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A 'New-found' Olympic Nation — Newfoundland's Involvement with the Olympic Games, 1904-1934

Fred Mason — Canada

On February 24, 2006, the Canadian men's curling team competed for Olympic gold in Pinerolo, Italy. The team included two members from the island of Newfoundland, two from Labrador, and one resident of New Brunswick. Across the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, schools shut early so that students could watch the historic moment. In the provincial capital of St. John's, Memorial University of Newfoundland opened up its Fieldhouse so that thousands could watch together on the big screen. It is likely that very few of the Newfoundlanders engrossed in Olympic fever for the ten days of the curling competition at the Torino Games realized that Newfoundland's Olympic history actually went back over a hundred years before. The Gushue rink's gold medal in curling was the first ever for born and bred Newfoundlanders, but the island has a long history of involvement with the Olympic Games. Athletes born in Newfoundland competed as early as the 1904 Games in St. Louis, and the country of Newfoundland, for a brief period in the 1920s and 1930s, appeared on the list of Olympic invitees.

This paper considers the involvement of the island of Newfoundland with the Olympic Games up to 1934. To elucidate Newfoundland's Olympic connections, the focus is on a number of key individuals: Robert Fowler, who represented the United States in the Olympic marathon in 1904 and in the Intercalated Games of 1906; Eric Mackenzie Robertson, marathoner in 1920 and later coach and administrator; Harry Watson, Canadian hockey player in the 1924 Games; Arthur Johnson, sport administrator of the 1920s and 1930s, and general secretary of the "Newfoundland Olympic Committee." The stories of these individuals will serve as a frame to draw out how Newfoundland's Olympic history is heavily intertwined with the island's historic position in the North Atlantic world, and how Newfoundland's early encounters with the Olympic movement express characteristics that might be seen in other, smaller, Olympic nations.

Newfoundland as Colony/Country/Colony/Province – A Brief Political and Economic History

It is impossible to sketch out Newfoundland's more than 500-year history in a short paper, but a discussion of its status within the British Empire and Commonwealth is needed here for context. Newfoundland was Britain's oldest colony in the New World, being discovered in 1497, but it was not officially named a colony of the Empire until 1824, long after British possession had been settled and St. John's

established as the capital city.¹ In 1832, Britain granted Newfoundland a form of representative government, where an elected general assembly advised the governor and his appointed council.² In 1855, responsible government was established along parliamentary lines, and the Dominion of Newfoundland was created with full nation status Newfoundland had representatives at the Québec confederation conference in 1864, but decided to stay independent.³ The question of confederation would be raised on and off, but the Newfoundland economy, always dependent on fish, started to pick up with the establishment of a lumber industry in 1905. The First World War brought the island prosperity, and closer ties to the United States. In 1927, a large parcel of the Labrador territory was granted to Newfoundland by the Privy Council (explaining the province's current status as "Newfoundland and Labrador"). In 1929, the US economy crashed, and Newfoundland's brief period of prosperity ended. The country went completely bankrupt, and acting on a report of a Royal Commission, voted to suspend self-government and place the country under a UK commission in 1933, probably the only time in history a country has willingly given up its independence to its former colonial power.⁴ In 1949, after years of bitter debate, Newfoundland joined with Canada in Confederation, and it is now the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.⁵ Newfoundland had been an independent nation from 1855 to 1934, and had fought as a nation in the First World War. This paper recaptures some of the athletic history of that nation.

Olympic Émigrés—Robert Fowler and Harry Watson

The first Newfoundland-born athlete to compete in the Olympic Games was Robert Fowler, born in Trinity Bay, Newfoundland, in 1882,⁶ Fowler, living in Cambridge, Massachusetts, competed in the marathon for the USA in St. Louis in 1904, and again in the Intercalated Games of 1906 in Athens. With Fowler, Newfoundland's beginning with the Olympics was inauspicious, as he failed to finish either race. Still, it is arguable that Fowler was the first Newfoundland Olympian.

