

# Sparking A Cultural Revolution: Joey Smallwood, Farley Mowat, Harold Horwood and Newfoundland's Cultural Renaissance

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Volume 16, numéro 2, fall 2000

URI : [https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/nflds16\\_2art04](https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/nflds16_2art04)

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Éditeur(s)

Faculty of Arts, Memorial University

ISSN

1198-8614 (imprimé)

1715-1430 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

Overton, J. (2000). Sparking A Cultural Revolution: Joey Smallwood, Farley Mowat, Harold Horwood and Newfoundland's Cultural Renaissance. *Newfoundland Studies*, 16(2), 166–204.

# Sparking A Cultural Revolution: Joey Smallwood, Farley Mowat, Harold Horwood and Newfoundland's Cultural Renaissance'

JAMES OVERTON

## REVOLUTION

IN THE SECOND HALF of the 1960s, talk of revolution was common in Newfoundland. In his Budget speech in 1967, Joseph Smallwood, the province's Premier since Confederation in 1949, described what had been accomplished in the province as a "true revolution" (*Evening Telegram*, March 31, 1967: 3). There had been ten major revolutions in his lifetime, he argued, and what had happened in Newfoundland could stand alongside the revolutions in China, Russia and Cuba. Albert Perlin, writing as Wayfarer in the *Daily News* (April 4, 1967: 4), also assessed Newfoundland's progress in a column with the title "Speaking of Revolutions." That same year, newspaper reporter Rupert Jackson, recently returned from a period living in London, England, declared Newfoundland to be "a revolutionary place" (Jackson, 1967: 44).

Others, too, were caught up in the revolutionary fervour. In the *Book of Newfoundland*, edited by Smallwood, George Pope described "the welfare revolution in Newfoundland" (Pope, 1967), Eric Jones celebrated the province's "revolution in roads" (Jones, 1967) and politician Edward Roberts, a close associate of Smallwood, talked of the "the great revolution of belief" — in the province's future — as being "the foundation of Newfoundland's astounding progress" (Roberts, 1967: 102). About the same time, Richard Gwyn looked at Smallwood's career and declared him to be "the unlikely revolutionary" (Gwyn, 1968).

In the 1970s former Liberal politician Fred Rowe wrote about Newfoundland's "cultural revolution of the 1960s" (Rowe, 1976: xiii), his focus being mainly on the changes in education which had taken place since 1949. However, a broader set of changes was underway in the cultural sphere in the 1960s and early 1970s. These changes were in evidence when Richard Gwyn updated his 1968 biography of Smallwood in 1972 (Gwyn, 1972: 321-22). By the mid-1970s, Newfoundland's fully-fledged cultural renaissance had caught the attention of Sandra Gwyn who wrote about it in the magazine *Saturday Night* in 1976, providing a perceptive analysis of its institutional setting and key individuals, ideas and practices (Gwyn, 1976).

## CULTURAL REVIVAL

It is common to link the cultural nationalism which is associated with the renaissance in Newfoundland with the prospects of oil development, as does Harry Hiller (1987). According to him, it was the promise of such development which provided the "energy, the confidence and the occasion" for "an awakening in Newfoundland's cultural and economic aspirations" in the 1970s (*ibid*: 271). However, it was the "prospect of economic betterment" linked to oil rather than "oil in itself" which was the trigger and the "confrontations with the federal government and the earlier modernization" which provided the "catalyst and underlying condition to make the movement possible" (*ibid*: 271). Hiller does acknowledge the importance of earlier events in providing the conditions which set the stage for the cultural nationalism of the 1970s. He argues that "there is compelling evidence for an historical feeling of uniqueness in Newfoundland," even if he stops short of accepting this as fully developed "ethnic identity" (*ibid*: 270), choosing rather to see this "identity" as "emergent" (*ibid*: 271) or "nascent" (*ibid*: 265).

Hiller suggests that the cultural renaissance began in the late 1960s (*ibid*: 269), but he does not explore the roots of this movement. Useful comments on politics in this period have been made, for example, by Peter Neary (1969; 1971; 1972), who also provides an analysis of how "Smallwood the modernizer fell victim to the modernized" in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Neary, 1974: 16). Sandra Gwyn's (1976) account of Newfoundland's cultural revival does focus on its institutional base, identifying Memorial University's Art Gallery as the "crossroads and command post" for the "cultural renaissance" (*ibid*: 41).<sup>2</sup> Other works which examine aspects of the cultural revival include Overton (1979; 1986 and 1996), Pocius (1988), Brookes (1988) and, more recently, Ronald Rompkey's (1998) study of the evolution of cultural policy in the post-Confederation period.<sup>3</sup> However, there is little examination of the actual history of the cultural movement and, as yet, no comprehensive study of the cultural revival as a whole. This paper aims to go some way towards examining the roots of the Newfoundland cultural

revolution by means of a discussion of the relationship between three key figures in the cultural renaissance during the 1960s. The three figures are Harold Horwood, Farley Mowat and Joseph Smallwood. However, it is Mowat who is the central figure here as the author of what may be thought of as an early manifesto of Newfoundland's cultural revival, the document "Some Unsolicited Suggestions On How To Spark a Cultural Revolution in Newfoundland," which was written and submitted by Mowat to Joseph R. Smallwood, Newfoundland's Premier, in early 1966 (Smallwood Papers). It is this document, together with two other documents, "Outline for a Historical Reclamation Project in Newfoundland," which was produced in late 1965 by Mowat and Horwood and "The Forgotten People," which was written by Mowat in 1967, as well as related correspondence, which are the main sources drawn on in the following discussion.

## FARLEY MOWAT AND NEWFOUNDLAND

### *a) Mowat and the Renaissance*

Farley Mowat has an important, if ambiguous, relationship to the Newfoundland renaissance. In one of the early anthologies of Newfoundland literature, *Baffles of Wind in Tide*, published in 1973 by what was to become one of the main vehicles for the discovery and promotion of Newfoundland writing, Breakwater Books, Clyde Rose's "Foreword" to the collection starts with Burgeo and Farley Mowat — Rose himself had attended school in Burgeo (Rose, 1973: xi-xiii). Rose argues that it was Mowat, "a writer from 'upalong' ... who, more than any other writer, initiated what might modestly be termed a literary renaissance in Newfoundland" (*ibid*: xi). According to Rose it was *This Rock Within The Sea — Our (sic) Heritage Lost* which started the literary movement, even if, in his judgement, the book's "mixture of political propaganda and romanticism does not come off" (*ibid*).

Rose acknowledges the role which Farley Mowat played in the Newfoundland renaissance thus:

... Mowat points the way. His first achievement is that he **began** the literary movement, however badly; and his second is that he taught us we were worth writing about. That has made all the difference. The decade of the sixties blossomed with literature about Newfoundland by Newfoundlanders. (I use the term broadly to include not only those who were born here but those who have come and made it their home). Daily young writers are sprouting. For the first time in our history our children are enjoying writing poems about themselves. In my school days reading poetry was, like smoking, a furtive activity. Mowat's two-fold contribution is that he initiated a literary movement and he directed us towards the sources — the land and the people. Ourselves (Rose, 1973: xi).

There is an obvious element of truth in Rose's assessment of the origins of the Newfoundland cultural renaissance, even if he does tend towards a Great Man view of history, neglecting in the process to examine the social and economic context in which the renaissance took place and the role of other key individuals and of institutions in the emergence of the cultural movement. Nevertheless, for Rose, Mowat's link to the renaissance is tangential rather than central. The material presented here suggests a much more important role for Mowat. He wrote the cultural movement's manifesto before the movement emerged.

It is easy to dismiss Mowat as "Canada's leading literary strip-miner," as did George Story in 1974 (Story, 1974: 25), but clearly there is much more to Farley Mowat's relationship with Newfoundland than this.

#### b) *The Lure of Newfoundland*

Farley Mowat first visited Newfoundland in 1957. It was then that he met Harold Horwood, starting what was to become a long-term friendship (Orange, 1993:69, 119).<sup>4</sup> In July 1958 he returned to Newfoundland to collect material for two books which he proposed to write on the province (Morris, 1958). During this visit Harold Horwood accompanied Mowat on a tour of the Stephenville area before they moved east to St. John's and the Southern Shore of the Avalon Peninsula (Orange, 1993: 71). When interviewed by *Evening Telegram* reporter Don Morris in 1958, Mowat declared that: "I love the place and the people so much that I am sure that one day I will settle down and live here" (Morris, 1958). It was Mowat's stated aim that, through his writings, he would make Newfoundland better known to the Canadian Mainland and to the world.

