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THE BUTT FAMILY  
OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
BY W. JOHN BUTT

revised 10 me  
rfd Hist. Society  
by the author

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This presentation on the history and genealogy of the BUTT family of Newfoundland and Labrador will, of necessity, be inadequate and incomplete. It is simply impossible to condense all the historical and genealogical material researched and collected by the author into a comprehensive lecture to be delivered in the time available. Besides, all the information, as you would suspect, is not in continuity, but rather often disjointed and in some cases based on the interpretation of seemingly related times and circumstances. There are special problems with the so-called 'dead years' for names in this province. These are (a) the years up to 1675 and (b) those from 1715 to 1765. There are, of course, times and places when and where substantial factual information does exist. You will note then that not all the reader's question can or will be answered and not every person or groups of persons bearing the name BUTT can be stitched together in this history and genealogy. However, there is strong evidence to support the belief that the vast majority, if not all those bearing the name BUTT in Newfoundland and Labrador, are members of a single stemmed family, with a limited number of exceptions, but more about that later.

The author has made an effort to tell the story of the BUTT family in the context of the appropriate period of history generally and to include items of human interest, both of which helps to put flesh on what otherwise could be a bare skeleton.

By way of further introduction let us consider the origin and meaning of the name BUTT. Reaney, in his outstanding publication 'The Origin of English Surnames' identifies the name BUTT(A) as being very old and states it was certainly in use in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (c1090-1170). Professor Basil Cottle of the University of Bristol stated in correspondence that by the twelfth century BUTT was known as a first name, but it is much older. Other sources indicate that 'the family of BUTT' in its different branches has been distinguished by various spellings of the name-DE BUTTS, BUTTS or BUTT. Other variations are BUT, LE BUT, BUTTE and BUTTES and there are others. Authorities claim, despite the difference in spellings, including in some cases the use of a preposition, that the name has changed very little over the centuries and in this particular, it is unique. It is a monosyllable and does not lend itself easily to change either in script or speech.

Very early instances of the name appear in Norfolk and Suffolk (East Anglia in medieval days) and in London and subsequently along the length of the 'Saxon Shore' from The Wash on the seashore of the shire of Norfolk to the West Country of Dorset, Devon, Somerset and adjacent shires. However, it is more probable that the name was transported with the Saxons as they moved inland via the rivers, and their tributaries, of the East Coast of Britian-up the Humber river and down the Trent and the Severn;

up the Nen and the Ouse from The Wash, or again up the Thames and its tributaries, conquering or taking over villages and towns as they went , but all converging in the area of Hardy's Wessex.

Unusual as it may seem those ancient members of the East Anglia BUTT family must have been among the earliest to have both a first name and a surname. Among them was one HUBERT BUT living in a Norfolk village in the year 1114 and one ROBERTUS BUT dated 1137. ROBERTUS, however, was the son of one WILLIAM BUT who, therefore, would be the very earliest recorded member of this family, having been born and lived, it can be assumed, in the eleventh century. In the next centuries, the 12th and 13th, the name BUT(T) is recorded in several other shires, Bedfordshire, Cheshire, Middlesex(London) and later still in several other shires including , of course, the West Country shires. As stated above the history of this Norfolk family is well documented but this is not the time or the place to pursue it. It is referred to here only to substantiate the origin of the BUTT name as being Saxon or Germanic. Nevertheless, it would be interesting and probably profitable or productive to investigate in so far as possible the suggested movements of the Saxons up the rivers from the east coast of Britain as outlined in the preceding paragraph.

Naturally the BUTT name would occur in East Anglia in the first instance because it was there that the early Saxons, either by invitation from the British tribes living in the area or in search of conquest, landed from across the North Sea in their longboats as early as 446 A.D. and continued to do so for several centuries thereafter, moving inland via the rivers and along the seacoast to the south and the southwest, and on to the area known later as The West Country. Even to-day the name BUTT is not uncommon in the northwest of West Germany. The current telephone directory of West Berlin contains a block of BUTT names together with addresses, including one Josef (Joseph) BUTT, one Johann (John) BUTT, a Willi (willie) BUTT and several others. In his volume "British Family Names, Their Origin and Meaning" Henry Barber states that 'old records indicate that the first members of the BUTT family were recorded as Saxon knights in England prior to 1066'. In other words the BUTT name was in England before the coming of William the Conqueror.

Evidence of the origin of the name is also contained in its meaning, of which three have been suggested. (a) A nickname for the 'thicker end, such as the stump (butt) of a tree' and probably used to describe 'a thickset person'. (b) the name applied to the caretaker of the target area (the butts) of an archery range. Authorities tend to believe that the BUTTS gave their name to this end of an archery range rather than vice versa. (c) The name BUTT is derived from the fish called the 'flounder' (the German flunder) or the English plaice , commonly named the flatfish or the sole by us, but known to the Saxons as 'le but'. An ancient coat-of arms belonging to a family named BUTT in Prussia of northwestern Germany has as its centrepiece the 'flounder' (flunder). Even in Germany to-day the 'flounder' (flunder) - the flatfish or sole is named "Der Butt". At least six different varieties of the species we commonly call 'flatfish' has names in both the English and the German languages that end in 'but' or 'butt' or 'bot' or 'bott', such as 'goldbutt', 'steinbutt', 'glattbutt', or simply 'bot'.

