

Newfoundland and Labrador Shore-Station Whaling: Overexpansion and Decline, 1905-1917

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The evolution of commercial whaling has been characterized globally by a pattern of recurring cycles. Each phase began with a new discovery, passed through a stage of fierce competition and ruthless exploitation marked by improved techniques and growing expertise, and ended with diminished resources, exhaustion and failure (see figure 1). In the end, with stocks in decline and profits increasingly uncertain, participants essentially had four options: withdrawal; exploitation of healthier stocks elsewhere; development of new techniques to support additional hunting of already depleted resources; or harvesting previously unexploited species.¹

"Traditional" commercial whaling was restricted initially to the capture of right, sperm and grey whales.² The "modern" era dates from the 1860s, when Svend Foyn, a Norwegian sealing master, successfully used a harpoon-cannon mounted on the bow of a steam-powered catcher.³ This combination of new hunting methods and technology permitted the harvesting of blue, humpback, fin and sei whales, species that were previously ignored.

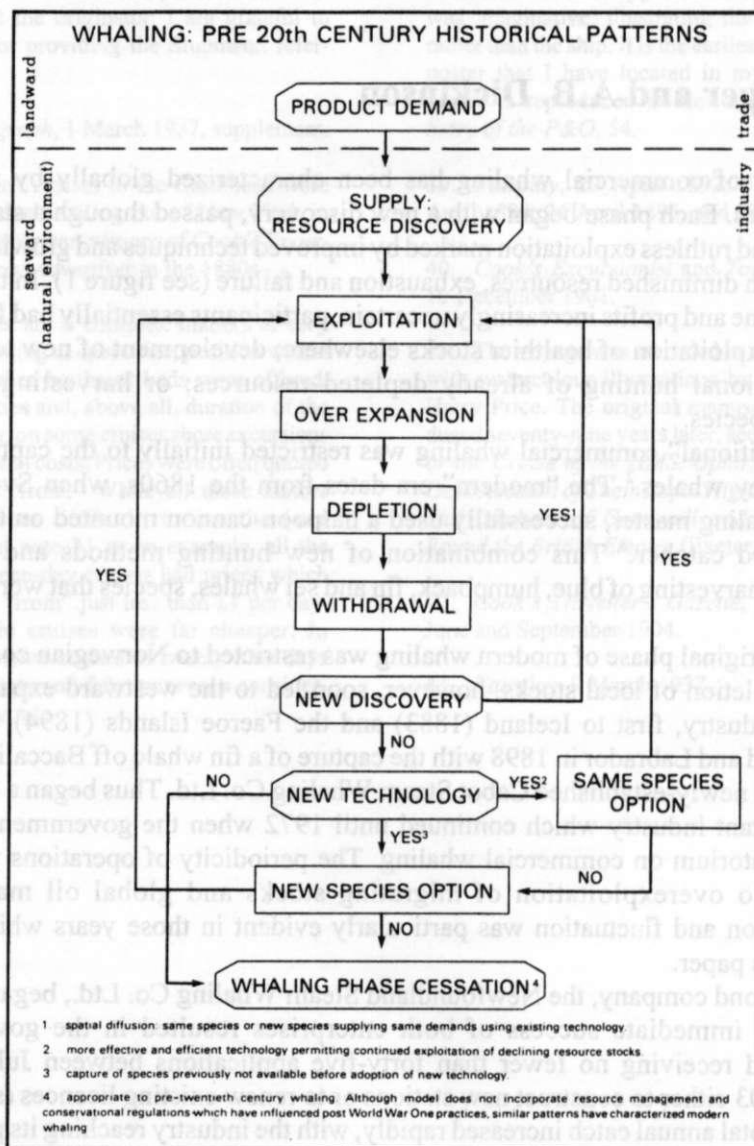
The original phase of modern whaling was restricted to Norwegian coastal waters. The rapid depletion of local stocks, however, soon led to the westward expansion of the Norwegian industry, first to Iceland (1883) and the Faeroe Islands (1894), and then to Newfoundland and Labrador in 1898 with the capture of a fin whale off Baccalieu Island on 26 June by the newly-established Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. Thus began a sporadic but locally important industry which continued until 1972 when the government of Canada placed a moratorium on commercial whaling. The periodicity of operations was directly attributable to overexploitation of migrating stocks and global oil markets. This overexploitation and fluctuation was particularly evident in those years which form the context of this paper.

A second company, the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd., began operations in 1900. The immediate success of both enterprises resulted in the government of Newfoundland receiving no fewer than forty-five applications between July 1902 and December 1903 either to construct new stations or to renew existing licences (see table 1).⁴

The total annual catch increased rapidly, with the industry reaching its peak in 1904 when fourteen factories processed 1275 whales for 1,492,456 gallons of oil, 2903 tons of

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whalebone, and 3511 tons of guano (see figure 2). The pace of development, however, soon caused some participants to express concern that the fishery "inside of twenty years... [would be]... a thing of the past." As early as the spring of 1903, for example, a St. John's newspaper stated that although the "whaling stock is regarded as a good investment now," it was questionable "whether it will continue [to be] so." Unfortunately, no heed was paid to these warnings and expansion continued into the 1904 and 1905 seasons.⁵ Newfoundland and Labrador's initial "expansion-depletion" commercial whaling cycle lasted less than two decades.



Source: C.W. Sanger 1985

Figure 1: Whaling: Pre Twentieth-Century Historical Patterns.

Source: Courtesy of the authors.

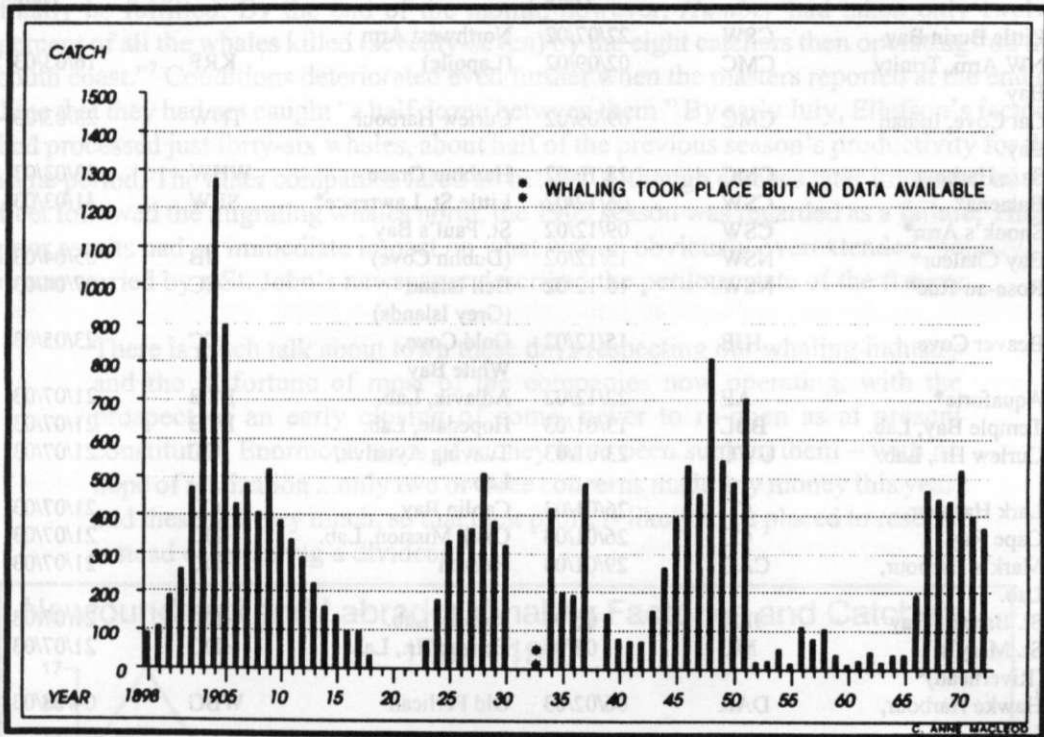


Figure 2: Newfoundland and Labrador Shore-Station Whale Catches: 1898-1972.

Sources: International Whaling Commission: Newfoundland, Department of Fisheries, *Annual Reports* (various); and various newspapers.

Continued Expansion and Initial Decline, 1905-1908

The 1905 whale fishery heralded the beginning of catch declines from the record 1904 season, a clear indication that fewer whales were available, either through changing migration patterns or, more likely, over-hunting. Although still caught up in the initial rush to expand, only three of the four new factories scheduled to open in 1905 were ready at the beginning of the season. The addition of *Cachelot* (Hawk Harbour), *Baccalieu* (Harbour Grace), and *Port Saunders* (Hawke's Bay), increased the size of the Newfoundland and Labrador whaling fleet to a high of fourteen catchers.⁶ Their presence thus brought additional pressure to bear on already depleted whale stocks (see figure 3).

Table 1
Whaling Applications, Newfoundland and Labrador, 1902-1903

Factory Site	Co.	Application Date	Factory Site	Co.	Application Date
Little Burin Bay	c s w	22/07/02	Northwest Arm		
NW Arm, Trinity Bay	CMC	02/09/02	(Lapoile)	KRP	16/03/03
Cat Cove, Indian Bay	CMC	09/09/02	Curlew Harbour	TNW	23/03/03
Safe Harbour	CMC	28/10/02	Harbour Grace	WHW	23/03/03
Balaena*	CSW	06/12/02	Little St. Lawrence*	SLW	31/03/03
Snook's Arm*	c s w	09/12/02	St. Paul's Bay		
Bay Chaleur*	NSW	15/12/02	(Dublin Cove)	JB	05/04/03
Rose-au-Rue*	NSW	15/12/02	Bell Island	CC	07/04/03
			(Grey Islands)		
Beaver Cove	HJE	15/12/02	Gold Cove,	CC	23/05/03
			White Bay		
Aquaforte*	AE	22/12/02	Adlavik, Lab.	BTB	21/07/03
Temple Bay, Lab.	BBL	13/01/03	Hopedale, Lab.	BTB	21/07/03
Curlew Hr., Lab.	u w c	23/01/03	Tuaving Ayualvk,	CC	21/07/03
			Lab.		
Lark Harbour	CC	26/01/03	Caplin Bay	CC	21/07/03
Cape Ray	CC	26/01/03	Okak Mission, Lab.	HDC	21/07/03
Mark's Harbour, Lab.	CAD	29/01/03	Hebron	HDC	21/07/03
St. Barbe's Bay	JRK	02/03	Raman, Lab.	HDC	21/07/03
St. Mary's	MC	02/03	Eclipse Hr., Lab.	HDC	21/07/03
(Riverhead)*					
Hawke Harbour, Lab.	DAR	06/02/03	Old Perlican	WBG	04/08/03
Port Saunders	JRK	02/03	Barrow Hr., B. B.	WBG	04/08/03
Cape Charles*	BBL	17/02/03	Hooping Hr., W. B.	AE	11/09/03
Cape Broyle*	CBT	23/03/03	Rencontre, F. B.	EWB	28/09/03
Quirpon	CC	03/03/03	Cottles Cove, N. D. B.	EWB	28/09/03
St. Lunaire Bay	NSW	03/03/03	Portugal Cove	JR	27/11/03
Blanc Sablon	JB	10/03/03	Bell Island, CB	JR	27/11/03
(L'Anse-au-Loup)*					

Notes: *denotes whaling stations either active or under construction in 1903. The following abbreviations are used in this appendix: AE (Anders Ellefsen); BBL (Bowring Bros. Ltd.); BTB (B. T. Byers); CAD (C & A Dawe); CBT (Cape Broyle Trading and Whaling Co. Ltd.); CC (Colin Campbell); CMC (Colonial Manufacturing Co. Ltd.); CSW (Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.); DAR (Daniel A. Ryan); EWB (E. W. Roberts); HDC (H. D. Crowe); HJE (Henry J. Earle); JB (Job Bros.); JR (Joseph Roper); JRK (James R. Knight); KRP (K. R. Prowse); MC (M. Cashin); NSW (Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.); SLW (St. Lawrence Whaling Co.); TNW (Terra Nova Whaling Co.); UWC (United Whaling Co. Ltd.); WBG (W. B. Grieve); WHW (W. H. Whitely).

