THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A MULTI-MEDIA KIT ON DAVID BLACKWOOD -- NEWFOUNDLAND ARTIST

WINSTON J. LANE

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The Development and Evaluation of a Multi-media Kit on DAVID BLACKWOOD--NEWFOUNDLAND ARTIST

BY

WINSTON J. LANE

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A Report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Memorial University of Newfoundland

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St. John's Newfoundland

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"Blackwood's prints a loyal record of Newfoundland in 'better days'" by James Purdie, Globe and Mail, March 1, 1975, by permission of The Globe and Mail.

"Skippers and Seals: Tales from the East Coast", Jay Acacia, Medium II, February 27, 1975, by permission of Medium II.

"David Blackwood" by Farley Mowat, Lost Party Series exhibit brochure by permission of McClelland and Stewart.

The following publications are no longer in print and efforts to locate the former publishers to reprint articles contained in these publications have not been successful to date.

The Newfounderlander Maritimer

Toronto Telegram

St. John's Today

Peterborough New Paper

The following have not responded to a request for copyright release.

Vancouver Sun

Arthur Enterprise-News

Time-Life Books

Winnipeg Free Press

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been a growing concern among educators and students about relevancy in education. Saylor (1973), Birkel (1972), and Hastie (1971) have all explored the topic. Saylor (1973), in writing about what is relevant in today's schools, points out that

> the school as an institution has three primary functions: (a) to contribute in significant ways to the transmission of the culture of our society; (b) to serve as a major agency in the socialization of the young; and (c) to contribute fully to the maximum development of each student (p. 44).

He goes on to state that schools have not adequately fulfilled these functions in the past.

Educators in Newfoundland are also aware of the problems of relevancy in education. In recent years steps have been taken, notably in Language Arts, to develop materials not only in keeping with the times but also local in content. The English Curriculum Guide (1971) of the Department of Education makes the following statement:

> "Newfoundlandia" has the motivational advantage of being immediate, real, local, relevant, vital and interesting.... It can be used to get the students thinking, talking, writing, observing, describing, feeling, sensing, investigating, questioning, probing and expressing; ... (p. 195).

One of the advantages of using local materials in any subject is that it may develop in the student an awareness in and a knowledge of Newfoundland-- its language, its people, its life, its arts, its literature--in general its culture.

CHAPTER II

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Teachers in Newfoundland schools who have to teach units of work with Newfoundland content find it difficult, at times almost impossible to obtain suitable reference and supplementary materials for their program. This problem exists for two reasons:

1. suitable materials do not exist in instructional format, or
2. the basic components necessary to design instructional materials are not accessible to the classroom teacher.

As a result valuable learning experiences through exposure to the many aspects of Newfoundland, its people and their culture are missed. This problem is acute in the field of art education.

The Program of Studies for 1976-77 from the Newfoundland Department of Education outlines the following for the study of art for Grade X:

> Grade 10 is comprised of six units, four of which are compulsory and two optional. The four compulsory units are:
> Communication Arts
> Sculpture and Construction
> Graphics (Printmaking)
> Other People's Art

The two optional units may be chosen from the following list:

Environmental Arts
Textile and Fabric Arts
Ceramics and Poetry
Photography
Film-making and Film
Industrial Design
Plastics and Synthetic Materials
Crafts
Newfoundland Art and Artists. (p. 81)

Although the Department of Education encourages teachers to discuss local artists and their works through units such as "Other People's Art", "Crafts", and "Newfoundland Art and Artists", teachers are hampered in their work by the lack of resource materials on Newfoundland artists. A search of primary sources such as the Memorial University Art Gallery, Arts and Culture Centre Library and Memorial University Centre for Newfoundland Studies revealed very little materials suitable for classroom use. In searching other sources, the writer was unable to discover any instructional materials which have been produced commercially on Newfoundland artists. If materials are needed for units of work with Newfoundland content, then additional emphasis and incentives must be placed on local production.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature search for the present study revealed little on the production of instructional materials for the study of local artists. The only evidence found of a similar study was produced by grade school students under the guidance of a teacher. McClelland (1974) helped her ninth grade English class do a slide-tape research project on a local author "to make them more aware of their town's history" (p. 85). Rooze (1969) investigated local history to enliven the social science concepts and found the process of producing materials by the class a definite asset in their understanding of history.

The English Curriculum Guide (1971), distributed by the Newfoundland Department of Education, cites in a unit on "Newfoundlandia" that the use of Newfoundland materials in the classroom is important "because it is local. It touches student's lives and it is relevant" (p. 196). It goes on to state that

> clearly, pictures, slides, art and art reproductions can stimulate students to explore the limitless potential of the language they speak and hear. But when these stimuli contain statements of the Newfoundland experience then the mood and feelings that the students think about, talk about, and write about, become meaningful. (p. 211)

Support for locally produced materials has come from a number of sources. The Newfoundland Department of Education Art Consultant, and art specialists in the schools have emphasized the need for a basic exposure of Newfoundland artists to high school students. Others such as Morrison (1969), Copeland (1970), Zylin (1969) and Bulgas (1970) have found that locally produced materials are not only relevant but, if multi-media in nature, provide a distinct advantage over a single medium approach. Bulgas (1970) states:

> Audio-visual media are not a panacea for all problems...but when properly and imaginatively used will make significant contributions to the learning process. (p. 10)

In "Publishers Explore New Approaches to Education" (1969) it states that

> most teachers have probably been convinced by now that if learning through one medium is good, then learning through more than one is better. However, when it comes to putting theory into practice many don't know where to begin. (p. 8)

Davidson suggests in the same article that the best "kit" is materials selected from a well-balanced library and designed by the librarian in co-operation with teachers and/or students for what the student is ready to learn. The fact is however that few, if any, of the libraries in our province have a well-balanced collection, and probably will remain that way for many years to come. Nationally produced commercial materials are difficult or impossible to obtain because the relatively small market makes it uneconomical. One solution is the production of instructional materials by teachers, curriculum committees, the Department of Education, or other groups and individuals that have a knowledge of the local content of a given course. Materials produced by these groups integrated into the library system with adequate facilities for efficient replay, have the potential for making a significant contribution to the learning process in our schools.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

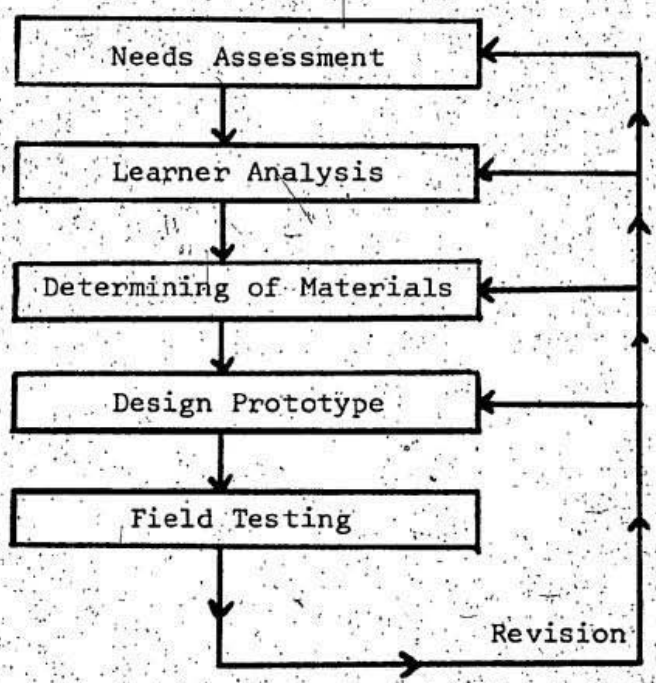
Introduction

The Art program for Newfoundland high schools encourages teachers to expose their students to Newfoundland art and artists. However, a search of primary sources such as the Memorial University Art Gallery, the Arts and Culture Centre Library and Memorial University Centre for Newfoundland Studies revealed very little materials on Newfoundland artists suitable for classroom use. Art specialists in a number of Newfoundland schools and the provincial Art Consultant agree that there is a need for such instructional materials to meet the instructional objectives of units of work on Newfoundland art and artists.

The lack of suitable reference and supplementary materials for the units of work on Newfoundland artists can be traced to two reasons; materials do not exist in an instructional format, and the basic components necessary to design instructional materials are not accessible to the classroom teacher. In order to meet the need for

instructional materials in specific units of the high school art curriculum in Newfoundland schools, locally produced materials were necessary.

A review of the literature revealed no specific instructional design for the development of instructional materials on an artist. The following general instructional design was chosen and followed in the production of instructional materials.



After determining the need, two basic questions were raised.

1. Which Newfoundland artist should be selected?
2. What media components should be selected?

Selection of the Artist

A number of criteria were chosen in the selection of an appropriate artist for this project. It was necessary to find a Newfoundland artist who had achieved wide acclaim in art circles, who used a dominant Newfoundland theme and whose work had cultural significance.

Using these criteria, David Blackwood, born and educated in the town of Wesleyville on Newfoundland's north east coast was an obvious choice. Blackwood grew up in the atmosphere of the Newfoundland outport, seeing first hand fishing schooners and sealing ships.

David Blackwood's ability "to draw" was recognized at an early age. The citizens of Wesleyville came to see his drawings of local landscape scenes, fishing boats, and quaint characters of the community. While still in high school, he received several Newfoundland Government Arts and Letters Awards and in 1959 was awarded a scholarship to study at the Ontario College of Art. He graduated with honors in 1963 with a scholarship to explore major art collections in the United States. That same year he was awarded the Ingres Medal by

the Government of France for his outstanding ability as a draughtsman. He spent 1963-64 as a Technical Assistant in printmaking on the staff of the Ontario College of Art. In 1969-70 he was made Artist in Residence of Erindale College, University of Toronto. He remained there for the next five years.

Blackwood's one-man shows and awards, both national and international, are impressive. By the time he was twenty-six he was considered to be Canada's leading contemporary printmaker. He is looked upon by some as more than a great printmaker, but a communicator of a great Newfoundland culture that is only partly recorded in our history. Mowat [1], writing for a Lost Party Series exhibit brochure, says of Blackwood:

> ...he is dedicated to delivering, and to making us pay heed to a message from the undefended past....He forces us to see that the antidote to the disease of the present lies in the past.... Blackwood never deviates from his direct intention. He tolerates no embellishment which might soften his message and make it more palatable....For his art is a living voice. He speaks through his art with the bluntness that has not been fashionable in 'artistic circles', lo, these many years....Blackwood has something to say...something which 'must' be said.

---

[1] This brochure was prepared for one of Mr. Blackwood's exhibits; date and place unknown. See Appendix B, p. 43, for a copy of the brochure.

Coastal Newfoundland and its people is the dominant theme of Blackwood's work. He lives and works full time at Port Hope, Ontario, not only creating masterpieces of etching but also recording a way of life that the present generation did not know existed. This is a part of the Newfoundland heritage which should be known by all Newfoundlanders.

Selection of Instructional Materials

No previous instructional materials have been developed on Newfoundland artists, therefore there was no available model to follow for the study of Newfoundland artists. The developer had to consider a number of issues relative to the Newfoundland school situation in developing a prototype instructional kit. The items considered were:

1. The instructional materials had to be in a format that could be readily used by teachers and students.
2. If A/V hardware was to be employed it had to be the type found in most Newfoundland schools.

Since the nature of the study dealt with the medium of art, some form of visuals were necessary to give students examples of the artist's work. It was also necessary to give students biographical data on the artist and provide them with a variety of commentary on his work.

Stolovitch (1975) in a recent study on the attributes of various media under the headings of task, learner, production and distribution discovered that a combination of print, audiocassettes, and filmstrips possessed all the desirable media attributes except motion and 3-dimensionality. With these considerations, the instructional materials selected were print, audiocassettes and 2"X2" slides. The slide format was selected because of clarity of reproduction and to provide the flexibility required in most school situations. With slides teachers could change the sequences or number of visuals to suit their mode of presentation. It is also possible with minimal additional expense to convert the slides into a filmstrip format if this is considered desirable.

The materials selected for the kit, i.e. audiocassettes, slides and printed materials satis-

fied the requirements outlined for inclusion in Newfoundland schools.

