

Newhook Master Shipbuilders
By N. C. CREWE
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(1) General

The Newhook family are the greatest family of ship builders in the history of Newfoundland.

In this monograph, are listed the eleven of them that I have established to have been "master shipbuilders," from either reliable traditions or written records, or both.

There was evidently a Committee of the House of Assembly in 1858 on local shipbuilding. In its issue of 25 January 1858, "The Patriot," a St. John's newspaper, reports the evidence given before the Committee by Hon. John Munn, merchant and shipowner of Harbour Grace, ending with this sentence: "..... No country can offer such an exhibition of genius and native talent, as our Kearneys, Stevensons, Newhooks, Curtises, Pittmans etc., have already produced in the science of shipbuilding."

(2) Introduction

When I was a small boy at Elliston, Trinity Bay, the grand old lady of the place was Mrs. Robert Tilly. Her husband, the first resident supplying merchant, had died as far back as 1872. I recall her speaking to me about three times; I had even then come to know that she used to say three things about herself. First, that she was born at New Harbour, Trinity Bay, to the name of Catherine Newhook; secondly, that her father and his father, were shipbuilders in Newfoundland; thirdly, that her paternal grandfather was a Frenchman.

Mrs. Tilly died in 1912 at the age of 88, and I attended her funeral. The officiating English-born curate said, in a short address, that her soul was now in Paradise. This doctrinal statement was seriously questioned by my foster-father and his fellow Salvationist, Bobby Hobbs. They were of opinion that clergyman ought to have said Heaven, not Paradise, which the latter place was unknown to them as a country eternal.

In 1928 I married her grand-daughter. Ever since then, I have been gathering data on the Newhook stock, for compiling the family trees of my wife and children. It is my opinion that I now have, on file or in my head, more information about the Newhooks, from their origin in this Province down to the present time, than is known to any other living person, and more than has been known to any other person in the last seventy years.

In the course of research, I have contacted several elderly Newhooks, but all of generations younger than Mrs. Tillys.

(3) Charles Newhook (the first), 1752-99

I call him Progenitor Charles Newhook (first), because he is the immigrant from whom all subsequent Newhooks in Newfoundland have sprung, and to distinguish him from those of them also named Charles. He was brought out from Europe to Newfoundland about 1777, by the mercantile firm of Benjamin Lester, to be its master shipbuilder at Trinity, Trinity Bay. Rev. George Lester-Garland, of England, has told me that Newhook is mentioned in the surviving Lester letterbooks of the eighteenth century. He was a young man when he came to settle at Trinity, and he must have brought his wife with him, as the Trinity church register has no entry of his marriage. His wife's maiden surname is unknown to-day. He was the grandfather of Mrs. Robert Tilly.

This Charles Newhook (first) was of French extraction, but whether he was a native-born Frenchman is now unknown. But I am inclined to think that he was a native Englishman of French near extraction. It would be very unusual for a firm to bring out to Newfoundland, either as a fishery youngster or as a tradesman, anyone except of English or Irish birth.

At Trinity, or elsewhere in that bay, there were born all his now traceable eight children, between 1778 and 1799, six sons and two daughters.

Of the sons, three became master shipbuilders in Trinity Bay, Charles (second), William and James. Of them, the elder two, Charles and William, were old enough at their father's death to have received some shipbuilding training from him.

Whether Charles Newhook (first) resided and worked in Trinity continuously, or wintered occasionally, for timber cutting and/or shipbuilding, at New Harbour or elsewhere in the bay, is not known to-day. The Trinity Anglican baptismal register, in which all his children's entries are found, records "Trinity Bay" as the birthplace of the elder two and Trinity for the others. But one must not assume from this "Trinity Bay" recording that these two children were not born at Trinity, seeing that the term "Trinity Bay" was often used by the registering officiants to include both Trinity and other places in the extensive parish. I myself assume that all eight children were born in Trinity, and that Charles Newhook (first) resided and worked only at that place.

Charles Newhook (first) died at Trinity relatively young. The epitaph on his headstone, in St. Paul's churchyard there, reads as follows: "In memory of Charles Newhook, who departed this life the 18th November 1799, aged 47 years. Also of his daughter, Sarah Newhook, who departed this life the 7th of November 1798, aged 2 years and 9 months."

