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CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN JEREMIAH COGHLAN
OF FOGO AND GOVERNOR MONTAGU,
ABOUT THE INTERFERENCE WITH COGHLAN'S
FISHERIES ON LABRADOR.

No. 392.

JEREMIAH COGHLAN TO GOVERNOR MONTAGU.

RECORD BOOK, ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND. Volume 7, page 52.

Fogo, August 30, 1777.

May it please Your Excellency,

10 Having already done myself the Honour of writing you at large by this conveyance, being one of My Sealing Schooners called—the Advice, I am under the disagreeable necessity of laying before you an Account of some Illegal proceedings which have happened of late at my Settlements on the N.E. Coast of Labrador: referring to the farther—relation of such given by my Agent at that place which I now hand you, and first begging leave to pray you will excuse my troubling you on this occasion, I shall take the liberty of communicating to you the Mode of my first establishing a Fishery at the former Coast, flattering myself that your Excellency, in your wise consideration will judge it equitable to confirm the possession granted unto me by your Predecessor, as you find in every respect I make use of the same to the no small Advantage of supporting so valuable a Nursery to the British Marine.

Early in the Government of my very respected good friend Sir Hugh Pallisser, and by His recommendation I was the first English Subject that settled in the Seal Fishery at Chateaux, so long back as the year 65, and finding it most eligible to pursue the Cod and Salmon Fisheries farther North on the said Coast, I fitted out an armed Sloop to guard against the Esquimaux Indians, and having Lord Rutherford on board, then Lieutenant of the Niger, the late Sir Thomas Adams, Commander at Chateaux, the said Sloop proceeded on a Discovery from the former Port to Cape Charles, Alexis St. Frances, and Porcupine Bays, on the North Coast of Labrador, and on her return encouraged by Sir Thomas Adams, I communicated my intentions to Sir Hugh Pallisser of Settling a Residence at the former places, for the

purpose of carrying on a Cod and Salmon Fisheries, in whose answer to me on the occasion he says "pursue your undertakings on the Coast of Labrador which are highly recommendary to me, and no after Commer, shall dispossess you." Still the Difficulty of getting proper People at that time to reside at the said Places was a hard task, however in 1769, being join'd by a Captain Cartwright, of the Army, and a Lieut. Lucas of the Navy, who were acquainted on the Coast, we formed a Settlement at Cape Charles, and fitted out an Armed Schooner to go among the Northern Tribe of the Esquimaux Indians to trade, the said Schooner having been unluckily lost, and Lieut. Lucas in her, who was a Man of Honour, I thought it most advisable to dissolve my 10 connections with Mr. Cartwright having been subject to a heavy loss, each Persons settlements being allotted on the Coast of Labrador, he remained with Cape Charles and Sandwich Bay Rivers, confirmed by Lord Dartmouth, then at the head of the Board of Trade, and I kept possession of Alexis and the other Rivers to Porcupine Bay, a little at this side of Mr. Cartwright, since which possession our Labours have differed very widely, as I have employed four times the number of hands, being Bread in this Business, and of course added more to the increase of Seamen; pursuing both the Salmon, Cod, Furring and Sealing Business, with old experienced Men carried from hence to instruct the young beginners; New Comers not being content to 20 have the same opportunity of exploring the Coast, and making a Trial of new found Rivers. In 1775 one Baskomb, a Salmoner employed by a Mr. Hooper of Poole without any proper Authority, while my People were gone to their Store Home for Salt, opposed them by setting Salmon Nets at the Mouth of one of my Rivers, but on my representing such to Lord Shuldhham, I obtained an Order from Capt. Parker of His Majesty's Ship the Martin, then at Chateaux, to cause immediately said Baskomb to quit and leave me all the Salmon he had taken, since that time I have remained in peaceable possession of all my Posts, on the Coast of Labrador, occupying the same with Industry, having had this year two Ships there cleared out of England, the 30 one called the Admiral Montague and the other the Young Joseph, for which Ships with my Winter Residence I had 100 Men employed in the Seal and Cod Fisheries & 40 men in the Salmon and Furring Business, occupying all my Posts with a proper Discipline and Decorum; and in Course subject to the greatest expence of erecting Buildings and other necessary Works, for the purpose of carrying on my Business to the best advantage, all which I take the liberty of referring to your Excellency, and I am now come to inform you of the cause of my present application to you in consequence of the following Letter received from my Agent at Spear Harbour, entrance of Alexis River, Labrador.

August 22nd, 1777.