Source: Newfoundland, Department of Fisheries, *Annual Report* (1903).

Nonetheless, at the beginning of the 1905 season whales appeared plentiful. Anders Ellefsen, for example, wrote to Ragnvald Berg, one of his Norwegian financiers, four days after the first whale had been landed, that "I should imagine that the first thing to start with is how the hunt is going, we had 4 blues in 3 days, that looks nice doesn't it? Henrik

[Anders' brother and captain of the Aquaforte station's catcher, *Humber*] reports many whales. " Whales continued to be abundant and *Humber* secured excellent catches into May. Early signs thus seemed to indicate that the promise of the previous two seasons would finally be fulfilled. By the end of the month, however, *Humber* had taken only twelve percent of all the whales killed (seventy-seven) by the eight catchers then operating "on the south coast. " Conditions deteriorated even further when the masters reported at the end of June that they had not caught "a half dozen between them. " By early July, Ellefson's factory had processed just forty-six whales, about half of the previous season's productivity for the same period. The other companies fared no better. Although catches later improved as the fleet followed the migrating whales north, the 1905 season was regarded as a failure. These poor results had an immediate impact on what was an obviously overextended industry. A report carried by a St. John's newspaper described the perilous state of the fishery:

There is much talk about town these days respecting our whaling industry and the ill-fortune of most of the companies now operating, with the prospect of an early closing of some, never to re-open as at present constituted. Enormous sums of money have been sunk in them - with no hope of realization... only two or three concerns made any money this year, and these not very much, so that their profit is likely to be placed to reserve instead of declaring a dividend.°

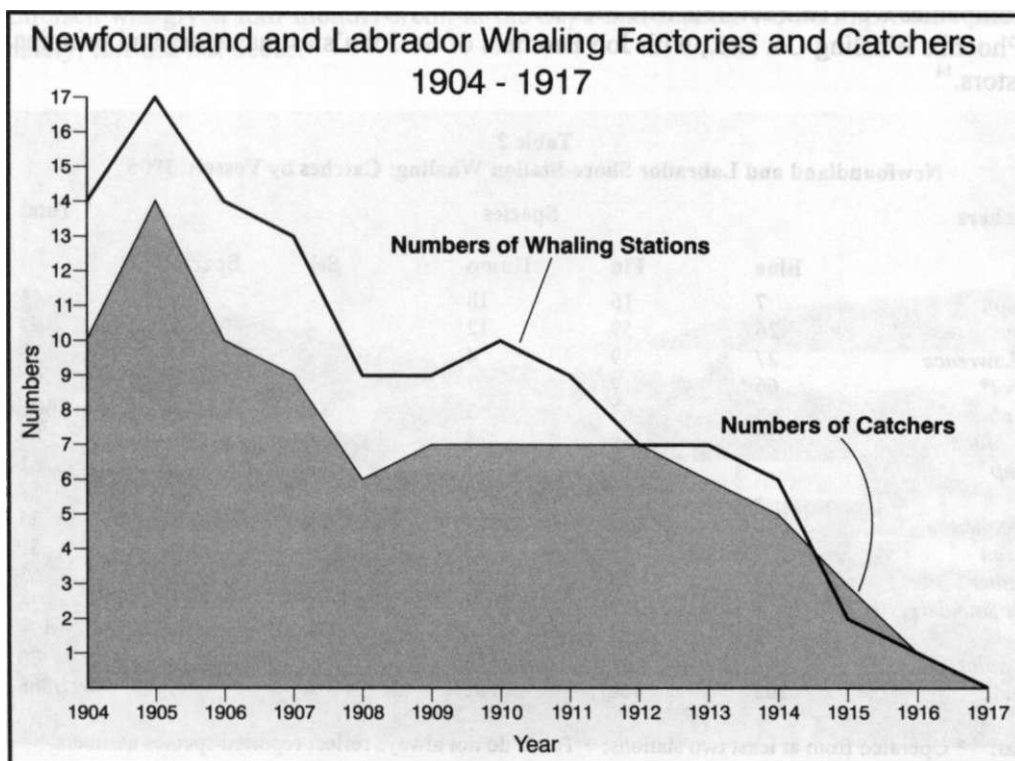


Figure 3: Newfoundland and Labrador Whaling Factories and Catchers, 1904-1917.

Source: Courtesy of the authors.

The increased level of exploitation and the magnitude of earlier catch rates had clearly caused a severe reduction in local whale stocks. Returns for 1905 declined by more than thirty percent compared to the previous season (263 blue, 460 fin, 161 humpback, two sei and six sperm), despite the deployment of the four new catchers (see table 2 and figure 3). The Newfoundland Department of Fisheries considered this "a very large deficiency... [that] demonstrates the great scarcity during the past year." Increased global catches also caused whale bone and oil prices to decline, the best quality grades 0 and 1 oil falling from £21 per ton in 1901 to £16 per ton in 1904, with several Newfoundland companies being forced to sell at £14 10s. in 1905. As the *Evening Herald* reported, "the price of whale oil has declined one-half in three years and, consequently, it requires twice as many fish to make a factory pay now as it did then."¹⁰

As a result, investors petitioned the Newfoundland government in 1905 to remit the factory license fee and replace it in future seasons with one based "on the profits of each concern, rather than in a lump sum of \$1500 as at present." Cancellation of the \$50 per ton coal tax imposed upon whale factories was also requested.¹¹ Neither of these initiatives were undertaken, however, and the failure to do so contributed to the industry entering a period of reduced activity.¹²

The Atlantic, Mic Mac and St. Mary's whaling companies were liquidated and advertisements announcing the sale of their factories, equipment and vessels were placed in local newspapers.¹³ Not surprisingly, there was little interest, and as an alternative some of the companies were restructured. Mic Mac and Atlantic, for example, were reconstituted as the Phoenix Whaling Co. Ltd., with Job Brothers of St. John's as managers and principal investors.¹⁴

Table 2
Newfoundland and Labrador Shore-Station Whaling: Catches by Vessels, 1905

Catchers	Species					Total
	Blue	Fin	Hump	Sei	Sperm	
<i>Avalon</i>	7	16	18	-	-	41
<i>Puma</i>	26	59	12	-	-	97
<i>St. Lawrence</i>	27	39	4	-	-	70
<i>Cabot*</i>	66	17	7	2	-	92
<i>Lynx*</i>	68	63	3	-	3	130+
<i>Mic Mac*</i>	37	34	13	-	-	84
<i>Hump</i>	-	47	12	-	2	61
<i>Fin</i>	-	23	10	-	-	33
<i>Baccalieu</i>	-	20	2	-	1	23
<i>Falcon</i>	9	19	23	-	-	51
<i>Humber</i>	17	25	23	-	-	65
<i>Port Saunders</i>	4	17	5	-	-	26
<i>Hawk</i>	2	24	16	-	-	45+
<i>Cachalot</i>	-	57	13	-	-	70
Total	263	460	161	2	6	892/888

Notes: * Operated from at least two stations; + Totals do not always reflect reported species numbers.

Source: Newfoundland, Department of Fisheries, *Annual Report* (1905).

The 1905 *Annual Report* of the Newfoundland Department of Fisheries well described the problems facing the local whaling industry prior to the beginning of the 1906 season:

The price of produce was again low during the year...so that the few companies which were successful as regards the catch scarcely paid running expenses. The catch of most of the companies was a comparative failure, and the result in several cases has been the winding up of the companies, with the loss of their entire paid up capital... The expenses of carrying on this business are very heavy, and like all other fisheries the results are very fluctuating and uncertain.

The disastrous 1905 season now led some investors to express well-founded concerns that the fishery might soon end. Despite the closure of four factories, continuing low catches early in the 1906 season seemed to indicate that whale stocks had been reduced to such levels that even this rate of participation could not be sustained (see table 3).¹⁵

The Ellefsen operation at Aquaforte provides a good indication of the difficulties facing the local industry (see figure 4). When ordering hemp lines for Humber from the Colonial Cordage Co. in St. John's, for example, Anders Ellefsen requested additional time to pay for the shipment. Recognizing the problems confronting the whaling companies, Ellefsen was given four months credit in the hope that catches would improve.¹⁶ Unfortunately, this did not occur.