And right here at home in our Nfld bays we have the 'turbot' and the 'halibut', names imported from the Old Country. The Saxons , by the way, regarded the 'le but' as a very special fish and harvested it along the shores of what is to-day southern Denmark and northwestern Germany. At least one historian has written that the Saxons believed the 'le but' to be a 'holy fish'

As you know, to assist in identifying the origin and meaning of the name BUTT reference has been made earlier to the Norfolk-Suffolk family. However, it so happens that a member of this very old and historic family was the first recorded BUTT to visit the shores of Newfoundland. That was in 1536- only 39 years after John Cabot's discovery of the island. In that year a London gentleman, one Master Hoare (Hore) conceived the idea of a "voyage of discovery upon the Northwest Parts of America" and encouraged numerous gentleman and others to join him. As stated it was a 'voyage of discovery'. It most certainly was not a fishing trip, judging from the 30 gentlemen who came with him. Probably it should be classified as the first tourist voyage from the Old World to the New. The 'gentleman' were of the upper classes; among them was Master Thomas BUTTS, son of Sir William BUTTS, a member of the Norfolk-Suffolk family and physician to King Henry the VIIIth. Three ships and ninety crewmen were employed-all mustered at Gravesend and sailing at the end of April.

After a long voyage they came to the Isle of Penguins, which was full of 'great foules'. The rocks of the Isle were covered with an abundance of eggs. Also there were numerous white and black bears. We can believe they had come upon the Funk Islands with its huge population of the Great Auks, and many other sea birds. Undoubtedly they replenished their meat supplies and the voyage continued for many weeks during which food supplies were exhausted. The gentlemen and crews suffered terrible hardships and hunger, many perishing and two ships were lost. In these dreadful circumstances the remaining ship with its remnants of gentlemen and crew came upon a French ship in a harbour apparently on the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland. It was shipshape and provisioned. The survivors, among whom was Master Thomas BUTTS, captured and took command of the French ship and set sail for England, arriving at St. Ives in Cornwall in October, completing a most horrendous voyage of some six months- the most terrible tourist excursion in history.

Much of the foregoing information accrued because of intensive efforts by the author to trace the origin and meaning of the name BUTT, but also to find a direct link between some village, town or shire in England and the BUTT family in Newfoundland. Much research was done in the most likely area, that is , the Southwest Country of England, especially in Devon and Dorset, and Somerset. In particular the towns of Teignmouth , Dartmouth and Poole and Wimborne Minister were considered as were many possible sources all over the West Country, but no conclusive information was forthcoming. The ancestral home of the first BUTT, namely ROGER BUTT, to settle permanently in Nfld awaits further research.



In a lecture entitled "The Pioneers of Conception Bay" delivered by the well known early Nfld historian, H.F.Shortis, in July, 1910, he stated

"ROGER BUTT, with his wife and four children and his four servants, was the principal man in CROCKER'S COVE in 1675. Their homestead was CROCKER'S COVE and every old family in Conception Bay will tell you that the BUTTS are one of the oldest families in the island. You will find families of this name in all parts of the island to-day and everyone will tell you their homestead was CROCKER'S COVE. There is no doubt that the BUTTS were very important persons of our early history"

CROCKER'S COVE then, at the northeast end of CARBONEAR, is the ancestral home of the BUTT family of Newfoundland and Labrador.

ROGER BUTT was a planter in CROCKER'S COVE IN 1675 and a family man with a wife and four children; with him were four servants. The only property reported in Berry's census for that year was one stage and one boat. Does his meager possessions suggest that he had not been long in Conception Bay? Or did Berry or his agent omit to list a complete inventory? He must have had some shelter- a house or other lodging- for his family and his servants.

In 1676 ROGER BUTT (spelt BUTTS) was still in CROCKER'S COVE with his wife and the same four children, but he now had 10 servants and 2 boats and the stage. But ROGER'S family and plantation were growing. In 1677 there were 5 children, 3 males and 2 females, 8 servants and new buildings, including 1 house, 2 stores or lodging houses, 1 traine fats or vats (for cod oil) and there were 4 hoggs (sic).

