

# Winsor, William Charles

(1876-1963). Mariner; politician. Born Swain's Islands, son of Emma (Whiteway) and William Winsor. Educated Wesleyville; Methodist College. Married Josephine Blandford. Winsor made his first voyage to the Labrador fishery when he was only nine, in a vessel commanded by his father. The following spring he was judged old enough to "go to the ice" under his father. In 1902 he married a daughter of noted Greenspond sealing master Samuel Blandford, and built a home in Wesleyville which is still a local landmark in 1994. By the age of 27 Winsor was an experienced schooner skipper in the Labrador and seal fisheries and was given his first command of a steamer at the ice, Reid Newfoundland Co.'s Virginia Lake qv. That first year his crew brought in a load of 22,677 pelts and the next year he harvested more than 26,000 -- surpassing many veteran "jowlers", including his father and father-in-law. After 1908 he commanded sealing steamers for Baine, Johnston & Co., and after 1912 usually went to the ice for Job Brothers in such steamers as the Thetis and Ungava.

In the fall of 1904 Winsor was elected MHA for Bay de Verde as a Conservative. In the "tie" election of 1908 he was returned for his home district of Bonavista, as a candidate for the People's Party of Edward P. Morris. (The political deadlock of 1908-09 caused him to miss the seal hunt for the first time in 20 years). He sat as MHA for Bonavista until 1913, being defeated in the next three elections, as he opposed the Union tickets put forward (and often led) by William F. Coaker. Returned as MHA once again in 1924, he was appointed Minister of Marine and Fisheries in the government of Walter S. Monroe. Again defeated in 1928, he was returned in 1932 and served as Minister of Posts and Telegraphs in the Alderdice government.

Winsor continued as a mariner and noted sealer, bringing in his biggest load in the Ungava in 1938 (47,534 pelts). The seal hunt was suspended during World War II, but when it resumed Winsor, at the age of 70, once again sailed to the front. He continued as a sealing master until 1949 and worked as a mariner until the age of 77.

Clifford Andrews (1984), Shannon Ryan (1987), Shannon Ryan ed. (1989), DNLB (1990), Who's Who in and from Newfoundland 1927 (1927).