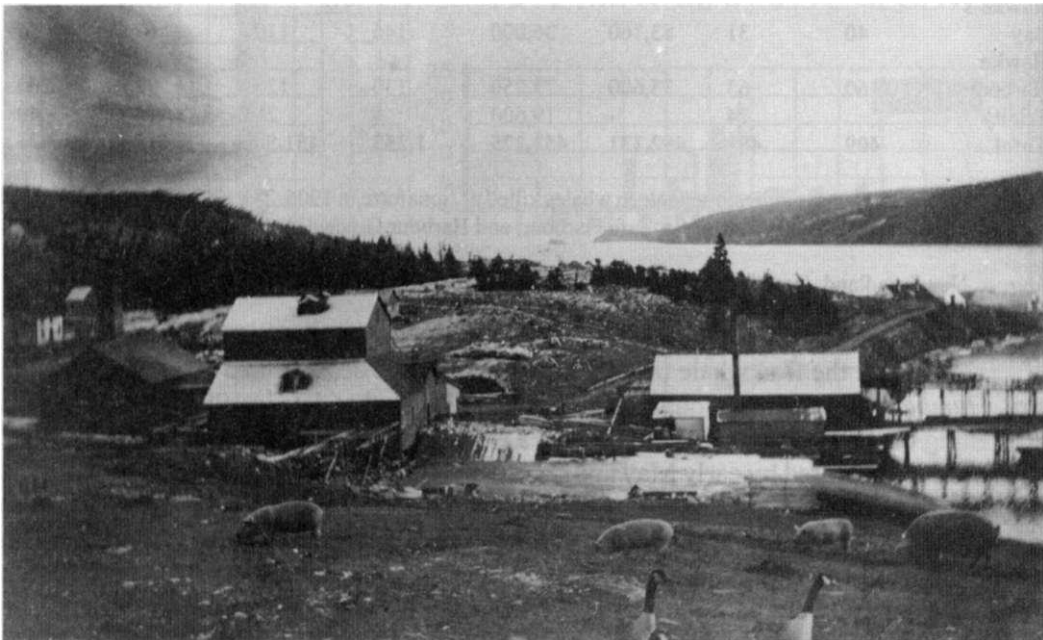


Figure 4: Aquaforte Whaling Station, c. 1904.

Source: Ellefsen Papers.

Table 3
Newfoundland and Labrador Whaling Production, 1906-1907

Factory	Whales		Oil (Gal)		Guano (Tons)		Bone (Tons)	
	1906	1907	1906	1907	1906	1907	1906	1907
Balaena Snook's Arm	24	32	59,392	33,831	212		103	4
Chaleur Bay	-	75	-	63,024	-		.	7
Rose-Au-Rue	58	37	60,178	36,546	188		113	5
Beaverton	67	84	44,653	63,720	182		106	82.75
St. Lawrence	24	42	31,006	46,181	95		50	7
Cape Broyle	21	30	20,520	26,422	78	93.5	35	49
Cape Charles	3	2	2,898	2,436	9		7	0.25
Dublin Cove	25	31	16,640	23,814		19	62	3
St. Mary's	27	27	30,080	25,956	62	70	50	50
Aquaforte	4	-	3,200	-	13		6	.
Safe Harbour	18	3	13,824	2,495	-		15	0.25
Harbour Grace	21	-	28,300	-	73		32	-.
Hawke's Bay	17	-	22,680	-	65		16	-
Hawke Harbour	40	31	83,160	36,000	146	119	69	55
Trinity	60	63	75,600	73,250	130	125	52	200
Total	409	481	492,131	453,275	1,253	451.50	718	503.25

Notes: Company records indicate seventeen whales killed at Aquaforte in 1906. The Snook's Arm station did not operate in 1906; St. Mary's, Safe Harbour, and Harbour Grace did not operate in 1907.

Source: Newfoundland, Department of Fisheries, *Annual Report* (1906 and 1907).

Although the first whale taken in the previous two seasons had been caught on 18 April, Humber was still in St. John's taking on supplies on that date in 1906.¹⁷ Not only was the opening of the season delayed, but whales were scarce when they finally did appear.¹⁸ Only two were captured by early May and just six by the end of the month, usually the most productive time for the Aquaforte station (see figure 5).¹⁹ It was also necessary to make longer, more expensive voyages. Earlier in the month, for example, *Humber* had been "in Placentia Bay all the week and got nothing." Other companies with stations on the south coast (see figure 6) were doing just as poorly, causing the *Evening Herald* to report: "The past week [11-17 June] is regarded as the best week of the year for whaling, and it is [sic] utter failure shows better than anything else the collapse of the industry."²⁰

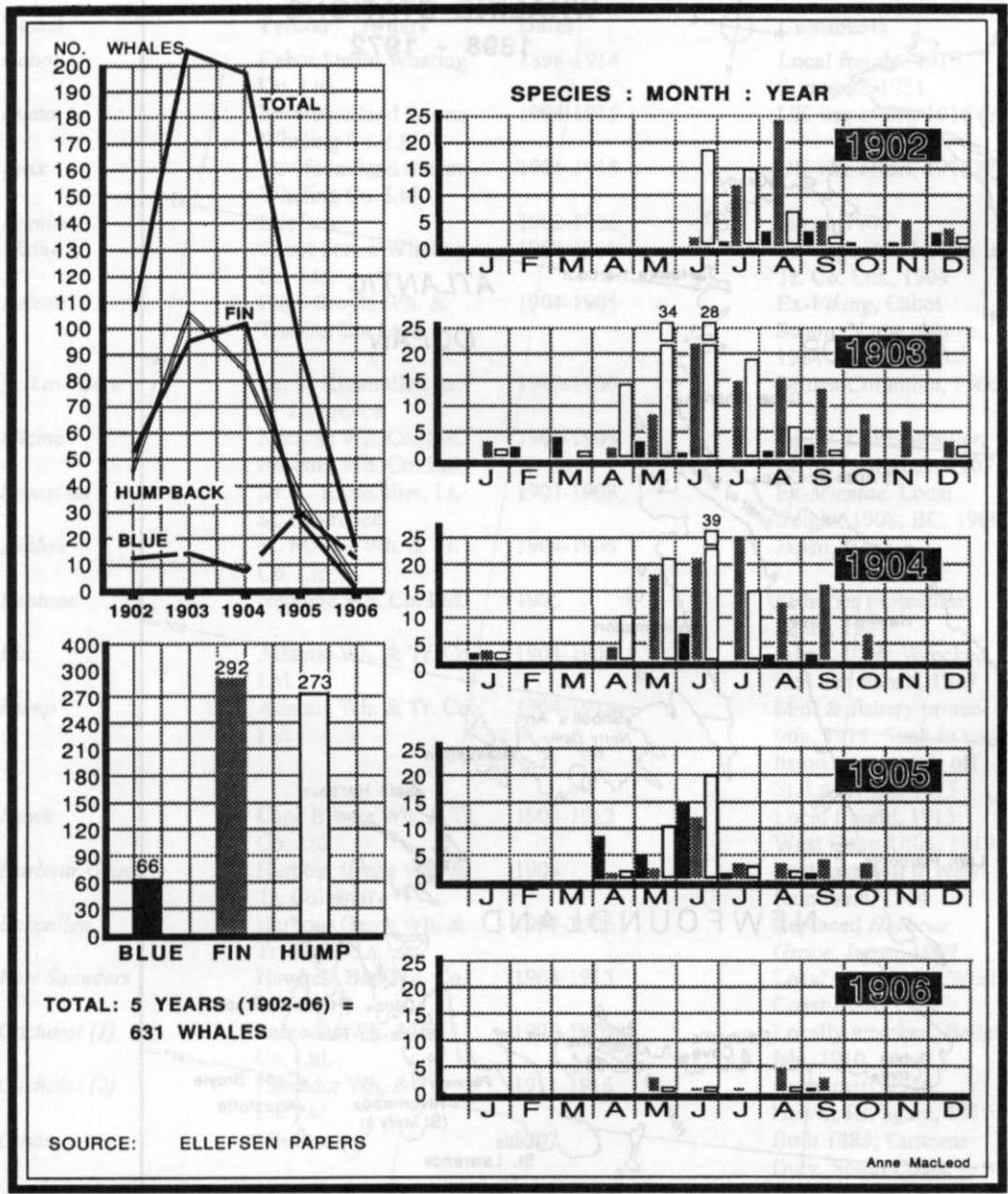


Figure 5: Aquaforte Whaling Station: Monthly, Annual, and Total Catches by Species, 1902-1906.

Source: See figure 4.

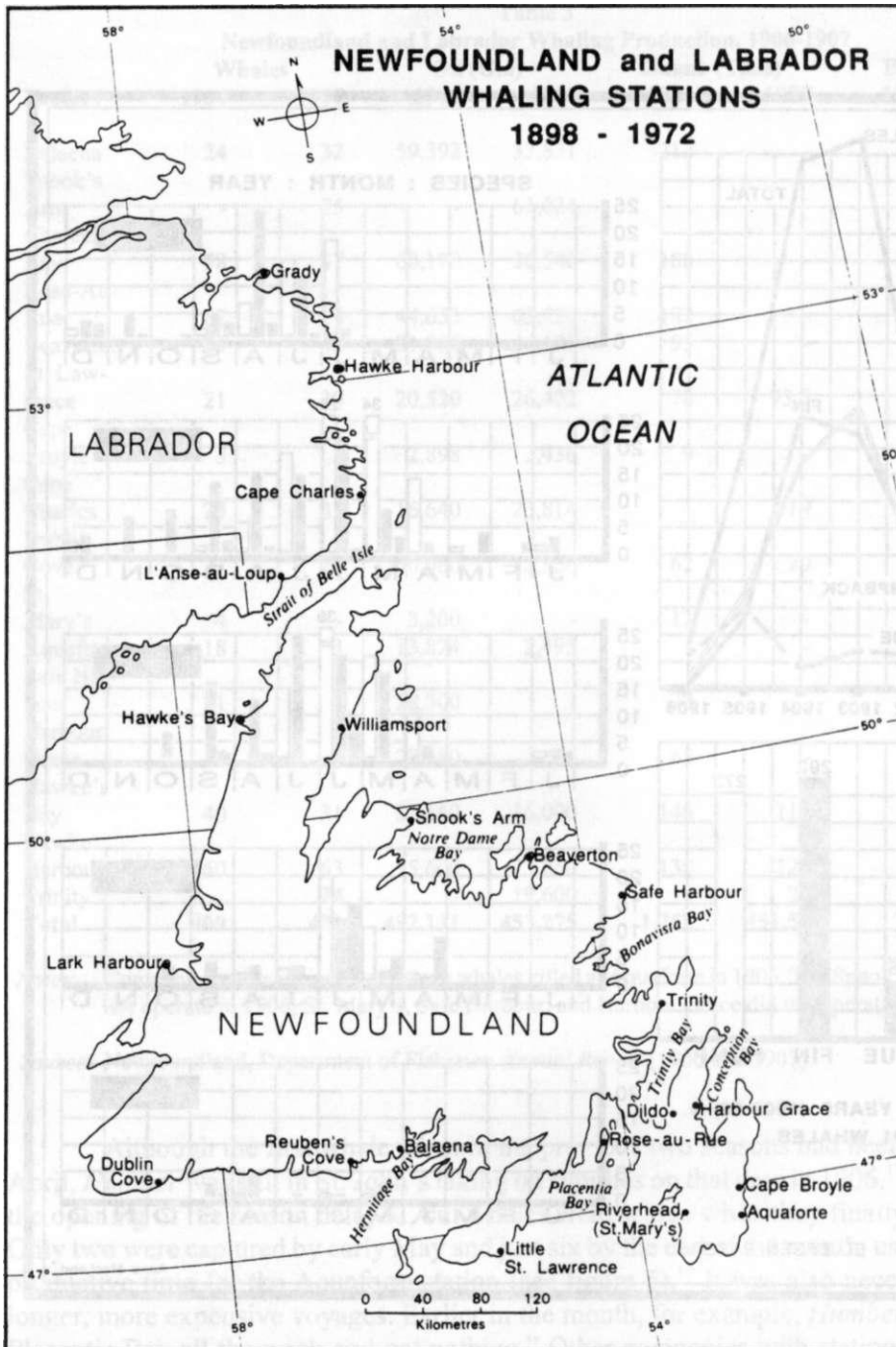


Figure 6: Newfoundland and Labrador Whaling Stations, 1898-1972.