According to comments reported in the St. John's *Evening Telegram* by both Don Morris (*ibid.*) and Ed Finn (1958), Mowat had encountered Newfoundlanders when he was working on his book *Grey Seas Under* (1958), which was about the Halifax-based ocean-going tug *Foundation Franklin*. He was "captivated" by the Newfoundlanders and, in his words, "so completely charged with their rugged individualism and colourful and distinctive characteristics that I just had to see the place that had bred them" (*ibid.*).

By this time Mowat was already expressing concern about the negative effects of the march of modern civilization. As Ed Finn (1958) put it:

Farley has been waging a one-man war against the softness and decay of contemporary society in other parts of Canada and the U.S. A recent article he wrote for MacLean's Magazine, protesting the swamping of Canada by American mass-produced entertainment and 'culture,' drew 180 letters from readers on both sides of the border.<sup>5</sup>

Mowat told the *Telegram* that he was pleased to see that “the disease of creeping Americanism” had not spoiled Newfoundland (Finn, 1958; Morris, 1958). In Newfoundlanders he found a spirit of rebellion and non-conformity of the kind that he had first encountered amongst the *People of the Deer* (1952), adding that:

The qualities that Newfoundlanders share with the Eskimos are rare attributes that should be treasured. Kindness, understanding, sympathy that is never pity, a dual vigor of mind and body, the strength and endurance that comes from a hard and productive life (quoted in Finn, 1958).

Nevertheless, according to Finn, he did express the fear that, if Newfoundlanders were exposed to the growing influences of US movies, books and television, then this, “together with the baby bonus and the old age pension cheques from Ottawa,” would cause them to “lose their initiative and vigor and become passive absorbers of the American entertainment media, as so many Canadians have” (*ibid.*). His dread was that the people of Newfoundland would “lose their individuality” (Morris, 1958). He informed *Telegram* columnist Ed Finn that he had already “detected the first incipient signs of the disease” of creeping Americanism in some East Coast outports during his visit in 1957, adding, “it will be a catastrophe if it is allowed to spread unchecked” (Finn, 1958).

### c) Newfoundland Nationalist

In Newfoundland, Mowat found a place and a people who seemed to him almost untouched by the modern world — an ideal base from which he would lead the revolutionary struggle to stem the tide of creeping Americanism. He would save Newfoundland and, from his new base in the province, set out to save the rest of the world. And it appears from Ed Finn’s words that Mowat was able to recruit the Corner Brook reporter to the cause:

As one phase of his campaign to save Newfoundland from the ravages of ‘the U.S. culture vacuum’, Farley has been acting as the Mainland undercover agent of the Newfoundland Revolutionary Society. If my readers have never read of this organization before, it is because it is a secret society. Its principle aim and object is to bring about the secession of Newfoundland, not only from Canada but from all the rest of the world, so that the Island’s traditions, culture and way of life may be preserved, uncontaminated by the corruption that surrounds it (Finn, 1958).

He continued:

If you haven’t already guessed, the co-chairmen of the Newfoundland Revolutionary Society are Harold Horwood and myself. In referring to Farley Mowat as our undercover agent, I am perhaps using the term rather loosely since Farley has been

anything but secretive in his methods. He has openly boasted of the activities of the organization, and has even gone so far as to threaten the rest of Canada with Newfoundland's secession on his many TV and radio appearances (*ibid.*).

Apparently these activities had led some people in Ontario to accuse Mowat of "preaching mutiny and sedition" (*ibid.*).

Finn revealed the future plans of the Newfoundland Revolutionary Society thus:

... overthrow the present government of the Island, exiling Premier Smallwood to Jamaica. The next step would be to take over the U.S. military bases, confiscating all planes and ships and weapons and holding the American servicemen for ransom. After that, of course, we formally secede from Canada and the Commonwealth.<sup>6</sup>

He added:

Eventually, when we gain enough strength, we'll invade the Mainland and 'liberate' the rest of Canada and the U.S. We're not actively engaged in recruiting supporters for our revolution, since we assume that all red-blooded Newfoundlanders will be right behind us when we are ready to pull off our 'coup d'état' (*ibid.*).

Finn's account of his encounter with Mowat rehearses many of the basic themes which would come to not just inform Mowat's later work on the province, but characterize the neo-nationalism which became common in some political and cultural circles in the 1970s and 1980s (Overton, 1979; Hiller, 1987).

#### *d) Mowat Moves In*

Mowat's fascination with Newfoundland continued throughout the late 1950s and into the 1960s. Sometime in the winter of 1960 Mowat and his friend Jack McClelland decided to buy a small Newfoundland schooner and, in May 1960, Mowat flew to St. John's to meet Harold Horwood, who took him to Admiral's Cove where Mowat spent \$1,000 on a converted jackboat which he named *Happy Adventurer* (Orange, 1993: 74). Later that year Mowat and McClelland set out on a voyage along the southern coast of Newfoundland. McClelland's trip was, however, interrupted when he was called back to Toronto (*ibid.*: 75). It was in 1960 that Mowat met Claire Wheeler at St. Pierre. In 1961 Mowat again returned to Newfoundland waters and sailed the south coast with, first, Harold Horwood and, then, Claire Wheeler. During the winter he visited England and during that visit undertook research for what was to become *Westviking*, his book about the Norse voyages to what we now know as North America (*ibid.*: 77).

In 1962 Mowat and Claire moved to Newfoundland and set up house in the Burgeo area on the South West Coast of the Island. His relationship with Harold Horwood continued and they visited Mexico and the United States together during the winter of 1964-65 (Orange, 1993: 85).

*e) Populist-Activist: The Battle of Small's Island*

By 1965 Mowat was well established on the Coast and taking a keen interest in local affairs. He was also corresponding with Joey Smallwood, Newfoundland's premier, about a number of issues. He took up the case of the residents of Small's Island in a "Memorandum" which he forwarded to Smallwood on July 10, 1965 (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, July 10, 1965). Small's Island was separated from the town of Burgeo, which is located on Grandy's Island, by a 135 foot channel known as "The Harbour." Ten families or 66 people lived on Small's Island, most of them having been "brought in from the outports as part of the original centralization scheme some years ago" (Smallwood Papers: "Memorandum: Smalls Island," July 8, 1965). The inhabitants of the Island were without "municipal services or assistance of any sort, other than to have two wooden well covers replaced." They had no telephone service and no electricity. According to Mowat, the residents of the Island had been pressing the municipal council for services for seven years before he took up "their cause" in 1964. He surveyed the channel and concluded that a suspension bridge could be built for about five thousand dollars. This would make it easier for the 32 children of the Island to attend school, thus eliminating the risk of crossing the "Harbour" "in flats, winter and summer." However, the response of both the municipal and provincial authorities to the proposed bridge was negative. The Council suggested that the people of Small's Island should move to Grandy's Island. Farley Mowat's argument was that such a move would "entail a serious injustice" to the people of Small's Island who were mostly fishermen who had settled on the Island "by permission of the authorities" (*ibid.*).

Mowat's "Memorandum" was forwarded to Smallwood with the following claim: "I have faithfully followed all the usual channels in attempting to obtain redress for the people involved with a total lack of success" (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, July 10, 1965). The "Memorandum" itself was occasioned by a letter from G.E. Frampton, the provincial local government engineer, to the effect that a road bridge connection between the two islands would be too costly and because of this the Small's Islanders would have to move to Grandy's Island (Smallwood Papers: "Memorandum: Small's Island," July 8, 1965). In response to this Mowat put the case thus:

Evidently the decision has been made to move these people again. If this is done, it will have to be done forcibly. The Small's Islanders are very bitter at what they



consider duplicity on the part of the authorities who brought them to Burgeo in the first place. They are almost unanimous in their decision to remain where they are even if it means being denied any of the services to which they are entitled. They feel that the refusal to give them electricity and other services amounts to an attempt to blackmail them into making a second departure from their homes. It is not impossible that they are right.... The Small's Islanders have, in effect, been issued with an ultimatum. Either move to the main island, regardless of whether or not suitable sites for shore fishermen are obtainable, or be placed in Coventry on Small's. The author is of the opinion that this is an inhuman, authoritarian, and despicable attitude and that it can only reflect badly upon the centralization program as a whole (*ibid.*).

Mowat's argument was that the people of Small's Island should "at last receive some of the dues, after fourteen years of calculated neglect" (*ibid.*).