Robert Fowler grew up in Newfoundland, attending St. Bonaventure's Collegiate in St. John's. While "St. Bon's" was one of the more athletically focused schools in the city, Fowler did not really participate in sports until a few years after his family emigrated to Boston, in 1898. He entered his first official race in 1901 and began running marathon distance races in 1902. Fowler entered a number of American marathons in the two years before St. Louis, always placing in the top six.⁷

The 1904 Olympic Games, combined with the World's Fair like the preceding Olympics in Paris, seemed at times more like an American all-comers meet than a major international event.⁸ Eighteen of 32 starters in the marathon, including Fowler, represented the United States.⁹ Runners faced terrible race conditions on the day; one chronicler of marathon history described this race as "the most difficult Olympic marathon in history."¹⁰ Competitors contended with hills, sometimes uneven surfaces, and heat exacerbated by the 3 p.m. start time. The worst aspect resulted from the automobiles driven by race officials and other traffic, which stirred up massive clouds of dust that obscured vision and choked the runners.¹¹ Of the 32 starters, only 14 would finish (with one disqualification), so that Fowler had good company on the DNF list.

For the 1906 Intercalated Games in Athens, many nations, including the US, selected its athletes. Fowler was one of four marathoners selected based upon recent performances, his third place in the Boston Marathon in 1905 among his best.¹² During the early part of the Games, the weather in Athens remained relatively pleasant, but on marathon day, the temperature went into the high 20s (Celsius).¹³

The journal of one of the US runners Joseph Forshaw noted that Fowler dropped out somewhere around mile 15.¹⁴ Again, a high number of runners failed to finish, with only 15 of 53 making it to the end.

Something of note in regards to Fowler's participation in the Olympic Games was his citizenship. As noted above, his family immigrated to Boston in 1898. However, Fowler did not take attestation of US citizenship until some time in 1906.¹⁵ This means, technically, that he was still a citizen of the Dominion of Newfoundland when he competed in 1904, confirming his place as the first Newfoundland Olympian, whatever jersey he wore.

Despite his Olympic disappointments, Robert Fowler would go on to become one of the top marathoners of his time. He placed second behind Tom Longboat at the 1907 Boston Marathon, third in 1908 and fourth in 1909.¹⁶ Fowler also briefly (for 41 days) held the world marathon record after the distance was standardized in 1908, setting the mark with a win in the Yonkers marathon on January 1, 1909.¹⁷ However, like Olympic glory, the Boston title would elude him, even though he tried until 1912, earning himself the nickname of the "ancient marathoner" in the local papers.

Harry Ellis "Moose" Watson – Canadian Amateur Hockey Star¹⁸

Another early Newfoundland-born Olympian, who also emigrated at a young age, was Harry "Moose" Watson, gold medal winner with the Canadian hockey team in Chamonix in 1924. Born in St. John's in 1898, Watson emigrated to England as a young child.¹⁹ Little is known about him until he returned to North America, settling first in Winnipeg, and then moving to Toronto in 1913. Like many young Canadians, Watson learned to skate and play hockey on the frozen ponds of winter.

Watson was a standout as a junior hockey player in the Ontario Hockey Association between 1915 and 1917, when he left to join the Royal Air Force.²⁰ Upon returning to Canada in 1919, he joined the newly formed Toronto Granites team. He would lead them to 1921-22 and 1922-23 Allan Cup victories, which earned the Granites the place as Canada's representative at the 1924 Olympic Games in Chamonix.

The Granites won the gold medal at the hockey tournament, completely dominating all teams but the USA. The Canadians beat Czechoslovakia 30-0 and Switzerland 33-0, a game in which Watson himself scored 13 goals.²¹ Watson led the team in scoring, with 37 goals in total, including 3 of the 6-1 margin over the USA in the final.²²

Upon returning to Canada, many of the Granites turned professional and joined the National Hockey League. Perhaps influenced by his English school background, Watson refused and stayed an amateur. He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1963, and has been described in the Hall's commemorative literature as "the finest amateur player in the history of hockey."²³