Source: Courtesy of the authors.

Catchers Built in Norway for the Newfoundland Whaling Industry, 1898-1919

Vessel	Primary Owners	Dates	Comments
<i>Cabot</i>	Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.	1898-1914	Local freight, 1915 Scrapped, 1951
<i>Puma</i>	Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.	1904-1915	UK war effort, 1916 (?)
<i>Lynx</i>	Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.	1901-1915	UK war effort, 1916 (?)
<i>Humber</i>	Ellefsen	1902-1906	Japan, 1906
<i>Viking</i>	Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.	1902-1903	To Cape Broyle, Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd., 1904
<i>Falcon</i>	Cape Broyle Wh. & Trading Co. Ltd.	1904-1905	<i>Ex-Viking</i> , Cabot Steam; Name change, 1904; Japan, 1907
<i>St. Lawrence</i>	Dr. L. Rissmuller, Lt. St. Lawrence	1903-1906	British Columbia, 1906
<i>Micmac</i>	Micmac Wh. Co. Ltd./ Phoenix Wh. Co. Ltd.	1904-1906	To Dr. L. Russmuller, Lt. St. Lawrence, 1907
<i>Sebastian</i>	Dr. L. Rissmuller, Lt. St. Lawrence	1907-1908	<i>Ex-Micmac</i> . Local freight, 1908; BC, 1909
<i>Avalon</i>	St. Mary's Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1904-1906	Japan, 1907
<i>Neptune</i>	Neptune Wh. Co. Ltd.	1905	Fisheries protection; Japan, 1907
<i>Fin</i>	Atlantic Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1904-1906	Japan, 1906; Wrecked, Red Sea transit, 1907
<i>Hump</i>	Atlantic Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1904-1914	Mail & fishery protection, 1915; Sunk in collision with <i>Argyle</i> off St. Lawrence, 1915
<i>Hawk</i>	Cape Broyle Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1904-1912	Local freight, 1913; West Coast USA, 1919
<i>Harbour Grace</i>	Harbour Grace Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1904	Lost in transit to Newfoundland, 1904
<i>Baccalieu</i>	Harbour Grace Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1905-1906	Replaced <i>Harbour Grace</i> ; Japan, 1907
<i>Port Saunders</i>	Hawke's Bay Wh. Co. Ltd.	1905-1913	Local mail, 1915; West Coast USA, 1919
<i>Cachalot (1)</i>	Labrador Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1905-1910	Locally wrecked, Belle Isle, 1910
<i>Cachalot (2)</i>	Labrador Wh. & Tr. Co. Ltd.	1911-1916	Local mail, 1916; Hawke Hr. again, 1919
<i>Othar</i>	Ellefsen	1907	Built 1885; Customs Duty, South Coast, 1908
<i>Lloydsen</i>	A/S Cosmos	1912	For combined Newfoundland/Greenland sealing/whaling

Source: See text.

With his factory workers seriously underemployed, Ellefsen now attempted to generate additional income to offset whaling losses by putting twenty men to work fishing for cod. *Humber* returned to Aquaforte on 24 July, having been "out all yesterday, but did not see a fish. Up to date she has but seven fish, and very poor prospects for the balance of the season." As a result, the company's shore crew again went cod fishing.²¹

The rapidly deteriorating state of the whaling industry was blamed primarily on the constant pressure on the stocks being exerted by the catchers. As a result, there were layoffs in associated industries. Yet there appears to have been some sympathy within the local business community for the companies' positions. When Ellefsen cancelled an order with the Colonial Cordage Co. for whale lines in early August, for example, the Managing Director, J.H. Munroe, replied that "[w]e are extremely sorry to hear that your heavy investment in plant... is not likely to be remunerative this year. We hope that the Fall fishery will make a saving voyage, and that you may have a bumper next year."²²

Catches had not improved by the end of September, and the Ellefsens and their Norwegian investors decided that they could not sustain further losses. As most of the other owners were in the same predicament, their best attempts to sell the factory, equipment and catcher all failed. Numerous and often ingenious schemes were proposed to salvage whatever was possible from the growing debacle. Job Brothers, for instance, inquired if the Ellefsens wished to buy their recently-constructed guano factory at Aquaforte and thus consolidate their operation. This, of course, could not be done, leading to public speculation as to whether or not the Aquaforte station would operate in 1907.²³

In an attempt to revitalize the industry, the government reduced the cost of station licences by half to \$750. At the same time, the price of oil, "owing to the scarcity... advanced again and now stands at £22, against £13 last year." There were those who considered that the collapse of the industry would reduce pressure on whale stocks and give a few stations a better chance of surviving.²⁴ Regardless, the whaling fleet continued to decline through to 1908, when only six catchers operated from ten stations.

The reduced competition led to increased catches per unit in 1907 for the first time in four years. As a St. John's newspaper declared, "the catch for the year is far above of that of last year," a fact it attributed primarily to the success of the "northern" fishery.²⁵ All the factories on the northeast coast of the island and the station at Hawke Harbour, Labrador, processed excellent catches. The Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. and the Labrador Whaling and Manufacturing Company were thus able to pay dividends of twelve and fifteen percent, respectively.²⁶

A similar combination of influences again provided relatively good catches in 1908. By late August, for example, *Cachelot* had secured fifty-three whales, reported as "an excellent showing." At season's end, the Hawke Harbour factory had processed 100 carcasses, a total considered "exceptionally good." All other companies, except for the Hawke's Bay Whaling Co. Ltd., matched their catches of the previous season.²⁷ The significantly reduced whaling industry thus became increasingly concentrated in northeastern Newfoundland and southern Labrador.

Implications, 1905-1908

In the face of failure, with little or no opportunity to recover their original investment through the sale of vessels, factories and equipment, many companies adopted new strategies. Most of these efforts involved the realignment of old partnerships and the adoption of new initiatives to utilize more effectively fewer catchers operating only from the more favourably located factories. Additionally, the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. mounted a more adventurous enterprise by attempting to carry out whaling in both the northern and southern hemispheres. The voyage of its factory ship *Sobraon* to the Antarctic in the fall of 1905, and its return to Newfoundland for the 1906 season, was in many ways a precursor of how southern whaling would evolve.

While the collapse of the whaling industry had a negative impact on the local economy, there were some positive outcomes as well. New whaling cycles were beginning elsewhere, and catchers and personnel from the declining Newfoundland and Labrador industry played important roles in the development of shore-station whaling in British Columbia and Japan, and to a lesser extent in South Georgia, Alaska and on the west coast of the continental United States.

Most of the idle Newfoundland catchers were sold to new Japanese whaling companies, no fewer than six (*Humber, Falcon, Avalon, Neptune, Fin* and *Baccalieu*) making the difficult and often dangerous voyage to Japan between 1904 and 1909 (see table 4).²⁸ Although a small number of Newfoundlanders sailed as crewmen, most came from the original pool of experienced masters, officers and engineers brought out seasonally from Norway.²⁹

The majority of local residents who had worked in the whaling factories and as ordinary seamen on the catchers returned to the traditional fisheries or were employed in the construction of the new pulp and paper mill at Grand Falls.³⁰ Many also became involved in British Columbia whaling after 1904, where as permanent and seasonal employees they played important roles in the development of that industry.

The *Sobraon* Experiment, 1907-1908

Global whaling expanded into sub-Antarctic and Antarctic waters when a shore-station was built at Grytviken, South Georgia, in November 1904. Norwegian-crewed factory ships and their catchers soon followed, the first arriving at the South Shetland Islands in 1905. The directors of the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. may have received reports of these activities from the Norwegian crews on *Lynx* and *Puma* and decided to fit out a southern excursion to counteract the failing domestic industry. The company applied to the Falkland Islands government for permission to hunt in the then-Dependencies, and in 1908 obtained the first whaling licence issued for the South Orkney Islands and the second for the South Shetland Islands and Graham Land.³¹

Sobraon was purchased from the Gordon Steam Shipping Co. Ltd. of London and converted into a factory vessel at Sandefjord. This appears to have involved construction of a side slipway, perhaps following a Norwegian patent granted to their whaling master Nokard Davidsen in 1905. The vessel sailed for Newfoundland in October 1907 with a forty-one-man Norwegian crew under Capt. Dulling on a voyage from "Sandefjord to Antarctic

Sea via England, St. John's, Newfoundland and further. Catching whales and returning to Norway." ³²

Sobraon arrived in St. John's in early November and took on 6000 oil barrels to supplement its 3000-barrel bulk storage capacity. The vessel then left for the southern hemisphere under Capt. Einar Egenes, with *Lynx* (Capt. Emmensen) and *Puma* (Capt. Christofferson), and under the overall command of Nokard Davidsen. The expedition did not reach the South Orkney Islands until mid-January, however, and thus missed most of the hunting season. Many of the whales that were observed could not be caught due to heavy ice. The vessels therefore continued to the South Shetland Islands, reaching them six weeks later than planned. Another setback occurred when Davidsen and the chief engineer of *Lynx* were washed overboard. The engineer was rescued, but Davidsen disappeared. A large concrete memorial was unveiled on 9 February 1908 to begin the whalers' graveyard on Deception Island (see figure 7). Command of the expedition was transferred to Emmensen. ³³