SIR,

Your having suffered John Peaton, Salmon Catcher for you at the exploits [22 August, 1777.] to come to this Coast in your Brig, Joseph, he is likely to be very prejudicial to your ensuing years Business, as the said Peaton being divested of every sensation of Gratitude, due to you for the Opportunities given him to serve himself by being concerned on the Half Shares with you, he has so inflamed the minds of all your Salmon Catchers and Furriers, as well as Sharemen, with the notion of going in future on their own accounts, and keeping possession of your Posts in his and their Names, so as to have all the Emoluments arising therefrom to themselves apart from you, in expectation of your not having it in your power to provide understanding men to make use of the Salmon Rivers within your limit on this Coast, that owing to such an unwarrantable Carriage in him, joined by a few others, I fear it will be out of my power to make things agreeable among the People, as the said John Peaton has already hired your Servants that were Salmon Catching at Alexis and Black Bear Rivers (though not for some time entitled to their discharge) and he has engaged them to go the Winter to your Settlements at Sandy Hill Cove in Porcupine Bay, to be employed in Salmon catching the Summer ensuing, saying he has nothing to fear, as their Voyage will be made and he will get a small vessel out of England to protect him, before you can dispossess them next Season, in consequence of which I have been obliged to come under terms of letting many of your old Servants to be half concerned with you the approaching Season, otherwise you must have the trouble of providing others, and it would be some time before they can be acquainted on this Coast, all which I think proper to lay before you, and hope you will put it in my power to prevent this evil arising to your Business under my direction, as I think it a great hardship that these People who were your Servants this Season should have an Opportunity of dispossessing you the next. I may as well claim a right to carry on your Trade myself—likewise it is a great stop to Industry to have those kind of Masters or Planters residing at Newfoundland to mix at this Place among Ship Fisheries as they are prone to indulge a great means of encouraging Sloth; And, further this Peaton has taken all the Servants Wages connected with you and hired by him into his own hands the better to be enabled to oppose you in your residence, so that if he does not succeed the poor deluded fellows will be great sufferers, as your presence here will be a great ease to me, and likewise to be very serviceable to yourself I shall, I shall Sir humbly wish for your appearance and am

Your faithful Servant,

(Signed) TIMOTHY SHEA.

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From the foregoing information your Excellency can readily judge what a prejudice such proceedings in those People I encouraged to be industrious in my Business (by giving them as a consideration an extraordinary part of

the profits on their labour) must be to me if not put a stop to ; and as I ever understood from my first settling on that Coast, that no Person had a right of Possession or residence there but such as were protected annually by Ships fitted out from Great Britain, as also that in Consequence of my having been one of the first settlers on the North part of said Coast, which I explored at a very great expence my said Possessions were confirmed to me. I beg leave to trouble your Excellency to grant me such redress as may appear to you equitable, and as those kind of People were forbidden in Sir Hugh Pallisser time to reside on the Coast of Labrador, except employ'd under the protection of a British Ship Fishery, I further pray you to grant me and order to cause 10 them to evacuate my Settlements, except they continue employed under the protection of a British Ship, and not as Planters or Residents, according to the Custom of this country which is pursuant to the late regulations made for the Coast of Labrador. The Peoples names that have taken upon themselves to reside as Planters on my Settlements are John Peaton, John Wrixson, John Nooks and William Phippard, Salmoners, with sundry other of my Servants hired by them, and John Dean, William Measey and George Marsh, Sealers. These People were hired by me and carried from thence as understanding Men in the former Business, and in consideration of their being industrious I allowed them a Share or part of the Profit of their Labours, and 20 as is too much the case with People of their uneducated principles I have experienced the treatment before mentioned from them.

I am at a loss how to apologize for giving your Excellency the Trouble of the foregoing information only flattering myself that your wonted readiness to encourage the industrious will excuse the liberty now taken by

Your Excellency's most obliged and very humble servant,

(Signed) JEREMIAH COGHLAN.

To His Excellency John Montagu, Esq.,
Governor, &c. &c.

No. 393.

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GOVERNOR MONTAGU TO JEREMIAH COGHLAN.

RECORD BOOK, ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND. Volume 7, page 58.

St. John's,
4th September, 1777.

SIR,

[4 Sept.,
1777.]

In answer to your several Letters dated the 20th, 29th & 30 Ultimo, I am to acquaint you that I have been obliged to appoint Lieut. Schomberg Commanding the Labrador Schooner to be my Surrogate on that part of the Coast of this Island, laying between St. John's and Fogo, not being able to spare a Man of War, as has been customary.

as those who possessed the Salt positively denying it, the Mr. Coghlan at the same time had not only taken some of it now in his possession, but had also been credibly informed of their having Cured their Fish with it this Year.

