

## **Moments in Our History** **(Excerpts from the Dissenting Church of Christ at St. John's 1775 - 1975)**

### **Opposition (Part 3)**

The Reverend John Jones arrived back in St. John's on 9 July 1779, much to the joy of his little flock. Ten days later, he presented the following memorial to the magistrates "for a license according to Law" -

"To the Worshipful Edward Langman and Nicholas Gill,  
Esq. His Majesties justices of the peace for this District.  
The Memorial of John Jones  
Sheweth

That your memorialist being appointed by a Presbytery of Dissenting Ministers in England to be Pastor of a Society of that profession at this place, And being now arrived by the unanimous invitation of the said Society, and having taken counsel's advice on the occasion before he embarked and stated to him the application he heretofore made to your Worships for that purpose; was answered that your memorialist had thereby done his duty according to Law and – advised him to reapply to your Worships for a license as a Dissenting Preacher, Your memorialist therefore most humbly hopes that your Worships will be pleased to grant his request, and as in duty etc."

Jones had obviously been coached by his co-religionists in England under the mistaken apprehension that the Laws of England stretched to Newfoundland. The Worshipful Mr. Gill gave "a ready and hearty consent." But, reports Jones, "Mr. Langman was in a great rage vowing there should be no leave granted and that he would send Constables to stop him if he after that presumed to go any further".

Undaunted, the little congregation continued to worship in the Meeting House "though with daily expectation of receiving orders by the officers of the peace to the contrary." They did not have long to wait. On "the Lord's Day, first of August ... about the middle of the afternoon service" the Constable arrived!