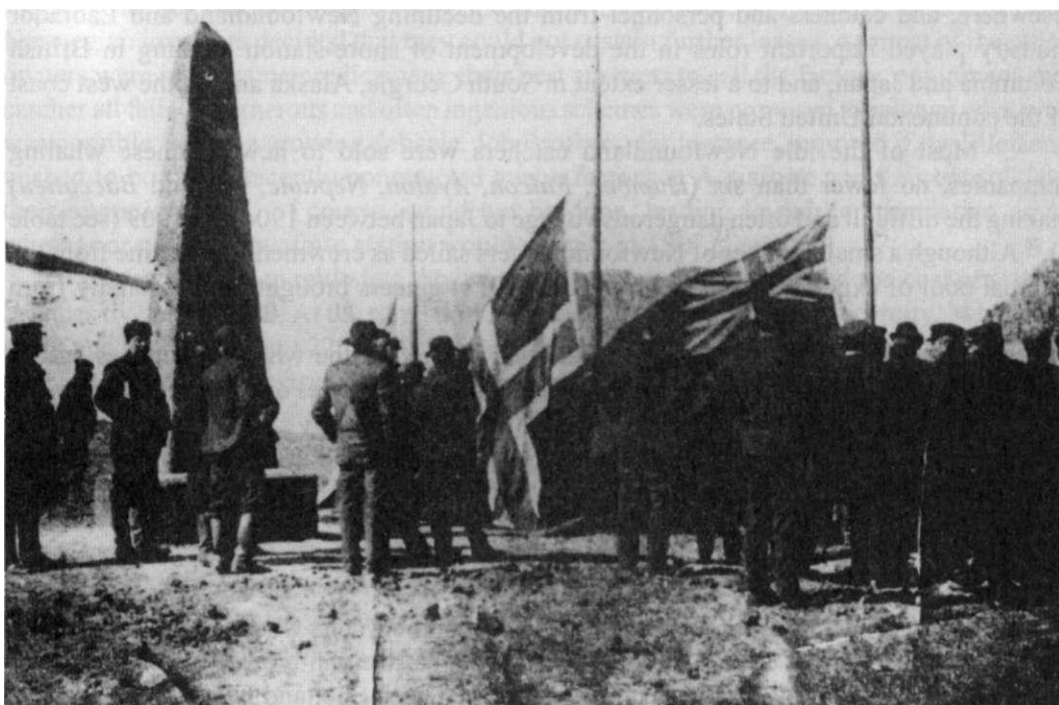


Figure 7: Nokard Davidsen's Memorial Service, South Shetland Islands, 9 February 1908.

Source: Courtesy of the authors.

The vessels left the South Shetland Islands in March 1908 with only 3090 barrels of oil and five tons of baleen from 116 whales. They then hunted off Labrador from mid-May until early July, but severe ice conditions allowed only twenty-five more whales to be killed. *Puma* and *Lynx* returned to St. John's to continue supplying the shore stations, while *Sobraon* took oil and bone to Glasgow. ³⁴

The deployment of a Newfoundland owned, Norwegian-crewed factory vessel to process whales in both the southern and northern hemispheres during the same season was a novel idea. But it unfortunately did not meet expectations, since only 141 whales of unrecorded species were killed, yielding some 4000 barrels of oil, an unprofitable production despite increasing oil prices. Heavy ice conditions were primarily blamed for the failure, but operating efficiency was undoubtedly affected by the death of the experienced Davidsen. Some of the oil also deteriorated in transit and likely sold at a lower price than expected.³⁵

Sobraon did not make any further voyages for the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd., although it continued in the industry following a purchase by Amadeus Andresen for whaling off the west coast of South America as *Orion*. The Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. was reorganized as the Rose-au-Rue Whaling Co. Ltd. in April 1910 and ceased operations at the end of the 1915 season.³⁶

Newfoundland Involvement in Twentieth-Century Shore-Station Whaling in British Columbia

The beginning of the British Columbia industry was but one stage in the global expansion of Norwegian dominated shore-station whaling and coincided with the decline of the Newfoundland whale fishery. Catchers, equipment, technology and experienced personnel were thus available for transfer. The growth of the west coast industry was facilitated by the presence in Victoria of a sealing company with strong east coast connections. One of its owners, Captain Sprott Balcom, was ideally placed in the late 1890s to be informed of Newfoundland whaling developments by family members in Halifax.³⁷

The Cabot Steam Whaling Company's early success had been widely reported in major Atlantic Canada newspapers. For example, the *Halifax Chronicle* commented that:

The recent establishment of a whale oil manufactory in Notre Dame Bay calls attention to the fact whaling is now a paying venture off the coast of Newfoundland. Recently seven whales worth nearly \$1,000 each were captured by a company of Norwegian whalers. There is no apparent reason why Halifax should not become an outfitting port for the whaling industry.³⁸

Also of primary importance was the presence of Dr. Ludwig Rissmuller in Newfoundland, and his subsequent decision to join Balcom's Pacific Whaling Company. Rissmuller had developed and patented equipment and procedures in Newfoundland which permitted wholecarcass utilization.³⁹ The adoption of a modified version of the 1902 Newfoundland Whaling Act by Ottawa in 1904 made it necessary to transfer similar technologies to the new British Columbia industry.⁴⁰

Rissmuller was also able to use his Newfoundland connections to recruit managers and skilled workers. These men and their families relocated to British Columbia and had a profound and lasting impact on the development of Canadian west coast whaling. This was enhanced further by seasonal hirings. Additionally, two of Rissmuller's Newfoundland catchers, *St. Lawrence* (see figure 8) and *Sebastian*, sailed west for long and distinguished careers.⁴¹ It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the British Columbia whaling industry would not have developed as it did without this significant input from the declining Newfoundland shore-station whale fishery.

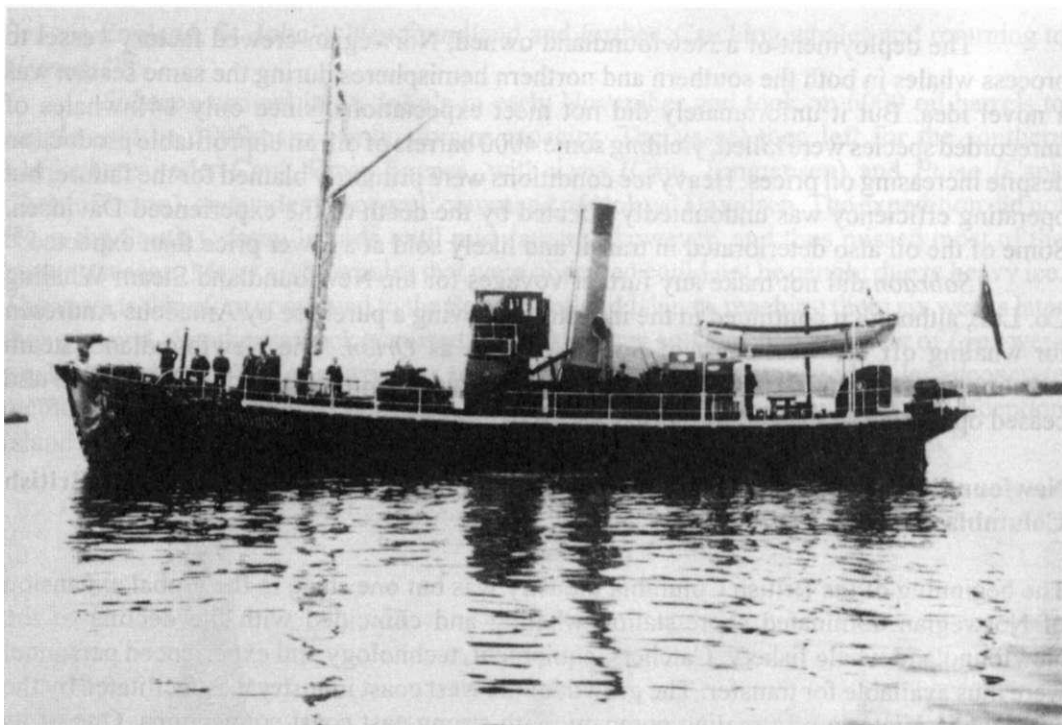


Figure 8: Whale Catcher *St. Lawrence*, British Columbia, c. 1910.

Source: Courtesy of the authors.

Consolidation and Closure, 1909-1917

Following the sharp reductions that occurred after 1905, the Newfoundland and Labrador whaling industry continued with relatively little change until it temporarily closed at the end of the 1916 season (see table 5). This period of prolonged stability was due to a complex set of factors. With reduced hunting pressure on whale stocks, less competition, and favourable environmental conditions, the more northerly stations began to improve their catches.⁴² Nonetheless, these were insufficient to allow most of the companies still whaling to operate profitably and thus recoup their earlier investments in new Norwegian-built catchers, factories and processing machinery.⁴³ Attempts to improve productivity by utilizing different combinations of vessels, factories and whaling grounds from season to season generated indifferent results. Continued efforts to sell steamers, plants and equipment were unsuccessful since all of the other whaling companies were in similar positions.⁴⁴ Consequently, stations were simply abandoned, and men and vessels turned to other activities.⁴⁵

Table S
Newfoundland and Labrador Whaling Industry: 1909-1917

Companies	Catchers	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917
		Stations								
Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. (Harvey and Co. Ltd.)	<i>Cabot</i>	Balaena Snook's Arm	Balaena Snook's Arm	Balaena Snook's Arm	Balaena Snook's Arm	Balaena Snook's Arm	Balaena Snook's Arm	-	-	
Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd.	<i>Puma/Lynx</i>	Rose-au-Rue	Rose-au-Rue	Rose-au-Rue	Rose-au-Rue	Rose-au-Rue	Rose-au-Rue	Rose-au-Rue	-	
Cape Broyle Whaling and Trading Co. Ltd. (Bowring Bros. Ltd.)	<i>Hawk</i>	Cape Charles	Cape Charles	Cape Broyle	Cape Broyle	Cape Broyle				
Phoenix Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd.	<i>Hump</i>	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	Dublin Cove	
Hawke's Bay Whaling Co. Ltd.	<i>Port Saunders</i>	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	Hawke's Bay	
Labrador Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd.	<i>Cachalot I</i> (lost 1910) <i>Cachalot II</i>	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour	Hawke Harbour

Note: - not operating.

Source: See text.