There can be no doubt that ROGER was well established in CROCKER'S COVE by this time. He is again included in the census of 1681. His family now consists of a wife and 6 children- there are 8 of them. There are 10 servants too. It is reasonable to believe that he is not at this time a migratory fisherman, if indeed, he ever was one. He is a permanent resident of Conception Bay, who together with his family and crew had constructed and developed a sizable plantation. A review of the several substantial property inheritances by his descendants some years later indicates considerable 'real estate' for those years in a new island, albeit mostly wilderness, beset by the problems of pioneering and probably harrassment by fishing ships of various nationalities, including the English, and not to mention the French raids of 1696-97, 1705, 1708-09 and later 1762

At this point in this genealogy we are upon one of the deadly periods for family names in Nfld referred to earlier, that is the period 1715-1765. Apart from some important historical personalities, there is an almost complete absence of family names, although one Joseph BUTT was living in Clown's (Cloune's) Cove in 1747, only 66 years after ROGER was living in CROCKER'S COVE and also only 41 years after one John BUTT was in the same area, and another John BUTT, who was born in Nfld in 1728, sailed to England in a vessel owned by Mr. Isaac Lester of Poole as a passenger in 1755.

Undoubtedly the French raids contributed to these circumstances and any existing records of the time were burnt or confiscated or relocated and lost. Indeed it appears that planters or others who survived these turbulent years one way or another had to rely on their memories or oral traditions to confirm earlier ownership or claims to their plantations or lands and beaches or those of their fathers or mothers or other members of their families when they returned to their former settlements. In the Plantations books we find again and again the statements in respect of registration of land and property, "in possession of the family for 61, or 80 or even 124 years". As an example a Joseph BUTT of CROCKER'S COVE in 1767 inherited 1 stage, 1 beach, 1 flake, 5 houses, 5 gardens and 1 meadow by deed of gift from his father, and it is stated in the written word "in possession of the family for 61 years". That would be since 1707. In another instance one Elizabeth Knight inherited considerable property in CROCKER'S COVE in 1755. The plantation books record that this bequest was "by deed of gift from her father, in possession of the family for upwards of 80 years". Therefore, these properties were in possession of her family in 1675 or even earlier. Since there were no family by the name of Knight in CROCKER'S COVE during this period, the thought arises that Elizabeth Knight may have been a descendant, possibly, a granddaughter of ROGER BUTT.

My outline of the information in the preceding two paragraphs is to bridge the gap of the so-called 'deadly years', at least in CROCKER'S COVE, when there was an absence of names generally around the bay. Obviously, on the basis of the recorded names and inheritances, there is strong evidence of the continuity of the BUTT family in CROCKER'S COVE. Again the name of one John BUTT, referred to above, is recorded as a resident of Conception Bay in 1706; most likely one of ROGER'S sons.

In the days of ROGER BUTT in CROCKER'S COVE, there was only one other planter, a neighbour who resided on the south side of the brook. His name was Bartholomew Keys (or Coyne or Caines), but he disappeared after the census of 1677. In the meantime, other planters were settled in Cloune's Cove (Clown's Cove), a Parsons, a Moores and a third named Pike, from whom one Joseph BUTT, probably from CROCKER'S COVE, purchased land and buildings in 1747 for £20.00

About and after this time the BUTTS came out of the woods (maybe literally) in sizable numbers. Of course, it was the time too of much renewed settlement in Newfoundland. In 1681 ROGER'S family in CROCKER'S COVE numbered 8 persons, but by the time of the French raids in 1696-97, 1705 and 1709-09 his family were all young men and women, having grown up during the periods of hostilities. Presumably the family took refuge, periodically as required, on Carbonear Island or they may have gone or been taken to St. John's, Placentia or even Quebec or they may have sailed to England. Or they may have moved to some other settlement. However, it would appear that, one way or another, they stayed around. As already indicated, at least two John BUTTS and two Joseph BUTTS were in the vicinity. There were others too- William BUTT and George BUTT were settled at Carbonear, South Side.

And three brothers, Henry, Joseph and Hezekiah turned up at CROCKER'S COVE and inherited fishing premises, houses, and gardens which are identifiable as the original 'BUTT PLANTATION", or part of it.

At this point, when the BUTT planters and others returned from wherever, it may be appropriate to review and summarize the evidence that supports the continuity and integrity of this genealogy.

(a) The name ROGER BUTT occurs and reoccurs in the BUTT family from Berry's census of 1675 down to the present day. It is recorded several times in the plantations books, it appears in Freshwater in 1770, in Harbour Grace in 1781 and again in 1790, in Perry's Cove in 1843, in the South Side of Carbonear in 1864, in Cat Harbour (Lumsden) after 1838 and there are several more instances. As recently as the early 1900s a ROGER BUTT from either Clown's Cove or Perry's Cove visited the author's family in CROCKER'S COVE many times on the basis of a family relationship. The repetition of generally used names such as William, John or Joseph would not be so significant, but ROGER was actually rare in those days of our early history and occurred only in the BUTT family for many generations, that is, as a recorded first name.

(b) Considerable research has not uncovered any other individual BUTT or BUTT family from the Old Country planting or settling anywhere at any time in Conception Bay or elsewhere in the island, apart from a John BUTT who apparently emigrated from England to Perry's Cove about 1842 and a couple of other BUTT families who are suspected as having come over in the 1800s, but these have not been proven. The information about the John BUTT of Perry's Cove was obtained directly from his granddaughter who passed away in 1979 at 87 years of age.