In response, Smallwood notified Mowat by telegram that he was "sending two engineers to Burgeo" (Smallwood Papers: J. R. Smallwood to Farley Mowat, July 29, 1965). He asked Mowat to "confer with them and advise them in a practical sense." In the communication he also indicated that the Government would contact the town council about extending electricity to Small's Island as well as "asking CNT to extend telephone service." Smallwood ended the telegram thus:

Many thanks for your letter and your kind and generous interest in the people of Small's Island stop they are fortunate at least in having one of Canada's most eloquent voices to speak for them stop kindest regards (*ibid.*).

In his campaign to represent the people of Small's Island many of the elements which would later emerge in Mowat's hard-hitting attack on the Smallwood government's resettlement program can be seen. These arguments would be honed in an article with the title "The People of the Coasts" which was published in the *Atlantic Advocate* in July 1967 (Mowat, 1967) and in *This Rock Within the Sea: A Heritage Lost*, a book with photographs by John de Visser published in 1968 (Mowat and de Visser, 1968). Mowat's concerns about the poor situation of the residents of Newfoundland's south west coast were also set out in "The Forgotten People" in 1967 (Smallwood Papers).

*f) Mowat Woos Smallwood: Smallwood Woos Mowat*

By mid-1965 Smallwood and Mowat had established what seems, from the tone of their correspondence, to have been quite an intimate relationship. Smallwood flattered the well-known author and Mowat responded in kind:

Thanks very much for your pleasant letter. Most authors (and, it may be, politicians too) thrive on the need for flattery, and I'm no exception. Your comments were very kind (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, May 26, 1965).

A particular interest of Smallwood's, at this time, was the question of the Norse presence in Newfoundland and Labrador and this matter was discussed at length by the two men in 1965. Mowat's book *Westviking* (1965) was just coming off the press, but even before its publication he was discussing some of the ideas presented in the book with Smallwood (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, May 26, 1965). In one letter Mowat promised to try to get his publisher to send a copy of the galley proofs of *Westviking* to the Premier. However, he wrote in July 1965 apologizing for the fact that these had not been sent, explaining that only ten proof copies had been made and that these had been required to meet book club requests for readings (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, July 1, 1965). In recompense, Mowat wrote, he had requested the publishers to send Smallwood a "mint copy of the book as soon as it is off the press" (*ibid.*).

Smallwood clearly recognized the importance for Newfoundland of Mowat's work on the Norse discoveries. *Westviking* would reach a mass audience and popularize the archeological work of Anne Stine Ingstad and Helge Ingstad and the view that it was in Newfoundland and Labrador that the first Norse contact with the North American continent was made. Mowat summarized his contribution in *Westviking* thus:

In essence, I believe that we at last have a clear and logical construction of the Norse voyages and, happy accident, it turns out that all of the ventures were concerned with Newfoundland and Labrador. Alas. Cape Cod! (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, May 26, 1965).

He went on to add this point:

I don't think there is any doubt but that we will be able to name as many highways and other features as we wish after the Norse. But I do recommend caution until all parties have been heard from (*ibid.*).

The competition to lay claim to the first Viking landfall and settlement in North America was stiff and being able to substantiate a claim would be a means of boosting tourism. Already plans were in the works to exploit for tourist purposes the Norse settlement in Newfoundland. Correspondence on the Norse issue continued. In November 1965, Smallwood congratulated Mowat on having *Westviking* selected for the Book-of-the-Month Club (Smallwood Papers: Smallwood to Mowat, November 23, 1965). This would further publicize Newfoundland's importance in the Norse discovery. In December Mowat was asked by Smallwood to comment on two letters which the Premier had received regarding the Viking exploration of North America (Smallwood Papers: Ed Roberts, Executive Assistant to J. R. Smallwood to Mowat, December 16, 1965). The comments were forwarded to Smallwood at "Russwood" — his ranch — by Mowat in late December

(Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Roberts, December 27, 1965). Mowat also brought to the attention of the government his concerns about the damage being inflicted on the Dorset archeological site in the Cape Ray area by vandals (Smallwood Papers: J.G. Channing, Deputy Minister of Provincial Affairs, to Mowat, November 10, 1965).

Smallwood recognized that he had a celebrity on the South Coast who would bring a great deal of favourable publicity to Newfoundland. That Smallwood's attention came as somewhat of a surprise to Mowat is clear from the following statement in a letter to Smallwood thanking him for some flattering comments:

Your comments were very kind. They were also somewhat unexpected. Being a romantic I have been much exercised by the recent, rapid plunge of Newfoundland into the Brave New Yankee World. It can hardly have escaped your notice (or am I now flattering *myself*?) that I have frequently, and sometimes vehemently, deplored in public the decay of the old Newfoundland and the older Newfoundlander. I am an apolitical man in the sense that I consider all parties to be tarred with the same ghastly brush of expediency, and I have never been backward in stating my convictions in this matter. But then, if I have at times made intemperate statements about your government, I have also done so about almost every other government which has come within my notice (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, May 26, 1965).

Smallwood had apparently made a comment about Mowat not being from Newfoundland in his letter, because Mowat fired off this good-natured defensive comment:

And what do you mean by insinuating that I am not a Newfoundlander? I gave up my Mainland citizenship long ago, and am a bona fide landed immigrant(*ibid.*).

### *g) Smallwood's Biography*

It seems that early in their relationship Mowat had discussed with Smallwood the question of a biography, perhaps suggesting that he be the one to write it. The suggestion was, apparently, turned down by the Premier because in May 1966 Mowat wrote:

I do agree that you are the best man to write your biography and I have always assumed that you would do so when, and if, you should retire. The book which my publishers had in mind would have been more in the nature of a study in change: the sudden thrusting of Newfoundland into the Golden (?) Age. You note that I say 'would have been.' I am happy to leave this field to you and I'm sure you'll do a fascinating job. The fact is that I am a lazy sod, and there are so many books ahead of me I would like to write, that I am always grateful when somebody else writes them first (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, May 26, 1965).

The issue of Smallwood's biography is important to the relationship between the two men because it has been suggested by Patrick O'Flaherty that Mowat started attacking Smallwood when the latter discouraged the former's plan to write his biography (O'Flaherty, 1979: 179). The evidence cited above suggests that the biography incident — if "incident" is the right word — took place in mid-1965. Other evidence suggests that the relationship between the two men remained close for some time after this. Mowat's version of the biography issue is revealed in an interview he did for *Maclean's* early in 1968 after he had left Newfoundland (*Maclean's*, 1968). In that interview Mowat describes his battle to get the bridge for the inhabitants of Small's Island. Asked why J.R. Smallwood agreed to provide the bridge, Mowat responds "Joey was trying to buy me, of course. That bridge was a gift to me" (*ibid.*: 66). When questioned about why Smallwood gave him this gift, Mowat claims that it was an effort on Smallwood's part to prevent him from being a thorn in his side. However, he also adds this comment, "And also, of course, he wanted me to write his biography" (*ibid.*). In response to the comment: "Why didn't you? It would have been a very good book," Mowat replied:

No, it would have been a very bad book, because I couldn't have told the truth. Smallwood had a special ceremonial dinner for me at Memorial University. All the elite of St. John's were there. He sent a helicopter down to Burgeo to pick up Clare (sic) and me, and Joey gave us a fantastic banquet and a terrifically laudatory speech. After the banquet I went up to see him in his office a couple of times on invitation, and it gradually came out that what he wanted was his biography. I told him I'd do it — but only after he was dead. Our relationship was never the same after that (*ibid.*: 66-7).

Mowat's account may be correct, but it seems unlikely, given the evidence, that the issue of Smallwood's biography was the cause of the eventual rift between the two men. Nor does Smallwood appear to have been averse to having his biography written. It was, after all, in 1968 that Richard Gwyn's *Smallwood: The Unlikely Revolutionary* first appeared. In the "author's note" in this book Gwyn states: "Joseph Roberts Smallwood made this book possible by granting me his full co-operation" (Gwyn, 1972: xiii). Smallwood's autobiography, *I Chose Canada* appeared in 1973.

#### *h) A Dinner Invitation and a Proposal*

The arrangements for the banquet to fete Mowat were made in late 1965. In November Smallwood invited Mowat to dine:

Would you be willing to be the guest of honour of the Newfoundland government at a dinner that we would like to tender to you as the most distinguished adopted son of this province on account of your latest achievement which in addition to adding lustre

to your own name is bringing additional fame to Newfoundland (Smallwood Papers: Smallwood to Mowat, November 22, 1965).