Plan for Prototype Production and Evaluation

After it was established what the media components of the kit should be, the following plans were made to collect, assemble and evaluate them. First, the artist under study would be contacted for his support for the project. Contact would be made with Memorial University Art Gallery for permission to photograph some of Blackwood's prints. A search of newspapers and magazines would be made to collect biographical data on Blackwood and commentary on his work. Interviews with people from Blackwood's home town would be arranged.

When a variety of materials had been collected the most appropriate for the objectives of the kit would be selected. A teacher's guide for the kit would be written, and the kit placed in four Newfoundland high schools for fieldtesting. Revisions of the kit would be carried out on the recommendations and suggestions of the students and teachers who used the kit.

Prototype Production and Assembly

Non-print Materials

Through the co-operation of the artist and Memorial University Art Gallery, 2"X2" colour slides of Blackwood's Lost Party Series were selected. The prints selected gave powerful images of a way of life which was common in outport Newfoundland during the time of the Labrador fishery and the annual seal hunt. The visuals chosen portrayed the struggle of the people against the elements and the strength of character which helped them survive.

Print Materials

Extensive biographical data and commentary on Blackwood's work was unavailable. The only information available was a limited number of magazine and newspaper articles generally related to his art exhibits. Appropriate articles from those collected were selected. Objectives for the print materials were written to guide the students reading. Biographical information and impressions of his early years were not available in print. The developer has captured some of these impressions on audiotape through the co-operation of

Miss Alice Lacey, a retired elementary school teacher living in Wesleyville. She taught Blackwood in grade school and has known him since his birth.

Teacher's Guide

A teacher's guide was prepared for the kit. (See Appendix D.) The following items have been included:

1. Goals and aims of the kit
2. Suggested teaching strategies
3. Related activities and discussions
4. Additional resource materials.

Student Evaluation

Ten short-answer questions based on the print materials were included for student evaluation. (See Appendix E.) After a careful reading of the print materials the student was expected to answer in writing at least eight of the ten questions correctly. In addition, a series of "visual evaluation slides" consisting of eight of Blackwood's prints and seven works of other Canadian artists were included. The student was expected to identify at least seven of the eight

Blackwood prints shown. The purpose of this evaluation was to determine if students could identify a Blackwood print shown in conjunction with similar prints by other artists.

CHAPTER V

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Introduction

Evaluation is an integral part of the development of instructional materials. Formative evaluation, which takes place throughout the development process, and summative evaluation, which takes place after the unit has been completed, play important roles in deciding the value of educational materials. The purpose of the evaluation during the development of the materials on David Blackwood: Newfoundland Artist was to revise parts which might not be appropriate.

Scriven (1967) emphasizes the importance of using formative evaluation during the development of instructional materials. He writes:

> Unless entirely ignorant of one's shortcomings as a judge of one's own work, he is also involved in field testing the work while it is being developed, and in so doing he gets feedback on the basis of which he again produced revisions.... He is usually involved with colleagues, e.g. the classroom teacher or peers, who comment on the material as they see it. (p. 43)

He later states that the purpose of formative evaluation is "to discover deficiencies and successes in the intermediate versions of a new curriculum" (p. 51).

Throughout the development of the kit two types of formative evaluation took place for the purpose of discovering its deficiencies and strengths. They were: (1) appraisal by specialists (2) field testing by students. The kit was placed into three Newfoundland schools--Clarenville High School, Glovertown High School and Hare Bay Junior High School. Each school had an active art program under the direction of qualified art specialists. See Appendix E for questionnaire completed by the art specialist after field testing.

Non-print Materials

The slides of Blackwood's prints were well received by both art teachers and students. One art teacher suggested, however, that Blackwood's work in other mediums, such as water colours, should be included. The number of slides was

considered adequate. The narration which took a storyline approach on the Lost Party Series met with mixed reaction. Two of the three evaluators felt that this approach was well-suited to their students because of their limited art background. One evaluator suggested more reference should be made to Blackwood's style and his use of light and composition.

The concept of a personal interview with someone who was close to Blackwood in his early years was well-received. Technical problems with the audiotape during the field test made it necessary to retape the interview.

Print Materials

The magazine and newspaper articles were used in the classroom in the original format. These were organized into individual folders for student use. Although the content was found adequate to achieve the objectives of the unit, the following weaknesses were discovered:

1. The reading level was found to be too advanced for the student with below-average reading ability.

2. The loose leaf format posed a problem for control of materials. It was suggested that the print materials be organized into booklet format.
3. A single copy of the print material was considered inadequate since only one student at a time could make use of the materials.

Teacher's Guide

The teacher's guide was well-received by the evaluators. The strengths of the guide in the opinion of the evaluators were:

1. teaching strategies and related activities,
2. flexibility of approach, and
3. recommended list of related materials.

Student Evaluation

Due to time constraints only one school was given a written pre-test consisting of ten short answer questions on the life and work of David Blackwood. (See Appendix E.) School A was selected as representing a typical Newfoundland high school serving a large town as well as a

number of small communities in the area. It had a student population of 450 students from grades 8-11. Most of the students were from middle to low-income families.

At the conclusion of the unit a post-test was administered in Schools A, B, and C. (See Appendix E.) The mean score in percentages for each class was recorded and listed in Tables 1, 2, and 3 which follow.

Table 1

Mean Score for Pre-test and Post-test for School A

Grade	Test	Number of Students	Mean Score in Percentages
IX	Pre-test	17	0
IX	Post-test	17	67.0

Table 2

Mean Score on Written Test for School B

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Score in Percentages
VIII	26	67.3
VII	42	55.0

Table 3

Mean Score on Written Test for School C

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Score in Percentage
X	22	74.0

In addition to the test where students had to respond in writing to ten short answer questions on the life and works of Blackwood, a "visual evaluation" test was also administered. For "visual evaluation" a set of 15 slides containing eight of Blackwood's prints and seven works of

other Canadian artists were shown to the students. Each student was given a sheet of paper with consecutive numbers from 1 to 15 written on it. The student was instructed to circle each number which corresponded with the numbered slide that was a reproduction of a Blackwood print. (See Appendix E.) The results were tabulated. The resulting mean scores were recorded and listed in Tables 4, 5, and 6 which follow. The purpose of this evaluation was to determine if students could discriminate Blackwood's works from those of other artists.

Table 4

Mean Score for Visual Evaluation Test, School A

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Score in Percentages
IX	17	100.0

Table 5

Mean Score for Visual Evaluation Test, School B

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Score in Percentages
VIII	26	86.4
VII	42	84.4

Table 6

Mean Score for Visual Evaluation Test, School C

Grade	Number of Students	Mean Score in Percentages
X	22	96.4

A detailed statistical analysis was not considered necessary. However, the results of the student evaluation showed that considerable gains were made in the student's knowledge of Blackwood as an artist and a high degree of recognition of his art work when compared with the works of other artists.

CHAPTER VI

REVISIONS

The components of the resource kit, David Blackwood: Newfoundland Artist, were designed and assembled for use in Newfoundland high schools. The various components of this kit; 2"X2" slides, audiocassettes and print materials were selected on the strength of evidence found in research on the media most effective in the teaching-learning situation. It was necessary, however, to test the suitability of the visuals and the format of the print materials. As well, the suitability of the suggested teaching strategies in actual classroom situations had to be examined.

No special arrangements were made for the field testing of the kit. Art students who were members of the selected art classes were exposed to the materials contained in the kit. The teaching strategies suggested for the use of the kit were adapted to the needs of local classroom conditions. Based on the feedback received from both the art specialists and students, it was deemed necessary

to revise the format of the print materials in the kit.

The kit originally contained photocopies of magazine and newspaper clippings in the original format. This format posed distribution and control problems in normal classroom conditions. The clippings were then organized and re-typed using a standard single column format. (See Appendix B.)

The 2"X2" slides of Blackwood's work were retained. However, introductory slides of the northeast coast of Newfoundland and the town of Wesleyville were added to acquaint the viewer with the geography of Blackwood's birthplace as well as the area which inspired most of his work. The narration for the slides was modified to include comments on Blackwood's childhood and to give the viewer an insight into his style and composition.

The audiotape interview with Miss Lacey was completely retaped and edited.

The teacher's guide was revised to include the narration for the slide/tape presentation. In addition, the section on resources was strengthened. (See Appendix D.)

CHAPTER VII

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Collecting, assembling and the evaluating of instructional materials is often met with problems which are beyond the control of the developer. This was especially true in the development of the resource kit, David Blackwood: Newfoundland Artist. The only large collection of Blackwood's prints in Newfoundland was the property of Memorial University. It was not possible to assemble and photograph the original prints. Thus, the colour slides made from the originals by the University was the only source available. Prints not owned by the University had to be photographed as displayed at a local gallery. Blackwood's drawings and watercolours were not available to the developer of the kit.

This kit was field tested in only three schools, and with students of average or below-average ability. Ideally, it should have been given a more extensive testing. However, due to the lateness of the school year, this was not possible.

Works of a similar nature to Blackwood's were not available to the developer for use in evaluating a student's ability to discriminate Blackwood's prints from those of other artists. It would have been disirable to use prints with less contrast in style than the ones used.

CHAPTER VIII

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is difficult to foresee and meet all the conditions and demands of the teaching-learning situation. Materials designed and tested on a small number of students may not meet the needs of a large number of students. Also, the integration of these materials with other areas of the curriculum, other than art, may prove to be beneficial. Considering these and other factors the following recommendations are offered.

1. This kit was field tested in only three schools in Newfoundland. It is recommended that it be placed into a larger number of high schools for a more extensive evaluation.
2. More appropriate "evaluation slides" should be added to the kit to get a more accurate evaluation of the student's ability to discriminate between Blackwood's works and similar works of other artists.
3. This study was limited to the development of instructional materials on one Newfoundland artist. It is recommended that in light of

the need for such resource materials kits be developed for other Newfoundland artists.

4. A study should be carried out to see if the materials in this resource kit can be integrated into other areas of the high school curriculum, notably language arts and social studies.

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APPENDIX A

Slide-tape presentation

DAVID BLACKWOOD, NEWFOUNDLAND ARTIST

(under separate cover)

AUDIO-VISUAL PORTIONS OF THIS THESIS

ARE AVAILABLE FOR CONSULTATION AT:-

University Library
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada
A0C 5S7



APPENDIX B

DAVID BLACKWOOD

Newfoundland Artist

DAVID BLACKWOOD

Selected Readings on the Artist
and his work edited and compiled by
WINSTON LANE

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Preface

To date little has been written or compiled on Newfoundland artists. This booklet has been compiled to provide classroom materials on one Newfoundland artist, David Blackwood.

David Blackwood, who has gained international acclaim for his artistic portrayal of outport Newfoundland, is an obvious starting point. His prints are more than a work of art, they are messages from a way of life that is disappearing.

Most of the materials printed here have appeared in Canadian magazines and newspapers in the last 8 - 10 years. Where possible the complete article has been used. Some articles, however, have been edited to avoid confusion of Blackwood's work with that of other artists. The original format has been changed to fit a standard format adopted for this booklet.

An attempt has been made to arrange the materials in a logical sequence starting with a biographical sketch and ending with his principal collections and awards. The reader will find some redundancy throughout the booklet since the writer of each article provides background information on Blackwood as an integral part in the study of his art.

David Blackwood: A Short Biography

David Blackwood was born in Wesleyville, on the northeast coast of Newfoundland on November 7, 1941. He is a descendant of a long line of sealing captains, successful Labrador fishing skippers and master mariners. His birthplace has been described by Harold Horwood, in his book, *Newfoundland* as having produced some of the greatest seafaring men of the nineteenth century. At one time over sixty Labrador fishing schooners sailed from this small outport. For over 150 years it provided captains and crews for countless sealing ships.

Blackwood grew up in the atmosphere on the Newfoundland outport, seeing first hand the fishing schooners and sealing ships. Although these annual voyages ended before he was old enough to participate, many veterans remained to fill the long winter nights with tales of their adventures. Much of his present work draws its inspiration from these first hand accounts.