(c) It is not uncommon when researching early church records or newspapers to find obituaries stating that the deceased was a native of such and such a village, town or shire of England or Ireland. No such obituary was discovered for even one BUTT. It is recognized this is not conclusive, but it is significant.

(d) After reading the author's original draft manuscript on the BUTT family and on the basis of his wide and intimate knowledge of family names in Newfoundland, the late Dr. Keith Matthews stated that the BUTTS could be a single stemmed family, with a few exceptions.

(e) Thornton's map of the Harbour Grace-Carbonear area of 1689 identifies a stage and building(s) on the northeasterly side or 'corner' of the beach and adjacent area of Croker's (CROCKER'S) COVE. This is the exact location where the BUTT family (including the author and his father) fished in the 1930s and also where the author's grandfather and his six sons fished in the last century and the early part of this one and preceding BUTT generations fished in the centuries before. The author's father, Joseph, and the author himself was born in this same general area. Moreover, it is the same site where ROGER BUTT'S plantation was located in 1675, and subsequent years. Several generations of the BUTT family were born, lived

and fished on this site. Even up to this day a member of the family owns a parcel of land in this area which must have been part of the original homestead.

A small brook divides the shallow valley , separating the north from the south side of CROCKER'S COVE and was probably a boundary for plantations initially. All the BUTT land and property was on the north side of the brook in the early years but later the family acquired a tract of land on the south side, the southern boundary of which was determined by a public road running approximately east and west along the valley floor. At that time the BUTT family must have owned a fairly substantial area of land, but in time it was shared with or sold to others, most likely the descendants of one Callaghan McCarthy since in the 1900s parcels of land occupied by members of the BUTT family were interspersed with blocks occupied by the McCarthys. Most of the land owned by the members of the BUTT family was held until the 1950s, when much of it was sold. At the north of the meadows was (and is) a very steep and massive grey stone hill running up several hundred feet, a landmark known for many generations as JOE BUTT'S hill . It was a solid and durable buttress against northerly and northeasterly gales providing some protection and relief for those of the BUTT family and subsequently others whose homes, meadows and stages nestled at its feet. In the 1930s there were two old fish storage rooms and a well constructed shed on the beach which must have come down through two or three generations of the BUTTS or more.

To return to the times of Henry and Joseph and Hezekiah in CROCKER'S COVE and Henry in Clown's cove and others, there are BUTTS all over the place in the COVE in the middle and latter parts of the 1700s and on into the 1800s and later. The plantations books and early, but limited, church records testify to the large BUTT families living and fishing there in those years. Obviously, the waterfront, or what they called the beach, in this small COVE must have been completely occupied, even overcrowded. Besides, there were newcomers now-the Kennedys, the Bransfields, the Clarkes, the Pikes, the Ashes, the Coles and others, including Callaghan McCarthy referred to above, whose plantation was adjacent to the BUTT plantation. And not only were the BUTT families large but they were predominately male with only a couple of exceptions the boys outnumbered the girls. Population pressure in this small fishing village must have been high and sites for stages on the beach literally unavailable. Consequently, some of the BUTT families , and others, fanned out along the coast to settle in other coves and harbours. They moved 'up the bay' to Carbonear and Carbonear, South Side, to Harbour Grace, to Spaniard's Bay and alternately they moved 'down the bay', that is, 'down north' to Clown's Cove, Freshwater, Perry's Cove and even further then or later, to Broad Cove, Blackhead, Bradley's Cove and Western Bay. In the meantime, some other families had settled or were settling in these coves, some , no doubt, directly from England and Ireland. Some families, including the BUTTS, went even further north in course of time, planting in Bonavista Bay and Notre Dame Bay to carry on the seal, as well as the cod fishery.



At this time a new religious movement influenced their lives. Methodism came to Harbour Grace and Carbonear in 1765 and it came to CROCKER'S COVE and in the months and years following to all the other coves and harbours, spreading 'up(or is it down)' the North Shore of Conception Bay, growing rapidly, once it was established, converting numerous individuals. It would appear that many of the BUTT families - the majority of them- were converts too, not only in their old homestead , but all along the shore. This is a new aspect in the genealogy, requiring research in at least two, if not three, sets of church records and histories. In this connection, it is recorded that George Thoresby, a Methodist minister, conducted services and class meetings in CROCKER'S COVE in 1796 and was a regular visiting minister there. He writes that on April 24th, 1797 he was returning to CROCER'S(sic) COVE and met a Mr. Birt on the road. Mr Birt was in tears and very distressed because his two sons had gone out on the ice that morning and had not returned, and he feared they were lost. We do not know the outcome of this event, but up to that time and later the name "Birt" was unknown anywhere in the area and one can assume that the Rev. Thoresby talked with a Mr. BUTT.

At this time(late 1700s and early 1800s) there were several BUTT families in CROCKER'S COVE and elsewhere around the bay and a generous use of the usual common names , such as Joseph, John, William, Samuel and others, Constructing a family tree or history was a baffling problem to say the least at this period and the omission of the names of wives and children from the records in some cases added further complications in tracing direct descent.

