, commenced business at Lance-a-Loup, Grady and Henley Harbour. In 1813 Sir Richard G. Keats appointed Pinson, of Temple Bay and Samuel Prowse of Cape Charles, Justices of the Peace for Labrador. It was the first attempt to create courts of justice on this desolate coast.....'

P.655. Name repeated, in the same spelling, in a repeat of the list on p.393.

Note:

Confusion may arise between the above and Robert John Pinsent (1798-1867) who was Judge of the Court of Labrador, and a 'magistrate of this Colony for nearly fifty years'.

If Robert John Pinsent had been the individual appointed in 1813 he would have been aged 15 years at the time.

If he retained his magistracy up to the time of his death in London his appointment could not have been earlier than 1826.

This suggests that the families of Pinsent and Pinson were both represented in Newfoundland at this time.

R.J.F.H.Pinsent.

Extract from: 'Newfoundland. Island into Province'.
St. John Chadwick. 1967. Cambridge University Press.
Chap. 11. 'The Labrador Dispute'. p. 134-5.

'...The boundary issue was, as Fraser points out, ⁽³⁾ first raised 'in a semi-academic manner' by a Newfoundland judge in 1888. Mr Justice Pinsent then pointed to a discrepancy between the extent of Newfoundland's jurisdiction in Labrador as defined by the Letters Patent of 28 March 1876 and as shown by a map published under the authority of the Canadian Government. The judge urged that a practical and essential problem arose in respect of the administration of justice in the territory. He appealed to the then Governor to seek some exact definition from the British Government. Efforts were made at the abortive conferences at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on confederation in 1888 and 1892 to resolve the matter. But even an agreement reached at the latter meeting that the Newfoundland and Canadian Governments should each appoint geographers to study and to report on available documents on the boundary came to nothing. The issue 'was at that time of little practical importance'.⁽¹⁾

1. G.W.St.J.Chadwick. 'The Economic resources of Labrador'. Polar Record, v (1948) 155-62.
3. MacKay, p.463.

Sir Robert Pinsent.

A. SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF NEWFOUNDLAND by Sir Robert Pinsent.

One of the most startling and sensational events of the past year, was the destruction by fire of the greater part of the City of St. John's the Capital of Newfoundland, the nearest to England of all our Colonial dependencies, situate on the other side of the Atlantic, and about 1700 miles distant from Ireland.

In a few hours 10,000 people became homeless, and as ill luck would have it, the region of the fire was that in which the most valuable warehouses, wharves, and public buildings were situate. It is estimated that £3,000,000 worth of property of all kinds was destroyed, of which one third only was insured.

The beautiful Cathedral of St. John the Baptist designed by Sir Gilbert Scott, was amongst the victims of the devouring flames, and represents a loss to the Church of England Community of £100,000. This church had been begun just after the former great fire in St. John's in 1846, and had only recently been completed.

It may be interesting at this time to give a sketch of the history of the Colony of which St. John's is the capital, and of which some views, as it was before and after the fire, accompany this paper.

Newfoundland, the oldest Colonial possession of the English Crown, became such originally by right of discovery through the expedition of the Cabots, John and Sebastian, prosecuted under the auspices and authority in the name of King Henry the 7th. Four years hence will see the fourth Centenary of that event.

There was however no attempt at colonization, nor indeed any formal act of appropriation by England for many years after this discovery, although the fisheries were the subject of some legislation in the reigns of Edward VI and Henry VIII.

The aboriginies now entirely extinct for many years, were described by a very early writer as white people "very rustical," and eating fish and flesh raw, wearing skins for clothing in winter, and some going naked in summer. They worshipped the "some and Moone and other idoles".

The same writer tells us that "The Brytons (Bretons) and French are accustomed to take fyssche on the coast of these lands, where is found great plenty of tunnyes, which the inhabitants call Baccalaos, whereof the land was so named. Northward from the region of Baccalaos is the lande of Labrador."

Thus after the news of discovery of the "New Island" by Cabot, the maritime Europeans lost no time in resorting to its coasts for the sake of its teeming fisheries.

One of the most notable of the early English expeditions to the Newfoundland was set on foot by Cardinal Woolsey under the sanction of Henry VIII. A Canon of St. Paul's accompanied that expedition which was under the Command of

/Capt. Rut P.T.O.