Joey would celebrate his new friend and present him to the elite of St. John's. In the mid-1960s Smallwood was at the height of his power and was anxious to show off the revolutionary changes which he had brought to Newfoundland. He had, according to Gwyn (1972: 233), "created a new tradition of state banquets" to honour the likes of John Kenneth Galbraith and Farley Mowat. These celebrities were brought to St. John's, no expenses spared, to be Joey's special guests.<sup>7</sup>

In November 1965 Mowat accepted the dinner invitation but requested "winged transport" because he could not "afford leisurely journey via unhurried CNR system which takes five days each way" (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, November 23, 1965).

Mowat and Smallwood had corresponded but it seems they did not meet until late 1965. In October Mowat wrote to Smallwood from Toronto thanking him for his assistance in solving the Small's Island problem, but also expressing his gratitude to the Premier for making time to see him during a recent visit to St. John's. To have the problem of Small's Island "equitably resolved" clearly meant a great deal to Mowat who, in his own words, had become "... deeply involved in the bridge battle" (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, October 6, 1965). He added the comment: "... even if Spencer [presumably Spencer Lake] does put a hex on me, I shall die happy."<sup>8</sup>

It was at this time that Mowat informed Smallwood that:

With Harold Horwood's assistance I am now drawing up what amounts to a crash program designed to salvage as much as possible of the oral history of Newfoundland. It looks to me as if the project might conceivably be eligible for a centennial project. At any rate I do hope that you will find it useful. Should it seem meritorious to you, I will be glad to assist in its implementation, but on a purely voluntary basis. When the federal Government fired me back in 1947, for 'talking back to my superiors' I swore a great oath never to accept government employment again; consequently any labours of mine for Newfoundland history will have to be done free (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, October 6, 1965).

He added: "I shall be back in Burgeo Nov. 14th — assuming Spencer lets me land."

It appears to be the "Outline for a Historical Reclamation Project in Newfoundland" written by Mowat and Horwood to which Mowat is referring here (Smallwood Papers). This document was forwarded to Smallwood in late November 1965 as a "draft outline of our suggestions for a crash program, which might qualify under the Centennial grant system, for collecting Newfoundland historical material" (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, November 27, 1966). He introduced the proposal with these words:

I believe the idea has great merit. Here in Burgeo, itself an outport, I am in a position to see just how rapid is the decay and loss of oral tradition. There really isn't much time left to collect outport material. Nor do I feel that the spasmodic efforts of the University people are able to meet the need. I found the much-vaunted 3-volume collection of Newfoundland folk songs, recently published by the Queens Printer, to be appalling in its detailed ignorance and in both its omissions of important material and its inclusion of totally irrelevant material. I'm sure its author did his best, but — and this is the vital point — he was NOT a Newfoundlander, nor did he have sufficient local background to fit him for the task (*ibid.*).<sup>9</sup>

The project would have an historical focus, but would also attempt “to preserve the history of our own time and of the immediate past,” the latter focus being justified thus:

We can well envision a time when people will not know what a pre-Confederation outport looked like, or even the basic plan upon which an outport grew up. This, as well as more ancient history, ought to be preserved in as great detail as possible (Smallwood Papers: “Outline for a Historical Reclamation Project in Newfoundland”).

Mowat added a note about Harold Horwood's participation in the project to his letter to Smallwood:

Because of his long feud with you, Harold is somewhat distraught about participating in this project. However, I know him well, and can assure you that he is deeply involved in the idea. Furthermore, and between ourselves, he is much less intractable than of yore and, I suspect, would welcome an end to a long and fruitless conflict (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, November 27, 1966).

In case it might be thought that the proposal was an attempt to get financial assistance from the Newfoundland government for the two authors the following statement should be kept in mind:

The joint authors of this plan wish to make it clear that they are not personally available, and will not in the future be available, as employees of the project. They are both working authors, devoting their full time to the task of writing, and propose to continue with their work. They are prepared to devote what time they can spare toward the creation of the project, and toward the advising and instructing of its personnel, but will not accept any position, full-time or part-time, within the scope of its budget (Smallwood Papers: “Outline...”).

At this point Smallwood appears to have not read any of Mowat's books. However, “not downhearted,” Mowat dispatched a complete set of his books to

Smallwood, “autographed so that they will have no re-sale value.” If nothing else, he suggested, they would provide “some extra work for your elderly librarian” (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, October 6, 1965). Included in the books was the second copy of *Westviking* to arrive from the printer, Claire having taken the first copy.

Mowat continued to keep the Premier informed about his writing projects and, in particular, the sales of his book *Westviking* — reported to be twenty thousand copies by January 1966 (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, January 30, 1966).

*i) Drawing Close*

Meanwhile Mowat and Smallwood continued to correspond about a number of issues. In particular, Mowat revealed his plans to construct a 50-foot schooner — “she will not be called The Term Twenty Eight” — in order to make “an eighteen-month recapitulation of part of the cruise of H.M.S. *Beagle* when she carried Charles Darwin” (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, January 30, 1966).<sup>10</sup>

Mowat had begun to investigate the possibilities of building his steel two-masted schooner, having obtained quotations from Canada, the United States, Holland and Hong Kong. The problem he identified with having the schooner built outside Canada was in paying “impossible customs duties in order to bring her back to Canada” (*ibid.*). In his letter to Smallwood he indicated that he was considering shifting his place of residence to some other country in order to avoid this problem. Apparently, Mowat had initially thought of building the schooner in Newfoundland, but he had not proceeded with this idea because he had assumed that no ship yards in the province were equipped to build steel vessels. However, he had recently heard that E.F. Barnes in St. John’s had constructed a 200-foot hospital ship and he indicated that he was planning to write to Barnes to see if he would construct the vessel. Mowat’s aim in writing to Smallwood was to ask the Premier if he might be eligible for a bounty to construct the boat in Newfoundland, adding:

Nothing would give me greater pleasure than for this to be a Newfoundland ship; registered in St. John’s; carrying an honourable Newfoundland name; and representing, here and abroad, the magnificent tradition of this Island as the home of a great sailing fleet through almost five centuries (*ibid.*).

He also outlined his plans for the vessel after the initial voyage:

On completion of the *Beagle* voyage the vessel would return to home waters in Newfoundland where she would have to earn part of her keep on charter work, doing local freighting, or fishing — probably sword fishing, a trade for which she will be fitted during construction. However, I plan on chartering her to myself for three or

four months of every year in order to visit as many as possible of the Newfoundland and Labrador outposts, gathering historical material in line with the objectives set out in the memorandum for a collection of Newfoundlandia which I sent you some months ago. All material I collect would, of course, be deposited in whichever repository the Government of Newfoundland thought was fitting (*ibid.*).

A postscript to the letter adds that Mowat had received a reply from Barnes to the effect that he would not be interested in building a "schooner-type vessel." Undismayed, Mowat was already chasing other possibilities for constructing his schooner at the Marystown shipyards.

Smallwood appears to have taken Mowat's bait on the schooner issue. Early in February 1966 he telegraphed Mowat with this message:

QUITE CLEARLY I HAVE PSYCHIC POWERS BECAUSE I HAVE ARRANGED FOR THE BUILDING OF CANADA'S NEWEST AND MOST MODERN SHIP YARD CONSTRUCTION COMMENCING IMMEDIATELY WITH THE FIRST KEEL TO BE LAID IN SEPTEMBER STOP GEORGE T. DAVIE OF LAUZON QUEBEC TO OPERATE YARD STOP YOU WILL THEREFORE NOT BE OBLIGED TO BETRAY YOUR PROVINCE BY BUILDING YOUR PROPOSED BOAT ELSEWHERE ESPECIALLY HONG KONG (Smallwood Papers: Smallwood to Mowat, February 8, 1966).

Smallwood also acknowledged receipt of Mowat's collected works with "deep appreciation" and restated his request that Mowat attend the proposed dinner in St. John's:

WHAT ABOUT THAT DINNER STOP ARE YOU GOING TO COME OR NOT STOP NOT COMING WILL BE REGARDED AS A MORTAL AFFRONT TO ALL THE QUEEN'S MINISTERS IN THIS PROVINCE STOP FURTHERMORE I HOPE TO MAKE THIS DINNER A NOTABLE GATHERING OF ALL THE ALLEGED INTELLECTUALS TO MEET AND HONOUR YOU (*ibid.*).

Mowat's correspondence with Smallwood covered a range of topics. He suggested that Allan Cook, a scholar associated with the Scott Polar Institute, be invited to head-up the proposed Mowat/Horwood Newfoundland historical reclamation project:

The brilliant idea struck me that we should nab him for Newfoundland. He is already familiar with a great deal of the Newfoundland historical background and would be an absolutely ideal man to place in charge of the task of gathering all available Newfoundlandia into one place, and organizing it so that it could be used by scholars and writers. I know — I know — we have an archivist and a museum director. A job would presumably have to be created for Cook — perhaps at the University. The thing is, he could do the job, which, alas, is not being done (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, February 19, 1966).