However, a shaft of light in the genealogical shadows was a Last Will and Testament made by a Joseph BUTT in 1841 in CROCKER'S COVE, He was obviously a substantial member of the family, a patriarchal personality, who exercised a large measure of authority over his family and the property. This document ,together with extracts from the plantation books, linked together the family history from the early 1700s to the late 1800s, at which point church records completed the picture.

Reference has already been made to the three brothers, Henry, JOSEPH and Hezekiah who 'turned up at CROCKER'S COVE and inherited fishing premises, houses and gardens! However, in addition to this trio, there were at least one other family group who also inherited property in the COVE. These were a brother and three married sisters, another Joseph BUTT, Anne Rowe, Frances Baker, and Jane Parsons. Their inheritance consisted of ' beach property, 2 houses and four gardens' by their father's Will(P.B.1783), of which no copy is available. And there is even another Joseph BUTT, apparently without any associated family member-wife, sister or brother-but of CROCKER:S COVE, who 'inherited beach property, 5 houses, 5 gardens by deed of gift from his father 1767. It is written that these properties were in the family for 61 years, which takes the ownership back to 1707, that is , to the days of the John BUTT who lived in Conception Bay in 1706 and even before the days of another John BUTT who was born there in 1728. However, our special interest here is the three inheritors, the three brothers , Henry, JOSEPH and Hezekiah, of which JOSEPH was the WILLMAKER. He contributed much to the diagrammatic BUTT genealogy on the following page.



BUTT  
Devon or Dorset

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ROGER BUTT

Planter, Crocker's Cove, 1675  
" " " , 1676  
" " " , 1677  
" " " , 1681

Six Children

John Butt  
Resident in Conception  
Bay in 1706

Absence of  
names and families  
1713-65

Joseph Butt, Anne  
Rowe, Frances Baker,  
Jane Parsons inher-  
ited beach proper-  
ty, 2 houses, 4 gar-  
dens by their fat-  
her's Will.P.B.  
1783

Joseph Butt of Crocker's  
Cove inherited beach pro-  
perty, 5 houses, 5 gar-  
dens by deed of gift  
from his father 1767. In  
the family for 61 years  
-from 1707

Henry, Joseph, Hezekiah,  
bros, inherited 1 stage,  
1 flake, 3 houses, 5 gardens,  
2 meadows. Joseph made a WILL  
in 1841, when an elderly man,  
born in the late 1700s. Wife  
5 children (below) Sarah

Joseph Butt to Clow  
Cove in 1774

Samuel John Elizabeth Joseph Basford  
m. m.

Alex-  
ander

Eliza  
Clarke  
Croc.  
Cove.

Eliz. Mulcahy  
Bay Bulls, 1842.  
5 children

Roger Butt living in  
Freshwater in 1770.

William, George and  
Thomas, South Side,  
Carbonear, 1775 @ 1784

Nov. 29  
1837  
4 chil.

Agnes John Charles Joseph Alfred  
d. 1922

Several other  
families in  
Crocker's Cove  
1800-1925.

Esther  
b. 1838

Joseph  
b. 1847  
m. Cath.  
Butt,  
Perry's  
Cove  
1871  
8 chil. (2.d)

Robert  
b. 1850

Alfred  
b. 1854

David  
b. 1871

John  
b. 1876

William  
Henry  
B. 1872

Edgar  
(Edward)  
b. 1878

Joseph  
b. 1883  
= Frances  
Pike

Michael  
b. 1885

Alfred

Esther

William John  
m. Dorothy Adcock

3 children  
1 grandchild

JOSEPH'S WILL was made and executed in 1841. Its survival determined the essential descendants of the family from that date to the present, or more precisely the order of the descendants. It also helps in reaching back to earlier years as will be shown. Naturally, the diagrammatic genealogy centres on the direct ancestors of the author, but it is immediately obvious that a great number of other family branches can be prepared using it as a basis. The WILL is a model document, reflecting the format in general use in those days and is as pleasant to read as a piece of good literature. The first part pinpoints JOSEPH'S strong Christian faith, which as a matter of fact, is further reflected throughout the whole document by his deep concern for his wife, Sarah, his children and his grandchildren. He refers to his infirmities because of his age and anticipates being 'called away' from his family. It is reasonable to assume that he was well along in age—probably in his 70s, or at least in his 60s, when the WILL was made—and therefore born about 1770-80. No reference is made to the wife and/or children, if any, of Henry, but he does include Hezekiah's two sons, Charles and Moses, to each of whom he bequeathed property.