The life stories of Robert Fowler and Harry Watson give an indication of some important aspects of Newfoundland's social history—emigration and the pull on Newfoundland of a number of influential poles in the North Atlantic. Both Fowler and Watson emigrated at a young age, with their parents. The loss of population by emigration, particularly the young population most likely to move, is a social factor that has loomed large in the collective Newfoundland psyche since at least the 1850s. As W.G. Reeves notes, the "exodus" of islanders became a campaign issue in the 1889 election, and every government since has faced criticism for it.²⁴

The choice of America (Fowler), and England/Canada (Watson) also reflects the most significant political and economic influences on Newfoundland throughout its history. Through fish and shipping, and the impact of two World Wars, Newfoundland has been a crossroads of the North Atlantic triangle,

with political, economic and kinship ties to all three countries. At various times, the influence of each of these larger countries took precedent on the Newfoundland scene. For the next Newfoundland Olympian, Great Britain would be calling.

Eric MacKenzie Robertson – Newfoundland Representative at the Olympics

The first Newfoundland born and bred athlete to compete in the Olympic Games was Eric MacKenzie Robertson, who competed in the marathon in Antwerp in 1920. Never a great athlete, Robertson's main contributions to Newfoundland's Olympic history were through precedent, and his work as a sports official and organizer.

Robertson was born in St. John's in 1892, the son of local merchant John R. Robertson, a clothier who represented Scottish and British interests in Newfoundland.²⁵ Young Robertson attended St. Bonaventure's school and competed in inter-brigade sports competitions sponsored by local cadet organizations, which served as the main providers of youth sport in the city. As noted by local sports historian and archivist Frank Graham, who knew Robertson personally, "By his own admission Eric realized that he was no great shakes as a distance man, but he enjoyed running and continued to compete."²⁶

When the Great War broke out, Robertson volunteered immediately and joined the first contingent of the Newfoundland Regiment, shipping out on the SS Florizel on October 10, 1914. He served in Gallipoli, before being transferred with his regiment to the Western Front.²⁷ On the first day of the Battle of the Somme on July 1, 1916, at Beaumont Hamel (a day when the majority of the Newfoundland Regiment was killed or wounded), Robertson was among the hundreds of the regiment wounded, suffering a "perforating gun shot wound" to his right leg.²⁸ As a result of this injury and recurring dysentery, Robertson was ultimately discharged home to Newfoundland in August of 1917, on a 20% disability pension.²⁹

In 1920, Robertson took a temporary position with Fortnum and Brown in London, England. He served as an apprentice and intermediary for his father's company, which represented Fortnum and Brown's interests in Newfoundland.³⁰ While there, he returned to running, training with the Polytechnic Sports Club. A number of his club-mates were selected for the British Olympic team in Antwerp, and Robinson joined them there, intending to compete as a representative of Newfoundland.³¹ A series of correspondence between Robertson and the Newfoundland government, relating to the race, are held with Robinson's service file in the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland. He cabled the Regiment office in St. John's on July 30, 1920, requesting that they pay his entry fee, which amounted to approximately 30 pounds. Robertson received ascension to his request, and congratulations and good luck from the Prime Minister, through telegrams sent to the Newfoundland High Commission office in Westminster.

In Antwerp, Robinson found out that he could not represent Newfoundland at the Olympics, since the country had no Olympic committee and no athletic association to certify his amateur status.³² His participation engendered some mystery among later statisticians, because some local papers listed him as representing Canada, who already had their full complement of five runners.³³ Even though Newfoundland was a separate Dominion at the time, he competed for Great Britain, who only had four competitors running, including a steeplechaser seconded to make up numbers.³⁴ Likely Robinson's friends on the British team pulled some strings. Graham romantically noted that the British committee welcomed a competitor from the "Empire's oldest and most loyal colony."³⁵ However it came about, Robertson completed Britain's complement of five in the marathon.