The gradual decline in the industry is illustrated by the fact that six whaling companies were using seven catchers to supply nine factories in 1909 (see table 5). The Cabot Steam Whaling Company deployed *Cabot* to hunt migrating stocks along the south coast from Balaena in the early part of the season, before moving the catcher to Snook's Arm on the northeast coast for the remainder of the year. The company continued to use this exploitation pattern until its operations ceased in 1914.⁴⁶ Following the failure of the *Sobraon* experiment in 1907-1908, the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. enjoyed reasonable success to 1915 by operating both of its catchers, *Lynx* and *Puma*, from the Roseau-Rue station in Placentia Bay only.⁴⁷ The Cape Broyle Whaling Co. Ltd. (Bowring Brothers Ltd.) deployed *Hawk* at Cape Charles, Labrador, in 1909. The Cape Broyle station was then reopened at the beginning of the 1910 season. The additional expenses of operating both factories necessitated the closure of Cape Charles after the 1910 season, followed by Cape Broyle in 1912.⁴⁸ The Phoenix Whaling Co. Ltd. (Job Brothers Ltd.) used its catcher *Hump* in the south coast fishery from Dublin Cove and, then, on the northeast coast from Trinity between 1909 and 1914.⁴⁹ The least productive whaling firm during this difficult period, the Hawk's Bay Whale Co. Ltd., reopened the Harbour Grace station in 1910, following *Port Saunders*' dismal catching record on the west coast during the 1909 season. As with the other companies, this type of move was unsuccessful, and the firm closed its Hawke's Bay and Harbour Grace stations in 1911 and 1913, respectively.⁵⁰

The most successful whaling operation between 1909 and 1916 was the Labrador Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd., one of the three new factories which opened in 1905. The hunting grounds off southern Labrador proved to be the most productive, enabling the company to order a new replacement vessel from Norway when *Cachelot* ran aground on Belle Isle in late August 1910, at the height of the whaling season.⁵¹ Also christened *Cachelot*, the new vessel was more powerful and strengthened for ice navigation, permitting the company to continue operations when others could not.⁵² By 1916, however, catches and world oil prices had declined to the point that Daniel Ryan, the principal investor, decided to sell the Hawke Harbour station, catcher and equipment, thus bringing the local whaling industry to a temporary close.⁵³

Conclusion

The rapid growth of the modern whaling industry in Newfoundland and Labrador could not be sustained in the face of stock overexploitation in the search for quick profit. As with other marine mammal utilization before and since, a collapse was predictable. Daniel Ryan, for example, in commenting on his involvement in the trade provided a succinct summary of the rapid rise and dramatic decline of the local whaling industry in the two decades following 1898:

Take the whole business. We had some parties introduced this, and they got along very well. Then we had two or three factories made a big success and then all wanted to get into it. I remember at the time being a member of the Government when at one time we had twenty-three applications for those factories in one batch. Fortunately for the most of these people the applications were not granted. The few who got them lost all.⁵⁴

The first exploitation-depletion cycle of the modern Newfoundland and Labrador shore-based whaling industry thus lasted just nineteen years. Altogether there would be three significant revivals, with well-defined peaks, before worldwide concern about the status of whale stocks finally led Canada to place a moratorium on commercial whaling on 21 December 1972.⁵⁵ None, however, matched the initial phase.

NOTES

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1. For a fuller discussion of the cyclical nature of commercial whaling, see C.W. Sanger, "The Origin of the Scottish Northern Whale Fishery" (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Dundee, 1985), 42-47; Sanger, "'On Good Fishing Ground But Too Early I Think:' The Impact of Greenland Right Whale Migration Patterns on Hunting Strategies in the Northern Whale Fishery, 1600-1900," *American Neptune*, LI, No. 4 (1991), 221-240; and Sanger, "Changing Resources and Hunting Grounds of Scottish Whaling-Sealing Vessels in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Scottish Geographical Journal*, CVII, No. 3 (1991), 187-197.

2. Several of the more comprehensive nineteenth-century accounts of "traditional" whaling include Charles M. Scammon, *The Marine Mammals of the North-Western Coast of North America, Described and Illustrated: Together with an Account of the American Whale-Fishery* (San Francisco, 1874); William Scoresby, Jr., *An Account of the Arctic Regions with a History and Description of the Northern Whale-Fishery* (Edinburgh, 1820; reprint, 2 vols., Newton Abbot, 1969); Alexander Starbuck, *History of the American*

Whale Fishery: From its Earliest Inception to the Year 1876 (2 vols., Washington, DC, 1877); and A. H. Clarke, "History and Present Condition of the Fishery," in G. Brown Goode (ed.), *The Fisheries and Fishing Industries of the United States* (Washington, DC, 1887), esp. 3-218.

3. The origins of "modern" whaling and the particular influence of Svend Foyn and others have been well documented. See, for example: John R. Bockstoce, *Steam Whaling in the Western Arctic* (New Bedford, 1977); Paul Budker, *Whales and Whaling* (London, 1958); Robert Burton, *The Life and Death of Whales* (London, 1973); Richard Ellis, *Men and Whales* (New York, 1991); D.E. Gaskin, *Whales, Dolphins and Seals: With Special Reference to the New Zealand Region* (London, 1972); Richard J. Harrison and Judith E. King, *Marine Mammals* (2nd ed., London, 1980); N.A. Mackintosh, *The Stocks of Whales* (London, 1965); Frederick P. Schmitt, Cornells De Jong and Frank H. Winter, F.H., *Thomas Welcome Roys: America's Pioneer of Modern Whaling* (Charlottesville, VA, 1980); and J.N. Tonnessen and A. O. Johnsen, *The History of Modern Whaling* (Berkeley, 1982). Modern whaling also required the development of exploding harpoons and winching apparatus capable of retrieving the carcasses of species which usually sank when dead.

4. Tonnessen and Johnsen, *History*, 83-84; C.W. Sanger and A.B. Dickinson, "The Origins of Modern Shore-Based Whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador: The Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd., 1896-1898," *International Journal of Maritime History*, I, No. 1 (1989), 129-157; M. Baker, A.B. Dickinson and C.W. Sanger, "Adolph Neilsen: Norwegian Influence on Newfoundland Fisheries in the Latter 19th-Early 20th Century," *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXXXVII, No. 2 (1992), 25-35; A.B. Dickinson and C.W. Sanger, "Modern Shore-Station Whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador: Expansion and Consolidation, 1898-1902," *International Journal of Maritime History*, II, No. 1 (1990), 83-116; and C.W. Sanger and A.B.

Dickinson, "Expansion of Regulated Modern Shore-Station Whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1902-1903," *The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du Nord*, I, No. 2 (1991), 1-22.

5. A. B. Dickinson and C. W. Sanger, "Modern Shore-Station Whaling in Newfoundland and Labrador: The Peak Season, 1904," *International Journal of Maritime History*, V, No. 1 (1993), 127-154; *Evening Herald* (St. John's), 30 March and 15 April 1903.
6. The Neptune Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. was formed in 1904 with a public subscription of \$90,000. A new catcher, *Neptune*, was built in Norway and work begun on a factory at Lark Harbour. All operations were suspended, however, "by reason of the unsettled Treaty Coast question." By the time the French Shore problem was resolved, whaling had taken a downturn and the investors decided not to proceed. For full details, see *Evening Herald*, 28 September 1905. Hawke Harbour was operated by the Labrador Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd.; Harbour Grace by the Harbour Grace Whaling and Trading Co. Ltd.; and Hawke's Bay by the Hawke's Bay Whaling Co. Ltd. All seventeen of the catchers used in Newfoundland and Labrador up to 1905 had been ordered newly built in Norway by Nylands Verksted and Akers Mekaniske Verksted of Oslo. See, for example, Public Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, Job Papers, W. C. Job, "Whaling Notes Compiled by William C. Job on a Visit to Norway, June 1903," typescript; and Kmdr. Chr. Christensens Whaling Museum (KCCWM), Ellefsen Papers (EP), R. B. Job to Anders Ellefsen, 27 May 1903; and A. Northfield to Ellefsen, 6 December 1907. For additional details on Nyland's involvement in the Newfoundland and Labrador whale fishery, KCCWM, EP, "Contracts." Anders Ellefsen, who was manager and owner of the Aquaforte station, brought home to Norway in 1908 documentation covering the entire operation of the Newfoundland factory between 1902 and 1908. The data not only provide the most complete information extant on the daily operations of a local whaling station but also offer important insights into the relationships the Norwegians developed with their Newfoundland business partners and neighbours. The catchers were also manned increasingly by more experienced crews. Local seamen were rehired from season to season, while the Norwegian masters, officers and engineers usually returned annually, thus gaining additional knowledge of local factors affecting the industry.
7. See, for example, *Evening Herald*, 24 March, 14 April, 17, 20 and 29 May 1905; and KCCWM, EP, Ellefsen to R. Berg, 21 April 1905. Although the opening of the season further north was delayed by stormy seas and ice, at least 226 whales were killed by the end of May: *Lynx* (forty-six), *Mic Mac* (thirty-eight), *Cabot* (thirty-eight), *Falcon* (twenty-four), *St. Lawrence* (twenty-one), *Puma* (twenty) and *Avalon* (twelve).
8. *Evening Herald*, 24 June and 5, 10 and 11 July 1905.
9. *Ibid.*, 4 November 1905. Another report declared that "the collapse this fall in the whaling industry is provoking much discussion. There are 17 factories in operation altogether, and they represent an investment - for steamers, factories and guano plants - of fully a million and a half dollars almost every cent of which is local capital." *Ibid.*, 16 November 1905.
10. Newfoundland, Department of Fisheries, *Annual Report* (St. John's, 1905), 150; Tonnessen and Johnsen, *History*, 107; and *Evening Herald*, 16 November 1905.
11. *Evening Herald*, 20 December 1905. In a letter to the editor of the *Evening Herald*, which was a response to an earlier article on a request by investors of "The Nail Factory" for tax relief, "Whaler" wrote: "Why should they receive any protection? There are other industries... that are giving ten or fifteen times more employment to the labouring class... in which local capital is also invested, with no protection. I refer to the whaling industry... I believe that some of the managing directors applied to the Government to have the licence fee either reduced or taken off, but they met with poor encouragement... why tax the whale fishery at all, any more than any other fishery?" *Ibid.*, 18 January 1906.
12. In responding to the industry's petition for relief the premier, Sir Robert Bond, stated "that he would bring the matter before his executive colleagues... [but] could not, of course, intimate what their action would be as the whole subject would require careful consideration, but... was afraid there would be no prospect of remitting the present year's fees as they were provided by law and the Government [has] no power to cancel them." *Ibid.*, 20 December 1905. The Government decided initially to take no action. *Ibid.*, 22 December 1905.

13. See, for example, *ibid.*, 20 October, 21 November, and 4, 5, 19 and 27 December 1905.

14. "The Mic Mac Whaling Co., which operated the whaler of that name and factories at Dublin Cove and Lance au Loup [sic], but which had to voluntarily liquidate and reconstruct, being \$27,000 in debt, met last week and decided to amalgamate with the Safe Harbour Whaling Company...The Phoenix will likely sell the 'Micmac' and work Dublin Cove and Safe Harbour with the 'Fin,' closing up Lance au Loup." *Ibid.*, 7 February 1906. For additional details, see *ibid.*, 14 and 15 November, and 15, 19 and 28 December 1906.

15. Newfoundland, Fisheries, *Annual Report* (1905), 150. For additional details of whaling company closures and amalgamations at the end of the 1905 season, see *Evening Herald*, 14 August, 3 October, 16 November and 20 December 1905. The stations at Snook's Arm, Trinity, Lark Harbour and L'Anse-au-Loup did not operate in 1906.

