

# Sound Island

- Population 1940: 178
- (pop.1951, 89).
- Fishing-lobstering settlement at the North West head of Placentia Bay, near Swift Current
- 80 miles from Argentia
- Coastal boat "Home" carrying passengers, freight, and mail
- 4 radios (based on annual \$2.00 fee paid)
- Post and Telegraph office with money order
- The site of abandoned fishing community, Sound Island is in the north western part of Placentia Bay, just south of Garden Cove qv,
- Moved in the 1950s. The island was settled by one or two families at several locations, but the two main concentrations were coves on the northeast corner of the island, facing the sound which separates the island from the mainland: Back Cove (identified on maps as Maggoty Cove) and Newtown
- The first record reference to settlement is from 1805, when William Cummins was resident.
- Rev. Charles Blackman noted a small protestant congregation there in about 1820, while Cyrus Crew (or Crewe), formerly a fisherman with Spurrier and Company of Bar Haven, was on Sound Island in 1830, acting as an agent for merchant William Magill.
- Other early family names of Sound Island include Allen, Beazley, Beck, Brinston, Eddy, Gilbert, Hollett, Guy, Piercey and Stacey.
- Family traditions identify another pioneer settler as being Patrick Brown (of Kilkenney, Ireland). The brown family were Roman Catholics and settled at Browns Cove, on the east side of the island. In later years most of the Roman Catholics minority as Sound Island lived at the south end, known as Muddy Hole or Bollards town.
- The settlement of Sound Island appears to have been seasonal at first, as in 1835 Wix reported that many families spent their winters at Pipers Hole (Swift Current qv), hunting caribou.
- In 1836 there were 157 people on the island, fishing for cod and salmon and keeping a handful of cattle and sheep. By mid-century Sound Island supported a thriving western boat qv fishery, concentrating on the grounds around Cape St. Mary's.
- There were also a few sealing vessels sailing from the settlement. As merchants began to withdraw from Isle Valen and Bar Haven, Sound Island became a center trade in inner Placentia Bay.
- Merchants opening in 1871 were Philip Brown and James Hollett. The first Episcopalian (Church of England) church was built sometime before 1845. Two years later a

Methodist church was established with Charles Dormis serving there as resident clergyman by 1869.

- A small Roman Catholic chapel was opened by 1884, but for most of the community's history, Methodism was the dominant religion.
- Twenty-five lobster factories had been started on the island in 1901 as the areas many inlets, shoals and Small Island provided seines in the Reach between the mainland and barren, woody and sound islands.
- A.H Murry qv of St. Johns began trading in herring at Sound Island in the early 1900s and eventually became the largest merchant in the community, with the firm in later years being known as sound island stores.
- Between 1921 and 1935 the fishery in Placentia Bay declined and the population of sound island families, in 1953 the remaining residents decided to resettle to garden cove.
- In August of 1993 a reunion at the island was attended by several hundred people.

H.C Brown (1974; 1985) George and Shirley Hollett (interview, June 1993) E.R. Seary (1977), Robert Wells (1960), Edward Wix (1836), census (1836-1951), Lovells Newfoundland Directory (1871), Sound Island reunion 93 book of memories (1993), Hand Book Gazetteer and Almanac, Newfoundland 1940.