David Blackwood's ability to draw was recognized at an early age. The citizens of Wesleyville came to see his drawings of local landscape scenes, fishing boats, and quaint characters of the community. While still in high school he received several Newfoundland Government Arts and Letters Awards and in 1959 was awarded a scholarship to study at the Ontario College of Art. He graduated with honors in 1963 with a scholarship to explore major art collections in the United States. That same year he was awarded the Ingres Medal, by the Government of France for his outstanding ability as a draughtsman. He spent 1963 - 64 as a Technical Assistant in printmaking on the staff of the Ontario College of Art. In 1969 - 70 he was made Artist in Residence of Erindale College, University of Toronto. He remained there for the next five years. He now makes his home in Port Hope, Ontario.

Horwood, H. **Newfoundland**. *Toronto: MacMillan of Canada*, 1969

DAVID BLACKWOOD

by

Farley Mowat

They were a people out of time -- a breed of men whose certainty and hardihood, whose courage and tenacity linked them more closely to the ancestors of our species than to ourselves. They were on with nameless and long-forgotten beings to whose essential qualities we owe our transient dominance. They were essential Man.

They were anachronisms in our time for they remained utterly committed to the enduring struggle to strike a balance with natural adversity in an era when the Technological Horde had perverted the natural contest, making of it a witless conflict waged against nature, and against, and within, ourselves.

They were the outport men and women of Newfoundland whose minute villages clung precariously to the rocks bones of a bleak island wracked by the unpassioned fury of the North Atlantic. Between wind and water they clung to life and living with a tenacity that is beyond the capacity of modern men to comprehend, let alone emulate.

But they did more -- much more -- than just endure. In summer and winter, in autumn and in spring they sallied out from their embattled roosting places to fling the primordial challenge back to those unyielding elementals -- the roaring sea, the mad and bitter gales; the entombing fog; the green, destroying ice. They were winnowed and culled by a merciless environment so that their strength grew greater with each succeeding generation. They were evolving in the manner that has been decreed for all loving things; they were becoming -- had already become -- magnificent, functional human entities, secure within themselves.

Then suddenly in this -- our time -- they perished. Never overmastered by the implacable natural forces they were instead sapped, corroded and destroyed by the New Man who is ourself.

That which natural adversity could not accomplish through the generations and the centuries, we accomplished in a little less than three decades.

The people out of time -- the men and women of the sea and of the rock ribbed coasts are gone, and the manner of their passing is a tale of genocide -- but not for the detailed telling here. It is enough to say that they were willfully destroyed by those who styled themselves Leaders of Men, but who were so blinded by the arrogance of their own spatial and temporal madness that they could not tolerate the accusing sanity of the people out of time. Aberrant aliens, insanely pre-occupied with the construction of an alien world, they could no longer tolerate the reproach which was implicit in the survival of a breed who lived in harmonic contest with a natural world.

The destruction was not absolute. There were survivors. One such is David Blackwood. He is of the true lineage and the true blood of the sea people of Newfoundland. Although he wears our clothing, walks our streets and shares our glittering proto-tomb with us, he is not one of us. He remains immutably one of them. He is of the older, simpler, stronger and more enduring breed, and he knows us for what we really are. He knows that we are self-sentenced to dissolution because we have chosen to eschew the elementary truths that govern all living things -- truths which, while man adhered to them, made him pre-eminent. Truths which, when we deny them, must doom us irrevocably to ignominious extinction.

Blackwood's concern with re-establishing the validity of those truths is total. As stubbornly intractable in the face of stupidity and ignorance as were his forefathers in the face of wind and sea, he is dedicated to delivering, and to making us pay heed to a message from the undefended past. He is a celebrant, not of love and light and sweet desires and wistful dreams, but of those almost forgotten qualities which made man great, which gave him ascendancy in the hierarchy of living things. He is a celebrant of essential man. He forces us to see that the antidote to the disease of the present lies in the past. He tells us that, if we are to survive, it is mandatory that we recover the attitudes and the abilities of primeval man, together with the understanding of man's true place and role in the natural world. These are the things which gave us our primacy and which we have rejected for the fragile, manufactured values which are the shaky underpinnings for an artificial world of our own contriving.

Blackwood never deviates from his direct intention. He tolerates no embellishments which might soften his message and make it more palatable. Not for him the sallies into esoteric fields of art and the egocentric drive for personal acclaim. Art for art's sake, or art for artists' sake are concepts he brushes aside as brusquely as if they were pale clouds of gnats. For him, art is a living voice. He speaks through his art with a bluntness that has not been fashionable in artistic circles, lo, these many years. Blackwood does not give a damn if fashion lifts its lip in supercilious disdain. Blackwood has something to say -- something which must be said.

His thematic work is the Lost Party series, and he makes it clear that the Lost Party is mankind -- lost but not irretrievably doomed if, if its members will awaken to the elder truths, give more than lip service to the elder values, be ready to proclaim by action and intent their pride in being what they are -- the most competent, enduring, effective natural animals this world has ever known. The figures in his works are the people out of time. They are not forgotten. They are essential Man. We need their counsel and we need to understand the sources of their strengths and certainties as never before in human history. Blackwood has brought them back to speak with us. We will do well to listen...and to learn.

(Lost Party Series exhibit brochure)

An interview with David Blackwood

conducted by

Harry Stone for "This is St. John's"

Stone: How did you get started as an artist?

Blackwood: I was born in Wesleyville, Bonavista Bay and got involved in drawing before I even went to school. A lot of youngsters are interested in drawing and painting, but by the time they're 8 or 9, they get into other things. The reverse was true in my case because as I got older, I became more knowledgable of the fact that some of the greatest people who ever lived were artists. To the detriment of my grades I continued drawing and painting.

Stone: What type of work do you do?

Blackwood: Mostly my prints are heavy, serious and philisophical. The colors are determined mainly by the atmosphere I try to create -- the damp, the wet and the fog of the northern coast in February and March. Having lived there it has a lingering effect on you. In the summer as a relief I paint landscapes in water colors.

Stone: How did you like working with Farley Mowat?

Blackwood: Farley is really an interesting man. There are two Farley Mowats. There's the show biz, hilarious type constantly with a bottle in his hand. His image has been built up and the public demands it wherever he goes. There has to be a bottle and he has to do something outragious. If he shows up wearing a suit and tie people are really put off. The other Farley is a romantic who doesn't drink and stays away from publicity tours.

Stone: Where did you get the material for your book?

Blackwood: The visual material has been done over a period of 12 years. We had to use the Memorial University collection of my prints because it was the only complete collection in existance.

Farley had been thinking for years of writing a book on such a fantastic subject. The Labrador fishery was even bigger and greater but it did not have the same elemental struggle -- with the ice and so on.

Stone: Are you pleased with how your book turned out?

Blackwood: I was appalled when I first saw it. Then I started to like it. There have been four major books written about the great seal hunt. The most recent being Cassie Brown's "Death on the Ice". Where she has been somewhat careful about what she says, Farley's text is the first one that really comes out and tells the whole truth in such a direct way.

The courage of the men, the skill and cunning of their captains and the ruthlessness of the owners comes out very effectively.

Stone: Do you think the seal hunt is necessary today?

Blackwood: No, absolutely not! It should be out-lawed with the exception of the few people living on the northern shores and the Eskimo people in Canada who rely on it very much.

Stone: Would you say that people in those days were different?

Blackwood: They really were. Joey Smallwood is now going across Canada saying that we have been living under the burden of a creeping inferiority complex. This is a lie because any inferiority complex we do have has developed since the early '50's with the introduction of television, unemployment insurance, baby bonus and welfare and so on. Prior to that if anything we had a superiority complex. The men were hard working, proud and independent. There were very few lazy people because lazy people perished prior to confederation. They were just as good as anyone else and could stand on their own two feet. It's a sad situation that we face today. There was a tremendous self-reliance and strength of character that has steadily been eaten away since the 1950's.

Stone: What political changes would you like to see instituted in Newfoundland today?

Blackwood: Well, I don't ally myself to any political party but we're at a very critical stage right now. Frank Moores tells me we haven't gone too far, we can still save the ship. But that's going to require some very special effort.

They seem to be developing the tourist industry. I can't see where we are going to have any big industry. I think in the future tourism could be our main industry. We should therefore try and preserve anything we have here of any historical significance and restore some of the things we have destroyed over the years.

Stone: Are you going to be back in Newfoundland soon?
Blackwood: I always look forward to coming to Newfoundland. I can assure you that I'm not spending the rest of my life in Ontario.

Stone, H. *An Interview with David Blackwood.* **St. John's Today,** *December, 1973, p. 4.*

DAVID BLACKWOOD

Painter and Printmaker

by,
Shirley Breen

In Wesleyville, Newfoundland when David Blackwood was a boy, the dubious blessing of television was unknown. So the long evenings were spent listening to his father Skipper Edward Blackwood spin out with his friends, lengthly yarns about the many adventures and disasters of life at sea. Naturally a good many of the stories revolved around the seal fishery, which in those days was a thriving industry and one which had more than its share of disasters. Young David's life was steeped in his formative years in the flavour and atmosphere of the often unheralded bravery and sometimes the gross misjudgement of sealing captians, which went into the making of what Blackwood now called "the last great Canadian adventure."

His lively imagination thrived on these discussions and he drank the details in, stored them away and in 1961 began to bring to life the stories, many of which he had heard as a boy and others he reconstructed after reading everything he could get his hands on which had been written about the seal fishery. He has put eight years of work into what he calls his "Lost Party Series" which so far includes fifty prints. From one of the prints the face of his great-grandfather Edward Bishop stares out -- a hardy sea faring man, behind him the starkness of the treacherous ice and the sombre darkness of a cloud filled sky.

One of ten children of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Blackwood, David was educated in Wesleyville, B.B. He's been sketching sea themes since the age of fourteen and at about the same time began his independent study of painting and drawing. He set up a studio in Wesleyville from 1955 to 1959 and it wasn't long before his work began to attract attention. Proof of this early recognition can be seen in the impressive number of scholarships and awards he has received. At sixteen he arrived in Toronto to begin his studies at the Ontario College of Art, graduating in 1963. That same year he was awarded the Government of France Award, the Ingres Medal for Drawing and Painting. Blackwood now has his studio at 460

Spadina Avenue in downtown Toronto and he alternates between there and Trinity College in Port Hope where he teaches (History of Art and Cultural Studies) three days a week.

David Blackwood, at twenty-six is one of Canada's leading contemporary painters and printmakers. His work is represented in the collections of the National Gallery, Ottawa and the University of Toronto, to name a few and in the private collections of Her Majesty Queen Mother Elizabeth and many other private collections in Canada and the United States. Memorial University of Newfoundland has a permanent collection of fifty Lost Party prints which is presently on a tour of Western Canada.

So far this year (and the year is young) David has already been through four exhibits, including a one-man show at the Gallery Paschal in Toronto which was a complete sell-out (one of the prints in the show was bought by the Department of External Affairs.)

My meeting with David took place at his Spadina studio and I was fascinated. I spent the better part of an hour just talking with him about the many old books and antiques he keeps there. Old pictures line the walls -- pictures of famous sealing captains (he calls them the "heros of yesterday") and of the boats they skippered. As evidence of his fondness for things of the past, he showed me the gold ring he was wearing--it had belonged to a Newfoundland sealing captain now deceased.)

I couldn't help but think that if David Blackwood had been born in another time, he no doubt would have been a sealing captain, as his father and grandfather were before him. But times have changed and so Blackwood has chosen to become a part of the seal fishery in a very special way. Michael Cook, writing in the St. John's Evening Telegram has said: "To these simple often bloody and rude men of the past, David Blackwood has granted dignity and grandeur. The sealing epic will survive to haunt the memories of men long after the helicopter has left the deserted icepans, never to return. He has made of Newfoundland sealers, men of tragic substance."

Although the seal fishery is a dying industry now, just about everyone from Newfoundland remembers the way it used to be when the time came, in the spring of the year for the men "to go to the ice."

Adventurous young men and experienced old hands, they all paid their five dollars for the privilege of being taken on as crew members. They all felt the same surge of contagious excitement as they left port, an excitement that was always caught up by the crowds who "saw them off" and then settled back in the comfort of their warm homes to wait for the first meal of flippers -- a great delicacy! The excitement however, was only one part of it -- some of the sealers, the lucky ones come back to port, many others were lost. Those are the men David Blackwood concerns himself about in his Lost Party Series -- all the men who have never returned. These prints are sad in their harsh beauty -- the smallness of man against the vastness of nature comes across as simple and clear as black and white can make it. The sealers on the ice in their great loneliness and futile waiting show a side of the seal fishery that has been neglected for far too long.