On a cool day with light rain, Robertson struggled home in 35th and last place among finishers, in a time of 3:55:00, over an hour and 20 minutes behind the winner Hannes Kolehmainen, and 35 minutes behind his nearest competitor. Colonel R.J. Kentish, member of the London Army and Navy Club and observer at the Games wrote a letter to the Dominion High Commission describing Robertson's race as follows: "

*Robertson ran a very game race all through and declined to get into the Ambulance, which followed the Competitors in the Race although he was obviously suffering the effects of his old wounds etc. In doing so he kept the Dominion's and Empire's flag flying to the end.*³⁶

In appreciation of his efforts, the Polytechnic Sports Club in London struck him a simple medal, inscribed with: "The Polytechnic Sports Club. Awarded to Eric Robertson, Olympic Competitor, 1920."³⁷ Robertson's race, while certainly not one for the athletic record books, seals for him a unique place in Newfoundland history, being the only born and bred athlete from Newfoundland who competed at the Olympics while the island possessed Dominion status.

Upon his return to Newfoundland in 1921, Robertson became involved with athletics as a judge, official, trainer and organizer.³⁸ His experience of being denied the right to represent his country served as a spur to the organization of athletics in the province. In the summer of 1921, a meeting of prominent St. John's businessmen interested in sport created a National Sports Committee with George B. Ayre as first president. Robertson, working with Ayre, was one of the meeting's organizers.³⁹ The National Sports committee was renamed the Newfoundland Amateur Athletic Association (NAAA) in 1923 and reconstituted a number of times in the 1920s. Eric Mackenzie Robertson served on the board of the NAAA throughout its existence (into the 1930s) and would manage and coach teams of Newfoundland athletes who competed abroad, mainly traveling to the Canadian nation to the west.⁴⁰

The 1920s, the NAAA and Arthur Johnson's National Olympic Committee

Throughout the 1920s, the NAAA attempted to promote and organize athletics in the Dominion, affirming themselves as the official athletics association and sanctioning national records in track and field and road running events. In 1925, a team of Newfoundlanders (managed by Eric Robertson) traveled to the Halifax Herald road race in Canada, one of the major events on the Eastern seaboard at the time, and came home with the team title.⁴¹ This was the first of 6 titles in a row that the Newfoundland team would take at the race. Despite such successes, the organization of the NAAA was weak, primarily due to the dominance of St. John's members over those from the rest of the island's outport communities. The first attempt to reorganize occurred in 1926, but it would be discussion of the possibility of participating in the Olympic Games in 1928 that led to effective reformation.

In late January and February of 1928, debate started in local sports circles and in the St. John's newspapers, over whether or not Newfoundland should send a team of athletes to the 1928 Olympic Games to be held in Amsterdam. Arthur Johnson, Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), apparently received an offer from J.H. Crocker of the Canadian Olympic Committee. Crocker suggested that if Newfoundland wanted to send any athletes to the Olympics, they could accompany the Canadian team, who would look after their needs, for the fee of \$500.00 per person. Johnson relayed this information in a letter to the editor of the Evening Telegram,⁴² which drew forth other letters and columns advocating the idea and comparing the running times of Newfoundlanders with the Canadian

champions.⁴³ After this debate, a committee (including, amongst others, Eric Robertson and Johnson) was struck to analyze the feasibility of the proposal.

In the first week of March, 1928, this committee convened a meeting of the NAAA at the Hotel Newfoundland in St. John's.⁴⁴ At this meeting, the NAAA was reformulated yet again, but this time more successfully, gaining wider representation and involving more individuals with experience in organizing sports events. The Evening Telegram of March 12 reported that an Olympic Training Committee was formed to carry on the work of the preliminary committee, and that plans were underway for an Olympic trials.⁴⁵ Arthur Johnson, was elected the new NAAA's first vice-president and general secretary; he would have a large impact on the Newfoundland sporting scene in the years to come.