There is nothing in the Smallwood Papers to indicate how this suggestion was received by the Premier.

*j) Celebrating Farley*

In the mid-1960s Smallwood was clearly enamoured of Mowat, who he described as “an adopted Newfoundlander and one of the greatest writers in North America” (*Evening Telegram*, March 1, 1966: 3). He also appears to have been flattered by the attention being given to him by the famous author. Harold Horwood provides this pertinent insight into Smallwood’s character in his book *Joey*:

When Joey met able people from outside the sphere of politics, particularly someone distinguished in a field of endeavour he admired, he could be remarkably humble and almost pathetically eager to please, as he was when I took Farley Mowat to visit him at his Roache’s Line ranch in 1966 (Horwood, 1989: 257).

Smallwood himself had literary ambitions and harboured a desire to quit politics and take up the writing of books; making statements to this effect on several occasions. One such occasion was at a dinner held in his honour on the Tenth Anniversary of Confederation. On that occasion he declared that, until the conflict with the Federal government over Term 29 had erupted, he had planned to announce his retirement from politics so that he could resume his life as a journalist and author (*Evening Telegram*, April 1, 1959: 1).

It was the publication of Mowat’s book *Westviking* in 1965 — described by Smallwood as a “very great and momentous piece of writing which has attracted the attention of scientific men all over the world” — which provided the occasion for the Premier to fete Mowat at a dinner organized in his honour for March 3, 1966 (*Evening Telegram*, March 1, 1966: 3). *Westviking* had drawn attention to Newfoundland as the first European landfall in the New World and stimulated interest in L’Anse aux Meadows on the Great Northern Peninsula where excavation of the Norse site discovered by the Ingstads was already underway. Smallwood announced the dinner in the House of Assembly during discussion of the estimates under the subheading, “Investigation, Maintenance and Preservation of Historic Sites and Monuments” (*ibid.*).

As requested, Mowat and Claire were whisked to St. John’s by “operation Flying Carpet” mounted by Eastern Provincial Airways (Smallwood Papers: Ed Roberts to Mowat, February 25, 1966). Mowat had also requested a double bed be provided at the Newfoundland Hotel (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Ed. Roberts, February 26, 1966).

The banquet, which brought together members of the government, literary people, educators, city officials, court justices and other important people to honour Mowat, was held in the Memorial University Dining Hall (*Evening Telegram*,

March 4, 1966: 3). Of the approximately 150 people attending the banquet only two were named by the *Telegram* — Smallwood and Harold Horwood, “author of ‘Tomorrow is Sunday’” (sic).

According to the *Telegram*, in his speech, Mowat took “his audience on a verbal voyage around the rough coasts of the province, and surviving, had ended his address with a plea that Newfoundlanders retain their own rugged individualism which, he maintains, is unique in North America” (*ibid.*). Mowat went further than this to declare that he had “fallen in love” with the attitude of Newfoundlanders. However, while stating that he welcomed the growth that the province was experiencing, he expressed regret that “it is altering our state of being”— continuing “it has done something that hurts me.” Newfoundland was, he suggested, in “danger of losing an ingredient which preserves the ‘essential core’ of being a unique people” (*ibid.*). Newfoundlanders, he suggested, should not turn their backs on their heritage by turning their “eyes ... in a direction which has no connection with the past.” Mowat’s plea was that in its quest for “liberation” a conscientious effort should be made to capture the Newfoundland past for the future of Canada.

“We have been shipmates with a great historian,” declared Smallwood, in response to Mowat’s speech (*ibid.*). He went on to describe Mowat as one of the two remarkable men in the field of the professional arts who had sojourned in Newfoundland — the other being Rockwell Kent. It is ironic, in light of subsequent events, that Smallwood then gave an account of Kent being driven out of the province as a suspected German spy in 1914, saying that some day the province would make up to Mr. Kent for the grave injustice he had suffered. It may very well have been the contact with Mowat which triggered Smallwood’s interest in bringing Rockwell Kent, the U.S. writer and artist who had lived for a period in Brigus during World War One, back to Newfoundland.

### *k) Sparking a Cultural Revolution*

Soon after his return to Burgeo, and presumably as a result of encouragement received from Smallwood during their meeting in March 1966, Mowat presented Premier Smallwood with a manuscript with the title: “Some Unsolicited Suggestions On How To Spark a Cultural Revolution In Newfoundland” (Smallwood Papers: March 10, 1966). This was forwarded to the Premier along with a letter of thanks for the dinner in St. John’s. Mowat and Smallwood had firmly bonded. Mowat was now a Newfoundlander: “And so, you’ve done it now. I am a Newfoundlander to the end!” (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, March 11, 1966). Newfoundland had acquired an influential ambassador.

In his letter to Smallwood Mowat introduced his “unsolicited suggestions” thus:

I am not sure whether you will feel that the enclosed is an act of ingratitude, or a sincere attempt to make some small repayment for the dinner. It is meant as a token of repayment. I am aware (having watched you, briefly, in action) of how difficult it must be for you to keep tab on all the details of what happens on the Island. Perhaps, therefore, you will find some crumbs of useful information in the enclosed screed. It is a sort of minority report — a Mowat Plebian Commission Report. It is not all my own, of course, but is a careful evaluation of all that I heard and saw from many sources. Well — fairly careful: just don't check my statistics too carefully (*ibid.*).

Mowat also asked the Premier if he might “see if Davies/Vickers just might change their mind and build my boat for me?” Apparently, Mowat's request had met with rejection. He also informed Smallwood that he had been approached “with great cloak-and-dagger secrecy after the banquet” to see if he would run for the PCs in Burgeo-LaPoile. To his reply: “No, but I might run for the CCP,” his “seducer” said: “Well in that case at least we wouldn't run anyone against you” (*ibid.*).

Mowat's manifesto provided a rationale for his plan which is worth quoting at length:

During the past 17 years Newfoundland has made a galvanic leap out of the morass of a feudal-primitive society into the gleaming material society of 20th Century North America. More than a century has been spanned in less than two decades. It has been a fantastic achievement but, by its nature, somewhat lopsided. While concentrating its every effort on hauling an impoverished and neglected people out of a forgotten niche in time, the government had no spare energy with which to salvage what was good out of a past that had too much of evil in it.

The New Newfoundlander has now emerged: well-fed, secure in his possessions, guaranteed against oppression, healthy, and hopeful. He is also, and this is very sad, rather naked, increasingly uncertain of himself, and in a condition where he is rapidly being bereft of those tenuous, but vital, links which give every man a place in the continuity of human history. The metamorphosis which stripped him of the rags of poverty, cleansed him of the scabs of disease, and freed him from the brand of servitude — has also stripped him of his history, his story; without which he can have no culture of his own and no firm grip on certainty.

But now the government has reached a point of achievement where all its energies are not engrossed in the economic and social battle. It has had time to reflect on other needs and to realize the urgency of conserving the remaining fragments so that they and the cultural renaissance which might arise from their renewal can again cloth our people in the certainty and pride which only those who know and revere their past can ever feel.

Restoring a sense of historic certainty to Newfoundlanders (and thereby giving an essential impetus to the growth of all the arts) is not going to be easy. The construction of masonry monuments, no matter how impressive these may be, is not going to do the job. It isn't the package that counts. Many new projects, mostly admirable, are now afoot but unless a lot more time is given to planning their contents and functions

— to filling the space inside the various packages — they may very well end up as mere memorials to a past already moribund.

Because I conceive of the presence of this danger I have presumed to prepare the following notes and comments. I have not presumed to try and draw up a master plan I am only concerned with attempting to show that one should exist, and that it would not be too difficult to prepare a good one (Smallwood Papers: “Some Unsolicited...”).

One month later, on behalf of the Premier, Ed Roberts replied by telegram to Mowat’s letter with the comment: “YOUR CULTURAL SCREED MOST INTERESTING” (Smallwood Papers: Edward Roberts to Mowat, April 11, 1966). Roberts also indicated that the government was looking into “THE ROCKWELL KENT SUGGESTION” which it appears was made by Mowat during his visit to St. John’s. Roberts asked Mowat: “CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE MR KENT IS NOW TO BE FOUND?” (*ibid.*).<sup>11</sup>

In late May, 1966 Mowat again wrote to Smallwood enclosing a “screed from Macmillans” and adding “John Gray, head of the House, wants me to do a book on Newfoundland which ‘would be part of a series to be done by first rate people and intended to hold their place for a long time...’” (Smallwood Papers: May 29, 1966). The problem for Mowat was that he lacked the time to do the research for the book. He enquired of Smallwood whether “it might be possible for some esoteric branch of the government to do the basic research.” This, he suggested, would leave him “with the happy prospect of travelling into every nook and cranny of the island (and Labrador) then writing the book” (*ibid.*).