David enjoys relating the sea stories that have always been a part of his life, such as the time his grandfather, Captain Alb. Blackwood lost control of his sealing ship because he sided with the members of his crew when they mutinied. He speaks with regret of Captain Abram Kean, a man who was awarded an O.B.E. in 1942 for having brought to port one million seals -- he was also a skipper who sent his men out on the ice when the barometer was down.

"He was a hard captain" says David" a blizzard came and 78 men were lost -- never to be seen alive again. They were frozen into chunks of ice as they waited in vain for rescue. It sounds fantastic, but they had to cut through the ice around the men, put chains around the chunks and tow them to shore. Then they had to put the ice into the town's only swimming pool to melt, so they could get the bodies out."

In one of the Lost Party prints that same captain is shown, waiting for the return of his lost crew -- a great hulk of a man, bundled warmly against the northern winds.

I was interested in the technical side of printmaking and also completely ignorant of the methods used, so David very agreeably showed me his tools and explained things for me as we went along. His lost Party prints were taken from etched and engraved copper plates, time-consuming process which takes a great deal of skill and I

learned that the term print is not to be confused with the term reproduction. A reproduction is made with the use of photographic equipment, whereas the print is made and printed, by hand, by the artist.

According to David, the idea of etching and engraving is to cut a line into the metal plate to hold ink, which is eventually pressed onto the paper when the press bed containing the inked plate passes between two steel rollers under great pressure.

By this time I was feeling very knowledgeable and I guess it must have shown because David looked encouraged and went on to explain that the line in the copper plate is obtained by cutting (engraving) with the type of tool used by jewellers to cut initials on rings, etc. A thin layer of wax is brushed in a liquid form on the surface of the warm plate and then allowed to cool. A series of points, needles, pencils, etc. are used to draw into this wax, exposing the copper underneath. Nitric acid is applied to the exposed copper and lines appear where the points have drawn through the wax. The plate is inked for each impression and David told me that his Lost Party plates take three to four weeks in the making.

Having obligingly given me a fundamental knowledge of printmaking, David showed me around his studio, all the time keeping up a running commentary on the historical significance of his impressive collection of Newfoundlandia. He explained that he has other pieces that are too valuable to be kept in the studio and he keeps those in his apartment. Then we sat for a chat and while he munched on a Dad's cookie, (it was getting near supper time) I asked him what his opinion had been of the controversial book (at least in Newfoundland) by Farley Mowat and John DeVisser "This Rock Within the Sea".

Obviously he's enthusiastic: "This Rock is a very good book and although the writer has taken literary liberties, his sentiments are sincere. He's one of the few people in Canada who really understands the social and historical situation that we have in Newfoundland today."

About centralization (which was, by the way, the theme of "This Rock Within the Sea") his feelings run strong and deep. "It should have been a slow, fifty years if necessary, evolutionary process! There should have been some consideration given, for God's sake" he said "to the feelings of the older people!"

"I mean the people who have been living near the sea and fishing all their lives. Take the fishing community of Lumsden North (Bonavista Bay) for instance... it was moved one mile from the sea and now the poor fishermen have to walk that one mile before they can get to the water. That's not sensible!"

We talked some more about the problems of the fishermen and it was easy to see that David enjoys a lively discussion and that it's not too difficult to get him started on one. He particularly enjoys talking about Newfoundland and keeps abreast of all that's happening there by subscribing to the Island papers.

One thing that has greatly upset him recently is the cancellation by the Government of the Bonne Bay National Park. He feels (with a great many other people) that Newfoundland has a great tourist potential and that, sadly enough, it's being neglected. The park has been cancelled, according to David, to favour "foreign, industrial, capitalist speculators." He feels that the Bonne Bay park could have been a great drawing card for the tourist trade and added "To my mind the cancellation is a crime against the present and future generations of Newfoundlanders!"

I asked what has to be the inevitable question — what were his feelings about the premier?"

"Joey is one of the greatest Canadians who ever lived and perhaps in time this will be proven" he began and then went on to add some constructive critisism...

"He's made a tremendous mistake by trying to bring about a revolution instead of letting the Island evolve. He's tried to industrialize it! Now Newfoundlanders have been fishing for years and to take them out of fishing boats and put them into leather and wall-board factories is incredible!"

Warming to his subject, he began to talk about the state of the fishery. "You know, there's been a great demand in the West Indies for Newfoundland salt cod. I'd like to know why the warehouses in

Newfoundland were full last year (they sent some of it to Biafra) and the West Indies had to go to Iceland to buy their cod."

He feels very strongly for the fishermen... "instead of the Government spending all the money to bring in new industries, that money should have been spent to update and extend the great industry already there. With the over-population problem we'll all be looking to the sea for more of our food in the future." "You know 90 of the fishermen in Newfoundland are inshore" he added as an afterthought" and the Newfoundland Government has not given any boat building subsidies to the small inshore fisherman. This is really too bad.

This coming summer David will probably be spending quite some time back home because he's just bought a house in his home town of Wesleyville. It's an old house that was built at the turn of the century by Captain Billy Winsor and David plans to restore it to its former condition. To David that means tearing down all the modern wallboard and papering the whole place. He's enthusiastic about the eight fireplaces in his house and excited because now he'll have somewhere to keep his sealing collection. It will also be a place where he can spend his summers quietly away from the bustle of a big city.

When I left David Blackwood I was thinking that for a person who has never been "to the ice" he has done a magnificent job in capturing the enduring spirit of the "men of tragic substance." A heroic breed of men who tore their livings from the frozen sea despite the treachery of nature. Once seen his *Lost Party* prints are not easily forgotten... why Blackwood has chosen to devote his considerable talents and eight years of his life to portraying this particular side of the seal fishery is perhaps best explained in these words from the poem by Hilary Bates "Cape Islanders Waiting" which is based on the Blackwood print of the same name:

And O such rock encloses me
in the same sea where sealers drowned
and O such cliffs which mourners
crowned
are etched around my liberty."

(From FOLIO University of Western Ontario)

Breen, B. *David Blackwood, Printer and Printmaker* The Newfoundlander Maritmer, *April, 1969, pp. 21-22, 28.*

Blackwood's "Lost Party" exhibition opens at library

In my opinion, David Blackwood has produced one of the finest pieces of primal art in North America today, author Farley Mowat said at the opening of Mr. Blackwood's exhibition at the Port Hope library Thursday.

Mr. Mowat, one of Canada's most famous authors, has worked with Mr. Blackwood to produce the book "Wake of the Great Sealers."

The book and Mr. Blackwood's series of etchings present the life and [study] of the sealers of Newfoundland. People have Mr. Mowat said, "lived in adversity, never thinking of dominating the environment, but living with it.

"David extolls the virture of these people", Mr. Mowat said, "He says the man who lives with his environment is man at his best.

"People are often put off by what they perceive as the coldness of these etchings, but if they study the detail in the faces of the people they begin to warm to them. A sense of affinity develops and then a sense of jealousy of these people. One thinks "these were men!", Mr. Mowat said.

Describing Mr. Blackwood's background as WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) or Anglo-Celt, Mr. Mowat said that the image of the WASP in North America is somewhat suspect. But, he said, "apart from the abhorent things they have contributed, Anglo-Celts have contributed more to the artistic consciousness of the Western World than any other group."

David Blackwood is to Mr. Mowat, an example of the remarkable men and women produced by Anglo-Celts.

Unlike many artists who are concerned with technique, Mr. Blackwood has not forgotten the human story in art. It is this human [illegible] which Mr. Blackwood deals with, not artistic pretensions, according to Mr. Mowatt.

(An excerpt from "*Blackwood's 'Lost Party' exhibition opens at library*")

Port Hope Evening Guide, March 23, 1974, p. 3.

VIVID GRAPHICS TELL THE TALE

by
Joan Lowndes

Blackwood lives outside Toronto, where he is artist-in-residence at Erindale College, University of Toronto.

But he is, of course, a Newfoundlander. He was born in 1941 in Wesleyville, Bonavista Bay North, of a distinguished seafaring line. Among his ancestors were Capt. Sir Henry Blackwood, who commanded a ship under Nelson at Trafalgar; Capt. A. L. Blackwood, sealing captain and master mariner; and Capt. Edward Bishop, a great-grandfather who was also a sealing captain and member of the house of assembly for Bonavista North.

David Blackwood was in town last week and in the incongrously tame setting of a hotel room over a cup of tea, reminisced about his childhood.

"In my time the great traditional annual seal hunt was passing away but I grew up in a town which provided most of the captains for some of the most famous ships, including those that took the Arctic and Antarctic tradition, from grandfather to father, from father to son. Before television we provided our own entertainment, and large numbers of people would gather around the patriarch of the family or a patriarch in the community. We had people who were known for their storytelling ability. Of course, our very rich folk music heritage developed also because of the need to entertain."

"Even before starting school I was sketching. By the time I was 14 — having concentrated on drawing and painting, constantly involved with this activity — I was already producing paintings based on the environment I was living in."

"At 16, when I finished high school — because we had no Grade 13 in Newfoundland — I went to Toronto to the Ontario College of Art. Actually I was very lucky because I could have gone to Mount Allison University. That would have been really very, very bad. Colville was there at the time, turning out little Colvilles — people who've never been able to get over it, having studied with him. I think he's done more harm to Canadian painting than any other person. He's fine himself; followers are usually behind."

Young Blackwood with his attachment to a certain place and his

figuratism, could have been crushed in such a big institution as Ontario College of Art, but he had inherited the independence of his seagoing forebears.

"There were 50 members of the staff representing every extreme of painting. It was very difficult for a student because you would be studying with a realist painter who could not stand non-objective work, an instructor who was a non-objective artist himself who could not stand realism and both of them were demanding that you see their way of thinking. You were torn in all directions. But a few students survived simply by not paying too much attention."

Fortunately, Blackwood had Jack Macdonald as a teacher, an artist who spoke about art in general terms, not in particulars. And in printmaking he came upon Fred Hagen, the head of the graphics department, who also had a high regard for student individuality.

"His philosophy was you have your handwriting and I have mine. You have problems technically, I'm here to consult but I'm not going to tell you what's good or bad. The print medium is more intimate, more personal and so I was able to express my own feelings in that area and keep to my Newfoundland theme."

"Printmaking has remained my major medium. I'm a landscape painter too but this is a form of escape from the really heavy, serious business of printmaking. The technique I use is etching on copper. It's in the tradition of Goya and in the tradition of Rembrandt and Whistler. Now, of course, a great many printmakers are preoccupied with technique. They're influenced by the Stanley Hayter School (which has its headquarters in paris at Atelier 17), where virtuousity of color, virtuoso printing techniques become the subject matter of the print. Well, technique for me is way, way down on the ladder. I'm more interested in the idea and the technique would be used to make a statement."

Blackwood visits Newfoundland about four times a year and he loves it most in winter. Then it is reduced to its primal essences: granite, snow and sea. His statement concerns the struggle for life in the inhospitable setting. His prints are mostly monochromes: bleak blue-grey, green-grey, grey, relieved by stark white representing patches of ice or the ghostly vision of a ship. White in his work has the positive impact of color, dazzling in its effect. Between his color and white he

introduces an infinite variety of tones as in a print such as Survivor Wandering, with its deep foreground of subtle grey-green, deepening to a dark, almost black, band. Then, in a narrow interval of light on the far horizon, one perceives a tiny figure silhouetted in the vastness.

"In the prints color is never used for the sake of color. If there's a fire you're going to see red but the color is dictated because of the climate and the particular atmosphere. Northern light is very unusual and strange.

"You can have one part of the heavens really dark and a great glow of light coming in, very melodramatic. And in Newfoundland, of course, we're dealing with the North Atlantic, which is different from the Pacific...You have these great clouds rushing over and this prevailing constant of the sea. You're constantly aware of the sea and you're aware of the mist and you're aware of the sound — the roar of the ocean all down the coast on the shoreline.

"And when it blows — you know we were in St. John's just a few days ago and there was an 80 to 90 mile-an-hour wind which took the roof off the hotel we were in, this sort of flimsy, corrugated modern thing. And God, the wind removed part of the roof and it got underneath and it just lifted the entire roof right off."

