

Ruth Gibson.

This is a most attractive and readable essay on Labrador. Though the competitor has only consulted two books, she has thoroughly absorbed the knowledge gained and, as a result, has produced an interesting piece of work.

1935.

Sid-down.

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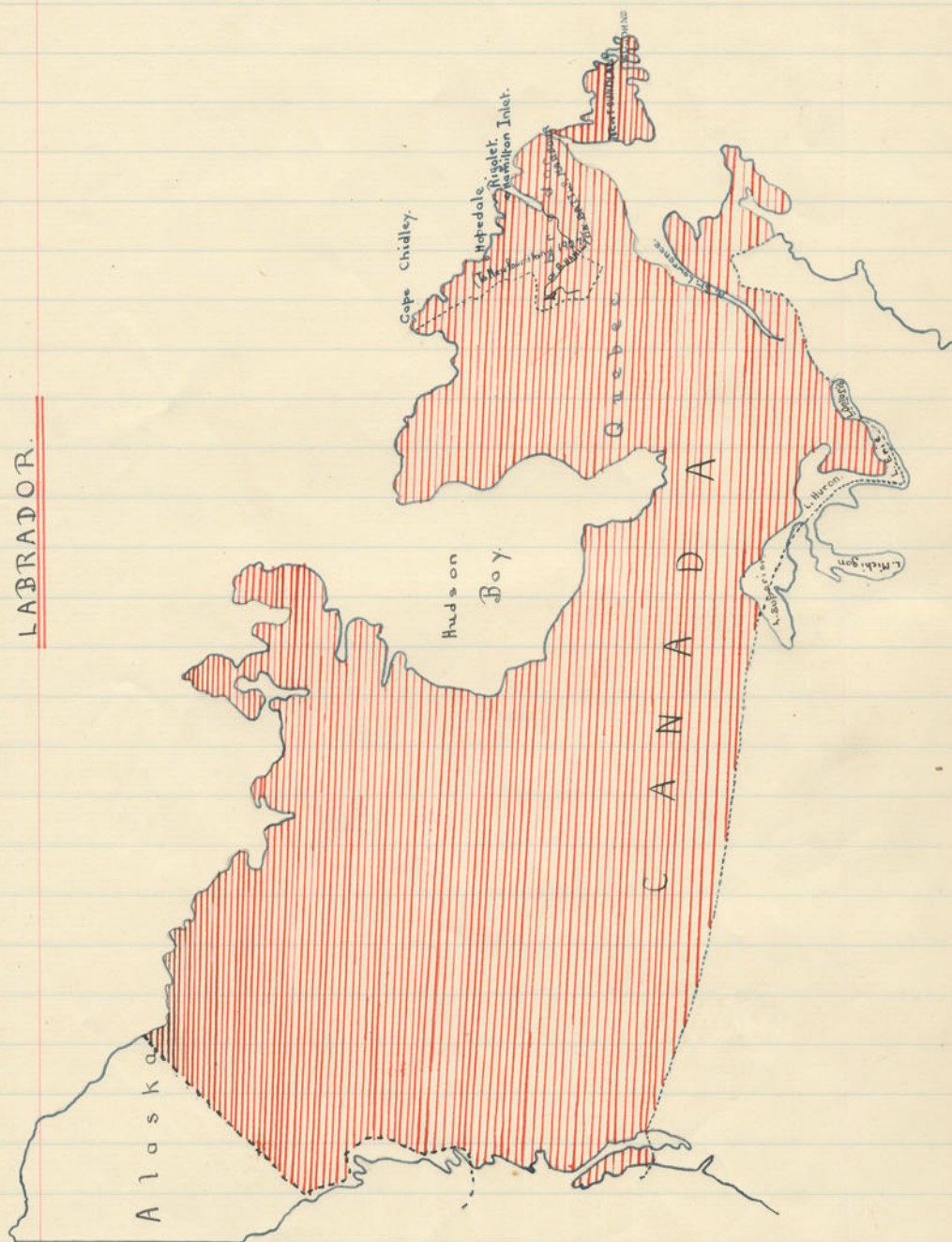
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LABRADOR.



If you were offered a holiday in some part of the Empire, other than your own, where would you like to go and what would you hope to see?