By the mid-1920s, Arthur Johnson had established a strong career in local business as president of his family's insurance company and manager of other notable enterprises. In the latter part of the decade, Johnson began to serve in an executive capacity in several sporting bodies. He held a prominent position on the athletics scene in Newfoundland into the 1930s, when he would turn his hand to organizing ice hockey and basketball. For his efforts, Johnson was elected to the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Hall of Fame in 1978.⁴⁶

In 1928, the NAAA, with Johnson as new vice-president and secretary, decided that a national championship was the next step forward in preparing athletes for international competition. An all-Newfoundland sports week was held in St. John's during the summer, which brought athletes from outlying towns to the capital.⁴⁷ Intended as an annual event, it never occurred again after 1928 because of the cost. In 1937, J.A. Clancey, sports editor of the St. John's Daily News, remarked:

*Existing economic conditions in the country may be said to be the chief reason why the idea of an all-Newfoundland competition has not been carried out since the initial attempt in 1928. The cost of having teams come to town and remaining there for a period of the sports is considerable, and it was not clear that this could be undertaken whilst economic conditions were generally so bad throughout the country.*⁴⁸

Despite the financial cost, reports of these Games are generally positive in terms of their organization and competitive standard.

Newfoundland received invitations to compete in the Olympic Games in Amsterdam in 1928, and in Los Angeles and Lake Placid in 1932. Clearly the country had attracted the notice of someone at the International Olympic Committee, because after listing the 59 countries initially invited, the official report from the Amsterdam Games notes, "At the request of the International Olympic Committee invitations were also sent to Malta, Rhodesia and Newfoundland."⁴⁹ Similarly, Newfoundland appears on the list of invitees in the 1932 Lake Placid Games report. This document states, "By custom, invitations are sent to the entire list of separate countries recognized by the International Olympic Committee."⁵⁰ Newfoundland appeared as nation # 43 on that list.

The reference that is the most intriguing is from a 1930 newsletter published by the Los Angeles Games Organizing Committee. Under its list of "National Olympic Committees," appears the notation, "Newfoundland: Newfoundland Olympic Committee: Arthur Johnson, Gen. Sec., St. John's, Newfoundland."⁵¹ Despite extensive searching in Newfoundland Archive sites, this author has been unable to find any corroborating evidence for the existence of such a committee. In all likelihood, it was referring to the Newfoundland Amateur Athletic Association. Whether the naming of this as an

Olympic Committee was an error on the part of the LA organizers, or Arthur Johnson putting on a name that would sound good to other international sporting bodies, is open to debate.

The NAAA never sent an official team to the Olympic Games. It did, however, achieve the ambition of a Newfoundland team competing at a major international event. Newfoundland teams competed at the British Empire Games in 1930 and 1934. For the first British Empire Games held in Hamilton, Ontario, in August 1930, Newfoundland sent a team of four runners, one thrower and one boxer, with Arthur Johnson as team manager. The report back from triple jumper Greg Power, published in the Newfoundland Quarterly in 1931, tells a tale of injury and bad luck⁵²—decades later, it came to light that boxer Sam LaFosse tied for third place, as there was no bronze medal bout.⁵³ In 1934, Newfoundland managed to send only three athletes and a manager to the Games in London. The costs involved in this venture, at the time of the Great Depression, exhausted the NAAA's resources. It carried on as an organization into the late 1930s, but could not organize any further national competitions or international representation.⁵⁴

The NAAA's financial collapse mirrored a more general collapse of organized sport in Newfoundland during the 1930s and the collapse of Newfoundland as an independent nation state. In 1933, with the nation's treasury bankrupt and debts mounting, the Newfoundland assembly voted to suspend responsible government, and go back to government from afar by Britain. In 1934, the new regime began, and Newfoundland once more became a colony of England. Both economic prosperity and sport on a highly organized level would await the coming of the Second World War, and the arrival of Canadian and American troops on Newfoundland soil in mass numbers.⁵⁵

Concluding Thoughts

As detailed through the stories of Fowler, Watson, Robertson and Johnson, Newfoundland had historical connections to the Olympic Games throughout the early part of the twentieth century, until the island nation ceased to be a nation in 1934. For the most part, these connections rested on the effort of a few individuals. In the more collective sense, of putting together a national committee or representative teams, Newfoundland was in many ways an Olympic nation that almost happened.