About the year 1800, the Lester firm was succeeded in name by the Garland firm, on the same premises, at Trinity, a Garland having married a daughter of Benjamin Lester, the founder. The premises are owned to-day by the Ryan family.

No names, or other particulars, survive, either in traditions or in records, available to me, of the vessels that Charles Newhook (first) must have master-built or repaired at Trinity or elsewhere during his more than twenty years of work.

(4) Charles Newhook (second), 1778-1839

Born at "Trinity Bay," assumedly Trinity, in 1778, eldest child of Charles Newhook (first).

This man probably succeeded his father as master shipbuilder at Trinity for the Garland firm, either immediately after the father's 1799 death or after a lapse of years. He married his first wife, nee Catherine Newell, of Trinity, at that place in 1804.

About 1806, he moved to New Harbour, where he resided, as master shipbuilder for the Garland firm and leading inhabitant, until about 1832, when (with his second wife) he moved back to Trinity, to be again Garland's master shipbuilder there.

He had four children by his first marriage, one being a son named Charles Newell Newhook, born at New Harbour in 1806.

Pages 155-6 of "The Methodist Magazine," London, for February 1819, carry a long extract from the diary of Rev. William Ellis, then Methodist minister at Trinity, describing his missionary visitation of places in the bay in 1817. Mr Ellis records that, on arrival of Mr. Garland's boat at New Harbour, in which he had taken passage from Trinity, "..... we were met in the harbour by Mr. Newhook, in his pleasure boat, and conducted to his house, where we were hospitably entertained. In 1815 the inhabitants built a neat little church"

At that time, Charles Newhook (second) was a widower. His large, plastered house stood near the middle of the south shoreline of New Harbour, opposite the present house of Mr. Robert Walter Ellis Newhook, his great-grandson.

The church stood for many years, predecessor of the present Anglican church. Its notice board is preserved in the Anglican Cathedral's museum, St. John's. The end portion of the board that carried the name of "Charles Newhook, Architect" is broken off and lost. Years ago, I saw a photograph of the board, ending with these three signature words, which indicate that Charles Newhook (second) was the church's designer and, no doubt, master carpenter.

In Accession no. 253, at the Newfoundland Archives, there is a manuscript "List of all ships surveyed in the Port of Trinity, between 4 February 1835 and 17 December 1841, by Robert Bayly, Surbeyor of Navigation." There are listed five vessels, built or re-built at Trinity, with the name C. Newhook given as the re-builder of one, the cutter Bee, of 40 tons, and that of C. Newhook, Senior, listed as the builder of three new brigs and a schooner, named George Robinson, Garland, Victoria and Dart, all owned by the Garland firm and of the average size of 146 tons.

The foregoing C. Newhook, and C. Newhook, Senior, are obviously Charles Newhook (second).

In some St. John's newspaper of 8 November 1907, probably "The Evening Herald," there is a lengthy article, evidently composed in 1893 when the narrator, Captain Andrews, was eighty-seven, and now reprinted, entitled "Biography of Capt. Henry Andrews, of Port de Grave." He was a noted sealing master, and lived for some years in Trinity about 1835. Paragraph 5 reads: "The next year, 1830, I went to the ice in a brig called the Beaver, built at New Harbour by John Newhook, 150 tons burthen"

Now, there was no John Newhook as a master shipbuilder in or before the year 1830, and the above name is a mistake, in Andrews' memory, for Charles Newhook (second) or William Newhook (Trinity).

Charles Newhook (second) was in St. John's in the spring of 1839, when he fell from a vessel's mast and was killed. "The Times," a city newspaper, in its issue of 15 May 1839, has the following newsitem:-

"Died. At this place Monday last, of concussion of the brain, occasioned by an accidental fall whilst engaged in the duties of his profession, Mr. Charles Newhook, aged 65 years, for upwards of 30 years master shipbuilder in Trinity and neighborhood for Messrs John Bingley Garland & Co. Mr Newhook was a most skilful, active and perservering man, and his death is sincerly regretted by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance."