Coming back to the prints, one notices their extraordinary mastery of space and their sculptural quality — the almost palpable chunkiness of the men bundled in their long coats or the heaving of the precipitous ice floes or the awesome loom of Newfoundland's snow-clad bluffs. Two periods in art history which Blackwood finds especially meaningful give clues to his work: the Renaissance and the French Romantics. I brought up Giotto in connection with his figures:

"He had a wonderful ability to get to the essence of a figure. He wasn't like a lot of contemporary realists. He wasn't concerned with the buttons on the coat. He was concerned with the sculptural, three-dimensional aspect: inside that cloak there is a figure and inside of the hood there is a head. I'm a great admirer of Gericault and Delacroix. I compare a lot of contemporary realist painters with Jean-Louis David, who was so caught up with the surface of the painting — you know, the neo-classical thing — whereas Delacroix wasn't.

"He was concerned with the emotional approach as opposed to the intellectual rendering of square inch after square inch of painting."

Finally, I asked Blackwood if Mowat's symbolical interpretation of the fate of his Lost Party prints is correct — that is, that it applies to all humanity which, to endure, "must recover the attitudes and abilities of primeval man." This unleashed a veritable floodgate, a lament for pre-Confederation Newfoundland uttered in the artist's usual soft tones.

"Over a period of 400 years we were effective, competent and had very beautiful qualities: honesty, sincerity, generosity, consideration for natural living things. It was necessary for us to kill in order to survive."

(There are no seals in the prints, not a drop of blood although part of the book describes the ships' decks as "slippery with mingled blood and fat" and "blood gouts" covering the arms of the men, while the air was filled with the moans of the seals.)

"We were not so much interested in the lamb as in the sacrifice! We took from the sea and the land what we needed for ourselves, not the industrial revolution capitalist idea that you dig a hole in the ground and take out some for yourself, then 10 times more to sell. We were total, natural human beings.

"Prior to Confederation, it was necessary for us to be very, very strong. We didn't even know what welfare was, you see. No baby bonus. There was no unemployment insurance. There was no old age pension. You had a complete communal situation where even the elderly were active, were needed, wanted and involved and if they were aged to the point where they could not be, they were well looked after. The children and the old people had the prime place in the community. They were elevated above.

"And so nobody starved. People worked very hard but they were very, very proud. Mr. (Joey) Smallwood is going across Canada saying we have suffered for centuries under the burden of this great inferiority complex which he has himself and he's trying to transfer to every other Newfoundlander. We in Newfoundland felt 25 years ago that we were equal to any other people in the world and superior to a lot.



But the introduction of television was a really traumatic experience because it brought into tiny communities a vision of life in the outside world. People were looking at these little boxes and seeing these beautiful women, beautiful houses, swimming pools, pavement as far as you could see, all their beautiful, shiny chrome kitchens and big trees and flowers and green grass — of course, they were living on solid granite, you know.

And the speech of the people on television — we have 27 dialects in Newfoundland and you have people living 15 miles apart that can't understand each other. But then we developed an inferiority complex about our brogue. Joey maintains we've had this inferiority complex for hundreds of years. I maintain that we developed it in the last 25 years. All of a sudden we became aware of the fact that we did not have indoor showers and bathtubs, but we managed for centuries without and it didn't really hurt anybody.

"In the early 1950's you have the beginning of an unending situation. We tried to turn houses in Newfoundland — developed because of the climate, because of snow — into what looked like suburban developments in Don Mills and Scarborough. We tore off the traditional pegged roofs, took out the 12 paned Georgian windows and put in great blank picture windows. Entire communities have changed their character and become unrecognizable.

"I'm not against progress you know, but I'm a great believer in evolution as opposed to revolution. A combination of the land and the sea and the activities produced an admirable race of people over a period of 400 years and they've literally been destroyed in 20. It's really, really very sad.

"My prints make a statement to remind people what did exist and it might sort of help in looking towards the future."

An excerpt from
Lowndes, J. Vivid graphics tell the tale **Vancouver Sun**, *November 9, 1973, pp. 4 - 6.*

Blackwood's prints a loyal record of Newfoundland in 'better days'

by
JAMES PURDIE

DAVID BLACKWOOD, the printmaker who shares with Farley Mowat feelings that made a best-seller of their book, Wake of the Great Sealers, has long been disquieted by the come-day-go-day-God-send-Sunday mood that has rooted itself like an alien weed in Newfoundland.

He sees the years since Confederation as what the natives would call duckish times — meaning between sunset and dark — a period of spiritual upheaval, in slow motion. It brought television and the welfare cheque, to be sure. But in the end it turned the backs of trawlermen's grandsons to the sea and their hands to the manfacture of cardboard cartons.

Moreover, all those jokes depicting Newfoundlanders as oonshicks— the vernacular for persons of low intelligence — are, to Blackwood, ill-considered comment on the disintegration of 478 years of community loyalty and individual fortitude. As he sees and records the history of his native province we might all have been better prepared to weather inflation and its unwelcome disciplines if Canada had joined Newfoundland in 1949, instead of the other way around.

The generations he depicts strive, and are made powerful by work. They are gentle with each other when the sea makes its claims, and they have not forgotten how to build wooden ships or houses that rarely break open in storms.

Blackwood lives — in Ontario, for the most part — by his etching needle and printing press. But he finds his subjects in the leftover hamlets and not-yet-evacuated outports still to be found here and there around the 6,000-mile perimeter of Newfoundland. His year involves up to 10 working visits to the homeland, most of them made in bleak months between November and June.

Since 1965, he has been preoccupied with the harsh aspects of survival on a rock that seems to exist only to anger the ocean and

amuse the mainland. His people, dark, straining figures set against a conspiracy of hostile elements, may be the truest evidence in existence of a culture that has proved itself capable of withstanding all hardships—except those of envy and affluence.

He prefers to let his prints report what he feels compelled to say about the humanity and strength of the old culture, but if you press him, he'll tell you this:

"The former premier, Joseph Smallwood, was the island's greatest tragedy, no doubt unwittingly, since his intentions seemed noble enough.

"But Smallwood was born 30 miles from the sea. He never liked the smell of fish or fishermen. He tried a number of things—none of them fishing—before getting into politics. Some of those old people he failed to uproot from the outports, the ones who didn't believe that Confederation would bring two jobs to everyone, who refused to take part in the centralization program, still warn anyone who'll listen to beware of men who rise to power from one suspender."

Blackwood is referring, of course, to those binicky (ill-tempered) grandfathers and grandmothers who were taught by their grandparents to look on politics as just another aspect of the weather. They could be cross as cats and deaf as haddocks—to use their own imagery—when the radio quoted the latest get-rich-quick plans of John C. Doyle and John Shaheen.

Only the children, who make no promises, can bring out the love of these aged holdouts, and even then only for brief periods, as when the sun sweeps a band of warmth along the cold shore through a rift, soon repaired, in the rain clouds.

This inhospitable land developed the finest fishermen in the world," Blackwood says. "We had a great national resource. We should have built a fishing fleet, not factories.

Up to the point of Confederation, Newfoundlanders felt as good as anyone in the world, and better than many. Then TV began to show them the big houses, the cars, the wealth of the larger world. It made them feel backward.

Instead of being proud of their 27 dealects, they began to develop complexes about their speech.

"Frank Moores (now premier) tells me it isn't too late to restore both pride in our differences and a great fishing fleet, but I wonder..."

Blackwood was born in 1941 in the town of Wesleyville—which bore the more romantic name of Swain's Island in the days when it harbored up to 65 fishing schooners—about 200 miles north of St. John's. He was an accomplished artist before the age of 16.

Acting on the kind of "progressive" advice prevailing in Newfoundland at the time, he left for the Ontario College of Art in Toronto in 1959 to learn from the masters how to make a living from his art. He found, instead:

"Art schools do more harm than good. I studied for four years and 90 per cent of what I learned was useless. Most, but not all, of the teachers of that period had already capitulated or failed in some secret, internal way. They concentrated on biases.

"It was a good atmosphere, though, and I did learn from other students."

But, in the end, he returned to Newfoundland, to his beginnings, and took up his work where he had left it as a teenager.

The Blackwood roots in Newfoundland go back to 1802, when one of two sons of Capt. Henry Blackwood—who, later, carried the news of Nelson's death from Trafalgar to England, and was knighted—emigrated. But the English connection is so distant in time and the salt air of Newfoundland so dominant in the artist's blood that the only influences he allows in his work are the crags and promontories and, above all, the people of the island.

He has just completed a three-year stay as artist-in-residence at the University of Toronto's Erindale College and will now work at his press in Port Hope, where he lives with his wife, Anita, and their three-year-old son, David. He teaches one day a week at Trinity College School in Port Hope.

Although Blackwood makes a good living from his printmaking, he has never been a high-volume producer and he makes no more than 50 prints from each plate, compared to 100 to 150 by most artists.

"I use the most basic, uncomplicated techniques," he says. "It's the

idea that's important." He etches through a wax ground, for the most part, as Rembrandt and the ancients did, but he also employs the Goya technique of resin or aquatint.

He feels he has passed through all the experiments of youth—shapes, textures and colors—and now seeks only truth and simplicity. For Blackwood this means a great deal of work on the composition, the relationships of figures and the over-all frame that might best express the idea.

His maximum annual production is five to eight plates, but last year he produced only three. At least part of the reason is his insistence on doing all the work himself, from rough drawing to inking and printing.

The truth is, he hates printing and loves platemaking. As a result, he usually works on more than one plate at a time. He loses much of his interest as soon as the plate itself is complete and ready for the ink.

Blackwood says he still has more than 100 ideas to work out before completing his depiction of man's battle against the sea and its allies, the ice and the wind.

"People keep asking me why I'm so severe. It's a good question, but all I know is it took 10 years to work out those harsh things. Now, I find, I'm being drawn to the warmth of life on the land, the importance to Newfoundland family life of aunts, uncles, grandparents, the waiting women and the children. That's one of the reasons I think my work with Farley on Wake of the Great Sealers may have been 10 years premature."

Purdie, J. Blackwood's prints a loyal record of Newfoundland in 'better days' **Globe and Mail**, *March 1, 1975*

Harsh Newfoundland life evoked in Blackwood's etchings

by

Harry Underwood

With remarkable singlemindedness, artist David Blackwood has worked since 1963 on a series of etchings, which ultimately may number 210, portraying the harsh life of the old Newfoundland fisherfolk.

A good selection of the 85 completed thus far is being circulated by the Art Gallery of Ontario and is on display at the Mackenzie Gallery, Trent University until November 25. Included are two of the best and most popular in the series, both part of the early Lost Party sequence, a narrative based on a 1934 disaster. In "Lost Party at Sea: The Sign" (1965), a great white bird materializes out of the waves, to the astonishment of the swamped fisherman. A bird is, of course, usually a good omen because it is a sign land is near, but this omen is deceptive because it is a vision. The strange perspective of "Cape Islanders Waiting" (1967), a view straight up a huge cliff on top of which a group huddles anxiously, powerfully suggests the loneliness and desolation of the scene.

Blackwood's vision is a simple one, almost melodramatic: the elemental shapes of rock, hut, and fisherman's dory; the hulking fisherman, like the land, shaped by the rough weather and without any spark of cheerfulness or energy. He paints an environment, like some of the Group of Seven, not a landscape. But what his work lacks in photographic faithfulness, it more than makes up for in an intense evocativeness — a different kind of verisimilitude.

The medium, (though ancient and arduous), is highly appropriate to Blackwood's message. In copperplate etching, a wide range of tones is possible but the texture is rough and scratchy. "I am more interested in ideas; the technique is a secondary thing," he says, dissociating himself from the modern school of printmakers for whom experimenting in technique is everything. But he is plainly attracted by the rigours of etching. "Once a line is down, you can't get rid of it," he explains, so control and careful planning are essential. The finished original takes as much as 10 weeks work.

To satisfy the need for spontaneity, and, one imagines, for colour, Blackwood paints watercolours. In his etchings, he makes very sparing use of colour, and never simply for its own sake. His deep sea blue-green is handsome.