Capt. Rut who writing to the King, and to the Cardinal from the "Haven of St. John", relates that he found in St. John's harbour engaged in fishing, "eleven sail of Norman, one Breton and two Portugal barks."

In 1578 there were four hundred vessels employed in the Cod-fishery of which only fifty were English, but the Chronicler says:- "The English are commonly lords of the harbours where they fish, and levy contributions of salt and other things, for the protection they afford foreign fishermen against rovers."

In 1583 Sir Humphrey Gilbert under Commission and Charter from the illustrious Queen Elizabeth, took formal possession of the Island in her name. The ships of his expedition entered the harbour of St. John's where he set up the Arms and Standard of England, and on the 5th of August all the English and foreign adventurers there, acknowledged his authority and homage; and to some of them he granted parcels of land.

Sir Humphrey and his party were right royally entertained by the merchants at a picnic in the "Auncient Garding".

Thus there can be no doubt that for many years St. John's had already been to some extent inhabited, as well as visited, by the adventurers and their followers.

On the return voyage to England, Sir Humphrey Gilbert lost his life in the wreck of the ship he sailed in.

Next we hear of the expedition of Mr Guy, Mayor of Bristol. It began well, and Cuper's Cove (now called Cupid's) in Conception Bay was his headquarters. A deadly encounter with the Indians brought about by other settlements led to this settlement being abandoned. In 1615 Capt. Whitbourne who was a great enthusiast about Newfoundland, was commissioned by the Admiralty to exercise powers of control and judicial authority; and at this time nearly three hundred English vessels were engaged in the fisheries, and a sedentary population had sprung up.

Capt. Whitbourne for a period of thirty years before this, had been living a great part of his time, in this Country.

In 1624 took place the famous attempt of Sir George Calvert (Lord Baltimore) at regular and organized Settlement under Charter from James I.

He gave the name Avalon to the peninsula which is now so called, and at Ferryland his capital, built a handsome residence, fort and other buildings. After a few years, mainly through the troubles consequent upon warfare between England and France, Lord Baltimore abandoned his possession in Newfoundland, and, shortly after, Sir David Kirk became the grantee. He and his family lived at Ferryland for many years, and Sir David was buried there.

/About the middle of

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About the middle of the 17th century there were said to have been about 2,000 permanent residents in the Island, and about 11,000 English seamen resorting to it for the summer's fishery.

A century after this the fisheries began to take a new form, and the greater part of the export of Codfish then amounting to about 600,000 quintals, was the result of resident labour.

Early in the present century the population of the Island had risen to between 20,000 and 30,000; the volume of the fisheries had increased, and the seal fishery was beginning to form a considerable item in the yearly produce of the colony.

After all, the progress of the Island (nearly equal in area to England) had been very small; but the reasons are too obvious.

In addition to the contested dominion of the French which with every outbreak of war, aimed at the possession of the Island, the policy of the English Government and of English adventurers repressed settlement in favour of a transitory fishery.

The Star Chamber first put in force Royal ordinance against residence and cultivation. Every hired fisherman was required to return to the British Islands. No woman was to be allowed to land here. No cultivation was permitted within six miles of the shore; and in 1660 it was ordered that "No master or owner of any ship should transport any persons to Newfoundland who were not of the ship's Company, nor such as were to plant and settle there."

Then the Act 10 and 11 of William III "To encourage the trade of Newfoundland," gave the force of statutory law to similar rules. In the meantime a population sprang up in defiance of these unnatural laws; but there was no resident Civil Government; it was a lawless community. Harbour Admirals (who were fishing-ship masters) administered injustice in summer.

It was not until 1728 that regular governors were appointed in the person of Naval Commodore. These returned to England every autumn, and several years of the present Century passed before the Act of William III, and the prohibition in building except for fishery purposes, became a dead letter. At the conclusion of peace in 1763, France was unhappily for this Colony, permitted to resume such rights of fishery on the West and North-eastern coasts of the Island as had been reserved under the treaty of Utrecht, although the proprietorship and Sovereignty of the Island were declared to be wholly in Great Britain.

The settlement and the improvement of the colony having been so long crushed by the evil genius of the old policy, its progress under the new order of things was checked by its traditions, and as one of the results it long continued to be the habit for the well-to-do merchant to leave the island every autumn, and ultimately to retire wholly from it after his fortune had been made.

It is not so very long ago that this ceased to be the general rule. Moreover, the development and settlement of nearly one half the Island are stultified by the French-Treaty intrusions.