In the letter he informed the Premier that he had still not been able to find out if Rockwell Kent was alive and he invited Smallwood to stay with them in Burgeo “for as long as you cared. Certainly for a scoff, at least” (*ibid.*).

Mowat also corresponded with Ed Roberts, who, apparently, had been reading Mowat’s books *The Serpent’s Coil* (1961) and *Ordeal by Ice* (1960). In late May he outlined his plans for the rest of 1966, but stated: “I shall be on tap, and if urgently needed, or if it appears I can be of real service to our Province, I can be got at” (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Roberts, May 30, 1966). He informed Roberts that he had invited the Premier to stay with them “when he comes down the Southwest Coast this summer” and that the people of Small’s Island had promised Smallwood a “feed of mountain veal” — caribou (*ibid.*).

Mowat left his base in Burgeo in August for a ten thousand mile trip through the Arctic. This was followed by his departure for the Soviet Union in October. Nevertheless, he found time to write to Smallwood from Toronto about problems with the Burgeo Hospital. He ended the letter by wishing the Premier “all good luck in the election — I anticipate a full scale sweep of the province, even if I am not there to vote!” (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, September 6, 1966).<sup>12</sup>

1) *The Burgeo Whale*

The Mowats returned to Burgeo early in 1967. It was in late January of that year that a whale became trapped in a salt water pond near Burgeo. Mowat took on the task of trying to save the whale. He appealed for help in providing food to keep the whale alive and called upon the RCMP to stop some of the local residents from shooting at the whale (*Evening Telegram*, January 31, 1967: 1). He contacted his friend Smallwood who designated Mowat “Keeper of the Whale” and provided \$1,000 of government money to purchase herring to feed the trapped animal (*Evening Telegram*, February 2, 1967: 1). The effort to save the whale failed. By February 8 the animal was dead—probably of infection caused by gunshot wounds—and when the whale’s body surfaced the major task facing local residents was how to dispose of the putrifying mass.

The story of the whale’s destruction by “boatloads of men armed with .303, .30-30 and .30-06 rifles” was told by Mowat in an article, “The Burgeo Whale,” published in *Atlantic Advocate* in March 1967 (Mowat, 1967), and, in more detail, in his book *A Whale for the Killing*, published in 1972 (Mowat, 1972). It is this event which is usually seen as triggering the catastrophic disillusionment which led Mowat to eventually abandon Burgeo and Newfoundland.

But Mowat did not leave Burgeo immediately. In the months following the whale incident he continued to campaign on behalf of the people of the South West Coast. He also continued with his plans to produce a book on the area.

The publicity generated by Mowat in his efforts to save the Burgeo whale focussed a great deal of attention on Newfoundland. One rather strange result of this publicity was a request which came to the Newfoundland government from Charlie Campbell of Hugo, Oklahoma (PANL GN 51/5 Tourist Services 1957-65: Premier’s Office: Campbell to Smallwood, February 6, 1967). Campbell had read in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* that a whale called “Moby Joe” was stranded in Aldridge’s Pond near Burgeo. He was a circus man who had been involved with the Miller Brothers Boat Circus which had visited the Maritimes in 1963. Campbell was interested in the whale. He wrote from the Debs Motel in Paragould, Arkansas:

Gentlemen;

Are Whom it may Concern,

... if “Moby Joe” dies I might be interested in the dead whale, to exhibit on a railroad car in the States. Providing I can get it out there on to a ship, are (sic) some type of barge. I know there is no railroad track there, I checked that out when I was up there in 1963. If there was a railroad track, then I would build a make shift track down into the pond, should the whale die, providing I get the green light from the Canadian Government. The dead whale would be a great drawing card here in the states, due to its enormous size, weight, length, etc.

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I would be pleased to hear more in detail from the Big 80-ton, 60-foot whale. And should it die, and I think it will in due time have a heart attack, from like (sic) of enough food, and from fright, and the gun wones (sic). At any rate I would be pleased hear from you, are (sic) Some one who knows what they might do with it, just in case it dies. Is it possible that it could be lifted up, with a heavy boom, loaded on to a barge, if it should die. Advise (*ibid.*).

Campbell enclosed a self addressed envelope, for “your convenience, in giving me a prompt reply.” On February 27, 1967, E.P. Henley, Associate Director of Tourist Development, wrote the following note to Charlie Campbell:

As you surmised, the whale “Moby Joe” did die. The carcass is in a state of advanced decay and would not be of much use (*ibid.*: Henley to Campbell, February 27, 1967).

In preparation for the filming of *A Whale for the Killing* a 38-foot wooden whale was trucked to Newfoundland from California in 1980.

### *m) War Declared*

Ed Roberts continued to correspond with Mowat on behalf of Premier Smallwood, by forwarding material related to the Burgeo Whale incident to Mowat, for example. In late April Mowat wrote to Roberts thanking him for “the Whale-bumf” and providing information about his latest project. This consisted of:

... a preliminary outline for Mowat’s Centennial Campaign to shed a little light on the Sou’west Coast. I have decided to take a leaf from the Premier’s book. If you want something, don’t pussy foot, get out there and yowl, but loud. I’m going to yowl, but loud. If our local members won’t do anything — and they won’t — then, be jazus, I’ll have a go. So stand by for an outpouring of Mowat. No quarter given — none asked. And if I achieve nothing for this coast, I will at least have had the dubious satisfaction of having made the attempt. En garde! (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Roberts, April 25, 1967).

A postscript to the letter added:

I intend to use the works: TV, radio, the press, periodicals, and at least one hard cover book — the photographic one. The pix we got this winter will make the Sou’west coast appear to be a survival out of the middle ages! (*ibid.*).

Mowat’s communication was read to Premier Smallwood on May 5th. The outline “The Forgotten People” provided a detailed account of the neglect of “the central Sou’west Coast region, by Federal and Provincial authorities” (Smallwood Papers: “The Forgotten People”).

To this indictment of government neglect and inaction was added an article with the title "The People of the Coasts," published in *Atlantic Advocate* in July 1967. In late 1968 the arguments made in this article were expanded in the book *The Rock Within the Sea: A Heritage Lost* (1968). It is the photographs of Grey River taken by John de Visser, presumably, early in 1967, which appear in that book.

"The People of the Coasts" article is important. In many ways it provides the mould from which many of the arguments which informed Newfoundland's cultural renaissance in the 1970s were cast. The article is an angry and pessimistic critique of Smallwood's development program of the kind which was to become common in the late 1960s and 1970s. It focussed particularly on resettlement. It did not mention Smallwood by name, but Mowat was clearly launching an attack on the government from the "banana belt" of the Sou'west Coast (Mowat, 1967: 56). And it was a very public attack in Canada's Centennial year.

The article drew a critical response from the Honourable Dr. F. W. Rowe, Smallwood's Finance Minister in 1967 (Rowe, 1967). However, Maria Penny, President of John Penny and Sons of Ramea admitted that, while she disliked the article, it was ninety percent correct (Penny, 1967). Albert Perlin, the editor of the St. John's *Daily News*, admitted that he, like Mowat, deplored the "evacuation of many of the communities which have become or are destined to become deserted villages" (Perlin, 1967: 80), but he argued that "sentiment must be tempered by realism."

The next to last item in Smallwood's Mowat file is a telegram sent to Smallwood in September 1967 in which Mowat announced what was in effect a campaign to draw national attention to the plight of the people on the South West coast:

REFERENCE GREY RIVER MY EVALUATION DEPLORABLE CONDITIONS OF OUTPORTS AS REPORTED IN ATLANTIC ADVOCATE WAS OBVIOUSLY UNDERSTATEMENT STOP AM ALERTING NATIONAL MEDIA FOR FULL COVERAGE GREY RIVER REVOLT STOP MY NEW BOOK THE FORGOTTEN ONES DEALING WITH NEGLECTED OUTPORT PEOPLE WILL INCLUDE FULL STORY GREY RIVER SITUATION STOP BEST WISHES (Smallwood Papers: Mowat to Smallwood, September 25, 1967).