He persists in theme as much as in technique. "Some people ask when I'm going to get into circles and squares, more modern work. I'm not interested in that." For he is steeped in the life he portrays, having spent his boyhood on the northeast coast of Newfoundland. His father was a fisherman but young Blackwood was drawn to painting and came west to the Ontario College of Art. This series evolved over ten years, he says, though "there was no special crusade or effort to do it." Now he revisits the island every year — but not to paint — to the sea he misses so much.

Blackwood describes with feeling the old sealing industry he chronicles. "At one time 50,000 men were involved in this, really the most dangerous of occupations — deadly but necessary." The ships that worked around the coasts were usually condemned vessels purchased by St. John's merchant families for a few thousand dollars. The men were paid $50 for nine weeks work, during which time they didn't change or wash, even though they were up to their eyes in grease and blood, even slept on top of seal fat. If they were lost it was no great loss to the company which could always blame it on the weather. "The profits were phenomenal."

Dangers for the men included explosions and being stranded on ice fields of ice. In one disaster, 78 were cut off from the mother ship with the temperature dropping. A day later they were found, frozen completely solid in sitting and standing positions.

Obviously the stuff of exciting literature and painting. Blackwood either gives us exciting art though, one feels, his vision is sometimes excessively stark, horrible, and dark, and therefore rather grandiose — the vision of a Newfoundlander transplanted to Port Hope. As he himself says, tragedy makes the best literature, and he admits that the people he portrays are unaware of the extremity of their situation. For them, it is an everyday thing.

Underwood, H, *Harsh Newfoundland life evoked in Blackwood's etchings.* **Peterborough Examiner, November, 1972.**

Soft memories of the Newfoundland Seal Hunt

by

ELIZABETH DINOMAN

You'll not find his like anywhere: Young David Blackwood, 26, surrounded in his studio by old photos of Newfoundland sealing ships and captains, by steel engravings of the court of Queen Victoria, by rubbings from the gravestones of the great sea captains of Bonavista North.

He puts you in mind of Moby Dick, of the novels of Joseph Conrad and of the things of the sea. His work has the elemental power of Eskimo sculpture.

Engraving is the medium David Blackwood uses to portray the life of the seal hunters of the Newfoundland coastal waters.

He has been working since 1961, using the title Lost Party, to produce 70 etched plates of the essential world of the Newfoundland outport where he grew up and to which he returns every summer.

Memorial University of Newfoundland has a complete set of the Lost Party Series.

Others are in the National Gallery of Canada, National Gallery of Australia, public galleries around Ontario, and in private collections including that of Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. His work was exhibited at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts this year, but has never been shown at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

ANGRY

They threw away the mold when this Newfoundland boy was made: An angry young man with black curling hair touched with gray, standing in the middle of his studio at Erindale College, arms akimbo, chin cocked up, hating the city, hating Toronto which he called the most American of Canadian cities.

"The terrible problem of the city," he says, "is of children growing up in concrete, never knowing nature. If you cut people off from nature, something terrible happens to them. Their lives are artificial. They

invent reasons for living. Otherwise there is no need for them to do anything or be anything. As you get away from urban centres, people become natural, essential, basic."

FISHERMAN

David Blackwood has a studio on Spadina, south of College, unused for almost a year since he became artist-in-residence at Erindale College. He came out of Wesleyville, Bonavista North, in 1959 to study at the Ontario College of Art with a scholarship and money earned as a lobster fisherman when he was 15 and 16 years old.

"I am the only survivor of a class of 19 at OCA," he told me. I am still thinking about art, not working 9 to 5 doing signs or with the CBC, and unable to accept a position at Erindale without needing to."

WAY OF LIFE

The titles of his etchings describe his preoccupation: Great Lost Party Adrift, Captain Abram Kean Awaiting the Return of the Lost Party, Captain with Mutineers, Lost Sealers, Hunter Spirits, On The Greenland's Bridge, S. S. Imogene with Crew on Ice.

"The Lost Party series," he said, "is based on a thing unique in Newfoundland. Sealing has been going on there for 300 years as an organized event. 1850-1900 was the great period when 400 ships and 50,000 men were involved in the hunt. It produced a way of life from which came very famous ships and captains."

His own family, British naval people, has been involved in the seal hunt since 1812. The Blackwoods are among the clans of sea captains for which Wesleyville is renowned. The Keans, Winsors, Barbours are the other names of the great seafaring families of this outport named after John Wesley, the Methodist philosopher who preached an ethic of industry, hard work, education, honesty.

David Blackwood's etchings record a way of life that began to disappear with the emergence of Premier Joseph Smallwood and a decrease in the importance of Newfoundland's fishing industry on the world market. "The fishing fleets disappeared," he said, "as Newfoundland started to lose its markets and because the Smallwood Government had no money for the fishing industry."

BITTERNESS

He cannot speak of Joey Smallwood without bitterness:

"Joey's stupid ideas of inviting foreign capital in to develop Newfoundland. Twenty of these enterprises have folded since 1950. Yes, I am a nationalistic Canadian, very much aware of the threat of the United States to Canada. We are quite content to be well paid servants. I'm afraid that our superficiality will destroy us. There are so many people willing to sell out. The loss has been total in Newfoundland."

He turned to a wall of photos dating back to 1914. "The Eagle: my great grandfather was captain of this ship. All these men are from my home town.

"Why do I hang these photos? They create a certain atmosphere away from home. This is my court in exile. I have to have these things around me in order to create a certain reality. Every person in Toronto should make one trip to Newfoundland in order to learn that things are not so bad after all — that there is such a thing as newfound-land."

Dingman, E. Salt memories of the Newfoundland sealer **Toronto Telegram**, *March 25, 1970.*

Personal Nostalgia In Artist's Prints

by

PHYLLIS FREEDMAN

Free Press Staff Writer

For 400 years Newfoundlanders braved their harsh environment and in doing so become strong, proud and resourceful.

But when Newfoundland became a Canadian province in 1949, the new government saw fit to do away with fisheries — the main industry — and the people suffered as a result.

That's the opinion of artist David Blackwood, a descendant of a long line of master mariners, fishing skippers and sealing captains. His heritage is communicated in a collection of prints, the Lost Party series produced from 1963 to 1973, part of which illustrates Farley Mowat's new book, Wake of the Great Sealers.

In an interview this week at Hotel Fort Garry, Mr. Blackwood said the book is a collaboration of two people — himself and Farley Mowat making one statement. The writing and art work depict an era which they feel ended too soon.

"The seal hunters devised ways to survive, and in the process they developed admirable qualities," Mr. Blackwood said. They lived in a total communal situation; everyone needed everyone else."

When Newfoundland joined Canada, the people became eligible to receive welfare and old age pensions. "Before that everyone had to work. Old people were involved in what was happening."

Mr. Blackwood criticized Joey Smallwood's Liberal government for the destruction of fisheries. "There was no consideration of the availability of raw materials, transportation required and consumer needs. The Smallwood government ignored the one great industry and replaced it with various unsuccessful factories. There's now a national debt of $1 billion."

Frank Moore's Conservative government is trying to develop fisheries which have almost disappeared, Mr. Blackwood said. "There's a generation of Newfoundlanders who don't know how to fish."

"I'm not interested in turning the clock back to 20 years ago. We should have had planned progress," he said.

Mr. Blackwood said his prints "happen to make a statement" based on his own personal nostalgia. "They show strong, admirable people passed into time. It's a universal situation."

Born in Wesleyville, Nfld. in 1941, Mr. Blackwood lived with traditional story-telling about ancestors who braved the elements hunting seals on the North Atlantic ice fields. He found it natural to choose the seal hunters as subjects for his art work.

But his prints are "slightly divorced from reality. They take on an element of the fantastic, the supernatural. Reality is used as a point of departure."

Mr. Blackwood said he paints landscapes during the summer as a form of relaxation. "But painting is a deadend thing. Painting has forfeited its traditional role. It no longer communicates.

"Prints are a great medium of communication," he added.

Mr. Blackwood is artist-in-residence at Erindale College, University of Toronto. He visits Newfoundland a few times a year — "The sea takes me back" — but doesn't live there because "every job there is on the line politically."

Mr. Blackwood studied at the Ontario College of Art and graduated with honors in 1963. He has received awards from the National Gallery of Canada, the French government, the Sarnia Art Gallery, the London Public Library and Art Museum, the National Gallery of Australia and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. He has also received awards at the First International Norwegian Prints Biennial and the Third Biennale International De L'Estampe in Paris.

He has had one-man shows across Canada since 1963. His works are found in a number of private collections, including that of Queen Elizabeth and the Queen Mother.

Mr. Blackwood's work is available in Winnipeg at the Fleet Gallery, McDermot Avenue.

Freedman, P. - Personal Nostalgia in Artist's Print
Winnipeg Free Press, *November 3, 1973.*

SKIPPERS AND SEALS: TALES FROM THE EAST COAST

An interview with David Blackwood, Artist-in-residence

by Jay Scott
Medium X Staff Reporter

It seems that many great men have at some time in their personal growth developed an intimate tie with particular aspects of nature and from this tie derived inspiration and strength in conducting their daily lives. Especially for the artist, this relationship takes on added importance, as the inspiration often directly influences their work, the strength gives the work substance and meaning.

For David Blackwood, Artist-in-Residence, the oceans are this source of power. The sea, willful, wicked, calm and peaceful; sustainer of life but hailer of death; the sea, turbulent, beautiful, awesome, mighty; to be placated, to be mastered; the sea and all its natures lead Blackwood on.

It's been in his blood for generations. Master mariners, well-known sealing captains, fishing skippers of the Newfoundland coast are the heritage to which Blackwood belongs.

His birthplace has been described by Harold Horwood, in his book **Newfoundland**, as having produced some of the greatest seafaring men of the Nineteenth Century. The small Newfoundland outport of Wesleyville once harboured sixty Labrador fishing schooners. It provided the captains and crews for countless sealing ships for over 150 years.

To a people whose entire livelihood depended upon the sea and its fruits, these were the men who led the seasons. The captains were community leaders, wells of confidence, stamina and integrity from which the people could draw, keepers of know-how for the very essential matter of survival. Often one with qualities outstanding of his leadership made his way into coastal folklore. Many are the stories and songs still told about these particularly laudable worthies. Because of them, the East coast, more than any other region in Canada is extremely rich in this sort of peasant narrative.

These were the stories to which Blackwood listened in his Wesleyville, Newfoundland youth. The stories and his own actual participation in the last days of the great seal hunts were forever impressed in his mind. Most of his boyhood summers were spent aboard his father's schooner, the Flora S. Nickerson, built by a banker in Glouster. His memories of these tales and of real life experiences provide him with his vast, varied repertoire of sea-saga subject matter.

His art grips gloomily with a kind of otherworld reality, a reality which we, in our plastic push-button world, have lost contact with. It is the stark, sheer terror of cold existence in which Life, Love, and Death are the central and barren themes, the black and white situation of wrestling the forces of roaring seas, bitter gales, sepulchral fogs, and monumental icebergs to eke out a satisfactory survival.

It is an exciting art. Always on the verge of Life and Death, describing the fine line between survival and destruction.

It is sombre, it is powerful.

It is technically skilful.

The superbly done intaglio prints, whether they contain a blaze of flames consuming a boat, or the rhythm of the wave caps in "The Lost Party at Sea" (in which the white bird, obviously an omen to the men in the life boat, seems to materilize right out of the waves), or the foamy spray thrown up by the boat bringing the sick captain on shore, do justice to his subject matter.

As much as the art is spelling a people's despair, it spells of their magnificent strength. The essence of primevil tenacity is the mood well captured in the prints and etchings, and it is this quality which makes them totally convincing. The strength of his subject matter and his complete mastery of technique has brought him to the attention of international art connoiseurs. (He is the holder of the 1963 Government of France Award, the Ingres Medal for Drawing and Painting). He has received awards from countries such as Norway, Australia, England and the U. S.

So our artist-in-residence has really proven himself in the proper places.

The Newfoundland government was early in recognizing his obvious

talents and he was sent to the Ontario College of Art on a scholarship in 1959. There he perfected his printmaking techniques through learning from other students rather than the teachers. This move to Toronto he considered a good learning experience but not especially for his art. "Nobody can teach you to draw, to paint," he says. One learns when one is ready and able.

