

Mr Goodyear would like to cut some wood –
The bureaucracy in action.

One can sometimes wonder how anything actually got done in early Gander, as a lot of people and organisations wanted to have their say in how things were supposed to operate.

In the summer of 1932, the Conference in Ottawa of the “Air Communications Committee” which took a look at a possible trans-Atlantic route that might go through Newfoundland, had representatives from no less than four countries, Britain, Ireland, Canada and Newfoundland itself. When TA Hall and Alan Vatcher went out to look for and survey a site for the new airport, they reported to Thomas Lodge, Commissioner for Public Utilities with the Newfoundland Commission government. But this report had to meet the rigorous specifications laid down by someone else, Mr. Ivor McClure of the Directorate of Civil Aviation of the British Air Ministry.

On 30 November 1938, H.A.L. Pattison was appointed as the first full-time Airport Manager but he wasn't the boss of everything. The Meteorological staff for example was under Canadian government control. By 10 February 1940 the RCAF started to have a look at Gander and in early 1940 Lord Beaverbrook (a Canadian, Max Aitken, heading the British Ministry of Aircraft Production) contacted his friends at Canadian Pacific to investigate what it would take to be able to fly land-based airplanes from Gander across the Atlantic even in the middle of the winter. By mid-July, Canadian Pacific Air Services Department, which was then Gander's priority user, was replaced by British Ministry of Aircraft Production itself through its ATFERO (Atlantic ferrying organization), which was then replaced by the RAF Ferry Command. By now the defense of Gander was under the Canadian Army.

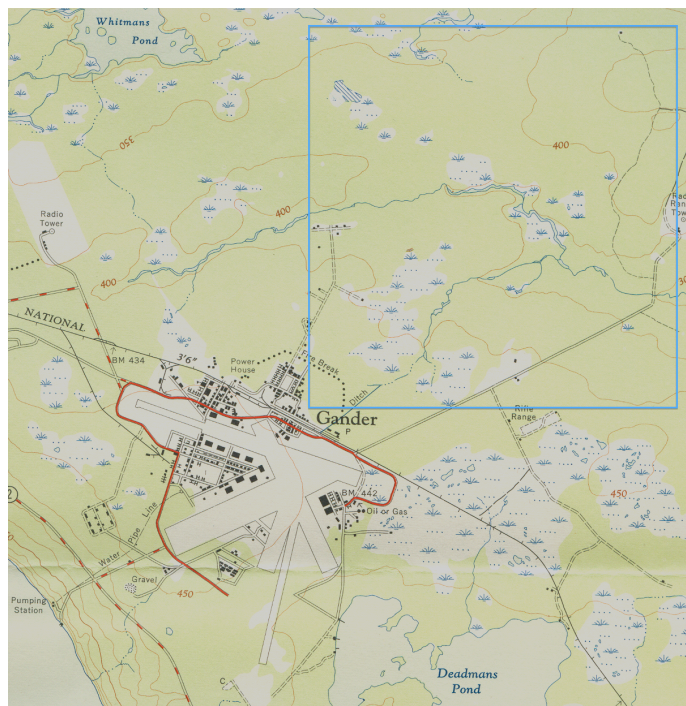
Earlier, in April 1941, the RCAF had taken over command of Gander as such, but also had to deal with the Americans who were arriving in greater numbers. In the meantime, while military folk were looking at tactics and military maneuvering in the immediate, the governments of Canada, Britain and Newfoundland were all maneuvering for the best position after the hostilities.

It therefore goes without saying, as Roland Goodyear found out, that even the simplest request could involve quite a lot of different people and levels of government.



Roland Clement Goodyear
c 1935-40

Sometime in 1942, the Bowaters Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Company had granted him a license to cut timber on its land near Gander. However, when the RCAF got wind of this, they were quite unhappy, because while the exact limits of Mr Goodyear's cutting right were unclear (roughly in the area in blue below), a portion was located within the "Defended Area" north of the railway station.