There are similarities that could be drawn from the case of Newfoundland with other fledgling Olympic nations, especially smaller states from Caribbean and Polynesian areas in more recent times. A major part of the motivation to participate in the Olympic Games is to place the nation more firmly on the world stage, even if only for a brief moment during the parade of nations. In 1928, Arthur Johnson advocated sending a Newfoundland team to the Olympics because, "first, that is [sic] would tend to lift local sport to a higher plane; second, that it affords local athletes international competition; and third, which is perhaps more important than the other two, it provides excellent publicity for Newfoundland."⁵⁶ Such sentiments could easily be dropped into the rhetoric of public officials in the modern era without seeming out of place.

Another similarity that could be drawn from Newfoundland Olympic history with other states is the heavier focus upon individual sports rather than team events. In all the discussion of sending Newfoundlanders to the Olympics, and the practice of sending them to the British Empire Games, athletes in individual events were stressed. This individual focus would stay long after Confederation with Canada in 1949. There would be a Newfoundland born athlete selected to compete for Canada in every Summer Olympics from 1952 to 1988, but they were all individual athletes, other than Frank Humber, who

competed in the demonstration event of baseball in 1988.⁵⁷ For poorer or underdeveloped nations, or those with lower populations or less coaching and administrative structures in place, focusing on individuals makes sense as the potential for gain (i.e. medals, status) for the same amount of investment is greater. However, it is a strategy that relies more on breakthrough performances than the building of infrastructures.

Ultimately, Newfoundland's failure to make it as an Olympic nation in its own right was because it could not get its organizational problems straightened out, either in its sports administration structures, or in the wider political and economic forum. A brief period of success occurred in the early 1930s, with the sending of teams to the British Empire Games, success built upon finally straightening out the role and structure of the NAAA in 1928. Ultimately thwarted by the economic crisis that ended the existence of the country, it still stood as a moment of accomplishment. Perhaps then, at the risk of greatly oversimplifying Newfoundland's athletic and economic history, there is a lesson to be learned from Newfoundland's trajectory in international competition—worry about straightening out internal affairs first, and do not worry about the world stage until afterwards.

Endnotes

- 1 Kevin Major, *As Near to Heaven by Sea: A History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: Penguin/Viking, 2001), p. 195. The first permanent settlements on the island were in place by the 1620s, with St. John's the central hub. Major interprets the late announcing of colony as British afterthought, since the UK was so used to treating Newfoundland as a fishing station rather than a member of Empire.
- 2 The sketch of Newfoundland history in this paper is by necessity oversimplified and undeveloped. Readers interested in a more in-depth history of early Newfoundland should refer to D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland* (Portugal Cove, NL: Boulder Publications, 2002). This was originally published in 1895 and is a standard work. Kevin Major's popular history referenced above is an entertaining and highly opinionated take on Newfoundland history. For a succinct and informative overview of Newfoundland history in a longer term, see R.O. Rothney, *Newfoundland: A History* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association Booklets #10, 1973). Unless otherwise noted, information in this section of the paper comes from this source.
- 3 Major, pp. 279-281.
- 4 Two recent books that offer excellent reading on the rise and fall of Newfoundland as an independent country are Gene Long, *Suspended State: Newfoundland Before Canada* (St. John's, NL: Breakwater, 1999), and Patrick O'Flaherty, *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933* (St. John's, NL: Long Beach Press, 2005).
- 5 It is not possible to go into the voluminous literature on Newfoundland's Confederation with Canada here. It will suffice to say that there are a number of historiographical viewpoints, ranging from an "orthodox" view that sees Confederation as an inevitability, to a "conspiracy theory" view that sees Newfoundland's Confederation as a back-room deal between Britain and Canada without Newfoundland's knowledge. New debates have been raised by a resurgence in "Newfoundland nationalism" in the 1980s and 1990s, in part related to the collapse of the Newfoundland cod stock and subsequent moratorium on fishing imposed by the Canadian federal government in 1992. One interesting recent book, which offers