The issue of 14 May 1839, of "The Royal Gazette," reports the death more fully, thus:-

"In the afternoon of yesterday the Coroner was called in to hold an inquest on the body of Mr. Charles Newhook, Sr., of Trinity, who was accidentally killed by falling from the mast of a wrecked vessel at the South side of this harbour; a verdict to this effect was returned by the Jury. The deceased Mr. Newhook was well known and much respected both in this community and in Trinity Bay."

He was actually in his sixty-first year, and was buried in the Anglican cemetery at Trinity.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that Charles Newhook (second) master-built or repaired.

(5) Charles Newell Newhook (third), 1806-71

Born at New Harbour in 1806, eldest son of Charles Newhook (second). He must have been educated at Trinity or Harbour Grace, or some other place with a better school than would have been found at New Harbour. He wrote a fine hand, and was for many years, down to his death, the Justice of the Peace, and the leading inhabitant, at New Harbour. I feel he was the best educated of all the Newhook stock in Newfoundland, until the emergence of his grand-nephew, the late Doctor William H. Newhook, M. D.,

who died at Whitbourne about 1963.

About 1830 Miss Sarah Lander, daughter of the deceased sea-captain, Thomas Wise Lander, came out from Poole, England, to visit her re-married mother, then Mrs. William Davis Cross, at Trinity. A fortune-teller had told the young lady that the first man she would meet in Trinity would marry her. Sure enough, Charles Newell Newhook (third) was the first to help her off the vessel in Trinity, and in 1831 they were married there, where their first child was born next year.

Then he moved from Trinity to New Harbour, where he succeeded his father as master shipbuilder, presumably for the Garland firm or its successor in business, and his father moved back to Trinity.

In New Harbour, Charles Newell Newhook (third) took over the plastered house, and some of his fifteen children were born in it. But about 1845 he purchased, from its then owner, the large house that the Garland firm had built for their agents' residence, together with the extensive land and premises, on what is now called Newhook's Point. This house was occupied in our day by his son, Postmaster John Newhook, whom I first met there one Sunday in 1928; it was taken down by its last owner, John's daughter, about 1958.

Charles Newell Newhook (third) was both a master shipbuilder and a merchant, or merchant's agent, during his life at New Harbour. Philip Tocque refers to him, on page 138 of his book "Newfoundland as it was and as it is in 1877" as "merchant and shipbuilder." His grandson, Mr. Robert F. Newhook, of 29 Amherst Heights, St. John's, tells me that he had some connection at New Harbour with the St. John's firm of Charles Fox Bennett & Co.

Archdeacon Edward Wix, in his book "Six Months of a Newfoundland Missionary's Journal," relates on page 18, first edition, that he walked from Spaniard's Bay across to Trinity Bay one day in February 1835. He goes on to say, "..... by half-past seven p.m., I reached the house of the Mr. Charles Nieuhook, junior, of New Harbour, a late worthy parishioner of the Reverend William Bullock at St. Paul's Church, Trinity, whose father is of French Huguenot extraction." This Charles Nieuhook, junior, was Charles Newell Newhook (third), and his father, then living at Trinity, was Charles Newhook (second).

On page 82 of volume one of his book "Excursions in and about Newfoundland," John B. Jukes relates that the small ketch in which he was journeying anchored in New Harbour on 17 July 1839, and that next day "..... Mr. Nieuhook of New Harbour treated us very kindly, and piloted us out in the morning" This was Charles Newell Newhook (third).

A letter, written from New Harbour and signed A Rambler, in "The Patriot," a St. John's newspaper, on 8 October 1853, speaks of Charles Newell Newhook (third) thus: "..... It is but justice to say of Mr. Newhook that he is a double honour and a double credit to this little settlement, a man justly respected and esteemed by all who know him. Mr. Newhook is the father of twelve children, and I question whether a family of more exemplary moral training is to be found within the precincts of our country"

In an obituary of John Newhook (Postmaster at his native New Harbour and last surviving son of Charles Newell Newhook), in the St. John's "Evening Telegram" of 12 December 1934, H. F. Shortis writes in part as follows: "Charles Newhook built the brig Charles for C. F. Bennett & Co., St. John's. She left St. John's at 4 o'clock one Friday evening in 1834 and on Sunday week Mrs. C. F. Bennett attended morning Divine Service in Bristol Cathedral. There are scores of other vessels built by the Newhooks that were noted for their great sailing qualities." Mrs. Bennett was obviously a passenger on the short crossing.

