

28 men; Ambrose, Colbourne master, 28 men (vessel lost by 18 April); and Samuel, Taylor, master, 30 men.

In 1843, there is further evidence of George Forward becoming increasingly involved with community affairs. The Sentinel of 11 July printed a list of the newly appointed Board of Road Commissioners for Carbonear, a district which stretched from the Main Road on the South Side to Spout Cove. The seven members included George Forward, John Rorke and William Bemister, indicating that these three men must have been among the leading public-spirited citizens in the community. George continued to serve on this board until his death.

The seal hunt of 1844 saw only four Forward vessels, due to the loss of the Ambrose the preceding year. Those sent were: Jubilee, Colbourne master, 20 men; Samuel, Taylor master, 30 men; William the 4th., Forward master (probably Mark), 33 men; and Fortitude, Taylor master, 20 men. Shortly afterwards, however, the firm must have acquired a new vessel, through purchase or charter, for the Sentinel of 30 May notes the recent arrival of the Forward vessel Nancy, a brigantine, from Liverpool with a cargo of salt; she was commanded by a Captain Nelson. The results of the annual seal hunt were to be noted in the Sentinel of 9 July, which recorded the departure of the William the Fourth, Forward master, bound for Bristol with a cargo of oil and skins; certainly a fragrant voyage. By September, the firm was utilizing yet another new vessel--the brig Convivial, Hampton master; it had cleared with a cargo of 3500 quintals of Labrador fish, bound for market (no doubt in Europe). On the 16 September, a vessel named the Hector, Frazer master, had arrived from Halifax with provisions for the Forward firm; it is likely that this was a Nova Scotian vessel, either chartered for the occasion, or representing some Halifax business. Indeed, there is no further trace of the Nancy, the Convivial, or the Hector at this point.

In 1845, five Forward vessels went to the seal hunt: William IVth., A. Forward master (no doubt Ambrose), 38 men; Samuel, S. Taylor master, 38 men ;

Jubilee, Colbourne master, 20 men; Horta, J. Pelley master, 32 men; and Fortitude, G. Taylor master, 20 men. The Horta was apparently a new acquisition. Another ship, the Fisher, was also running for the firm during the summer of 1845, but it was no doubt a temporary charter. It arrived from Liverpool on 27 May carrying general cargo and left on 14 June, bound for Quebec with ballast; it was commanded by a Captain Young.

The following year, 1846, the firm outfitted and sent five vessels to the sealing grounds; at this point, their names and captains are not known. In 1847, those sent were: Briton, Henry Forward master, 41 men; William the Fourth, Ambrose Forward master, 39 men; Samuel, Samuel Taylor master, 38 men; Jubilee, James Colbourne master, 27 men; and the Fortitude, Henry Taylor master, 27 men. The Briton was probably another new vessel; at 152 tons, it was the largest in the Forward fleet. These annual listings of sealers would indicate that in each respective year, most, if not all, of the firm's ships were sent to the hunt, leaving only perhaps the smallest for local trade. The only large vessel which did not take part in the hunt for each consecutive year was the William the Fourth. From this information, it is probably safe to surmise that at any given point during this period, the Forward fleet was composed of, at the most, six or seven vessels.

At the present time, very little is known of George Forward's final ten years, or of the progress of his firm. He was, however, still active in the community. After 1849, his name is included in the annual Newfoundland Almanac as one of the Justices of the Peace for the Conception Bay district; this was an office and honour which he held until his death.

George Forward eventually died on 2 March 1857, at the age of 71. Under the heading, "It is appointed unto All once to die", the Conception Bay Man carried the following announcement on 4 March: "Suddenly on Monday last at his residence in Carbonear Mr. George Forward, for many years a highly respected merchant of that place". And again on 11 March: "On the 2 inst. George Forward, aged 71 years he has left a widow, and a large circle of relations and friends to lament their irreparable loss".

He was buried in the Methodist cemetery at Carbonear on 5 March.

His will had been drawn up nine years previously, prior to a trip to England (see Appendix E). It was apparently made on the spur of the moment, and unfortunately gives few clues as to the extent of his estate. The will was witnessed by William Horwood and C. Forward--the latter may very well have been George's elder brother, still alive; it was signed on 10 July 1848.