- primary source documents on confederation with editor's interpretations, is John Edward FitzGerald (ed.), *Newfoundland at the Crossroads: Documents on Confederation with Canada* (St. John's, NL: Terra Nova Publishing, 2002).
- 6 *Dictionary of Newfoundland and Labrador Biography* (St. John's, NL: H. Cuff, 1990), s.v. "Fowlow, Robert", p. 352. The entry in this biographical dictionary lists the last name as Fowlow, while all primary sources, including newspaper reports and citizenship records, list the name as Fowler. It also appears to have some errors in the claims on times and placement in races. The majority of the entry was based on a personal interview between Fowler (Fowlow?) and the late Frank Graham, original archivist with the Sport Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, in 1981. As such, I am confident that it can be trusted for general information, but the specific details may have been affected by time and memory.
 - 7 Ibid.
 - 8 On these games, see R.K. Barney, "Born From Dilemma: America Awakens to the Modern Olympic Games," *Olympika* 1 (1992), pp. 92-135.
 - 9 Bill Mallon, *The 1904 Olympic Games: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 1999), pp. 57-58.
 - 10 Charles C. Lovett, *Olympic Marathon: A Centennial History of the Games' Most Storied Race* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), p. 11.
 - 11 David E. Martin and Roger W.H. Gynn, *The Olympic Marathon: History and Drama of Sport's Most Challenging Event* (Champaign, IL : Human Kinetics, 2000), p. 47.
 - 12 Thomas Derderian, *Boston Marathon: The History of the World's Premiere Running Event* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1998).
 - 13 Martin and Gynn, p. 59.
 - 14 Chrisine Forshaw O'Shaugnessey, "Joseph Forshaw, Marathon Runner," *Journal of Olympic History* 12/2 (2004), p. 16.
 - 15 Naturalizations Petitions Index, US District Court, Boston, Massachusetts, Vol. 1 (1906-1907), p. 242.
 - 16 "Canadian Indian Victorious on Changed Course," *Boston Globe*, April 20, 1907. Fowler is the subject of much discussion in the early part of Derderian's history of the Boston marathon.
 - 17 International Olympic Committee, "World Record Progression, Men Marathon" http://www.multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_367.pdf (accessed, August 18, 2006).
 - 18 Chronologically, the story of Eric Mackenzie Robertson would come next, as he competed in the 1920 Olympics. However, Watson's and Fowler's stories fit together better, so Watson will be dealt with first.
 - 19 Hockey Hall of Fame, "Legends of Hockey, Harry E. Watson" <http://www.legendsofhockey.net:8080/LegendsOfHockey/jsp/LegendsMember.jsp?type=Player&mem=P196224&list=ByName#photo> (accessed, August 18, 2006).
 - 20 Hockey Hall of Fame, *Honored Members: Hockey Hall of Fame* (Bolton, ON: Fenn Publishing, 2003), p. 59.
 - 21 *Rapport officiel, Les jeux de la VIIIe Olympiade* (Paris, 1924), p. 704.
 - 22 Ibid., p. 706.
 - 23 *Honored Members*, p. 59.
 - 24 W. G. Reeves, "Aping the 'American Type': The Politics of Development in Newfoundland, 1900-1908," *Newfoundland Studies* 10, no. 1 (1994), p. 44. Emigration is still very much on the collective minds of Newfoundlanders, as is the will to come back. See Leslie Bella, *Newfoundlanders: Home and Away* (St. John's, NL: Greetings from Newfoundland, Ltd., 2002).