A page-long column in an old St. John's newspaper, entitled "Memorable springs and other information, Seal Fishery," has this to say concerning the year 1833: "Celebrated for the loss of the schooner Union, Capt. Jno. Delaney, with a picked crew of 28 men from Trinity; built by Charles Newhook of New Harbour for Jno. B. Garland, merchant; capsized while under full sail. April 23rd, the schooners Active and Avon took some of her seals and towed her for 2 days, but had to let her go."

The foregoing builder of the Charles and the Union was, I assume, Charles Newell Newhook (third), although he might have been Charles Newhook (second).

Lawrence O'Brien, merchant of St. John's, advertised in "The Public Ledger" of 8 December 1840 as follows: "On sale a new brig (not yet registered) of about 150 Tons Burthen, built at Trinity Bay, of the very best materials, by that established Ship-builder, Mr. Newhook, and under inspection of the owner; having extra BREAST HOOKS and FASTENINGS, BEAMS, &c, and is of a superior description, being intended for the Seal Fishery and the general trade of the country; was launched in June last, and now laying at the wharf of the Subscriber (advertiser)."

The foregoing builder of this new brig was, I assume, Charles Newell Newhook (third), although he might have been either of his two uncles, William Newhook (Trinity) and James Newhook (Norman's Cove), for whom see below.

Charles Newell Newhook (third) died at New Harbour in 1871, and his body was taken across the bay to Trinity for interment in the family vault in the Anglican cemetery.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that Charles Newell Newhook (third) master-built or repaired.

(6) Charles Newhook (fourth), 1834-1915

Born at New Harbour in 1834, second son of Charles Newell Newhook (third), died there in 1915. He learnt the shipbuilding trade at his native place, largely from his father's half-brother, Robert Penny Newhook (see below).

Charles Newhook (fourth) was the latest of the full-time Newhook master shipbuilders in Newfoundland. He practised in the Newhook building dock at Cat Cove, New Harbour.

His son, Mr Robert Frederick Newhook (78), of 29 Amherst Heights, St. John's, tells me that when he was a boy his father, year after year, would have from one to three vessels in his charge for repairs. He recalled the names of five of them, belonging to the Rorke mercantile firm of Carbonear, namely, Jessie, Margaret, Orion, L. and S. and Sophia. He has a certificate, written and signed by his father, to the effect that the latter had rebuilt and enlarged the schooner Flying Arrow in 1884, for George C. Crosby of Brigus. Charles Newhook (fourth) also built at New Harbour the schooner Shamrock for the Rorke firm; she was burnt at Emily Harbour, Labrador, while loading fish. Another schooner he rebuilt was the Czar, later lost on the Funks.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that Charles Newhook (fourth) master-built or repaired.

(7) John Newhook (Postmaster), 1852-1934

Born at New Harbour in 1852, a younger son of Charles Newell Newhook (third), died there in 1934. He inherited the old dwelling house and extensive premises on Newhook's Point.

While he was a merchant most of his life, and also succeeded his oldest brother as Postmaster, he told me that he master-built a schooner on Newhook's Point, which was recently confirmed to me by his son-in-law, Mr. Reginald Woodman.

(8) Second Marriage, 1820

In 1820 Charles Newhook (second) married, at Carbonear, his second wife, Miss Martha Penny of that place (Carbonear Methodist register). Evidently the Anglican groom must have shared a doubt of that period of the legal competence of a Methodist minister to perform marriages, as the couple were re-married next year by the Anglican rite (Trinity Anglican register).

Two of the three sons of this marriage, Robert Penny Newhook and Jonas N. Newhook, became prominent master shipbuilders. They were old enough at the time of their father's fatal accidental death in 1839 to have received some training under him.