The three sons, "Henry, Mark and Ambrose", each were to inherit one third of his vessels, property, houses and stores, shop goods, cattle, furniture and personal effects. Since no definite legacies were provided for, one can only imagine the confusion which must have accompanied the division of the estate; George must have definitely trusted the integrity of his sons, although there is some evidence that each was assigned a certain share and role in the estate, perhaps through verbal agreement. There were only two provisions stated in the will. The three "aged aunts" in Dorset, Mary Ann, Charlotte and Susanna, were still unmarried as of 1848; the sons were to forward them money whenever it was convenient to do so. His wife Susanna was to be maintained by her sons in her widowhood, and was to continue in the family residence with Ambrose; this would indicate that as of 1848, he was still alive and at home--whether married or not. Whatever the arrangement, Susanna survived her husband by a mere 14 months; she died on 10 May 1858, and was buried beside him a few days later.

No inventory of George's estate has yet been uncovered, so that its actual content or value must merely be guessed at. The indications are that he was a businessman of wealth and success; he was certainly shrewd and practical--factors which no doubt contributed to his progress--but he also maintained a fine sense of family ties and community interest. Tradition states that his house at Burnt Head was known as "The Mansion", and that this section of the estate went to Captain Mark. Another part of the Burnt Head property was referred to as the "Forward Plain", and

this was supposedly left to Henry, who is said to have made little use of it. The shop, stone store and dock premises fell to Ambrose, as the son chosen to continue the firm; the business premises were eventually sold to one William Penny, although it is not known at this point what course of events led to the demise of the Forward firm.

Tradition also states that George and Susanna enjoyed a high style of life in Carbonear. "The Mansion" was the scene of many huge parties, and the family was known for their fine carriages and horses. In an age when banks were non-existent in the smaller communities, George Forward is reputed to have stored his money in barrels at the foot of his bed. Nor was he without his failings; he was known to be periodically fond of his liquor, and to circumvent this weakness, his wife is said to have, on several occasions, thrown the household supply of alcohol to the backyard pigs!

The evidence presently available would indicate that this wealth and mercantile prominence did not continue into the next generation. Certainly George's sons were solid and moderately well-to-do middle class citizens in Carbonear, but with the father's death, the firm appears to have gone into a decline and eventually crumbled. Where George Forward had owned vessels, his sons merely sailed them, and for firms other than their own, by the 1800's. No doubt the fate of the firm depended on Ambrose, the youngest son. Mark and Henry appear to have been only interested in seafaring; by tradition, Ambrose preferred sailing to managing the business, but he was said to have been his father's choice as a successor, and there is evidence that he did take over the firm. How and when he died are still unknown; the firm may have collapsed with his passing.

Mark William, born 6 June 1816, was apparently George's eldest son. Tradition states that he was educated in Carbonear, but that at the age of

There is also, of course, the definite possibility that there were two Ambrose Forwards in Carbonear at approximately the same time, with overlapping careers. As noted earlier, Charles Forward, George's elder brother, may well have married and left children in the community. With the family's fondness for shared Christian names, Charles would no doubt have called one of his children Ambrose, in honour of his father in Dorset. With this in mind, it is entirely possible that while George's Ambrose was sailing for his father's firm, there was another Ambrose, perhaps slightly older, who had married and was establishing a family (e.g., the birth announcement of 1845). The question of identity may never be satisfactorily resolved at this point in time.

With this in mind, Ambrose may have, as is claimed, drowned at an early age. Mark and Henry Frederick may then have attempted half-heartedly to run the family firm, with Henry in control from the landward end--only to have the effort collapse sometime during the 1800's. It would then follow that the Ambrose Forward, merchant, was a member of another branch of the family and was, at approximately the same time, running his own small and separate firm in Carbonear.

So far, only passing mention has been made of George Forward's other brother--John, the youngest son of Ambrose and Susanna. Although there is, as yet, little trace of him, it is certain that John also emigrated from Sturminster Newton to Newfoundland, eventually establishing a branch of the family in the Twillingate area, in the north-central part of the colony.

Being the youngest of the three brothers (he was baptized 17 April 1793), he was no doubt the last to leave Dorset. The first trace of him in Newfoundland is in 1817, when on 23 December, a John Forward married Ann Pike in the Anglican church at Harbour Grace; both parties were from Carbonear. This would indicate that John had joined his two brothers in the colony, and was perhaps working in a junior position for their beginning business. He evidently did not remain with them for long, for on 3 Octo-

ber 1819, a son Hugh was baptized in the Anglican church at Harbour Grace; the father was listed as John Forward "of Twillingate".