After that, he began his long collection of awards, scholarships, and one-man exhibitions of his art. He has a once-a-week post as Art Master at Trinity College in Port Hope which he considers a hobby. He certainly doesn't need it as income. According to him, a man who pays more in taxes than most people make in one year's salary hardly needs to teach from necessity. He feels this kind of contact with pupils is desirable to keep track of what the kids are up to. He does his own work the rest of the time.

The man has a quiet warmth about him . An eye of understanding and calm, alluding to a peaceful soul, alluding to confidence, accomplishment, alluding to a mighty heritage. Soft spoken and sure, he explains how he got his position as artist-in-residence at Erindale College.

It really was a right time, right place question. Dr. J. T. Wilson, former Erindale president came to Newfoundland to receive yet another honorary degree. While there, art appreciator that he was (strange for a scientist?) Wilson chanced to see an exhibit of Blackwood's, and liked it enough to arrange to give Dave a show at Erindale. This done, the next idea of Wilson's was to give Blackwood a tentative one-year residenceship. The one year (1969-70) turned into five years, fortunately for Erindale, and now Blackwood has decided to pack it up.

He has given a few reasons for his disenchantment of Erindale. Foremost is that the atmosphere of Dr. Wilson's patronage is lost. There was a time when Erindale was teeming with artists, playwrights, filmmakers, etc., in residence. It was as if Dr. Wilson needed this environment himself. Strange to say of a man of science, but one never knows how deeply sensitivities may run. All these ideas were Dr. Wilson's. A true art patron, he took a genuine interest in each and every artist that ever exhibited at Erindale offering the utmost of his hospitality to them.

This mood has now gone. Funds and hospitalities are being cut back; Erindale is no longer a breeding ground for creativities; the atmosphere is lost. Blackwood says, "It all depends on the man at the top, regardless of the institution."

A couple of grievances also led to his decision to go. Lack of appreciation is characteristic in each instance.

Once, when a curator from the National Gallery travelled down from Ottawa expressly to examine an Erindale-owned Mary Pratt painting put up in our library, she got here and it was gone. It was hung two days and some considerate librarian had taken it down for some obscure reason.

The same thing happened in the dean's office. A painting of value and worth was once hung on the office wall, later Blackwood found it behind a pile of boxes, as if discarded.

It has since been put up again.

There is also the incident where a professor once called up the morality squad on an exhibit. This irritated Blackwood. In fact, the art was not immoral, just gross, and the police could not lay charges. (Those who remember, the exhibit was mainly paintings of sick people with spiders, flies and flowers all over them.)

Blackwood has done Erindale the favor of making ours one of the best University Art Galleries in Canada in the works acquired for our private collection. He has put us a notch above the other colleges in the U. of T. in this respect. It is rumored that Hart House is covetous of our collection. (But where is it!!?)

He had done much good while he was among us, and has filled some people's needs. Much of his most important work was done on our campus, i.e. "Captain Solomon White" (coll: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts), "Abandoned Ancestors on Bragg's Island" (coll: Museum of Modern Art, New York), and "Summer on Bragg's Island (coll: Art Gallery of Ontario). Dr. Wilson also provided him with the time to put together the magnificent book "Wake of the Great Sealer" which was produced in collaboration with Farley Mowat. To date it has sold 50,000 copies in the Canadian and American editions.

He has given much to Erindale and in turn Erindale has given much to

him, but, in his own words, "The conducive atmosphere is lacking now," and we must sadly see him go.

"The worst thing I saw was when I tried to get to another pan and I fell over a clumper. Only it warn't no clumper. 'Twas Reuben Crewe and his son, froze together, and the old fellow's arms tight around the lad, and the lad's head buried under his father's jacket. I recall the drift eased off about then and it seem light as day and I looked around me and 'twas like being in a graveyard full of awful white statues...dead men all around..."

Captain Lew Kean
Fam Wake of the
Great Seafers.

Acacia, J. Skippers and Seals: Tales from the East Coast, Medium II, February 27, 1975.

Artist Hangs in Gallery

by

B. Rusted

There is no one story that this story is based on. In the last 250 years there have been more than 500 major national disasters on the icefields. The series is based on nostalgia. Most of the men is Wesleyville went to the icefields each March. Most of them returned.

The Lost Party Series has evolved over the last ten years and came from the experiences David had as a child. They are just an extension of his environment. He is portraying the incidents that concerned the people he knew in his home.

The past has been giving way, in Newfoundland, over the last 20 years to a future, that for the most part, is unwanted. The people used to be self-sufficient; they were satisfied with their lives and they had no need for things such as welfare. At one time there were 50,000 men who went on the seal hunt. There was no concern about the killing of seals not being humane. It's the cocktail people from Rosedale who it bothers, but it is not their way of life. The great ways of life in Newfoundland are slowly giving way to progress. It looks more and more like a little Ontario. People now sit at home and watch TV. As a result, traditional methods of entertainment are dying. There are not many grandfathers who still tell stories and there is hardly anyone writing songs about all that goes on. David Blackwood is starting his own tradition; he is changing the old verbal stories into visual ones. That does not mean that his work is only relevant in Newfoundland. There was a girl there, from Nova Scotia who said the series reminded her of stories here grandfather used to tell. There was someone from the Prairies who was able to see his land in its vast openness and bleakness. People of Russia like them for similar reasons. Many people of Norway and other Scandinavian countries like it because the ways of life are so similar.

David doesn't do much work in Newfoundland. In living there all the time one loses awareness of the situation and environment and everything becomes common-place. He does do watercolours there in the summer. This is so much of a contrast to what he does in Ontario

that it becomes a vocation. The making of prints is a very precise and exacting process whereas the watercolours are very spontaneous things done in a remarkably short time. David says he cannot live permanently in Newfoundland because he dislikes the political and social situation. Most government policies take Newfoundland out of the Newfoundlanders. 'Things might be different now if there had been someone other than Smallwood at Confederation. We needed someone like Castro.'

The most important work in art being done in Canada today is in the area of printmaking. The art of printing is very old; Goya is considered to be the first master of it. Today there are too many people who put too much emphasis on technique. In printing, technique is really secondary, it is the ideas that deserve most concern.'

David sees no radical changes in his work for the near future. He is against change for the sake of change. The 'sell-out' is slowly creeping into Canadian Art. The desire for something new and fascinating' every fall can be seen among certain circles. The media as in everything else is telling us what is good and most of the time what is new is supposed to be good. This kind of thing has a detrimental effect on art because it allows no time for things to grow and develop on their own.

Rusted, B., *Artist Hangs in Gallery*, Arthur Enterprise-News, November 21, 1972, p.7.

PRINCIPAL COLLECTIONS, SHOWS AND AWARDS

PRINCIPAL COLLECTIONS

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa
National Gallery of Australia, Melbourne
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Winnipeg Art Gallery
The Hamilton Art Gallery
The New Brunswick Museum
The London Public Library and Art Museum
The Sarnia Art Gallery
The Beaverbrook Art Gallery
The Confederation Art Gallery P.E.I.
The Brantford Art Gallery
The Cobourg Art Gallery
Department of External Affairs
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
The Ontario Department of Education
University of Toronto
University of Windsor
St. Mary's University, Halifax
Memorial University of Newfoundland
University of Western Ontario
McMaster University, Hamilton
Clarkson Gordon Collection, Toronto
Steinberg Collection, Montreal
Toronto Star Collection
American Anaconda Brass Collection
Benson and Hedges Collection
The Private Collections of Her Majesty The Queen and Her Majesty, The Queen Mother Elizabeth
Canada Council Collection

ONE MAN SHOWS

1963 Ontario College of Art, Toronto
1964 Art Gallery, Memorial University, St. John's, Nfld.

1965 Sarnia Art Gallery
1965 Brantford Art Gallery
1967 Art Gallery, Memorial University, Nfld.
1967 Trinity College School, Port Hope
1967 McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont.
1968 Erindale College, University of Toronto
1969 Trinity College, University of Toronto
1969 University of Waterloo
1969 Gallery Pascal, Toronto
1969 Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Que.
1969 Alberta College of Art
1969 University of British Columbia
1969 Mount Allison University, Sackville, N.S.
1970 St. Mary's University, Halifax
1970 University of New Brunswick
1971 The New Brunswick Museum, St. John
1970 The Confederation Art Gallery, Charlottetown, P.E.I.
1970 Wells Gallery, Ottawa
1971 McIntosh Gallery, University of Western Ontario
1971 Gallery Pascal, Toronto
1971 Dunlop-Burton Gallery, Hamilton
1972 Warwick Gallery, Vancouver, B. C.
1972 Gallery 1640, Montreal
1972 Fleet Galleries, Winnipeg
1973 Trent University, Peterborough
1973 Laurentian University, Ontario
1972-73, 1973-74 Art Gallery of Ontario Circulating Exhibition
One Man Exhibition of Prints by David Blackwood
1973 Gallery Pascal, Toronto

AWARDS,

Latham Foundation Awards in International Student Competition, Stanford, California, 1958, 1959.

Newfoundland Arts and Letters Awards, national jury, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963.

Newfoundland Centenary of Responsible Government Scholarship to study at the Ontario College of Art, Toronto, 1959 — 1963.

Ontario College of Art Scholarship 1960.

Ontario College of Art Travelling Scholarship 1963

Purchase Award: Biennial Exhibition National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 1964.

Purchase Award: London Public Library and Art Museum. 1966.

Purchase Award: National Gallery of Australia, 1967.

Purchase Award: American Anaconda Brass 1967.

INTERNATIONAL AWARDS:

Government of France Award, the Ingress Medal for drawing and painting 1963.

International Graphics '71, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.

1st. International Norwegian Biennial Prints, Fredrikstad, 1972.

Biennale International de L'estampe, Paris, 1973.

APPENDIX C

Interview with Miss Alice Lacey

(under separate cover)

APPENDIX D

Teacher's Guide

DAVID BLACKWOOD

Newfoundland Artist

D A V I D B L A C K W O O D

NEWFOUNDLAND ARTIST

by Winston Lane

Program Contents

1 set of slides--David Blackwood
Newfoundland Artist

1 cassette tape
(narration printed in teacher's guide)

1 cassette tape
(interview with Miss Lacey)

1 set of evaluation slides

1 booklet--selected readings on
David Blackwood and his work

1 teacher's guide

c1976

FOREWORD

Newfoundland is rich in historical events which stir the imagination of artists and story-tellers. It takes on added meaning when a native-born Newfoundlander gives creative vent to these events.

David Blackwood is one such Newfoundlander, who through his artistic creations has given people everywhere a glimpse of coastal Newfoundland and its people during the first half of the twentieth century.

This kit not only examines some of the artistic works of David Blackwood, but also presents the man and his present day thoughts on his native province.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To appreciate man's struggle with nature as depicted in Blackwood's art.

To familiarize the student with ONE Newfoundland artist by:

1. providing biographical data on a Newfoundland artist, David Blackwood.
2. introducing students to the philosophical thoughts and opinions of the artist as expressed through interviews published in magazines and newspapers.
3. listening to the artist's former teacher and friend reminisce about him as a student.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THIS KIT--ONE APPROACH

1. PREVIEW the materials before presenting the kit to the students.
2. Present the slide-tape without interruption.
3. Arrange study groups to examine in detail information contained in the booklet and taped interview with Miss Lacey.
4. Present again the slides in #2 without taped narration. Students should at this time be prepared to discuss Blackwood and his art.
5. Assign suggested projects. (See page 5 of this guide.)
6. Administer post-test. (See page 11 of this guide.)
7. Administer "visual evaluation" test. This test contains 15 selected slides of Blackwood's works and others. Students will indicate on the form provided the number corresponding to a Blackwood print. (See page 12 of this guide.)

Projection Pointers

1. Cassettes have the same program on each side so that rewinding is not necessary. Instructions for starting the sound are on the focus slide.

2. Any slide projector may be used. A signal on the cassette indicates when to advance to the next slide.

PROJECTS AND SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Consult some of the additional materials suggested on page 13 of this guide to see where Blackwood got the ideas for his Lost Party Series.
2. Write a class letter to David Blackwood telling him about your class experience and ask one or two questions about his art which interests you.
3. Collect scenes of the modern day seal hunt and compare it with those depicted by Blackwood in his art.
4. What process is involved in etching. Find other examples of this type of art.
5. Compile a list of Newfoundland artists.
6. Discuss possible reasons why Blackwood's art has become internationally famous.

