

Noddy Bay & Straistview



Photo Essay
Noddy Bay and Straitsview
--by Kathleen Tucker



Fish drying on the flake



Model cod trap made by Clarence Hedderson



Baxter Hedderson talks about the Leatherback turtle that landed on their beach (note the turtle shell beside him)



Animal skin hanging on the shed to dry



Crab pots on the wharf



Hedderson's Wharf and boat



Looking across from the community of Noddy Bay



Potato garden in the community



Hauling a capelin trap. L-R: Dennis Hedderson, Vincent Blake, Baxter Hedderson, Shane Hedderson, Hubert Hedderson, Wilfred Hedderson, and Carl Hedderson of Noddy Bay

Straitsview



John Hedderson's Wharf, Straitsview



Community of Straitsview



The far end of Straitsview



Boat on the collar



The present-day wharf at Straitsview



Figure 1 A 'full sapper of fish'. Photo courtesy of Wm. Bartlett

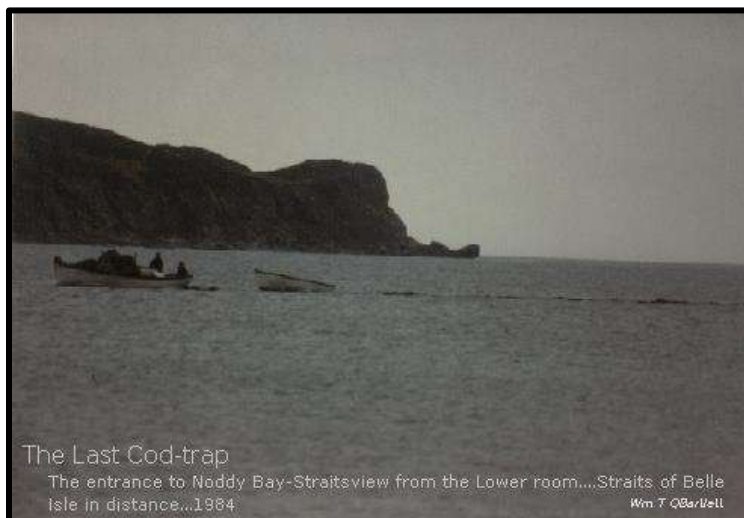


Figure 8 The Last Cod Trap and the entrance to Noddy Bay-Straitsview from the Lower Room. Photo courtesy of Wm. Bartlett