There is also the possibility that John was, for a time, in Grand Bank. The Dorset Record Office presently holds material concerning the Settlement Examination of William Melmer of Bishop's Caundle, Dorset, 7 March 1840, aged 25, in which he noted:

When I was 15 or 16 years old [around 1830] I bargained with Mr. Bird of Sturminster Newton to go to Newfoundland in his employ for three years and a half....I went...and stopped the three years and a half. I then agreed and worked for John Forward at Grand Bank.

It is quite possible, however, that the John Forward in Grand Bank was the son of Ambrose and Frances Forward (see page 12). This child was born on 12 July 1790, and although there is yet no definite further trace of him in the community, he would be only three years younger than his second cousin, John the son of Ambrose and Susanna. If he did survive infancy, it is indeed conceivable that he was a planter or minor merchant by the 1830's, in a position to employ others. At this point of research, it would perhaps be safest to say that the Grand Bank branch of the Forward family was totally distinct from any connection to Charles, George and John; with this in mind, John Forward, the youngest brother, apparently settled in Twillingate sometime after 1815, remaining in the area for the rest of his life.

THE EARLY H.R.

As already noted on page 31, John reappears in 1843, when he was assisting his three nephews in their purchase of the Burnt Head premises in Carbon-ear. At that point, John was resident in Tizzard's Harbour. The owner of the property in question was Henry Knight of Moreton's Harbour; no doubt John, being a "neighbour" of the owner and an uncle of the purchasers, was a logical choice as witness and go-between for the real estate sale. The other witness was one John Colbourne, who had been born in Sturminster Newton in 1794, and who was a ship owner in Poole by the 1820's. By 1838,

he was established in Twillingate as a merchant, for in that year he registered a schooner called the Velocity; by 1841, the vessel had been transferred to a new Poole registry. From this evidence, it is probably safe to say that both John Forward and John Colbourne had grown up in Sturminster Newton together, and that they had later established a co-partnership business in Twillingate, closely allied to Colbourne's shipping interests in Poole. The ties with the Dorset town appear to have been strong, for the Carbonear Sentinel of 23 May 1844 listed one John Forward as a passenger in the Triumvirate, recently arrived from Poole. This was no doubt the John Forward of Twillingate and Tizzard's Harbour, returning from a business and pleasure trip to the West Country.

There is unfortunately no further trace of John Forward until 1804, when he was listed in the Newfoundland Almanac as a member of the Board of Road Commissioners for Tizzard's Harbour; the member for Moreton's Harbour was Henry Knight. No doubt both were leading citizens in their small communities.

Although John was not listed in McAlpine's Directory for 1870, he must still have been in the area, for he apparently did not die until 1888. The Harbour Grace Standard of 7 March in that year published the following obituary: "John Forward, Sr., aged 78 years, brother of the late George Forward Esq. merchant of Carbonear, deceased a native of Sturminster Newton, Dorset". Unfortunately, no location was noted for his death. There is also a problem concerning his age; having been born in 1793, as the Dorset records indicate, John would have been 95 in 1888--an unusual age to achieve, but perhaps not impossible.

As indicated by the obituary notice, there must have been a John Jr., a brother to the son Hugh already noted above. There is no further trace of either child, but by 1871, there was a George Forward in Tizzard's Harbour, listed in McAlpine's Directory as a fisherman; he was no doubt a son of either John Jr. or Hugh, and was probably named for his great uncle in Carbonear.

found, were indeed closely associated with--and probably closely related to--the Forwards of Sturminster Newton.

The most intriguing of these "unknown" Forwards is one James Forward, a Carbonear planter who first appears in the period 1814-1816, commanding the schooner Tyro, a coasting vessel of 40 tons and 4 men. By 15 November 1825, James was registering the Tyro under his own ownership; it had been built in Conception Bay in 1804, was 54 feet long and by this point had been re-classified at 49 tons. In 1827, it was enlarged by John Roe in Heart's Content to a size of 63 tons and 55 feet. By June 1830, James had sold the Tyro to Slade, Elson and Company, from whom it was purchased ten years later by George Forward (see Appendix E).