However, in 1832 the population had risen to something over 60,000. In the next twenty years it doubled itself.

The progress has not since been so rapid, although in 1884 the population had risen to almost 198,000 but it is said by the census taken this year (1892) to have increased since then only by about 4,000, making a present total for Newfoundland (including our Labrador) of 202,000; the district of St. John's the Capital representing of that number 36,000.

The average produce of the cod-fisheries represents from a million to a million and a half quintals or cwts., averaging in value from four to five dollars per quintal.

The seal-fishery averages a catch of over two hundred and fifty thousand seals, of the value with their pelts of probably two dollars each.

The export of canned lobsters has gone to over 3,300,000 of the value of over \$380,000.

The value of the herring fishery may be estimated at \$400,000 with every probability of great extension; other fisheries such as salmon and trout, probably represent a total additional value of \$100,000.

The mineral resources of the Colony are believed to be great particularly in copper and nickel, lead, gypsum and asbestos. The value of mineral exports in one year reached nearly \$500,000. Last year it was found that the slag or refuse of the copper at one of the mines contained such a percentage of gold as was worth extracting, and this first experiment resulted in a yield in gold of £10,000 for that year from this source.

The agricultural produce of the colony which is wholly consumed within it, may be valued at \$600,000. While a great part of the interior of the Island is unfitted for agriculture, it is estimated that there are yet over 3,000,000 of acres capable of settlement and profitable cultivation.

The forests are pronounced to offer strong inducements to lumbering enterprise; and considerable tracts are now being worked by companies and individuals. There are over fifty saw mills in the island.

The total volume of trade per annum in exports and imports is about \$12,500,000. The public revenue \$1,500,000; The public debt about \$4,000,000.

Newfoundland (with which the oceanic system of telegraphy originated

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Sir Robert Pinsent

through the enthusiastic energy of Cyrus Field aided by British Capital), besides being connected by submarine cables with the rest of the world, possesses an internal system representing nearly 2,000 miles of telegraph wire. Of railways constructed, there are about 180 miles, and 250 more in course of construction.

Little public improvement, little industrial progress took place in the colony until it came to possess a representative legislature in 1832, the executive being still appointed by the Crown; and this system continued until 1855 when constitutional rights were still further enlarged by the Grant of "Responsible Government", which is now administered by a Governor appointed by the Crown, assisted by an Executive Council representing the majority of the Assembly; a Legislative Council nominated in the Colony but holding their commissions from the Queen; and a House of Assembly consisting of 36 members returned by manhood suffrage.

With a settled government, with justice duly administered, trade and industries prosecuted by the Colonists for the benefit of the Colonists, combined with political and religious freedom, Newfoundland is emerging from the difficulties and trials, mostly imposed from without, which beset her early history, and placed her at such a signal disadvantage compared with more favoured lands.

She still suffers from the ban of the French fishing rights upon the best part of her coast, an intrusion which goes far to neutralize the value of her territory, and to stultify her efforts and aspirations for the progress which might be expected with the removal of such fetters.

The early removal of her grievances at almost any cost is a duty, civilisation, humanity and kinship claim from the Mother Country in whose interests, and for whose purposes this incubus was originally imposed.

1826
William Pinsent
of Wolborough

Register of Ships. Exeter Customs House
1786 - 1831

9.2.1826 Brothers

115 Ton - Cupids, Nfld. 1820

Owners:-

Wm. Pinsent of Ebford, Wolborough - Merchant
Mary Spear Pinsent of Cullompton - Spinster and daughter and adm. of
late Joseph Pinsent, London merchant.

Master:-

Richard Heath

Vessel lost 4.2.1830

(2) Notice from contemporary newspaper.

'.....The death of Sir Robert Pinsent, which occurred at his father-in-law's rectory in Norfolk on Thursday, will be a great loss to Newfoundland. Sir Robert was hardly sixty, and was one of the best authorities on the vexed fisheries question. He was called to the Newfoundland Bar in 1856, and was appointed a Member of the Legislative Council three years later. Subsequently he became successively Attorney-General and Solicitor-General, and in 1880 he became a Puisne Judge, a position which he held till his death. Sir Robert was a son of the late Judge Pinsent, of the Court of Labrador, was a thoroughly sound lawyer and painstaking Judge, and was cordially esteemed by all who knew him.

April 27th, 1893.