



Our Life on Lear's Room, Labrador

Greta Hussey

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“Because of the scarcity of cod in Conception Bay in the early 1920s, my father decided to go to the Labrador coast and try his luck as hundreds of others were doing. He went as a skipper with his own fishing crew. Mother used to go along to save the expense of a cook so, at an early age I was taken along with the family. By the time I was married, I had spent sixteen summers on the coast. Fifteen of those were spent at Batteau and the other one at Five Islands, a distance of five or six miles to the south.”

This is Greta Hussey’s account of her early years on Labrador, where Newfoundland fishermen and their families set up shore fishing rooms to prosecute the inshore cod fishery. Her account is simple yet compelling as she describes the trip north on the Kyle, setting up the fishing room, the Labradorians, the typical day of a fisherman, curing fish in the fall, the hard life of a young girl cooking for a crew, native skills, folk medicine, making do with little, and on the lighter side, games and amusements to break up the long days of work. Come along on a journey to a world of yaffles and bawns, bakeapples and scruncheons, and in the stage meet headers, splitters, and cut-throats!

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