

NAME: SWAFFIELD, William E. **PARISH:** West Holme, Dorset **ENTERED SERVICE:** 10 Aug. 1887

DATES: b. 16 Feb. 1867
d. 12 Feb. 1952

Appointments & Service

Outfit Year*:	Position:	Post:	District:	HBCA Reference:
<i>*An Outfit year ran from 1 June to 31 May</i>				
1887-1888	Postmaster		Abitiba	B.134/g/62
1888-1891	Clerk		Temiscamingue+	B.134/g/63-65
1891-1892	Clerk	Sandwich Bay	Esquimaux Bay	A.12/FT 340/1, fo.15
1892-1901	Clerk	Davis Inlet	Esquimaux Bay/Labrador	D.38/17
1901-1911	Clerk*	Cartwright	Labrador	D.38/17; D.33/7-10
1911-1913	District Manager	Rigolet	Labrador	A.12/FT 340/2, fo.188
1913-1918	District Manager	Cartwright	Labrador	A.12/FT/327/1; D.33/11-18 A.12/FT 340/3, fo.5



+Near the beginning of his career he was stationed at Baie des Peres (D.38/55, p.143), at Mattawa, 1889 (D.38/6b, fo.153.) and Temiscamingue, 1890 (D.38/6b., fo.153d.)

*D.38/17, fo.41 & 42, however, indicate that he was at Rigolet as {Eastern} District Manager in 1908 & 1909. The Swaffield family moved from Rigolet to Cartwright in August 1913.

See also A.74/17, fo.38
B.183/a.38, fo.23d.; B.259/a/20, fo.96d.

Career after Labrador

In the fall of 1918, Swaffield took his first furlough since 1895/96. He wrote to James Thompson on 15 Dec. 1918 to state that he wished to live in a place where his children could be "properly educated". He had been offered a partnership in "a raw fur purchasing venture" which would mean living in Montreal. "However, to date I have not given the offer serious consideration preferring (if the prospective inducement is sufficiently promising) to remain in the employ of the Company where I have practically spent my whole working life" (A.12/FT 340/3, fo.171 He remained on furlough until June 1920. In July 1920 he returned to the Fur Trade Department as Warehouse Superintendent for the Eastern Buying Agency, Montreal. On 16 Feb. 1924, he was transferred to the Montreal Buying Office of the wholesale Department, continuing to work in the McGill Street warehouse. Owing to poor health, re retired on pension as of 31 December 1926 and died in Montreal on 12 February 1952. (A.92/17/128, fo.77; RG2/37/187)

Photograph: Undated, wearing post manager's cap. (HBCA Photo Coll., 1987/363-E-700-S-296)

Portrait: Pastel by Kathleen Shackleton, 1937, wearing MBE awarded him for recruiting volunteers in World War !. (HBCA Picture Coll., P-295)

Family Information See page 2

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In 1893 Swaffield was reported as finding "the life on the Coast too lonesome & monotonous" (D.38/17, fo.1)
He returned to England on furlough from fall 1895 to summer 1896 for the purpose of getting married. (A.12/FT 340/5/2)
When he signed his new contract on 26 February 1896 his address is given as 2, Alexander Rerrace, Christchurch Road,
East Boscombe, Bournemouth. (A.32/55, fo.240)



His wife predeceased him on 30 November 1942. (RG2/37/187) They had six sons and two daughters; Wilfred, Stewart, Bert, Alick, Sidney, Harold, Millie and Georgina. (J.S.C. Watt, "Labrador Years", The Beaver, June 1937, p.22.) He was survived by five sons and two daughters. (RG2/37/187)

Three sons worked for the HBC: **Wilfred Ernest, b.28 June 1903?**, entered service 1 June 1912, **Albert Tito, b. 28 June 1903?**, entered service 1 June 1917 and Alexander Burge, b. 19 Nov. 1904, entered service 21 July 1924. (RG3/40C/1)

Comments on Swaffield refer not only to his business zeal and competence but to his ability to get on with everyone with whom he had dealings - planters, Inuit and Innu. (See D.38/6b, fo.153d.; D.38/7, p.291; D.38/55, p.143; D.38/17, passim) In his article "Labrador Years", pp. 22-23, Jimmy Watt remembered:

Mr. Swaffield had the general direction of all the hurry and confusion {at Cartwright} and handled it easily. He always had time to chat with a customer, and could even listen to Phoebe Marten discoursing on "Fox{e}'s Book of Martyrs" without turning a hair.

Post Journal Signed By: Cartwright, 1903-1904 (B.259/a/17)