An uncle of mine has offered me a holiday in some part of the British Empire. I have chosen to visit Labrador, partly because I am in the Wilfred Grenfell house at school, and partly because it is a place I have always wished to visit. I shall go in winter, sailing on a steamship belonging to the Furness Withy line. Sailing from Liverpool, I shall reach Saint Johns, Newfoundland in about five or six days.

I hope to stay in Saint Johns for two or three days, visiting the greystone tower, which was erected to the memory of John Labot, and having a general look round, afterwards boarding a whaling boat for the journey to Labrador. This journey will take about two days. In Labrador I will stay at a fisherman's cottage, in Dalls Harbour, the Capital. I shall visit some of the hospitals, erected through the work of Sir Wilfred Grenfell, to which people come from a hundred miles distant. The mission house is another place I shall hope to visit, and I shall also visit the Marconi Station. The store, from which the people buy all their necessities is another place which will interest me. After exploring Dalls Harbour, I shall travel by sledge, pulled by a team of huskies, to another part of the coast. This and other journeys over the crisp, sparkling snow and ice will be, I think, my biggest thrill. When I reach my destination after a days travelling, about sixty miles further along the coast, I shall stay at one of the In'juns' cottages. Here all strangers are made welcome so I shall just walk in. I shall expect to see the wife making bread or moossins. The husband will probably be out hunting. One day we shall close the cottage

and travel, by sledge to the nearest co-operative stores, those having been introduced by Sir Wilfred Grenfell. We will buy provisions such as flour, pork, hard tack and molasses. After staying there for a day we will start on our homeward journey. After a few days I shall leave the cottage and travel on again, over the frozen lakes and seas and past great masses of ice jutting up from the ground. At last after many days of thrills and weariness I will reach my journey's end, the North of Ekimo Bay. Here there are less than fifteen hundred inhabitants. The Ekimo mothers never smack or scold their children. The boys grow up to be little rascals and the girls grow like their mothers in every way. Here just at this time the husbands will be returning from the hunt, with the reindeer. They are carried in doors where the eager wives strip the flesh from the bones. Then follow parties, celebrating the great luxury of the year, the first reindeer meat. The mothers wear seal skin clothes and deer skin boots. On their backs are seal skin dummies in which the babies are carried. The men while out hunting, trapping foxes, shooting rock ptarmigan, hunting seals, walrus and reindeer, tracking bears and trout, wear seal skins and moose shoes. Leaving the Ekimos I shall be just in time to see the fishermen from Newfoundland. The families settle down on the banks of the river living almost all the time in calico tents. The nets used to fish with are sometimes fathoms wide, but in bad weather hooks and lines are used. After being caught the fish are brought to land, split open and washed, salted in the fishing rooms, and dried in the sun, till hard. They are then shipped and sent to various places. In bad weather the men sometimes return with only five to ten quintals, each weighing a little under a hundredweight, after fishing all day. Nearly the whole crew take a share in the profits. When the

fishermen return with the schooners, there are usually merchants waiting to buy the cargo. When the season is a failure, provisions have to be borrowed from the merchants and he is paid when the fisherman has a good catch. The lives of the fishermen are very hard and dangerous. After having stayed here for a time I shall travel sometimes on foot and sometimes sailing, to another of the liv'jers' cottages, as now it is summer and I shall be able to see and do different things. During the journey I may see animals such as the Caribou, the black bear, the marten the musk rat, the fox, and perhaps an occasional wolf. The foxes are caught when young for the sake of their skins. Reaching the liv'jers' cottage I shall not expect to see the husband as he will be away fishing. While I am there I shall wander over the hills with the wife, to look for partridge berries, cranberries, and bakeapple. Another day I may row out to sea, with the young son, and jig for cod. This is done with a long line and a leaden fish hung on the end. I shall then leave these liv'jers and travel back to Battle Harbour. This time while in Battle Harbour I shall visit besides the places I will have already visited, the orphanage and the schools which have been built through the work of Sir Wilfred Grenfell. Then I shall board a whaling boat for Saint Johns and then travel by steamship to Liverpool.

The first person I shall visit after the journey will be my uncle, I'm sure, and I shall never be able to thank him enough for the delightful holiday. Sir Wilfred Grenfell has been in Labrador for nearly twenty years and I wish him every success in his valuable work.

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