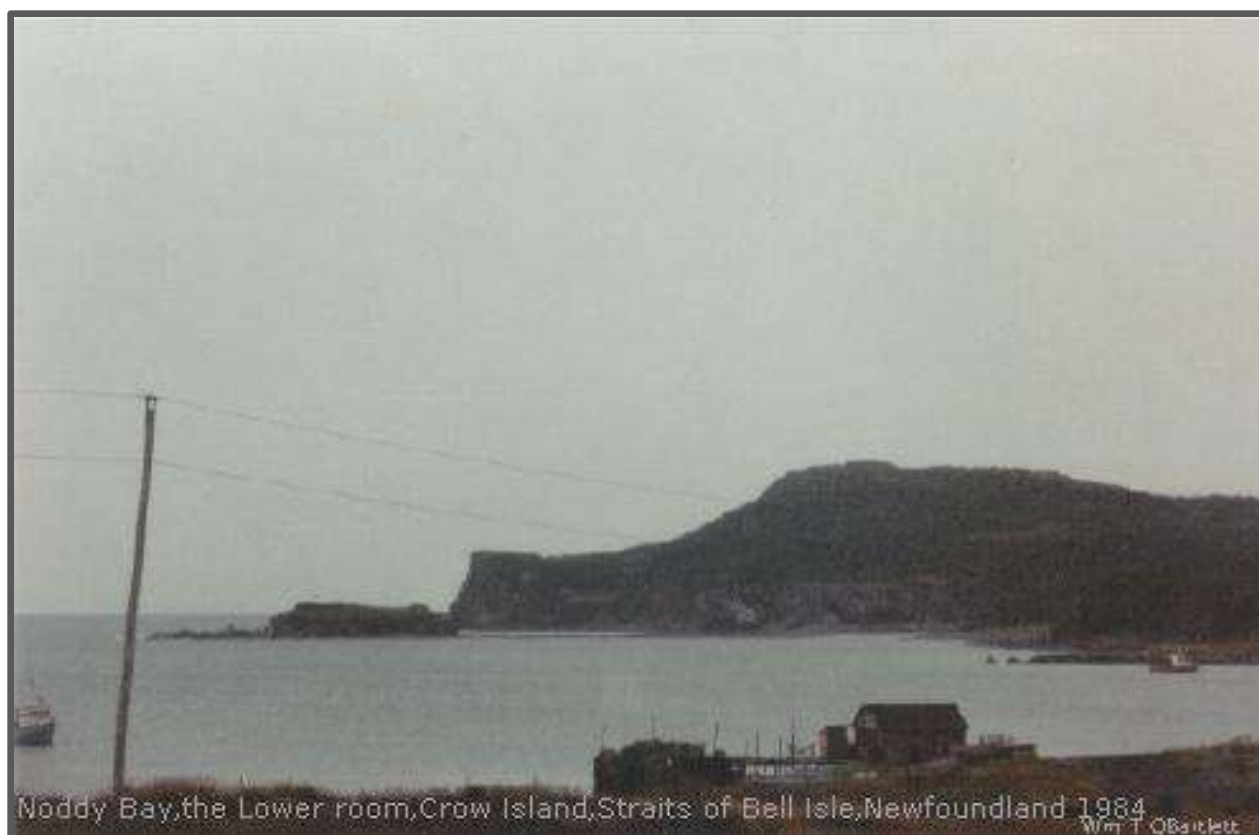


Figure 2 Noddy Bay: the Lower Room, Crow Island, Strait of Belle Isle, circa 1984. Photo: courtesy of Wm. Bartlett



Figure 3 Noddy Bay circa 2013. Photo courtesy of Wm. Bartlett

The Hedderson Brothers Noddy Bay and Straitsview

Seven sons from a fishing family



Figure 4 Five of seven Hedderson brothers of Noddy Bay. L-R Dennis, Hubert, Baxter, Clarence and Wilfred

The Hedderson brothers of Noddy Bay are from a fishing family. Their father, Peter Hedderson, was a fisherman, his father Walter Sr. was a fisherman. Pete's brothers were fishermen too; there was Walter Jr. in Gunner's Cove, Charles & Leeward in Straitsview, and Frank in Quirpon.

Walter Sr. fished the Upper Rumsey at Hay Cove. Later it was worked by Pete Hedderson (Walt's son) and then passed on to Pete's seven sons. Prior to trap fishing Walter and Pete were hook and line fishermen, but by the time Pete Hedderson's sons were old enough to make up a crew, they chose to fish with a cod trap.

The merchant

The merchant at Noddy Bay was Ford Elms of Griquet, but in Pete Hedderson's day it would have been Sack (Zach) Button in Quirpon. There was a fish plant and a cold storage in those days.

The Moratorium and the decline of the cod fishery

Around the time of the Moratorium the Heddersons were given a choice: they could throw it all down or keep fishing, so they decided to keep fishing, but it didn't take long to discover that there was a reason for the Moratorium.



Figure 5 L-R Wilfred, Baxter, Dennis, Clarence and Clyde Hedderson of Noddy Bay hauling their last cod trap in 1993. Photo by Terry Hedderson.

One day they went out with a sounder, which indicated there were a lot of fish in the trap. 'So we hauled up the trap, and by the time we got it hauled up, we knew we had about 300-400 pounds of cod.' But to their dismay the codfish were so small that, "they went through the mesh just like rain, that's how small they were," remarked Wilfred. "The mesh was 3 5/8" and the fish went right through."



Figure 6 Wilfred and Baxter Hedderson laying fish on the flake to dry. Photo: Kathleen Tucker

Local Names

- The Upper and Lower Rumsey (or 'Rumble Sea') berths were within talking distance of each other.
- Noddy Point on the map was called Lancey Ball Point by local fishers.
- Cape Raven on the map was called Noddy Bay Head by local fishers.

Notes

Speaking about the Wreck of the Nelson off Gull Rock (Little Sacred Island), the Heddersons say that Truman Tucker of Quirpon blew the spars off the Nelson (which were protruding above the water). They say Eber Elliott from L'Anse aux Meadows Point rescued the men off Mouse Island, where the lifeboat had been washed up.

Below is an extract, copied and pasted, from an Oral History Report on the Sinking of the *Nelson*, written by Kathleen Tucker in 2009:

Local stories tell us that the Nelson hit Gull Rock on Little Sacred Island, bounced off, drifted in and sank on Benny Caw(sic) Shoal. The motorboat floated off the schooner as it sank. The heaving waves carried the motorboat from the shoal and tossed it, high and dry, on top of Mouse Island.

John Hedderson of Straitsview was twelve years old when the Nelson grounded on what some people call Benny Caw Shoal, and he can remember the names of two men who ferried the shipwrecked crew in a dory off Mouse Island and safely to L'Anse aux Meadows: Hayward Burt of Random Island, Trinity Bay, and Pierce Blake.

