

## **Rowsells at South Brook, Pilley's Island and Pushthrough**

**Source: From a conversation between Harold Rideout and Reginald Rowsell,  
as recorded by Reginald Rowsell**

Harold Rideout and his wife, Grace, called on us today, September 13, 1980, from Deer Lake. Harold grew up as a boy at Pilley's Island where I too spent several years of my boyhood days.

Harold told me of a Rowsell man many years ago at South Brook, Hall's Bay, Nfld. who left his gun in his boat. Beothic Indians went on board the boat and examined the gun which Rowsell had left lying on the thwarts. In their examination of the gun, one of the Indians was looking into the muzzle. His friend was at the other end of the firearm and happened to pull the trigger. He killed his friend. When Rowsell returned to his boat, he found the body lying there.

This story Harold told me used to be often heard among the people of Pilley's Island when he was a boy. I used to live at Pilley's for some years but this is the first time I ever heard this story. I do know though that my forebears lived at South Brook, Hall's Bay in Notre Dame Bay, Nfld. In the book "Family Names of the Island of Newfoundland" it is indicated that South Brook was once called "Rowsell's Brook".

My own father told me on a number of occasions that earlier relatives lived at South Brook and that one of them was attacked by Indians. He saved his life by getting in his boat and rowing away but found it necessary to lie down in his boat to protect himself from the Indian arrows. Fortunately, the wind was blowing off shore and he drifted away.

I have been wondering whether the incident that Harold told me and the incident that father told me are related. It could be that the incident that father told me might very well have been the sequel of the story that Harold told me.

Harold also told me he remembered Rowsell families at Pilley's Island other than my family. There was an elderly John Rowsell and his three sons Peter, Archibald and Thomas. "Pierce Rowsell was very much like you," said Harold. Indeed he was and sometimes one of us was mistaken for the other. Pierce was a business man.

Pierce Rowsell once bought for his trade a considerable number of sacks of potatoes from a farmer at Cormack, a farming town just a few miles east of Deer Lake where I was minister of the United Church of Canada. One day when Pierce was passing through Cormack, he called at the home to pay for his potatoes. The lady of the house said to him, "You do not owe us anything for the potatoes, because they were a gift from us."

"You must be making a mistake," said Pierce, "for I bought a considerable number of sacks of potatoes from you."

Then by further conversation [the lady] discovered that Mr. Pierce Rowsell was not the Rev. Reg Rowsell.

That likeness between us both proved our blood relationship.

The same thing happened between a man I met whom I thought was my brother Arthur. I was travelling from St. John's to Corner Brook by train in 1929. Sitting in one end of the passenger car I saw a man at the other end of the car who had the same laugh and gestures as my brother. Speaking with him, I discovered that he was a Rowsell

from Pushtrough on the south coast of Newfoundland. This proved to me that there is a blood relationship between the Rowsells of Pushtrough and the Rowsells of Leading Ticks on the northeast coast of Newfoundland. I have yet to prove this.

[signed] RNRowsell Sept 12 1980.