As deduced from the Will, Joseph and Sarah had a family of four sons and one daughter, Samuel, John, JOSEPH, Basford and Elizabeth. Both Samuel and Elizabeth inherited the land each of them occupied, which presumably JOSEPH had assigned to them from his 'estate'. Since they both occupied their land at the time the WILL was made, we can assume they were both married since JOSEPH also bequeathed their lands to 'their heirs forever'. John died after the WILL was made and before his father passed away and a codicil amended the WILL so that John's son, Alexander, inherited his father's property. JOSEPH, the WILL-MAKER, was the owner of the land and property occupied by his brother Hezekiah since he assigned the same to Hezekiah's two sons, Charles and Moses. Subsequently, both Samuel and Alexander disappeared from CROCKER'S COVE. By 1860 Alexander had married one Mary Penney of the South Side of Carbonear and was resident there.

It is simply too tedious and complex to trace all of JOSEPH'S descendants at this time and place. A total of 33 has been identified up to the year 1900 and there are more. Nothing further is known about Elizabeth, which means that of JOSEPH'S 5 children, only Joseph and Basford definitely remained in CROCKER'S COVE. Those two are of special interest to the author, especially Joseph because he is in direct line of descent. But let us turn to Basford in the first place. His name has intrigued the family ever since it became known and is not just uncommon, but unique in the COVE and in the bay. Its source is unknown, probably borrowed from some itinerant preacher or visitor, or maybe it was the surname of some female who married into the family. Basford himself married one Elizabeth Mulcahy (or Mullaly) of Bay Bulls and there were 5 children, Agnes, John, Charles, Joseph and Alfred. Very little information is available on any of this family except Charles, who lived to 'to a ripe old age'. The author can recall being taken to visit him several times before he died in 1922. Although we do not know when Basford

was born, we do know that he was living in 1898 and for some years after. One relative, who was a mature young woman in the early 1900s, and who knew Basford well talked to the author about him (and other members of the family too) when she was an old lady. According to her (and she was a very reliable person) Basford was a much beloved man, both by his family and his neighbours and all who knew him. He forever had a smile and a kind remark and a pleasant story. He was also much respected and sought after for advice and counsel. Strangely his death was unrecorded .

The other one to be considered is JOSEPH'S son, Joseph, the brother of Basford. He married a local girl, one Eliza Clarke, on November 29th 1837. The author's family and the present Clarke(s) family in the COVE always claimed a relationship and obviously the above marriage confirms it. Joseph and Eliza had a family of 4, Esther, Joseph, Robert, and Alfred, of which Joseph was the author's grandfather. Up to this time in the family history little is known about the individual lives and personalities of the many persons identified, apart from Basford, but Joseph (grandfather) is an exception. He was very much the patriarch in the sense he was fully in charge.

He was born in 1847 and married Catherine Butt of Perry's Cove in 1871. Catherine, incidentally was the daughter of the John Butt who came out from England in 1842. There were 8 children in their family, David, b. 1871, John, b. 1876, Wm. Henry, b. 1872, Edgar (known as Edward), b. 1878, Joseph, b. 1883, Michael, b. 1885. The two others, Alfred and Esther, died in infancy. As stated earlier Joseph was in charge, ordering around his 6 sons, even after they were married. Yet his discipline was tempered by love and all his sons had a deep respect for him, even after they went elsewhere. The centre of his home and life was the large old-fashioned family Bible that occupied a table in the hallway of his home. The Bible was read and prayers were said every morning and evening and anyone of the sons who missed was properly reprimanded. He was the local Methodist leader in CROCKER'S COVE for years and led the class meetings. There is much more but time will not permit. However, his good wife Catherine was a typical helpmate of those days and was in the stage and the garden as much as in the kitchen.

In the course of events , the sons were part of the fishing crew as soon as each of them could use an oar or a jigger. As young men some of them joined the crews of the local and the foreign-going sailing ships going to Portugal, Spain, Italy, Brazil, Barbados and the West Indies. They told many stories about their experiences and adventures, both at sea and on shore and the author can recall the souvenirs, ceramics and sea shells, and pictures that bespoke strange and far away lands. Many a voyage almost ended in tragedy, but they all survived the storms and the hurricanes. It is apparent that the combination of fishing and sailing did not satisfy and periodically one, two or three of them joined the emigration tide to the "Boston States". Without exception each and all of them at one time or another lived in Boston , or more precisely, in one of the suburbs. However, what ever going and coming there was , two of

the brothers, David and Joseph (the author's father) finally settled on the old homestead. The other 4 brothers, John, Edgar (Edward), Wm Henry and Michael settled permanently in the city of Boston, its surrounding towns or suburbs, and later the family moved to other New England states, or went as far south as Texas or as far west as California. But the vast majority remained in the Boston area and today the author has over 150 relatives there. The brother, Joseph, who stayed in CROCKER'S COVE married Frances Pike, daughter of Captain James Pike and his first wife, Isabel Noel, both of Harbour Grace. This union fractured the usual tradition of sizeable or large families- There was only one child, the author.