- 25 Frank Graham, draft of an article entitled "Newfoundland's First Olympian," held in file entitled "Misc. Info on Eric Mackenzie Robertson, Newfoundland Olympian, 1920." Frank Graham Collection, Sports Archive of Newfoundland and Labrador (hereafter SANL), Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL).
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Robertson's service record is available on Microfiche at the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador. See Newfoundland Military Service Records, Vol. 517, file 497.
- 28 Medical History, Army Form B 178A, in Robertson's service record. PANL.
- 29 Correspondence between Robertson and the Board of Pensions Commission for Newfoundland shows that his disability was evaluated at 20% in 1919, 15% in 1920, 5% in 1921, and 0% in 1922. His marathon in Antwerp is one proof given by the board against continuing his pension.
- 30 *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Vol. 4 (1993), s.v. "Robertson, Eric Mackenzie," p. 611.
- 31 Martin and Gynn, pp. 103-104.
- 32 Graham, draft article in Misc. file on Robertson, SANL.
- 33 Bill Mallon and Anthony Th. Bijerk, *The 1920 Olympic Games: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2003), 104. Martin and Gynn are to be credited with solving the mystery.
- 34 Graham, draft article in Misc. file on Robertson, SANL.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 Letter from Col. R.J. Kentish to Dominion High Commission, dated 31 August, 1920. This was somehow placed with Robertson's service records at PANL.
- 37 Martin and Gynn, pp. 102-104. Notes in the Misc. file on Robertson at SANL indicate that his family still had possession of the medal after his death in 1975.
- 38 His name still occasionally appeared as an athlete in newspaper reports in the early 1920s, but Robertson's athletic focus lay more on the administrative side.
- 39 *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Vol. 4 (1993), s.v. "Robertson, Eric Mackenzie," p. 611.
- 40 For example, newspaper articles about a team that Robertson managed in Halifax in 1925, including letters to the editor from him, are in the Frank Graham Clippings Collection, Box 19, File: Track and Field, 1925-1933, SANL.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Arthur Johnson, "Suggests Nfldrs. Should Compete in the Olympic Games," letter to the editor, *Evening Telegram*, January 25, 1928.
- 43 Various letters to the editor, *Evening Telegram*, January 27 and 28, 1928.
- 44 Articles in the Frank Graham clipping collection on this meeting are hand dated March 6, 1928, but J.A. Clancy, writing about the NAAA, suggested March 8, 1928. J.A. Clancy, "The Newfoundland Amateur Athletic Association." In *Book of Newfoundland*, J.R. Smallwood, ed. (St. John's, NL: Newfoundland Book Publishers, 1937), pp. 147-150.
- 45 "AAA Governors Have Full Program," *Evening Telegram*, March 12, 1928. Such trials never occurred, probably due to the short time frame available and the economic difficulty of bringing together athletes from around the province.
- 46 *Dictionary of Newfoundland and Labrador Biography*, s.v. "Johnson, Arthur," p. 178.
- 47 *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Vol. 5 (1994), s.v. "Sports," p. 67.
- 48 Clancy, p. 149.

- 49 *Official Report, The Ninth Olympiad, Amsterdam, 1928*, International Centre for Olympic Studies (hereafter ICOS), p. 84.
- 50 *Official Report, III Olympic Winter Games, Lake Placid, 1932*, ICOS, pp. 57-58.
- 51 *Olympic: Official Publication of the Organizing Committee, Games of the Xth Olympiad, Los Angeles, U.S.A., 1932*, no. 2 (September 1930), ICOS, p. 4.
- 52 Greg Power, "With the Newfoundland Athletes at the British Empire Games," *Newfoundland Quarterly* XXX, no. 4, pp. 8-13.
- 53 Frank Graham was once tipped off that a medal in 1930 was a possibility. It took him several years to track down, but apparently, Sam LaFosse, the Newfoundland boxer, tied for third. This is detailed in the Newspaper Articles file, Box 4, Frank Graham Collection, SANL.
- 54 Clancy, p. 150.
- 55 *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, Vol. 5 (1994), s.v. "Sports," p. 268.
- 56 Johnson, "Suggests Nfldrs. Should Compete in the Olympic Games."
- 57 The other athletes from Newfoundland selected to represent Canada in this period were: Ferd Hayward, St. John's - Helsinki, 1952, racewalking; Alex Oakley, St. John's (competed out of Ontario) - Melbourne, 1956/Rome, 1960/Tokyo, 1964/ Munich, 1972/ Montréal, 1976, racewalking; Paula Kelly, Wedgewood Park/St. John's - Moscow, 1980; swimming; Bert Squires, Grand Bank - Moscow, 1980/Los Angeles, 1984, weightlifting ; Mel Fitzgerald, St. John's, Men's 1500 metre wheelchair, Los Angeles, 1984; Paul McCloy, St. John's - Seoul, 1988; running (10,000). Thanks to Robin Short, current sports editor of the *Telegram*, for providing the majority of this list.