(9) Robert Penny Newhook, 1821

Born at New Harbour in 1821, eldest child of the second marriage of Charles Newhook (second). He was twice married, his second wife being Elizabeth Thorne of New Harbour, and there were children by both marriages.

During his adult life he is known to have lived in New Harbour, Trinity, Carbonar, New Perlican, Harbour Grace and, perhaps, Bay Roberts. Harbour Grace is the place of his lengthiest abode; he was established there in 1864, and it was very likely his permanent home thereafter. He also worked at shipbuilding in Connecticut, U. S. A., and in Retchibucto, New Brunswick. His grandson, Mr. John Peddle of Harbour Grace, says that he used to travel around working his trade, and that he spent at least one year in White Bay.

In his 1934 obituary of Postmaster John Newhook quoted in section (5) above, H. F. Shortis states that Trinity Bay had been famous for shipbuilding for over 200 years (an exaggeration in period, I feel), and that none of the places in that bay ever came up to New Harbour when extra good foreign-going vessels were required. He mentions the barque Queen, as beating all competitors on foreign voyages.

I have a framed painting of this barque, obviously based on some older picture of her. There is a printed card inside the glass, reading as follows: "Barque Queen, 240 Tons. Built at New Harbour, Trinity Bay, 1856, Robert Newhook, Master Builder." She was built for the Harbour Grace firm of Punton and Munn. Shortis also says the the Queen is mentioned in an old record as having made two trips from Harbour Grace to Brazil in twenty days (each trip). He further says that the Queen's first voyage was to Liverpool, England, and that there were several passengers, including Postmaster John's brother (who, I find, was Thomas Lander Newhook).

An anonymous article entitled "The Old Ships," in the St. John's "Daily News" of 31 January 1959, states that the Queen made a trip in 1858 from Liverpool, England, to Harbour Grace in ten days.

Robert Penny Newhook built at Harbour Grace the brig Maggie. "The Newfoundlander," a St. John's newspaper, in its issue of 21 January 1867, reprints the following newsitem from the Harbour Grace "Standard:-"

"The launch of a new and very handsomely modelled brig took place yesterday from the building yard of W. J. S. Donnelly, Esq amid the cheers of the assembled multitude and the music of the band of the Benevolent Society she was named the Maggie by the lady of the owner Mr. Donnelly. The Maggie is a beautifully modelled and substantially built brig, coppered and copper fastened, and is intended for the foreign trade. Her builder, Mr. Robert Newhook, is favourably known to the trade, as a builder of some of the finest and fastest vessels sailing from the Island, and we feel certain that this ship is equal if not superior to any hitherto built by him" The builder's working model of the Maggie is now on display in the Newfoundland Museum. She was lost with all hands in the Mediterranean in 1868.

Rev. Arthur Pittman, a native of New Perlican, Trinity Bay, wrote an article on that place in "The Newfoundland Quarterly" of December 1935 when about 75 years old; it has this sentence: "I can remember the firm of Bemister & Co. having two brigantines docked and repaired by Robert Newhook at New Perlican."

W. A. Munn's article in "The Newfoundland Quarterly" of Autumn 1937 erroneously gives Charles Newhook as the Queen's builder, page 24.

In a list of vessels built in Newfoundland, appended to the Journal of the House of Assembly (or of the Legislative Council) about 1865, there is named a schooner built at Bay Roberts with Robert P. Newhook as the builder.

Besides the Queen and the Maggie, Mr. Peddle recollects that his grandfather built a vessel at Carbonear, presumably for the Rorke firm there. He died suddenly about 1885 while walking to Harbour Grace from Bay Roberts, where he was building or repairing a vessel. He is buried in Harbour Grace.

In my Slade monograph, published in the St. John's "Evening Telegram" in 1963 (August 29th, page 20), there is listed a Servant's Agreement, made at Trinity in 1841, whereby Robert P(enny) Newhook agrees to serve the Slade firm as dockman, i.e. shipwright; he was then about twenty years old.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that Robert Penny Newhook master-built or repaired.