Mr. Coghlan likewise complained to me of the irregularity of collecting the Greenwich Hospital Money at the same place. From these Complaints, I thought it a Duty incumbent on me to visit Twilingate, provided it would not interfere with the Surrogatory Business, and accordingly sailed for that Port, with Mr. Coghlan on board, the 20th in order to settle the Disputes, about an Hour after I left Fogo, it came on a very hard gale to the E.N.E., and so exceeding thick, as to render it unsafe, running in for the Islands, I with the advice of Mr. Coghlan put back, and the Wind continuing in the same Quarter, with as thick Weather, for three or four days, I thought it most Advisable to dispatch a Man who was recommended by Mr. Coghlan, in order to make some enquiry about the Salt, and to collect the Hospital Money. 10

The Man returned on the 25th but brought no Satisfactory Accounts from the People who had taken on board the said Salt, only gave him some Nocks, which plainly indicate their having had it, and in a much greater quantity than was mentioned in your Excellency's Order to Mr. Coghlan, as they denied making Salt to having received any more Salt than therein mentioned. 20

I have received all the Hospital Money from this Island & Twilingate except from Mr. Slade, who I wrote to, desiring he would settle, but received rather an evasive Answer. I shall therefore leave Fogo the first Wind, which I had proposed dong on the 25th, but the Wind continuing to the S.E. ward prevented me.

I am, Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,

I. SCHOMBERG.

To His Excellency,
Governor Montagu.

No. 395. 30

LIEUT. SCHOMBERG'S ORDER.

RECORD BOOK, ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND. Volume 7, page 73.

By Isaac Schomberg, Esq., Surrogate to His Excellency John Montagu, Esq.,
Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Island of Newfoundland Coast of Labrador, &c., &c.

[19 Sept.,
1777.] WHEREAS it has been represented to me by Charles Hellinss and his Crew who were employ'd by Mr. Jeremiah Coghlan on the N.E. Side of the Coast of Labrador as Furrers and Salmon Catchers on Shares, that the said Charles Hellinss and Crew having met with bad success at a part of the said Coast, called Partridge Bay where they were employ'd, Furring and Salmon 40

Catching the last Season, did on the 4th Day of August last, proceed to the Northward of the Mealy Mountains, in search of some other Place on the said Coast of Labrador, more likely to encourage their Industry to the Advantage of their Employers, and having after much Fatigue and trouble, discovered a Bay about Twenty Leagues to the Northward of the aforesaid Mealey Mountains fitting for the taking of Furrs the Winter, and Cod Fish and Salmon the Summer, which Bay or River that runs therein, no English Subject did ever discover or occupy, and that he the said Charles Hellinss and Crew or some other Crew of Hands belonging to the said Jeremiah Coghlan at whose
 10 Expence the said Discovery has been made, are to be employed at the aforesaid River the approaching Season for the purpose of taking Furrs, Salmon and Fish.

By the Power and Authority to me given by His Excellency Governor Montagu bearing Date at St. John's the 4th day of September, 1777.

I do hereby Order and Direct that no Person or Persons employed by John Payton, John Wrixon, or in their Names, or in the Name of any other Person or Persons whatever, do at any time after the Date of these presents disturb, molest, or pretend to hinder any Person or Persons whatsoever to or employ'd by the said Jeremiah Coghlan, the first Discoverer of the said
 20 Bay or River, from making of the said Premises, for his use only, and I forbid all Servants and others known by the Name of Planters, who may pretend to reside on the Coast of Labrador without the protection of a British Ship annually cleared out of some Port in Great Britain to be known as his or their Property, as the Law directs, not to occupy or make use of any Bay, Harbour, Creek or River for his or their use to the prejudice of the first Establisher; And should such Servants or Planters persist in residing on the said Coast, they are ordered herewith to evacuate the same otherwise they will be compelled.

And Whereas it appears to me that the said Jeremiah Coghlan, not only
 30 conforms to the Laws and Regulations in every particular, heretofore made regarding the said Coast of Labrador for the benefit and increase of His Majesty's Marine, but also has been at great expence in erecting Stages, Buildings and other Fisheries, for the purpose of carrying on the Sealing, Furring and Cod Fishery, and Salmon Fishery providing yearly two Ships from Great Britain to the said Coast, for the use of His Fisheries.

I do hereby also further Order and Direct that no Person or Persons whatsoever of His Majesty's British Subjects, shall on any pretence, as Settlers on the said Coast of Labrador take possession of, or settle at any Salmon River, Sealing Posts, Furring Paths, or Fishing Harbour, that has been first
 40 Discovered, occupied and established by the said Jeremiah Coghlan, or the people employ'd by him, on the said Coast of Labrador, he at all times taking care to conform to the Laws regarding his said residence.

Given under my hand on board His Majesty's Schooner Labrador, in Fogo Harbour, this 19th day of September, 1777.

I. SCHOMBERG,

Surrogate to His Excellency the Governor.