Port Royal

* Population 1940: 111
* (pop. 1966, 90)
* Fishing-lobster-herring settlement on west side of Placentia Bay
* 2 miles from Harbour Buffett
* A resettled fishing community, Port Royal was located on the southeastern sided of Mussell Harbour, a 3km –long inlet on the west side of Long Island, Placentia Bay.
* Sheltered by Barren Island and offering close access to cod fishing grounds in Central Channel, Port Royal was probably settled in the 1830s by a few families who moved there from Harbour Buffett qv, on the other side of Long Island but less than a mile away overland.
* Throughout its history Port Royal was a Roman Catholic community, while Harbour Buffett, originally settled by Irish Roman Catholics, soon became overwhelming protestant. Local tradition has it that it was tensions between the denominations that eventually led to the concentration of Roman Catholics at Port Royal.
* Port Royal first appears in the Census in 1857 (As Mussel Harbour) with a population of 40, increasing to 108 by 1869. Family names include Barry, Hann, Hayes, Miller and Murphy. In that year the inhabitants of Mussell Harbour include 70 Roman Catholics, who had a Church and 38 members of the Church of England. It is likely that as least some of the latter were living at the nort end of the harbour, known as Mussell Harbour Arm. In later years the north side of Mussell Harbour Arm was exclusively a Church of England community later named kingwell qv, while Musswll harbour Arm South was Roman Catholic and came to be considered a part of Port Royal.
* It is likely that up until the 1800s most of the inshore fisherman of Port Royal were supplied by Harbour Buffett merchant Thomas Hann. In later years, as motor boats became more common, ties with Merasheen increased. Still, most Port Royal residents were frequently in Harbour Buffett to purchase supplies or obtain work. S
* Some men also went to the ban fishing from the early 1900s in ships sailing out of Harbour Buffett firm. (Roman Catholic residents of harbour Buffett attended mass in Port Royal)
* In 1901, the first year in which the community later known as Port Royal was enumerated separately, there were 53 people at Mussell Harbour. The next year a new source of employment in the area opened up, with the Merasheen Island, directly across the channel from Port Royal.
* Port Royal men continued to find seasonal employment at Rosiru until the factory was closed in 1944. In later years some continued their involvement in whaling- at Williamsport on the great Northern Peninsula and Hawke Harbour, Labrador.
* The name Port Royal first appears in the census in 1911, when the population was 123. With fluctuations in the whaling industry and a severe decline in the inshore fishery from the 1930s, the population never rose much above that number.
* By 1962 there were only a few fishing families left in the community (family names Barry, Hann, Leonard, Ryan and Walsh), while other men were at sea or otherwise absent from Port Royal for much of the year. The community was resettled in the late 1960s, most of the remaining people moving to long Harbour or Placentia area.

Howard C. Brown (1983), victor butler (1980), census (1857-1966), list of Electors (1962) Lovell’s Newfoundland Directory (1871) , statsticsP: Federal – provincial resettlement program (1975?), Archives (A-7-1), Hand Gazetteer and Almanac, Newfoundland 1940.