Winston Colbourne of L'Anse aux Meadows mentions two other men who were said to have taken the shipwrecked crew off Mouse Island: Don Pilgrim and Eber Elliott. Mr. Colbourne says, "Don belonged to Little Brehat; he was down here at the time, fishing."

The sinking of the Nelson is more than a story of a shipwreck; it's a poignant story of a father's search for the body of his drowned son, Cecil Smith. It was said that if Mr. Smith's hand had been a little longer; as long as a stick of chewing gum, he could have saved his son.

"Poor Mr. Smith," says John Hedderson, "he made trips around the bay looking for his boy while they awaited the coastal boat to pick them up. He looked and looked for his son, but never did find him—never, ever found him. Some people say he did, but he never, poor man. He searched Black Duck Brook, Quarterdeck Cove, Evans Cove, and up as far as New Harbour."

People from all over helped search for the two missing men, but they were never found.

For some time after the schooner sank, the spar from the Nelson could be seen sticking up out of the water. The following summer, Azariah Roberts from L'Anse au Pigeon blew the spar off with dynamite and used it for his own boat. It is said that the Nelson had two spars, but nobody ever got the other one.

Zachariah (Sack) Button—a merchant from Lead Cove, Trinity Bay who used to supply all the fishermen in Quirpon with nets—salvaged the motorboat and used it for years collecting liver and freight. He had a liver factory on L'Anse aux Meadows Point. The motorboat was a normal sized trap skiff, with a witch-hazel keel made of yellow birch. According to Winston Colbourne,

“The stem was the crookedest thing ever you saw in your life. It was shaped almost like the front of a canoe. Strangest thing you ever seen; they said she was the finest kind of a sea boat. Uncle Sack used to take freight from the government wharf in Quirpon down to Lower Quirpon and he used that boat for years and years.”

Years later, the captain’s daughter came to L’Anse aux Meadows to see Mouse Island where her father and brothers had been shipwrecked. While there were no visible signs of tragedy on the island, the memories in the minds of her family, and the people who witnessed the heartbreaking event, have survived the passage of time.

Prior to the Draw System, Hay Cove Berths #1 (Lower Trap Berth), #7 (Lower Rumsey) and #8 (Upper Rumsey) were traditionally operated by Noddy Bay crews.

Under the Draw System: Black Rock to Lancey Ball Point was fished by crews from L’anse aux Meadows, Hay Cove, Noddy Bay, and Straitsview.



Figure 7 ‘The Clock’ at Little Sacred Island. This berth was called the Kinder Shoals by the Heddersons and the Kenna Shoals by Winston Colbourne in L’anse aux Meadows. Photo: Kathleen Tucker

Noddy Bay/Straitsview Trap Berths

(From Garden Cove to Cape Raven there were no trap berths)

1. Lancey Ball Point (it was a point of land at what the French fishermen had called L’Anse au Bois—Wood Cove). This was the trap berth that every fisherman wanted to draw. Walter Hedderson (grandfather) fished this berth. Later on, this berth was included in the Draw System for Quirpon.
2. The Brook (the brook runs out over the hill). John Hedderson and others fished this berth. Second draw.

3. Dark Hole (the water had washed out a place in the cliff and it appeared as a dark hole). Fished by Flee Hedderson (the name on his birth certificate was Pleman Eddison).
4. White Dog (a black cliff with a white rock in the shape of a dog). Fished by Garfield Blake from Straitsview.
5. The Old Berth (where the first cod trap was ever set). Fished by Flee Hedderson.
6. Noddy Bay Head. Fished by John Hedderson of Straitsview.
7. The Barracks Inside. The name 'The Barracks' is the Newfoundlander's rendering of 'the Bare Rocks', located on a map at Maria Reef. Fished by the Heddersons of Noddy Bay.
8. The Barracks East fished by Roland Eddison and Eli Kean.
9. The Barracks Northwest. Fished before Wilfred's time. This berth was used by some of the old fellers from Quirpon. It might have been the Johnsons, who had a schooner or Charlie Gillingham.
10. Green Island. Gus Hedderson from Straitsview worked this berth.
11. The Clock on Little Sacred Island. Worked by the Heddersons of Noddy Bay. This berth was referred to as the Kenna Shoals by Winston Colbourne and the Kinder Shoals by the Heddersons.
12. The Pigeon Hole. Fished by Noddy Bay crews. It was aptly named; pigeons nested in a hole just inside a gulch. Fished by Flee, Billy or Stewart Hedderson (Eddison).



Figure 8 French tools found by Wilfred Hedderson while digging a garden, top to bottom: 1. Pue (French prong) used for pronging fish out of a boat. 2. Gaff hook. 3. Hollowing Chisel for enlarging a hole in wood.

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Figure 9 Noddy Bay-Straitsview nautical chart