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NOTES ON THE LAKE surname in Newfoundland

Another widespread West of England family found in Dorset Hampshire and Devonshire and all counties had their individuals connected with the Newfoundland trade during the 17 and 18th centuries. Many were tradesmen, seamen captains or merchants who never actually settled on the Island but one or two did.

My ancestry is almost certainly connected with the following:-

GEORGE LAKE

Origin in England not clear at present but either from the Bideford area in North Devon, Sturminster Newton area of Dorset or Ringwood area of Hampshire.

The first George actually settled in Newfoundland was settled circa 1740 in Paradise Sound, Placentia Bay. In 1744 he signed a petition asking for naval protection against French privateers who were threatening the fishery. His mercantile connections (he was a substantial planter) were with the Poole, Dorset firm of Linthorne who had premises at a little Placentia. He married (wife's name was Ann), and remained at Paradise at least until 1758 when he appears to have become insolvent. Some time after 1763 he moved to the newly growing English settlement at FORTUNE on the other side of the Burin Peninsula. Had at least two sons GEORGE and John who in their turn became planters. In the 1790s they were a partnership; but by 1800 had each established fishing rooms and trades of their own. Their trading connections were with Newman and Company at Little Bay, Messrs Clarke Waldron and Young (of Poole) at Harbor Breton, and Messrs Spurrier and Co (of Poole) at Coderin. Like the Latten family they used Joseph Bird of Sturminster Newton as a kind of English "Banker" and correspondent and thus may have had connections by birth with that part of Dorset. In 1809 George (2) may have become insolvent, but if so soon resumed his living as a prominent "Planter" of Fortune Bay. In 1811 he joined a committee to raise funds to build an Anglican church at FORTUNE; but was not as prominent, nor as controversial as his brother and nephew John, and John (junior). another? George was a Commissioner for Roads (such as they were) in the area from Fortune to Lamaline in the 1830's and 1840's.

JOHN LAKE

Son of George (1) above). first appears in the records as a partner with his brother George in 1791 but by 1800 was fishing on his own. In 1802 was appointed constable at FORTUNE Harbor and in 1803 to the post of Sheriff's Officer. These were part time posts which however denoted a certain prestige, and created ample opportunity for becoming a figure of some dislike since both as constable and as sheriff's officer John Lake had the job of keeping the Peace amongst his neighbors and, much worse, of enforcing court writs for such things as debt. He continued his fishery and by 1807 owned and commanded a small schooner the SALLY of 20 tons which was lost in 1810.

In 1811 he and his son John suffered the indignity of being charged with creating a riot at the wedding of a neighbour. His son seems to have been more aggressive than he but they were fined

L10, an enormous sum for those days, and he lost his appointment as an officer of the Peace. Despite this, even while the case was being heard John (Senior) was sitting on the Grand Jury for Fortune Bay. The riot was basically the result of a feud between neighbours heated up by too much liquor at the wedding - a pretty typical Newfoundland outport affair.

WILLIAM LAKE

Almost certainly related to the above, a shadowy figure who lived in Placentia Bay during the 1820's.

JAMES Lake

A Planter in Fortune Harbor in 1791 but who never appears in the Records thereafter

PATRICK LAKE

an inhabitant of Placentia Bay in 1811. Relationship (if any) with the others, unknown.

Another member of the Lake tribe whose Christian name is unknown but whose wife came from Sturminster Newton, lived at Hare Island on the West Coast of Newfoundland in the 1830s.

ARCHIBALD LAKE

No relation to any of the above, and probably a soldier in the garrison, lived at St Johns during the 1750s. was married and had at least two sons and two daughters.