(10) Jonas N. Newhook, 1823-1901

Born at New Harbour in 1823, second child of the second marriage of Charles Newhook (second). He married Rachel Knight of St. John's. Early in adult life, he settled in Jackson's Cove, Green Bay, where he was a master shipbuilder, and where he died in 1901 and is buried. His grandson, Mr. Chesley Ralph Newhook of that place only recalls the name of one of the vessels he built, the Fleetwing.

In his salty autobiography "When Ships were Ships," sea-captain William Morris Barnes, born in St. John's in 1850, tells on page 9 of the building of this vessel for his family firm of supplying merchants and shipowners, and of her first foreign voyage. He writes, "..... this beautiful bark, the Fleetwing she was the fastest thing ever sailed salt water. She was built down in a place called Green Bay, built by a man called Newhook; he was a smart carpenter" Of her first voyage, Barnes writes, "She started out for Brazil and she made a very quick run down, thirty-two days to Pernambuco from St. John's the captain said that he saw nothing on the whole trip that he didn't come up with and pass, and nothing ever came up and passed him."

In his article "Storms and Ships," page 270 of volume one of Smallwood's "Book of Newfoundland," captain John P. Horwood writes, "The barque Fleetwing, 249 tons, was built at Green Bay by Jonas Newhook and launched in 1856 she is said to have made three different passages from Harbour Grace to Pernambuco in twenty-one days each passage. An average passage would be about thirty days."

Messrs J. B. Barnes & Co., Captain Barnes' family firm, advertised five vessels for sale by auction in "The Telegraph" of St. John's on 22 September 1858. The advertisement thus describes this vessel: "The well-known Barque Fleetwing, 248 tons, coppered high to the bends, of very superior build, all juniper frame, topsides, rails and covering boards of Baltimore white oak, keelson of white oak and Demerara greenheart, with greenheart treenails. This vessel will bear the strictest examination, and is, without exception, the fastest vessel in the Trade."

She came to be owned by Punton and Munn, and a newsitem in "The Star" of Harbour Grace, 10 December 1872, reads as follows: "Messrs. Punton and Munn's barque the Fleetwing arrived here yesterday from New York. This fine vessel, now under command of Captain James Pike, made the passage in six days and four hours; the quickest run we believe on record made by any sailing vessel from thence to this port. Captain Pike has of late made some very fast voyages"

In the 1934 obituary quoted in section (5) above, Shortis states that the Newhooks also built the Tasso for the firm Stabb, Row and Holmwood, St. John's, the great rival of Kearney's barque Rothesay (meaning that Michael Kearney was the master-builder of that vessel).

In his book "Sea Stories from Newfoundland," Michael F. Harrington devotes most of a chapter to a neck-and-neck race between the Rothesay and the Tasso from Demerara, British Guiana, to Cape Spear, Newfoundland. Both barques left Demerara the same day. On the fourteenth day out, August 27th, the Tasso sighted Cape Race and soon afterwards saw another ship nearby, which proved to be the Rothesay and which won the race to Cape Spear by a very few minutes. The author states that the Tasso was then about three years old, being "the crowning achievement of the lifework of Jonas Newhook, of New Harbour." This is, of course, Jonas N. Newhook, and he evidently built the Tasso in his native place

before moving north to Jackson's Cove.

Captain Barnes also writes that there was only one bark that "ever did anything with the Fleetwing," and that was the Tasso. He goes on to say that the captain of the Tasso said that the Fleetwing was the only thing that could ever beat the Tasso.

To sum up, the credit for producing these two masterpieces of shipbuilding art, the Fleetwing and the Tasso, belongs to Jonas N. Newhook of Jackson's Cove.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that Jonas N. Newhook master-built or repaired.

(11) William Newhook (Trinity), 1782

Born at "Trinity Bay," assumedly Trinity, in 1782, second child of Charles Newhook (first). He married Mary McGrath of Trinity in 1808. For distinction, I affix the word Trinity to his name, as he was the only son of Charles Newhook (first) to spend almost his entire adult life in that place. His first child was born at New Harbour in 1809, where he therefore must have lived for a short time.