The Newfoundland government moved swiftly to alert the Federal Liberals to Mowat's plan. Don Jamieson was forwarded a copy of the above communication with a note: "Farley Mowat strikes again — I am sure the news in this telegram will bring a little joy into your life" (Smallwood Papers, Unsigned to Jamieson, October 2, 1967). The copy of the letter to Jamieson is unsigned. However, it was probably written by Ed Roberts. This was Mowat's parting shot. By this time the Mowats had left Burgeo and settled in Ontario.

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### n) *Fond Memories*

Mowat would continue to work on Newfoundland material. His book on the South West Coast was published in 1968 and *A Whale for the Killing* in 1972. In 1968 he took up the issue of the seal hunt. Newfoundland continued to hold a special place in his affections. In particular, he seems to have lamented the fact that he was never able to write “a magnum opus about the Rock and its people” (Mowat, 1989: 13). To correct this, in 1989 he drew together pieces of his writing to make the book *The New-Found-Land* (Mowat, 1989). This book, he suggests in the “introduction,” came out of a suggestion of Harold Horwood’s:

One day I was bemoaning my failure to Newfoundlander and fellow writer, Harold Horwood. He brought me up short... “Farley,” he snapped in his waspish way. “Don’t be so bloody dense! You’ve already written your ‘Great Book’ about us, but you’ve been flinging the pieces of it about like so much confetti. All you need to do is to gather the bits together. Why don’t you just get on with it?” (*ibid.* 13-14).

In the year of the fortieth anniversary of Newfoundland joining Canada Mowat published what he described as “my celebration of a place...a people...and a way of life...which I have dearly loved” (*ibid.*:14).

## HAROLD HORWOOD AND NEWFOUNDLAND CULTURE

### a) *Labour Organizer, Politician, Journalist ...*

Harold Horwood was born in Newfoundland. He was head of the General Workers’ Union and the Building Crafts Council and organizer for the Federation of Labour in the mid-1940s (Horwood, 1980: 33; Gillespie, 1986: 84-5).<sup>12</sup> He was a stalwart of Smallwood’s pro-Confederation campaign and then Member of the House of Assembly for Labrador in the province’s first Liberal government. He soon had “had politics up to here” and then this self-confessed “far-out radical” who was “suspected in some quarters of being a communist” — but assures us “a communist I was not” — went to work for the St. John’s *Evening Telegram* (Horwood, 1980: 34). As the *Telegram’s* reporter covering the legislature Horwood focussed his attention on the “deeds and misdeeds” of the Smallwood government (*ibid.*: 35). In this role he became a major embarrassment to the Liberal government which responded to the threat with “endless threats of suits, a threat of imprisonment for ‘breach of privilege’, three writs for libel, one dramatic court trial, and a threat from the government to have the paper padlocked” (*ibid.*: 35). As well as reporting on the legislature Horwood also wrote a column called “Political Notebook” between 1952 and 1958 — started apparently following a suggestion made by J.R. Small-



wood (*ibid*: 37). His assessment that this column “was a major force in Newfoundland politics in the 1950s” (*ibid*: 37) clearly has the ring of truth about it:

Within a year I had become Smallwood’s principal opposition, doing the job that the opposition members in the legislature were too few and too inexperienced to attempt. Scandals, skulduggery, inside information that had leaked through my private pipeline from cabinet meetings, as well as my attacks on government policies, all would end up in the twelve-hundred word daily spectacular at the top of page 3. I produced such an endless string of sensations that people bought the paper for the column alone. Circulation soared. More than ninety per cent of surveyed readers said they read the column before anything else in the newspaper. A few even said they read nothing else except the column and the comics. Smallwood spent six years trying to plug the leaks, and fired one minister who had been a personal friend of mine, but he never managed to stop the flow of information (*ibid*: 38).

The defeat of the Liberals federally in 1957 seems to have been a turning point in Horwood’s career. He claims to have played a role in this defeat as part of “a cabal of journalists calling itself the Committee for the Salvation of Canadian Democracy” (*ibid*: 44). He was invited to Ottawa by the new Conservative Diefenbaker government but “he never seriously considered going” and then “Farley Mowat came to town” (*ibid*: 44).

*b) A Meeting of Minds*

Horwood and Mowat became close friends:

We took an instant liking to each other, and he began to hint that I was wasting my time working for a provincial daily. Late in the summer of 1958 I drove to Stephenville Airport and met Mowat for a camping and drinking tour of Newfoundland. The day the tour ended I handed in my resignation... I sold my cruiser, my trailer, my aluminum skiff and two outboard motors, took my canoe and headed in to the wilderness alone. There, with no visible means of support, I bought a small house at Beachy Cove, and went to live the life that disappointed flower children would be trying to imitate ten years later. It was a life without electricity, plumbing, telephones or any regular income, with a stone fireplace that I built with my own hands, and an old wood stove in the kitchen. Unlike the ex-flower children, I never went on welfare, but lived in blissful poverty, worked the land, caught fish, gave what I could to my even poorer neighbours, and began writing the ten books that I have since published (*ibid*: 44-5).

Horwood and Mowat continued to have contact. Mowat read early drafts of Horwood’s book *Tomorrow will be Sunday*, published in 1966. In an interview with Judith Miller published in 1986 Horwood identifies “non-fiction writers, Farley Mowat, for instance, [as] among the best writers we have had in Canada” (Miller, 1986: 67).

c) *Protocol and Cultural Nationalism*

Harold Horwood had long been active in literary circles in Newfoundland. Starting in 1945 he had been involved in publishing a small magazine called *Protocol* and had written criticism under his own name and poetry under the name of William Noble (Benson, 1981: viii). Together with his younger brother Charlie, Harold Horwood, in this period, moved in St. John's' small circle of radicals. He mixed with Irving Fogwell, who also wrote as John Avalon, and others. He describes himself as a "socialist of sorts" in this period and he was drawn to labour politics.

Newfoundland in the mid-1940s was in a state of political ferment. Britain had made a commitment to allow the people of Newfoundland to determine the future of the country and the process which would lead to the referenda of 1948 to determine Newfoundland's form of government was under way.

Clearly the editors of *Protocol*, Charles and Harold Horwood, were supporters of self-determination for Newfoundland. The "editorial" which introduced the first volume of *Protocol*, written in the aftermath of World War II in late 1945, spoke of the "thawing wind" which was "blowing over the earth." It spoke of a "time of fallen idols and repudiated grandmother-teachings, and broken ice where we used to walk comfortably across the ponds." And this "thawing wind" of change had come "even to Newfoundland." It went on to outline what is a classic statement of the role that culture should play in a nationalist movement:

In the forefront of every national movement there must be an artistic movement. The soul of a nation must be born first, and only then is a healthy political body possible. Otherwise the nation is like a wave of the sea, blown about by every wind and tossed; not knowing what is wrong or what it wants, and hence at the mercy of the professional quack or charlatan who promises to bring in the Millennium by act of Parliament.

That is why we must have the creative spirit in Newfoundland. Art must not be the hobby of a few over-fed merchants and lawyers in St. John's — a pass-time to while away leisure hours of people who have nothing better to do. It must be the soul of the people rising up to assert itself as different from the souls of other people. For every people, the Philosopher says, speaks its own language of good and evil. My good is not my neighbour's good, and universal brotherhood must not become international sameness ("Editorial," *Protocol*, Number 1, November 1945).

This was cultural nationalism to be sure, but not a backward, inward-looking nationalism. This was a radical liberal nationalism which would contribute to the dissolution of the "old conservative ice-blocks" which still remained (*ibid.*).

The attitude of the Horwoods towards the political future of Newfoundland was set out clearly in the second issue of *Protocol*:

Any Newfoundlander with pride of his country must also express his satisfaction that steps have at last been taken to restore to Newfoundland her own government. It is

an indignity to any people that strangers should manage their affairs — but it is much more than an indignity that foreigners should control their foreign policy (Editorial, *Protocol*, Second Issue, January 1946: 2).

*Protocol* was not published between mid-1946 and late-1948. It was during this period that Harold Horwood embraced the cause of Confederation, campaigning alongside Joseph Smallwood and Greg Power in the period leading up to the referenda votes of 1948.

When the fifth issue of *Protocol* appeared in the Fall of 1948 the editors had shifted philosophy. It was now internationalist in perspective rather than regionalist:

Henceforth it will, we hope, stand upon a broader base, with an international outlook, opposed to regionalism and intolerance, but also to reaction, either artistic or political. We believe that the internationalization of the arts and sciences is slowly destroying those “cultures” which stand in the way of a new world civilization (“Editorial Notes”, *Protocol*, Number 5, 1948).