The military considered that the cutting of timber within the Defended Area was undesirable for a number of reasons, as explained in a letter of 23 December 1942 sent to the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs by the Deputy Minister of the Department of National Defence for Air, SL Carteret:

- (a) Use of roads and railway sidings constructed by the R.C.A.F. will interfere with Service activities and subject the roads to undue wear and tear.
- (b) Danger of pollution to the water supply in the vicinity of the Station.
- (c) Creation of further difficulties in the maintenance of security measures.
- (d) Increased danger from forest fires by the accumulation of slash.

Mr Carteret went on to say:

It is felt that logging operations within the Defended Area of Gander Station should be postponed until after the close of hostilities and it is requested that the matter be taken up with the Newfoundland Commission of Government with the object of having Mr. Roland Goodyear's licence cancelled insofar as the Defended Area is concerned. //

The Canadian Secretary of state then sent a similar letter to the High Commissioner for Canada in St John's so that action might be taken.

But who should talk to whom?

In a letter of 30 December 1942, which appears to originate with the High Commissioner, specifies firstly that an area within a five-mile radius of the railway station had been declared a prohibited area by the Newfoundland Government. Secondly, "no person is allowed to enter upon such an area without the permission of the (Nfld) Commissioner for Defence or somebody delegated by him".

This letter then says that the Commissioner for Defence has given authority to the OC RCAF in Gander, and to no one else, to issue permits. So it would seem, every thing was clear - or was it?

Another letter a week later between these same two people repeats the above points but adds a few more:

- Mr Goodyear was cutting wood to be used in the construction of a new road from Gander to Bishop Falls and Lewisporte. It was assumed that he was a sub-contractor of the Atlas (construction) Company, thereby presumably giving authorities easy control over Mr Goodyear.
- The High Commissioner had also previously conferred with the Secretary for the (Nfld) Department of Justice who confirmed that the area in question was unquestionably Crown land. He was however surprised to learn that the timber was actually owned by Bowaters, (who might even be entitled to compensation).

Notwithstanding that the OC RCAF seemed to have full authority, it was suggested that the matter be taken up with Newfoundland Commission of Government with the object of having Mr Goodyear's license cancelled. However this would have to be done by Bowaters itself as owners of the timber, rather than by the RCAF.

In the meantime, not knowing the authority granted to OC RCAF, the Newfoundland Commissioner for Public Works, Sir Wilfred Woods, had already written a letter to Bowaters to get Mr Goodyear's license cancelled.

In a letter dated 23 January 1943, the High Commissioner for Canada in Newfoundland was finally able to inform the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the situation was about to be taken care of..

This was an awful crowd of military and government officials, of the very highest levels, in then two separate countries, to look after a few acres of black spruce.

But this didn't stop Mr Goodyear who was a partner in Goodyear Humber Stores and in other timber related adventures. He had been involved since the 1930s with the Island Timber Company, and with J.Goodyear&Sons which continued to construct roads throughout the 40's, 50's and 60's. In 1958, at the age of 76, Roland formed a new company, Central Enterprises, to consolidate and operate his lumbering, fishing and gravel pit interests.

But one of the things in his career that he was most proud of was to have been named to the 1955 Newfoundland Royal Commission on Forestry, which produced a well written 266 page report.

PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the Grace of God
of the United Kingdom, Canada and Her
other Realms and Territories, **QUEEN**, Head
of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith.

(signed)
Leonard Outerbridge,
Lieutenant-Governor.

(signed)
Leslie R. Curtis,
Attorney General.

C O M M I S S I O N

TO

MAJOR GENERAL HOWARD KENNEDY, C.B.E., M.C., B.Sc., M.E.I.C.
DONALD ROY CAMERON, ESQ., O.B.E., B.A., B.Sc.F., and
ROLAND CLEMENT GOODYEAR, ESQUIRE.

Mr Roland Clement Goodyear left his earthly abode in the last day of December 1975.

(Very much thanks to Mr Rick Stead of Gander
for providing the initial correspondence
which made this the article possible.)