I have a Servant's Agreement, made at Trinity in 1819, whereby William Newhook (Trinity) agrees to serve Robert Slade, merchant there, for one year in the capacity of master shipwright, for the wages of fifty pounds for the whole period, plus an agreed list of provisions each month.

In Bayly's "list of Ships surveyed," quoted in section (4) above, there is listed the brig Black Prince, 132 tons, built in Trinity in 1841 with the name of Wm. Newhook as builder.

In Accession no. 253, at the Newfoundland Archives, there is a manuscript "List of Mr. Robert Slade's Servants at Trinity, Fall 1811." In it, William Newhook is listed as master shipwright from October 1811 to May 1812, at the wages of 110 shillings per month.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that William Newhook (Trinity) master-built or repaired.

(12) William Newhook (Catalina), 1823-1902

Born at Trinity in 1823, son of William Newhook (Trinity). Died in St. John's in 1902. I affix Catalina to his name, as that is the place where he was a master shipbuilder. A grandson is Mr. William T. Newhook, of Churchill Square Apartments, St. John's.

He married Mary Ann Jeans of Catalina in 1850, and lived most of the next twenty years of his life there, where six of his nine children were born. He was both a shipbuilder and a house carpenter, and he helped build an Anglican church at Catalina.

He master-built at Catalina the banking schooners Cactus and Hyderangea for Benjamin Snelgrove, supplying merchant; I myself have seen both vessels.

He moved to St. John's to live about 1890, accompanied by his brother, Charles Newhook (bachelor). He brought with him some old family letters, written in French, which confirms the French extraction of the Newhook family. The letters were lost in the Great Fire of 1892.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that William Newhook (Catalina) master-built or repaired.

(13) Charles Newhook (bachelor), 1817-95

Born at Trinity in 1817, son of William Newhook (Trinity). Died in 1895 at St. John's, where he is buried. He never married.

In Hutchinson's 1864 Directory, he is listed as a shipbuilder at Trinity.

Messrs. Archibald, and Gilbert G., Christian, of St. John's, men in their eighties, recall him as an old, small, bearded man at Trinity when they were boys there. They know he built a schooner called Lizzie, for their grandfather, George Christian. They say the last vessel he built at Trinity was the Hiawatha, which I myself have seen.

Of his skill, Mr. Archibald Christian relates two anecdotes. First, he shaped a new stem for a vessel under repairs; when brought to be fitted in place, not a shaving had to be pared off it. Secondly, when a shipwright who had built a vessel in Prince Edward Island got nervous about the launching of her, Charles Newhook was brought there from Trinity and did the job.

Mr. Gilbert G. Christian, when about seven, was launched in the new schooner Alberta, which Charles Newhook master-built in Slade's Cove, Trinity, for the local firm of Robert S. Bremmer.

In "The Enterprise," a Trinity newspaper, of 4 December 1909, Rev. Walter R. Smith, who spent a number of years of his youth at Trinity, writes as follows: "I saw the new Dart launched in February 1859. She was a handsome craft, and designed and built by that A1 shipbuilder, Mr. Charles Newhook, who died at St. John's only a few years ago she was not a very fortunate ship In the future, I may speak of the Isabel, Thomas, Trinity and Henry Thomas; all these brigs I saw launched. They were all designed and built by Mr. Charles Newhook."

A letter signed Rambler in "The Enterprise's" issue of 27 November 1909 speaks of "..... a little house in which Mr. Charles Newhook, shipwright, used to keep the models of the vessels Trinity, Henry Thomas and many others which he built."

In the 1934 obituary in section (5) above, Shortis says that the Newhooks built "..... also the famous Henry Thomas, in which Capt. John Houlahan brought in 11,000 seals one spring."

An anonymous article entitled "Harbour Grace History, The Old Ships, etc.," in the St. John's "Daily News" of about 19 May 1959, reads in part as follows:-

"The Henry Thomas, one of the best known ships of those years, was built by Charles Newhook at Stoneman's Dock at Trinity, and was launched on the 8th February 1858. She went to the seal fishery in March that year under Capt. George Stoneman, and was also employed in foreign parts with Stoneman as master Capt. Field was in charge of her on a voyage to Sydney, and on her way back she was wrecked at St. Pierre. The St. Pierre merchants bought her and had her repaired, and made her the clipper of the French banking fleet. It was said that she could go through ice where other ships would get jammed and that she could run 18 knots."

