

NAME: SPENCE, George

PARISH: York Factory

ENTERED SERVICE:

DATES: 1874-1954

Appointments & Service

Outfit Year*:	Position:	Post:	District:	HBCA Reference:
<i>*An Outfit year ran from 1 June to 31 May</i>				
1912-1915	Mate	<i>Mooswa</i>	Nelson River	RG3/40A/1 & 40C/2
1915-1931	General Servant & Pilot	York Factory	Nelson River	RG3/40A/1 & 40C/2
1931, 31 May	Retired on pension as "failing eyesight" meant he could no longer serve as pilot			RG2/37/180
1940, 20 June	Pension confirmed for life			RG2/37/180
1954, 21 May	Died in hospital at Churchill at 11:15 a.m.			RG2/37/180

The extant formal documentation of George Spence's career covers only the years 1912 to 1931.

The following letter from Hugh Conn, Nelson River District Manager, to the Fur Trade Commissioner, 10 June 1931, describes his career in more detail:

...George Spence, who has given the Company very faithful service as guide, voyageur, pilot and Outpost Manager for over forty years, thirty-eight of which have been on contract.*

George is one of the old type of servant to whom the wish of the Officer in Charge was law; his own comfort or convenience was not taken into consideration when a volunteer was asked to undertake any difficult or dangerous trip. Dr. Milne and others of the older retired officers who served during the past forty years at York Factory could vouch for the exceptionally efficient and faithful service rendered by George on all occasions.

RG2/37/180

*None of his contracts survives. According to a note, he signed them in Cree.

RG3/40C/2

Family:

He was married with a family of nine (RG3/40A/1 & 40C/2). His pension file (RG2/37/180) refers to a son, Alex, and his son-in-law, J. Bignell, the game warden at York Factory, with whom he mostly lived during his old age. He had a brother in Churchill whom he visited in the summer.