If CROCKER's COVE and the history of the BUTT family there is prominently featured in this story, it is simply because the author gave it special attention in his research, which should be understandable. However, let us turn now from the ancestral home of the BUTT family in Newfoundland and Labrador to consider the migrations of its members elsewhere. This has not been an easy task, firstly, because of the usual absence of records and secondly, because the number of BUTT families in the bay mushroomed during the years after the 1750s and on into the next century, as did other families too. This growth too may suggest that new planters bearing the BUTT name settled to fish and live but as indicated earlier there are no facts or figures to support this belief. At the same time there was some emigration out of the colony- not just planters returning to England or Ireland on an annual basis, or permanently, but to New England in particular. New England fishing and supply ships were cruising the Nfld waters since early 1700s and it is no secret now, even if it was then, that planters and servants did move to "the Boston States". As a matter of fact, the number of Nflders emigrating to New England, especially in the 1800s and the first part of the 1900s, grew to be a tributary to the mainstream of emigration from the Old World to the New. It is only reasonable to assume that some of these were of the BUTT clan even before the 1900s.

In the meantime, settlement in new coves and harbours continued all around the east and northeast coasts and further afield. Population increased everywhere. Any attempt, therefore, to unscramble the BUTT family (or families) at this time gives limited results and is only partially productive. Nevertheless, there is evidence of movement. As stated earlier, the BUTTS were in Clown's Cove in 1749, in Freshwater in 1770, and in Carbonear, South in 1775. Reference to the volume "Family Names in Newfoundland" by the late Professor E.R. Seary indicates that one Thomas BUTT was in Blackhead in 1750 and William in Broad Cove on the same date. A John BUTT was a planter in Mosquito (now Bristol's Hope) in 1765; William BUTT was in Bradley's Cove in 1785, a Joseph BUTT in Bonavista 1792. Another John in Northern Cove (Spaniard's Bay) in 1802. We go on to other authentic sources and find that in 1789 a Joseph BUTT of Clown's Cove purchased a 'room' (fishing premises) for his grandson, William, from Stephen Cullen at Mosquito. Another William BUTT cleared a plot of land at Broad Cove in 1750 and again in 1776. As mentioned earlier one John BUTT, who was born in Newfoundland in 1728 made several visits to Canford Magna with Poole captains and finally made his home there.



Oral tradition has it that the BUTTS lived in Exploits in Notre Dame Bay in the late 1700s and that the site of their homestead was called "BUTT'S COVE" Reputedly they were master ship builders. Presumably they were the ancestors of the BUTT families who are recorded as living there in the 1800s and later descendants, <sup>some</sup> of whom subsequently moved to Botwood, Grand Falls, and Badger. In the 1800s members of the BUTT families at Freshwater and Carbonear, South, settled in Cat Harbour (Lumsden) and Flat Islands, Bonavista bay but more about these later.

English settlement on the West Coast of Newfoundland was seriously inhibited or delayed by the French Shore treaties between Britain and France. While there was a fair number of French fishermen and trappers in the area, English settlement was slow. Captain J. Polkinghorne of H.M.S. "Crocodile" cruised the West Coast in 1838 and reported that there were about 300-400 settlers in Bay St. George at that time. He goes on to add that a few English settlers had for many years taken up residence as far north as Anchor Point. We can believe that these English fishermen most probably came to Anchor Point by way of the Labrador and the Straits fisheries. In course of time, English fishermen from the East and Northeast coasts of the Island found their way still further south to Bonne bay, Bay of Islands and Sandy Point in Bay St. Georges. Polkinghorne reports that there were 5 families in Bonne Bay, but gives no names except a Mr. Bird, who was a merchant there.

In 1858, the well known Rev. Henry Lind of Sandy Point writes that he was requested to visit one G.B., one of the respectable inhabitants of the community (a Dissenter), who was very ill. What other Dissenter could there be in those years, but a Methodist? Could his name have been BUTT?

Two families of BUTTS were at Bay of Islands in 1859 and in later years James and George at Trout River. These latter two, or at least one of them, or their descendants, moved to Bonne Bay.

And Labrador too was chosen by one or more members of the BUTT family from Carbonear as their future home. Methodist (now United Church) records indicate that at least one BUTT from Red Bay married his best girl friend in the home church at Carbonear in the last century. Subsequently, this family, or descendants, moved to East Ste. Modeste and Pinware where Joey and Belle BUTT lived for some time as outlined in "Them Days", vol.1 No 3, March, 1976. Their son, Eben, is still active in the area. Joey BUTT must have been born in the 1880s since he lived to be 87 years old, but had passed away before 1976. Many of the BUTT family of CROCKER'S COVE spent many summers fishing "on the Labrador" thus creating the interest and the opportunity to settle.

To encircle the Island completely, it should be noted that on the South-West Coast at least one BUTT family chose Grand Bank as their home and, oh yes, there was a BUTT at Harbour-le-Cou who broke up the daring intruder when he attempted to steal his girl friend, as the song says.



Many communities ,which have been and are home to members of the BUTT family, have been omitted in this review. Enough have been included to show the extent of the growth and movement of a goodly number of them. Hopefully the omissions will be added in a later edition, or in a proposed book on the family.

