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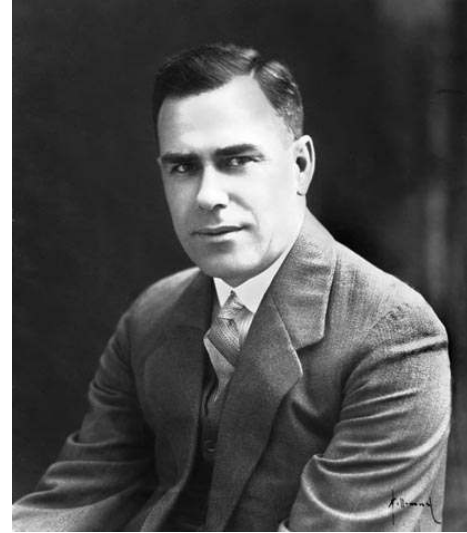
Herbert J. Russell and the Newfoundland Government Railway.

In 1923, the Reid's had succeeded in getting the ownership and operation of the Reid Newfoundland Railway transferred to the Newfoundland Government. For the people of Newfoundland, this was a gift of dubious value. For a small country already beginning to feel the strain of a massive war debt, it was a burden that many felt simply couldn't be carried.

What was needed was a change in management, and the Newfoundland Government found that change in Herbert J. Russell. Ownership of the Newfoundland Government Railway, as it was now known, passed to the Newfoundland Government on July 1st, 1923, and Russell was named General Manager.

Born in 1890 in Musgrave Harbour, Herbert Russell moved with his family to St. John's at the age of 10. He started what would be a lifelong career with the Railway at the age of 15, as a messenger. By 1917, he was the Superintendent of the Eastern Division, before being promoted to General Manager in 1923, at a salary of \$8,000 per year.

The Railway that Russell had inherited was not in good shape. The Railway's equipment was outdated and worn out, and the Railway was losing a million dollars a year. There was little money available from the Government to help, but within a decade of his appointment, Russell had performed a miracle. The rails and equipment had been updated, the operating deficit had been slashed from a million dollars to just \$30,000. In 1928, the *Daily News* stated that the Railway now



ran "on time, at the lowest cost, and in the most effective manner."

Russell achieved much in his career with the Railway, too much to recount here. In 1939 he was recognized for his efforts, and made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE). (Which can be seen on display at the Railway Coastal Museum).

Herbert J. Russell had turned the fortunes of the Newfoundland Railway around, and steered it through some of the hardest times of our pre-Confederation history- the depression, the Government scandals of the early 1930's, and the Second World War. The Railway was to undergo more major changes with Confederation in 1949, but Russell wouldn't see them. He passed away suddenly in February 1949, just months before the Newfoundland Railway. The greatest testament to his accomplishments, ceased to exist.

**Do You Have an Interesting Story
About the Newfoundland Railway?
We'd Love to Hear it!**

**Send Your Story to the Railway
Coastal Museum!**

**We Also Appreciate any Feedback
or Questions You May Have.**

Contact Us!

info@railwaycoastalmuseum.ca

**Don't forget - The Railway Coastal
Museum is a great place to hold
your events, whether it's a Little
Toot Birthday party or a reception.**

Contact Erin at:

echafe@railwaycoastalmuseum.ca

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM.**

www.railwaycoastalmuseum.ca