16. KCCWM, EP, Colonial Cordage Co. to Ellefsen, 19 March 1906.

17. *Evening Herald*, 17 April 1906. The delay appears to have reflected a conscious decision to reduce operating costs. Another indication of just how dismal the prospects for the 1906 season were is provided in a letter received by Ellefsen from a cooper he had employed previously. The cooper ended by expressing the "hope [that] you have some whales by this time [March]. I would have sent before only I heard there was nothing doing." KCCWM, EP, John Carter to Ellefsen, 7 March 1906.

18. See, for example, *Evening Herald*, 12 and 30 April and 3 May 1906. By the end of May, "only 50 whales had been taken by all the steamers...as against 185 during the same period last year." *Ibid.*, 26 May 1906. In commenting on the scarcity of whales, the same newspaper reported that "[fishermen coming in from all parts of the northward were often met in schools right along the shore a few years ago. Many attribute this to the constant hunting of the fish by the steam whalers now hunting here." *Ibid.*, 18 May 1906.

19. *Ibid.*, 8 May and 29 June 1906.

20. *Hawk*, operating out of Cape Broyle, "was as far as Grand Bank and this day reached Placentia Bay in quest of fish, but did not even sight a whale." *Ibid.*, 3 May 1906. Similarly, *Lynx*

(Chaleur Bay) "had to go 90 miles away from the coast" (*Ibid.*, 1 June 1906) and the *Baccalieu* (Harbour Grace) had returned "clean" following a three-day cruise. "She was down to Bonavista Bay." *Ibid.*, 2 June 1906. The catchers at Cape Charles and Hawke's Bay, meanwhile, had "to go 100 miles to sea in their quest and report cetaceans are very scarce." *Ibid.*, 10 August 1906. See also *ibid.*, 18 June 1906.

21. *Ibid.*, 29 June and 14 and 25 July 1906. A further indication of the dismal state of the industry in general and Ellefsen's operation in particular is provided in a comment by John Maclellan, Ellefsen's oil-and-bone agent in Glasgow: "I am sorry the fishery has been so poor this season." KCCWM, EP, John Maclellan to Ellefsen, 6 July 1906.

22. *Evening Herald*, 18 May and 3 and 4 September 1906; and KCCWM, EP, Ellefsen to Colonial Cordage Co., 7 August 1906; and J. H. Munroe to Ellefsen, 10 August 1906.

23. *Evening Herald*, 28 August; 20 September; 2, 15 and 24 October; and 7, 10, 15 and 17 November 1906; and KCCWM, EP, Job Brothers to Ellefsen, 23 August 1906; Ellefsen to Job Brothers, 25 August 1906; and Job Brothers to Ellefsen, 27 September 1906.

24. *Evening Herald*, 19 April, 15 September, and 4 December 1906.

25. *Ibid.*, 2 October 1907. The "southern" and "western" fisheries were complete failures. In late April a St. John's newspaper reported that "people who recently arrived from the south coast say that there is an abnormal scarcity of whales on the Newfoundland shore, and that whalers say that not a fish has been seen for weeks past between Cape Spear and Cape Ray. The fish now at Chaleur factory were taken off the Cape Breton coast." *Ibid.*, 22 April 1907. Conditions had improved little by the end of May: "For the past week nothing has been done by the western whale factories. There are no fish on the shore and steamers for those they secured had to go a long distance south." *Ibid.*, 30 May 1907.

26. The whaler *Hump*, for example, went to the Trinity station (from Dublin Cove) at the end of July "to cruise northern Bays...[where] she captured twelve of the big fish between Catalina and Cape Bonavista." *Ibid.*, 9 August 1907. The *Cabot* at Snook's Arm had equal success, landing "over

30 fish" by mid-September. *Ibid.*, 19 September 1907. Similarly, it was reported that "this has been the most successful year since the station at Beaverton [*Lynx*] opened." *Ibid.*, 4 November 1907. *Cachelot* did even better at Hawke Harbour "managing to catch 63 whales, which is considered a good season's work." *Ibid.*, 23 November 1907, and 13 January and 10 February 1908.

27. Once again, in 1908 whales were "not plentiful along the south coast." *Ibid.*, 8 May 1908. See also *ibid.*, 3, 15 and 18 June 1908. Similarly, the lone west coast factory at Hawke's Bay had not processed a single whale by the end of June, "and the prospects are very poor, the fish having all passed down [north] through the Straits [of Belle Isle]." *Ibid.*, 24 June, 28 August and 26 October 1908. The Hawke's Bay factory closed down in September "after a very unsuccessful year." *Ibid.*, 25 September 1908. For a full account of the latter half of the 1908 whaling season, see: *Ibid.*, 6, 23 and 24 July; 11, 26, 27 and 28 August; 1, 5, 12, 19, 22 and 23 September; 2, 6, 8, 14, 23 and 26 October; 3, 9, 10, 12, 13, 21 and 24 November; and 9, 12, 15, 17 and 23 December 1908.

28. *Fin*, for example, left St. John's for Kobe, Japan, on 4 January 1907, in company with *Avalon* and *Neptune*, and reached the Azores three weeks later before proceeded into the Mediterranean and through the Suez Canal. A good run was made to Port Said, but on 25 February *Fin* went ashore at Jedda, with a loss of four crew. For full details, see *ibid.*, 4, 5 and 10 January, 19 and 21 February, and 13 March 1907.

29. See, for example, *ibid.*, 4 January and 13 May 1907.

30. In an editorial on the whale fishery's "outlook," a St. John's newspaper noted that "there will be a big shortage... not more than 7 steamers operating against 16 last year, but the men who are not employed in this pursuit are being readily absorbed by the cod fishery or by the Harmsworth enterprise at Grand Falls." *Ibid.*, 20 April 1907.

31. A. B. Dickinson and C. W. Sanger, "The Origin and Development of North American Shore Station Whaling: Newfoundland and the Norwegians, 1896-1916," in B. L. Basberg, J. E. Ringstad and E. Wexelsen (eds.), *Whaling and History: Perspectives on the Evolution of the Industry* (Sandefjord, 1993), 91-100; Dickinson and Sanger, "A Newfoundland Floating Factory Whaling Expedition," *Polar Record*, XXVII (1991), 125-128; and Great

Britain, *Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee and Development in the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands* (London, 1920). The brother of Capt. Nokard Davidsen, whaling manager of the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Company, was master of the catcher *Hauken*, attached to the floating factory *Admiralan* at Deception Island in the South Shetlands. The company's plan was to deploy a factory ship to process southern whales in the austral spring and summer, then work Newfoundland and Labrador coastal waters in the northern spring. *Evening Herald*, 29 April 1907.

32. *Sobroan* (ON 96645) was built in Sunderland in 1889 and was 286 feet long, 2385 gross tons, and powered by a 230-horsepower engine. *Mercantile List and Maritime Directory*, 1907; *Evening Herald*, 22 and 23 October, and 6 November 1907; Tennessen and Johnsen, *History*, 106; A. O. Johnsen, *Norwegian Patents Relating to Whaling and the Whaling Industry, a Statistical and Historical Analysis* (Oslo, 1947); and Memorial University of Newfoundland, Maritime History Archive, Agreements and Accounts of Crew, *Sobroan*, 1907. The stem slipway was not developed until two decades later, when Petter Sorle used his 1922 patent to modify *Lansing*. See, for example, Bjorn L. Basberg, "The Floating Factory: Dominant Designs and Technological Development of Twentieth-Century Whaling Factory Ships," *The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du nord*, VIII, No. 1 (1998), 27; and Basberg, "Survival against All Odds? Shore Station Whaling at South Georgia in the Pelagic Era, 1925-1960," in Basberg, Ringstad and Wexelsen (eds.), *Whaling and History*, 157-167.

33. *Evening Herald*, 19 and 20 November 1907; and 11 and 21 May 1908; R. K. Headland, *The Island of South Georgia* (Cambridge, 1984); *Falkland Islands Magazine and Church Paper*, 19 December 1908; and *Evening Telegram*, 1 June 1987.

34. *Evening Herald*, 14 March, 11 May and 25 July 1908.

35. Headland, *Island*; and Tennessen and Johnsen, *History*, 106-107. To prevent a recurrence of spoilage during future voyages, plans were made to refit *Sobroan's* storage tanks. *Evening Herald*, 1 September 1908.

36. *Evening Herald*, 9 August 1910; Tennessen and Johnsen, *History*; and Newfoundland, Registry of Companies, Drawer 3, No. 181.

37. For a full account of the Newfoundland influence on the development of the whaling industry in British Columbia, see C. W. Sanger and A. B. Dickinson, "Newfoundland Involvement in Twentieth-Century Shore-Station Whaling in British Columbia," *Newfoundland Studies*, VII, No. 2 (1991), 97-122. Balcom sailed his sealing schooner around Cape Horn to British Columbia in 1892. W. A. Hagelund, *Whalers No More: A History of Whaling on the West Coast* (Madiera Park, BC, 1987), 56. For full details of the connections between the Balcom family in Halifax and Victoria, see Robert Lloyd Webb, *On the Northwest: Commercial Whaling in the Pacific Northwest, 1790-1967* (Vancouver, 1988), 146-156; and Tonnessen and Johnsen, *History*, 114-115.

38. Reprinted in *Evening Herald*, 5 August 1898.

39. Little is known of Rissmuller's background prior to his arrival in Newfoundland. Often described as "a German-American chemist and engineer" (J.G. Millais, *Newfoundland and Its Untrodden Ways* [London, 1907]), he married into a wealthy New York family (*Evening Herald*, 24 November 1916) and travelled extensively (Webb, *On the Northwest*, 158), before arriving in Newfoundland shortly after the second whaling station at Balaena opened in 1899. *Evening Herald*, 28 August 1899. Rissmuller arrived at the Sechart factory in December 1905 as a major shareholder in the Pacific Whaling Company. *Ibid.*, 13 December 1905. The formal arrangements between Rissmuller and Balcom were contained in a 29 November 1905 Memorandum of Agreement in which he "transferred to the Pacific Whaling Company, in perpetuity, all rights to his processes, methods, and machinery as well as his personal services as consulting chemist and engineer. Rissmuller also agreed to train and supervise assistants... to perform the necessary alterations of the whaling establishments and oil refineries of the... Company. In exchange, the company gave Rissmuller all 1,982 issued shares of its common stock. The value of the stock was \$97,800, and the arrangement made Rissmuller a major shareholder." Webb, *On the Northwest*, 157. See also Sanger and Dickinson, "Newfoundland Involvement," 104-108. For additional information on Rissmuller, see Joan M. Goddard, "The Rissmuller Factor in North American Shore Whaling, 1900-1912: The Atlantic Years," *International Journal of Maritime History*, V, No. 2 (1993), 135-155.

40. University of British Columbia Archive, AW 15474, v. 41, Canadian Minister of Marine and

Fisheries to Hon. W. Templeman, Victoria, 15 October 1904, stated that "the legislation authorizing the licensing of Whale Fisheries was based largely upon that of Newfoundland, which was formulated after the business had been in operation there two years."