NARRATION

SLIDE	VOICE
1. FOCUS Start tape	Music
2. David Blackwood Newfoundland Artist	Music
3. Produced by Winston Lane	Music
4. Newfoundland map	On the northeast coast of Newfoundland, exposed to the North Atlantic, stands the town of Wesleyville, birthplace of Newfoundland's best-known artist, David Blackwood.
5. Town of Wesleyville	It is this town, home of fishermen and sealhunters for over 150 years that began to stir the imagination of a youthful David Blackwood.
6. School	From this three-room school, now converted into a regional museum which bears his name, David Blackwood received his early education.
7. Survivor (drawing)	Although his early education did not include a study of art, he loved to draw. His first drawings were comic strips, local scenes and quaint characters of the community.
8. Graveyard scene	His greatest inspiration, however, came from stories of the past--tales handed down to him by his ancestors.

9.	Autobiography: Faces	His ancestors, like the Blackwoods and Bishops whose names are famous in the annals of the Labrador fishery and the annual seal hunt.
10.	Captain Solomon White	There were tales of the exploits of brave Newfoundland captains like Solomon White,
11.	Captain Arthur Jackman	and Captain Arthur Jackman.
12.	Kean's men waiting for the S. S. Bellaventure	There were tales of human suffering and death at the seal hunt.
13.	Survivor	and tales of ships crushed in the ice or ripped apart by explosions--all vivid images that Blackwood was to skilfully portray in his etchings.
14.	Spirit Departing: a once-told tale	To achieve effect in creating the mood for his work, Blackwood made wide use of contrast. Note the contrast in the white and black areas of these prints.
15.	Monday Morning March 1	Music
16.	Survivor Drifting	Music
17.	SS Imogene Home from the Icefields	Music
18.	Survivors Discovered	Music
19.	Capt. Wes Kean on the Bridge of the SS Newfoundland	The effect which light has on its subject is also used by Blackwood for dramatic effect. Note the contrasting effect of the Northern Lights as it is reflected in the sky and water.

20.	William Lane leaving Bragg's Island	Note his use of the bright sky being overshadowed by the heavy, dark clouds.
21.	Cape Islanders Waiting	Blackwood has also made effective use of mass and contrast of that mass with people. Note the foreboding cliffs of Cape Island with its people dwarfed by the massive cliffs.
22.	The Great Lost Party Adrift	Note again the massive ice flows with their hundreds of lost men, helpless against the forces of nature.
23.	Two Scouts from SS Eagle	Music
24.	Prince Andrew	Music
25.	The Departure:	In this print, The Departure: Kean's Men Leaving, Blackwood has combined a number of contrasting elements to create this dramatic etching. We see again his use of mass, his use of light, and his use of contrast between light and dark areas.
26.	Burning of SS Viking	In all of Blackwood's etchings very little use is made of colour. Colour, Blackwood says, is only used where it is essential, like an explosion or fire.
27.	Fire at Sea	Music
28.	The Burning of the SS Diana	The subtle use of colour in this picture is used to create atmosphere. Note the horror that shows on the faces of these seal-hunters.
29.	Vision of the Lost Party	Music
30.	The Retreat	In addition to Blackwood's use of contrast, colour and other techniques to create vivid images, he has used consistently one unifying force--people.

31.	Aunt Meg Felthan on Bragg's Island	At times massive, almost shapeless, yet dominant figures.
32.	Capt. Abraham Kean Awaiting the Lost Party's Return	Music
33.	Capt. with Mutineers: the Warning	Other times shadowy images of men, barely visible against the bright background.
34.	Capt. Edward Bishop with Officers on the the SS Eagle	and people whose searching eyes and haunting looks seem to tell their own story.
35.	Wesleyville Remembered	But always the people. Mainly the people of Wesleyville, remembered for the courage they showed and for a way of life which is now gone.
36.	Return to Wesleyville	They are Blackwood's people who lived close to the sea but are now only images of the artist's creations.
37.	Blackwood's prints courtesy of MUN Art Gallery and The Gallery	Music

10

PRE-TEST

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. ALL QUESTIONS ARE RELATED TO DAVID BLACKWOOD - THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

1. Is Blackwood a Newfoundlander? _____
2. In which community was Blackwood born? _____
3. What was the major type of work carried on by his ancestors? _____
4. Name one award that he has won for his work. _____
5. What is the title of the major Art Series that Blackwood has produced? _____
6. From where does the Series get its title? _____
7. Does Blackwood feel that the seal hunt today is necessary? _____
8. What is Blackwood's attitude towards present day Newfoundland? _____
9. Where is Blackwood now living? _____
10. Does Blackwood make his living as an artist? _____

POST-TEST

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. ALL QUESTIONS ARE RELATED TO DAVID BLACKWOOD--THE MAN AND HIS WORK

1. Is Blackwood a Newfoundlander? _____
2. In which community was Blackwood born? _____
3. What was the major type of work carried on by his ancestors? _____
4. Name one award that he has won for his work. _____
5. What is the title of the major Art Series that Blackwood has produced? _____
6. From where does the Series get its title? _____
7. Does Blackwood feel that the seal hunt today is necessary? _____
8. What is Blackwood's attitude towards present day Newfoundland? _____
9. Where is Blackwood now living? _____
10. What are some things which you have noticed about Blackwood's art? _____

USING THE EVALUATION SLIDES

The visual evaluation slides in this kit were designed to be used at the end of the unit to evaluate the student's ability to discriminate between Blackwood prints and the works of other artists. Slides 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 are reproductions of Blackwood prints. The following slides were taken from the book, The Group of Seven, by Peter Mellen, published by McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto, 1970.

Slide No.	Artist	Title of Painting	Page
2	Lawren Harris	Black Court, Halifax	113
4	Lawren Harris	Icebergs and Mountains Greenland	180
5	Frank Carmichael	Jackfish Village	156
8	L. Fitzgerald	Doc Snider's House	183
12	A. J. Casson	Anglican Church at Magnetawan	185
14	A. Y. Jackson	The Beothic at Bache Post Ellesmere Island	175

Slide 10, Drawing by Arshile Gorky, was reproduced from the book, American Painting 1900-1970, by the Editors of Time-Life Books.

The students will note the difference in the use of colour in Blackwood's prints and those of the Group of Seven. The composition in slides 4, 5, and 14, for example, may give students the impression that they are Blackwood's works since they reflect themes that are common to Blackwood prints.

VISUAL EVALUATION

Your teacher will show you 15 slides of the works of different artists, including slides of David Blackwood's works. Each slide will have a number. Circle each number which shows a Blackwood print.

1	6	11
2	7	12
3	8	13
4	9	14
5	10	15

Name _____

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

For further information on David Blackwood, the nature of his art, and background on the theme of his major artistic works, please consult the following:

Brown, Cassie. Death on the Ice. Toronto: Doubleday, 1974.

Men and Seals--A Multi-media Kit. GLC, 1973. (available through Newfoundland School Supplies--$11.00)

Mowat, F. and Blackwood, D. Wake of the Great Sealers. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973.

David Blackwood
King Street
Port Hope, Ontario.

Memorial University Art Gallery
Arts and Culture Centre
St. John's, Newfoundland.

The National Gallery of Canada
Lorne Building
Elgin and Slater Streets
Ottawa, Ontario.

The Gallery

Duckworth Street

St. John's, Newfoundland.

Miss Alice Lacey

Wesleyville, Bonavista Bay

Newfoundland.

Edgar Glover

Glovertown, Bonavista Bay

Newfoundland.

APPENDIX E

FIELD TEST OF RESOURCE KIT

ON

NEWFOUNDLAND ARTIST

DAVID BLACKWOOD

Co-operating Art Specialist _____

Grades Used in Test _____

Total Number of Students _____

School and Community _____

Dates Kit Was Used _____

FIELD TEST OF RESOURCE KIT

ON

NEWFOUNDLAND ARTIST

DAVID BLACKWOOD

Non-print Materials

1. Was the number of slides in the presentation of Blackwood's prints adequate? _____ If "no", what would be adequate?

2. Was the narration with the slides suitable, or should there be more mention of the nature of Blackwood's art?

If a different narration is needed, what would you suggest?

3. Did the taped interview with Miss Lacey help the students get an understanding of David Blackwood?

4. If it helped, in what way did it help?

5. Was the taped interview too long?

6. Should the taped interview be changed in any way?

7. Were the "visual evaluation" slides useful to the kit?

8. If the "visual evaluation" slide concept was useful, in what way can it be improved?

Print Materials

1. Were the print materials of a suitable reading level for your class?

2. Were there adequate materials to achieve the objectives suggested with each folder?

3. Were the objectives for each folder clearly stated?

4. Would one copy of the print materials be adequate for your class?

5. Should the materials be put in book format or left as it is now?

6. Was the suggested student evaluation adequate?

7. What should be added or deleted from the student evaluation?

Guide Book

1. Were the materials in the kit adequate to achieve the goals outlined in the guide book?

2. Were the "suggestions for the use of the kit" helpful?

3. What changes in procedure would you suggest?

4. Were the "suggested activities" useful?

Teaching the Unit

1. How many students did you have in your class? _____

2. With which grade did you teach this unit? _____

3. What was the general ability level of the students? high average low

4. How much time was given to the unit? _____

5. Did students show an interest in the study of a Newfoundland artist? _____

6. How do you think this kit should fit into your art program?

7. Do you think it could be of use in other subject areas? _____

8. What were the strong points of this kit?

9. What would you consider to be the weak points of this kit?

10. Would similar kits on other Newfoundland artists be useful in your teaching of art?

11. Additional comments?

PRE-TEST

School _____

Grade _____

Date _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. ALL QUESTIONS ARE RELATED TO DAVID BLACKWOOD--THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

1. Is Blackwood a Newfoundlander? _____
2. In which community was Blackwood born? _____
3. What was the major type of work carried on by his ancestors? _____
4. Name one award that he has won for his work. _____
5. What is the title of the major Art Series that Blackwood has produced? _____
6. From where does the Series get its title? _____
7. Does Blackwood feel that the seal hunt today is necessary? _____
8. What is Blackwood's attitude towards present day Newfoundland? _____
9. Where is Blackwood now living? _____
10. Does Blackwood make his living as an artist? _____

POST-TEST

School _____

Grade _____

Date _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN THE SPACE PROVIDED. ALL QUESTIONS ARE RELATED TO DAVID BLACKWOOD--THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

1. Is Blackwood a Newfoundlander? _____
2. In which community was Blackwood born? _____
3. What was the major type or work carried on by his ancestors? _____
4. Name one award that he has won for his work.

   _____
5. What is the title of the major Art Series that Blackwood has produced? _____
6. From where does the Series get its title? _____

   _____
7. Does Blackwood feel that the seal hunt today is necessary? _____
8. What is Blackwood's attitude towards present day Newfoundland? _____

   _____
9. Where is Blackwood now living? _____
10. What are some things which you have noticed about Blackwood's art? (Answer on back of paper.)

(evaluation slides under separate cover)

VISUAL EVALUATION

Your teacher will show you 15 slides of the works of different artists, including slides of David Blackwood's works. Each slide will have a number. Circle each number which shows a Blackwood print.

1	6	11
2	7	12
3	8	13
4	9	14
5	10	15

School _____

Grade _____

Date _____

APPENDIX F

April 12th, 1977.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Mr. Winston Lane has contacted me by phone and letter seeking permission to use a number of slides to support written material related to my work as an artist.

He has my approval to use any number of slides, newspaper articles, etc., and to quote from any correspondence which has occured during the past two years related to this project.

David Blackwood, R.C.A.

david blackwood 22 king street port hope ontario canada L1A 2R5 - tel. 885-4097

APPENDIX G

P.O. Box 875
Clarenville
Newfoundland
A0E 1J0
April 10, 1977

Dear Sir:

As partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education from Memorial University of Newfoundland I am developing a multi-media package on Newfoundland artist David Blackwood. The components of the package consist of the following: slides of Blackwood's works, slides of the works of other artists, magazine and newspaper articles related to Blackwood and his work and personal interviews on audio tapes. I hereby request release of the following without charge to be used by me in the development of the said package.

I do hereby agree not to use the materials stated in the release for financial gain.

Yours truly,

Winston Lane

bh