At this time the author would like to tell briefly the stories of two selected families and one individual, all of whom moved from Conception Bay, to settle and live in other areas of the Island. In the days of fast growing populations and an expanding fishery, many families moved to Bonavista Bay, or Notre Dame Bay and other bays too, where beach frontage, fishing berths and timber were more readily available.

One of these was a Roger BUTT and his wife, Sarah, and his children who migrated from Freshwater (or Clown's Cove) to Cat Harbour (Lumsden) sometime shortly after 1838. There were two sons, Joseph and William, who were probably born before migration, and 4 daughters, Jane, Polly, Julia and Kate or Catherine, born seemingly at Cat Harbour. The father, Roger, died in 1876 at 67 years of age and his wife, Sarah, in 1895 at 81. Roger's son, Joseph married Leah Laura Meadus who it is reported was a well educated woman. There were four sons, Wm. J., Harry, Frederick and Stephen. This latter son was a brilliant scholar and linguist, who was competent in several languages and became a professor at the University of Toronto. Frederick married a Mary Maria Gibbons and some of their descendants live in St. John's today. Roger's son, William was also married and the children consisted of 3 sons and 4 daughters. It would simply be too tedious to continue here with this large family.

Among many BUTTS living on the South Side of Carbonear about the 1840s were two brothers, Samuel and Edward. They married two sisters from Bradley's Cove, near Western Bay, Samuel was wed to Susannah Crocker on November 24th, 1831 and Edward to her sister, Ann, on June 7th, 1840. After this time the brothers (and their wives presumably) decided to move from Carbonear, South and go north. They embarked in the spring of 1842 in open boats with their families and household goods and whatever sailing to Flat Islands in Bonavista Bay, where they landed on June 5th, both boats arriving on the same day.

In course of time, each family occupied an island in the 'archipelago' and their generations increased and became widespread in the bay and latterly elsewhere. They were Methodists and in the turn of events a church was erected. The author will forego outlining the genealogy, and the life and work, of the family because one prominent member is currently engaged in research, probably with a view to publishing a family history. However, the author is constrained to mention that Edward and Ann were blessed with a son, baptized Andrew, on August 16th, 1842, shortly after arrival. Andrew, in turn, was the father of Edward Thomas BUTT, who lived to be 96 years of age, dying July, 1978. He was a beloved man, of great faith, high principles and courage, whom the author had the privilege to talk with, learning much of the story outlined here, and also from one of his two clergymen sons.

Just one more, Solomon BUTT of St. George's Bay and we will conclude. Solomon died in that bay on March 17th, 1917 reputedly 107 years of age, and was the progenitor of a very large family, now widespread on the West Coast and scattered elsewhere, both in Nfld, mainland Canada, and the United States. Preparing a genealogy of his descendants is not problematical, but determining his origin is.

There is a strong oral tradition in the family, that Solomon moved to St. George's Bay from Exploits in Notre Dame Bay. After arrival on the West Coast as a young man he lived at first on Sandy Point, where he was a permanent resident. However, in later years, he moved to the west end of the town of St. George's, where he lived until his death. In 1845 he married Julia Ann Parson's, the ceremony being performed by the Reverend William Meek, Church of England (Anglican) clergyman at Sandy Point at the time. Whether or not he was a Methodist before and after arrival is not known with certainty, but he was of that persuasion by 1875. It is said he built the local Methodist Church and then preached in it. He was a fisherman as well as a shipbuilder and reportedly was competent in several trades. Six sons were born to him and Julia Ann and today there are 200-300 descendents. Julia Ann died in 1878 and in the same year Solomon married Elizabeth Garcin, giving his age as 60 years. No children were born to this union. This latter wedding ceremony was performed by the Reverend George P. Story in the Methodist Church in Bay St. George and recorded in the Register of Marriages in Channel, Nfld.

In 1971 the author visited the late Mr. Jesse BUTT at his home in Western Bay pursuing information on the BUTTS. In the course of the conversation he made reference to Solomon (completely unplanned in the first instance) and immediately Jesse responded that he could remember when he was a boy that a gentleman from St. George's visited his family (presumably his parents) and claimed a relationship. Upon further inquiry it was established that the visitor from St. George's came to Western Bay specifically to call upon Jesse BUTT'S family and that his name was either Solomon or Samuel, but in either case the gentleman was an elderly man. This information was conveyed by the author at a later date to Mr. Ron BUTT of Heatherton, a descendant of Solomon, who, in turn, relayed the same to retired professor Charles Goodyear of St. George's when the latter was researching material for a booklet about the Centennial of the Methodist Church there. Charles followed this lead to Western Bay and found that one Solomon BUTT, son of John and Diana BUTT (Methodists) had been baptized in 1819. Could it be that Solomon, the grand old man of St. George's, was also Solomon, the bonnie boy of Western Bay and did he find his way to Sandy Point via Exploits or, like many West Coast English settlers, around the Northern Peninsula as fishermen in the Straits or on Labrador?

Finally the author wishes to thank warmly one and all, both professional and non-professional; friends, both young and old; and many informed citizens of many communities for any contribution, large or small, to this family history.