41. Sanger and Dickinson, "Newfoundland Involvement," 108-116.

42. *Evening Herald*, 4 November 1909, declared that in terms of average yields "this year the whaling catch will be one of the biggest on record, the average being 90 for each steamer."

43. The one exception on the island was in Placentia Bay, which continued to be a favoured haunt of migrating whales. Only Hawke Harbour, the most northerly station, produced consistently profitable returns. See *ibid.*, 13 June 1912.

44. After Anders Ellefsen's speculative and desperate attempt to continue whaling failed in 1907, he again placed advertisements in local newspapers (*Ibid.*, 3 July 1908) and contacted other Newfoundland and foreign whaling companies. Job Brothers was given first chance to purchase the station because of its "guano factory" in Aquaforte." KCCWM, EP, Ellefsen to Job Brothers, 2 April 1908. Letters were written to prospective buyers in the US, South Africa, Nova Scotia and other parts of Canada in which Ellefsen indicated that whales locally, "should come back." KCCWM, EP, Letterbook, 14 May 1908. He also considered that an additional incentive for the purchase of his factory was its "salvage" potential due to the proximity of Aquaforte to the notorious Cape Race, where "when [a] steamer is out whaling, she has [a] good chance of being first at the scene of the wreck." KCCWM, EP, Ellefsen to Joseph Salter's Sons, North Sydney, NS, 9 July 1908. Despite his very best efforts, no serious offers were received. As winter approached, and he became anxious to return home, Ellefsen wrote despairingly to his father in Norway: "Cannot obtain on offer. May I leave?" KCCWM, EP, Anders Ellefsen to Andreas Ellefsen, "10 October 1908. See also *Evening Herald*, 20, 28 and 30 March; and 1, 6, 8, 11, 13 and 18 April 1910; 6, 8, 10, 13, 14 and 16 January 1914; 4, 11 and 19 February; and 1, 3, 6, 9 and 12 April 1915; and 2 February, 4 May and 19 September 1916.

45. The eventual collapse of the Newfoundland and Labrador whaling industry was further delayed by increases in whale oil and bone prices brought

about by World War I and developments in foreign markets. *Evening Herald*, 18 April 1914 and 2 May 1915.

46. For details of the operation of the Cabot Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. between 1909 and 1914, see *ibid.*, 6 and 24 March; 8 and 12 June; 3 and 17 July; 24 August, 7 October; 30 November; and 13 December 1909; 25 January; 22 April; 13 May; 4 July; 9 and 16 September; 25 and 26 October; and 2, 5, and 22 November 1910; 16, 20 and 24 March; 29 April; 8 and 20 May; 15 and 21 June; 1, 11, 18 and 22 July; 4 August; 26 September; 4 and 5 October; 6 and 9 November; and 6 December 1911; 8 and 10 April; 14, 16 and 17 May; 13 and 15 June; 19 July; 2, 12 and 16 August; 5 and 25 September; 1, 5, 8 and 14 October; and 13 November 1912; 4 February; 19 March; 1, 9, 12 and 28 April; 8 and 31 May; 27 June; 7, 8, 17 and 18 July; 14, 16 and 29 August; 12 September; and 21 November 1913; and 4 February; 23 and 27 March; 25 April; 13 and 21 May; 6, 16 and 23 June; 28 July; 3 and 9 August; and 29 September 1914.

47. For details of the operation of the Newfoundland Steam Whaling Co. Ltd. between 1909 and 1915, see *ibid.*, 22 February; 19 and 23 March; 3, 12, 13, 16, 20 and 21 July; 24 August; 3, 17 and 18 September; 6 and 22 October; and 2, 3, and 5 November 1909; 28 March; 9, 20 and 30 April; 5 and 27 May; 7 June; 1, 18 and 26 July; 24 August; 13 and 16 September; 22, 28, 29 and 30 November; and 6 December 1910; 20 March; 17 May; 21 June; 31 July; 7 and 19 August; 8 September; 5, 11, 17, 19, 21 and 28 October; 25 and 27 November; and 6 December 1911; 1 and 3 April; 3, 17, 21 and 22 May; 13, 21 and 25 June; 15, 25 and 26 August; 9 October; and 13 and 18 November 1912; 12 April; 8 and 31 May; and 26 June 1913; 4 February; 16, 23, and 29 June; 22 August; and 8 and 29 September 1914; and 19 March; 16 and 24 April; 12 May; 17 June; and 25 October 1915.

48. For details of the operations of the Cape Broyle Whaling and Trading Co. Ltd. between 1909 and 1912, see *ibid.*, 23 March; 12 June; 21 August; 3, 17 and 18 September; 18 and 29 October; and 16 and 22 November 1909; 1, 10 and 19 March; 13 and 20 April; 23 May; 8 and 22 July; 6 August; 3 and 16 September; 1, 15 and 31 October; and 15, 28 and 29 November 1910; 20 March; 7 April; 10, 13, 16, 17, 18 and 25 May; 1, 8, 10, 15, 16, 20, 21 and 27 June; 4 and 24 July; 22 and 24 August; 12 and 30 September; 5 and 14 October; and 6 December 1911; 17 April; 8, 17, 21 and 25 May; 8, 10 and 20 June; 2, 12, and 17 August; 2

September; and 13 November 1912.

49. For details of the operations of the Phoenix Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. between 1909 and 1914, see *ibid.*, 13 and 24 March; 1, 3 and 5 April; 3, 12 and 30 July; 24 August; 2, 3, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 28 September; 11 October; 16, 18 and 30 November; and 1 December 1909; 25 January; 23 March; 8, 9, 12 and 14 April; 3, 4, 5 and 10 May; 17, 24 and 29 June; 1, 8, 11, 14, 22 and 30 July; 10, 15, 20 and 22 August; 1, 2, 6, 8, 13, 16, 20, 22, 27 and 29 September; 1, 4, 7, 14, 17, 18 and 25 October; 15, 22, 28, 29 and 30 November; and 1, 2 and 3 December 1910; 16, 20 and 24 March; 8, 11 and 22 April; 8, 16 and 18 May; 6, 12, 15, 21 and 27 June; 7, 8, 10, 18 and 25 July; 25 and 26 September; 14 October; 2, 7 and 25 November; and 6 December 1911; 20, 21, 28 and 30 March; 13 April; 13, 17 and 21 May; 5 and 18 June; 19 July; 20 August; 30 September; 11 October; and 12 and 13 November 1912; 27 January; 3, 12 and 21 April; 8 and 14 May; 10, 12 and 13 June; 7, 8, 12 and 29 July; 9 August; and 1, 24 and 30 October 1913; and 4 February; 7 and 23 March; 25 and 28 April; 21 and 30 May; 6, 16 and 23 June; 29 September; and 7 October 1914.

50. For details of the operation of the Hawke's Bay Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. between 1909 and 1913, see *ibid.*, 19 May; 9 July; 21 August; 3 and 18 September; and 1 and 9 October 1909; 18 April; 9, 13, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 28 and 30 September; 1, 4, and 7 October; and 2, 28 and 29 November 1910; 20 March; 26 April; 18, 22 and 24 May; 8 and 9 June; 18 and 29 August; 12, 28 and 29 September; 5 October; 30 November; and 2 and 6 December 1911; 9, 16 and 17 May; and 6 and 13 November 1912; and 28 April; and 8 May 1913.

51. For details of the operation of the Labrador Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. between 1909 and 1910, see *ibid.*, 17 and 24 May; 21 June; 12, 20, 22 and 28 July; 10 and 30 August; 3 and 15 September; 6, 12 and 26 October; and 3, 10, 16, 17 and 18 November 1909; and 17 and 23 May; 23 June; 4, 23 and 25 July; 10, 22, 26 and 30 August; 7 and 19 September; and 18, 22 and 30 November 1910. "Word was received Saturday [27 August] that the whaling steamer *Cachelot* was beached at Crowhead Cove [eastern end of Belle Isle] and is not likely to hold together much longer as the bottom is almost completely pounded out of her. The fishing season is now at its best and the loss to the Company is a serious one... as whale fishing on that coast [southern Labrador] does not finish until

late in the fall." *Ibid.*, 29 August 1910. See also *ibid.*, 25 August; and 2 and 7 September 1910.

52. "She is the same size as the old *Cachelot* but is stronger in the bow and amid ships. She is also fitted with the latest appliances and the most modern gun." *Ibid.*, 6 June 1911. For details of the operations of the Labrador Whaling and Manufacturing Co. Ltd. between 1911 and 1916, see *ibid.*, 4, 11 and 25 May; 8 and 28 June; 16 and 31 August; 1 September; 3 and 5 October; 2 and 30 November; and 1, 6, and 7 December 1911; 23 January; 9, 29 and 30 April; 14 and 20 May; 5 June; 16 and 19 July; 3 and 30 August; 5 October; 13 and 29 November; and 9 and 13 December 1912; 24 January; 28 March; 8, 12, 17, 29 and 31 May; 30 June; 8 and 30 July; 16 and 21 August; 5, 12, 15 and 24 September; and 18, 20 and 24 November 1913; 23 January; 13, 21 and 30 May; 6, 16 and 23 June; 2 and 17 July; 19 and 27 August; 16, 28 and 29 September; 22 and 24 October; and 3, 16, 20 and 23 November 1914; 15, 16 and 24 April; 2, 8, 12, 17 and 26 June; 3, 8, 17, 20 and 23 July; 7, 10 and 28 August; 13, 18 and 25 Septem-

ber; 13, 14, 15, 20 and 21 October; 2, 6, 10 and 25 November; and 1, 2, 3 and 10 December 1915; and 14, 15, 17 and 20 January; 22 and 30 May; 2, 7 and 27 June; 1 and 18 July; 1, 5, 9, 19, 21 and 29 August; 4 and 6 September; 2, 24 and 27 October; and 13, 16 and 24 November 1916.

53. *Ibid.*, 12 May 1917. *Cachelot* was subsequently chartered for "patrol work."

54. *Ibid.*, 2% July 1917.

55. C. W. Sanger and A. B. Dickinson, "Renewal of Newfoundland and Labrador Shore-Station Whaling, 1918-1936," *International Journal of Maritime History*, VII, No. 1 (1995), 83-103; Dickinson and Sanger, "Newfoundland and Labrador Shore-Station Whaling: The Third Major Phase, 1937-1951," *International Journal of Maritime History*, XI, No. 1 (1999), 101-116; and Dickinson and Sanger, "Newfoundland and Labrador Shore-Station Whaling: The Final Demise, 1951-1972," *The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du nord*, IX, No. 3 (1999), 39-52.