A newsitem in "The Courier," St. John's, of 17 January 1855, reads as follows:-

"On the 4th of January there was launched from the dockyard of Messrs. R. Slade & Co., Trinity, a fine new brigantine named Isobel, of the burthen of 151 tons, new measurement. She was built by Mr. Charles Newhook, is intended chiefly for the seal fishery, and by competent judge is pronounced a handsome vessel, and as strong as wood, iron and good workmanship can make her. The launch was witnessed by a crowd of spectators all wishing success to the good ship and to her long-established and highly respectable owners."

Mr. Andrew Horwood, of 140 Campbell Avenue, St. John's, tells me that on her first sealing voyage, the Isobel was dismasted in a gale, that she worked into Trinity under jury rig, was re-rigged as a brig and went out to the ice again the same spring.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that Charles Newhook (bachelor) master-built or repaired. He was the last Newhook master shipbuilder to practise that calling in Trinity, T. B.

(14) James Newhook (Norcove), 1788

Born at Trinity in 1788, fifth child of Charles Newhook (first). His adult life was spent partly at Trinity, partly at New Harbour, perhaps partly at Dildo and certainly finally at Norman's Cove, Trinity Bay, at which last place he appears to have settled about the year 1835. He was the first progenitor in Norman's Cove of all the subsequent Newhook people there. He married first Elizabeth Green, of New Perlican, in 1811, and one of their children was Mrs. Catherine Tilly, of section (2) above. I affix the abbreviation Norcove to his name, because of his final residence at Norman's Cove. He is said to have had twenty-one children by his two wives.

In Bayly's "List of Ships surveyed," quoted in section (4) above, there is listed the brig Mary, 109 tons, built in Chapel Arm, near Norman's Cove, in 1841, with the name Jas. Newhook, Senr., as builder. This is obviously James Newhook (Norcove).

His great-grandson, the late Charles Newhook (died at Norman's Cove in 1962, aged 86) knew that he had built one ice-hunter on the beach at Norman's Cove, but was of opinion that most of the vessels he built were fishing schooners.

On page 82 of volume one of his book "Excursions in and about Newfoundland," John B. Jukes mentions that when he sailed by Norman's Cove in July 1839 there was a small schooner on the stocks there.

No names or particulars are known to me of other vessels that James Newhook (Norcove) master-built or repaired.

(15) Acknowledgments

Newhook descendants, and others, who have helped me with information about this family are too numerous for listing in this monograph, and I hereby express my thanks to them all.

(16) Other shipbuilders

It seems inevitable that other members of the numerous Newhook family should have been shipbuilders, without attaining to the position of master shipbuilder. Such a one was John G. Newhook, who was a shipbuilder at Trinity for most of his adult life, and all his children were born there. He moved to live in St. John's about 1875. His obituary notice in "The Royal Gazette" of 3 February 1891 reads: "Died on the 25th ultimo, John Newhook, shipbuilder, of Trinity, aged 73 years." A grandson is Mr. Samuel J. McNeil, 5 James Lane, St. John's. He was the oldest son of James Newhook (Norcove), and a brother of Mrs. Catherine Tilly. We are unable to say whether or not he was a master shipbuilder during his career.

(17) Comparison with Kearney

The most prominent master shipbuilder in Newfoundland history is, of course, Michael Kearney, born in Ferryland in 1811, died at St. John's in 1889. This prominence is certainly due in part to the fact that he worked mostly in such places as Carbonear and St. John's, within the reach of newspapers which occasionally recorded his doings. But whether Michael Kearney was as competent a craftsman as Charles Newhook (second), Robert Penny Newhook, Jonas N. Newhook or Charles Newhook (bachelor), who mostly worked in the newspaperless more northerly parts of the Island, is a question that will never be answered.

.....END.....

Newfoundland Archives,
St. John's,
28 May 1965.

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