Meanwhile, on 4 May 1829, James had registered a new vessel, the Sally, which had been built the preceding year in Heart's Content, again by John Rowe. This schooner was 92½ tons and nearly 54 feet long; being large and new, she no doubt rendered the Tyro obsolete for James' purposes. Once again, the Sally was commanded by her owner, who was still listed in the shipping registers as a planter.

There is no trace of James Forward from 1829 until 1838 when he, too, along with a son, James Jr., signed the petition regarding the Anglican church in Carbonear. During these years, however, James Sr. was no doubt developing from a small planter to a minor merchant, for the Carbonear Sentinel of 19 March 1839 noted that he had supplied one vessel for that year's seal hunt. This was his own Sally, which took 28 men to the grounds; it was commanded by James Forward--likely James Jr. In 1840, the venture was repeated, except that the Sally carried 30 men that year. Against James Forward's one sealing vessel, by contrast, George Forward sent six, with a total complement of 152 men; nevertheless, the Sally brought back 3900 seals from the ice fields.

In March of 1843, both James Sr. and Jr. were listed--along with George For-

ward--as members of the special committee within the Mutual Insurance Society of Conception Bay; this would indicate that both father and son were still involved in vessel ownerships and mercantile interests. Although the Sally was not listed among the outgoing sealing ships for that year, the Sentinel of 25 April recorded that she had returned with 2400 pelts, Captain Forward commanding.

James Sr. apparently met with some business reversals prior to 1844, for when the annual sealing list was printed on 21 March, the Sally was included under John Rorke's firm. Again, the master was one Forward, likely James Jr. As was sometimes done, the Sally may have been merely provisioned by John Rorke, with James Forward still retaining ownership of the schooner. The original 1829 vessel registry for the ship, however, notes that the Sally was re-registered on 3 February 1844; unfortunately the records for this period are incomplete, and therefore there is no trace of what happened to this particular ship in that year. It is most likely, however, that she was sold to John Rorke in February, and that her master went with her. For the next few years at least, the vessel and her captain appear to have been in the employ of the Rorke firm.

There is little trace of James Sr. in later years. During the late 1850's and early 1860's, there may have been some attempt to revive the firm, but it does not appear to have been a success, nor does the firm seem to have achieved prominence at any time. The Newfoundland Almanac for 1859 lists James Sr. as a member of the Board of Road Commissioners for Carbonear, and includes him up to and including 1864. It is likely that he died sometime around that point, since the Newfoundland Directory for that year lists only one James Forward in the community--a seacaptain and ship owner living on Water Street West--probably James Jr.

James Sr. was definitely deceased by 1867, for The Standard and Conception Bay Advertiser of 16 January carried the following obituary:

At Carbonear, on the 3rd. instant, after a long illness, in the 78th. year of her age, Christina,

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relict of the late James Forward. The deceased was an old and respected inhabitant, and leaves a large circle of relatives and friends to mourn her loss.

This would put Christina's birthdate back to approximately 1789; whether she was born in England or Newfoundland is not known, nor has a marriage record yet been located. Her husband was no doubt a few years older, placing his birth at sometime around 1785. He was thus an exact contemporary of Charles, George and John Forward. It may very well have been that he was a relative who also emigrated from Sturminster Newton.

In addition, James must have come out to the colony at approximately the same time as the three sons of Ambrose and Susanna, for the first trace of him in Carbonear is in 1809. A daughter Rachel was baptized on 31 July at the Anglican church in Harbour Grace; this was no doubt their first child, since Christina would have been only 20 at the time. No further sign of this daughter has yet been found.

Their second child was James Jr., baptized 15 June 1814; he later married a woman named Julia and their family will be mentioned later. A second daughter, Betsey, was baptized 6 March 1817, and their final child, John, was baptized 6 December 1819; nothing further is known concerning these last two children.

James Jr., as already noted, first appears in 1838, when he added his signature to the petition of the Carbonear Anglicans. In 1839 and 1840, he took his father's Sally to the annual seal hunt. In 1843, he was on the committee of the Mutual Insurance Society of Conception Bay, and in 1844, he was serving on the committee of management for the Newfoundland Natives Society--along with Ambrose Forward. In that year he also appears to have followed the Sally when she passed to John Rorke's control, taking her to the March seal hunt with 34 men. The following year, he was again sailing the Sally for John Rorke, and in 1847 he was still in command of