Incidentally, it was in issues of *Protocol* published in the late 1940s that excerpts of Horwood’s novel *Tomorrow It Will Be Sunday* were published, under the name William Noble.

Horwood in the mid-1940s was a cultural nationalist, but not one celebrating Newfoundland’s traditional way of life. He was a “regionalist” but one who was *avant-garde* and modernist in perspective. Even when he shifted his political position from being an advocate of a return to responsible government to being a supporter of Confederation he retained an appreciation for the regionalist artistic movement in Newfoundland, seeing it as an attempt to create a distinctive culture rather than preserve one which already existed.

Writing in 1949, Horwood drew attention to the emergence of an important artistic movement in Newfoundland which was attempting to connect with the new province’s “true peasant culture”:

The regionalist movement is important in its own right. It is the soul of an insular people, rising up to assert itself as different from the soul of other peoples, and though it may make little impression outside its own province, it is vital to the cultural life of the province itself. Of the regionalists perhaps only Newell and Harrington will contribute to the national literature of Canada, as Dr. E.J. Pratt, another Newfoundlander, and precursor of the regionalist school has already done (Horwood, 1949).

Horwood’s relationship with what he described as Newfoundland’s “peasant culture” is complex. In the early 1950s he attacked one of “Newfoundland’s favourite myths”:

... the belief that we have in this Province a very distinctive and flavourful culture which should be preserved at all costs. Even the Government subscribes to the belief, offering annual prizes for the encouragement of arts and letters. We have no quarrel with the prizes, provided it is realized that we are trying to interest people in laying the foundation for a cultural tradition rather than building upon a foundation which already exists. The truth is that Newfoundland has no literature, no music, no art, little philosophy and less science. The only culture which we have is the culture of the fish flake, though even that isn't our own, having come with our peasant ancestors from England and the Channel Islands (Horwood, 1952).

While offering this sobering comment on Newfoundland culture and the "Newfoundland way of life," Horwood did argue for the government to direct more attention towards the preservation and the "study and recording of the cultures indigenous to Newfoundland," that is, the "Indian and Eskimo cultures [which] are fast vanishing" (*ibid.*). In particular, he drew attention to the destructive forces at work in the early 1950s:

... native cultures are vanishing at an increasing rate. The process has been hastened by the arrival in the North of hordes of Americans — both servicemen and construction workers. In the course of defending Labrador against the Russians, they are putting an end to whatever little may be left of the only distinctive culture that ever existed in the Province of Newfoundland (*ibid.*).

Here Horwood is very close to Mowat.

*c) Horwood as Counter Cultural Critic*

As James Polk notes, Mowat's Romantic Calvinist non-fiction is about "social loss" (Polk, 1973: 124). But there is also present in his writing something which Jack Batten describes thus: "Mowat despises us, us mid-twentieth century, urban Canadians" (Batten, 1971: 15). Similar statements could be made about Harold Horwood, particularly in his late-1960s hippy phase. As O'Flaherty (1974: 28; 1979: 169) suggests, Horwood's "distaste for industrialism had developed into a fierce hatred" by the end of the 1960s — "possibly because he was influenced by the views of his friend Farley Mowat."

Mowat had long been railing against the "bitch goddess Progress," but, as his efforts on the South West Coast show, he did not want to turn the clock back in any simple sense. Horwood's position, too, is complicated. Neither are simple romantics. In the late 1960s both Horwood and Mowat wrote against the rising tide of what they call North American urban industrial society. Mowat feared the coming Admass society, continuing a long-established quest. Horwood, already a back-to-the-lander and a perceptive nature writer, embraced the counter-culture of the 1960s. He charted the growing influence of a North American way of life which

he described as a “filthy, fart-ridden mess” (Horwood, 1969a: 108-9). He urged that this society be torn down by the “bronzed and bearded and barefoot and beautiful” (*ibid.*: 108). The Hippies were coming and with them came hope for regeneration — “not just a new nation, but a new species” (*ibid.*: 109).

It was the shift in sensibility which accompanied the so-called “sixties revolution” which put Newfoundland on the counter-cultural map. After a visit to the mainland in early 1969 to promote his new book, *Newfoundland*, which had just been published, Harold Horwood noted that “sweet salty old Newfie with its oilskins and red herring no longer triggers a yawn in Toronto”(Horwood, 1969b). Newfoundland was being “discovered” and promoted as the place to be in magazines and on radio and television, putting it almost in the same class with “hard rock music, marijuana and legalized abortion” (*ibid.*). Horwood predicted that the “real invasion of mainlanders would start in the summer of 1970” (*ibid.*).

Horwood’s shift in perspective perhaps gave him a greater appreciation for what he had once dismissed as the “culture of the fish flake.” In 1972 he wrote “Holding On,” an article about resistance to resettlement, for *Maclean’s* magazine (Horwood, 1972). The article was introduced thus:

... in Newfoundland, where the Smallwood government threw its support behind the city and turned its back on the countryside, where the economies of small towns are fragile and indelicate and cracked and broken, where unemployment is the most severe in Canada, a change of mood is being felt. Smallwood’s attempts to close the outports has failed. Newfoundland was so recently a country in its own right that there is no escaping what it was. And there are those who are struggling to keep what it was in the past what it is in the present (*ibid.* 32).

By this time, not only was there opposition to resettlement from the outports, but small communities were being colonized by “emigres of polluted cities” (*ibid.*: 35). In some cases abandoned outports were being re-settled by back-to-the-landers from Canada, the USA, and even Europe. For the Newfoundland government, this was a problem which caused them some anxiety, as Horwood noted with his comment:

It’s the new settlers who really get them uptight. No fewer than six RCMP officers were sent to Greater Paradise in an unsuccessful attempt to evict David and Linda Wilson. Another RCMP raid on Little Bay West, where eight young men had moved into a village that was being abandoned, resulting in the arrest and conviction of three of them. The other five escaped into hiding. The three were given 18-month sentences for entering an unlocked, abandoned house, and for moving a piece of furniture from another abandoned house (*ibid.* 52).

Horwood’s article, like Mowat’s article “The People of the Coasts,” was an overt attack on Smallwood’s policies. By this time the Smallwood regime was under

pressure and near its end. Fred Rowe did spring to the defence of the Smallwood government and its resettlement policies by attacking the “Mowat-Horwood view” that “the typical Newfoundlander until recently was hardworking, independent, self-sufficient and blissfully satisfied with his existence” (Rowe, 1972: 6), but the arguments advanced carried little weight with Smallwood’s growing band of critics. His tide of support had ebbed.

A perceptive comment on the cultural shift which took place in the late 1960s was made by Ray Guy in his article “Newfoundlanders as the once and future hippies” (1968). The people of Newfoundland, he suggested, were — or had been — the “genuine hippies” (*ibid*: 6). They were the original “dropouts” who had been “more interested in living than making a living.” These true hippies were, however, in process of being “destroyed” by “our leader” who has “nothing but loathing for the way of life of our original hippies.” The irony was that, just as Newfoundland was being discovered by the hippies, and just as the way of life of the outports was starting to be widely celebrated, that way of life was being buried:

The way of life of our original hippies was condemned without examination, trial or jury. To be sure, there was much about it that was hard and degrading but we are now coming to realize there was more good about it than was ever suspected. Does the realization come too late? Yes, says Farley Mowat who prepares for a jolly wake (*ibid.*).

Mowat had already buried the old Newfoundland and left. However, Guy was not yet ready to “join Farley Mowat in his jolly wake” (*ibid*: 7).

## FROM REVIVAL TO REQUIEM

As Mowat makes clear in *The Rock Within the Sea: A Heritage Lost*, together with photographer John de Visser, he set out to provide a “celebration” of both “the closed universe of sea and rock, plants and beasts, wind and fog that occupies the primordial coasts of southern Newfoundland” and the qualities of the people of that part of Newfoundland:

... an Antaeon people, adamantine, indomitable, and profoundly certain of themselves. They are a natural people who have not lost, as we have lost, consciousness of unity with the natural world around them” (Mowat and de Visser, 1968: Foreword).

However, they soon recognize that their view of the people of the area was “an illusion”:

In distantly envisaging these peoples' lives as they had been, we failed to glimpse the heart of darkness beating black within the present hour. Their lives had undergone a sinister sea-change. We had not been long about our task when we began to recognize the change, and began to understand that our account was being transmuted, without our volition, into a requiem. We who had come to chronicle human life in its most admirable guise remained to witness and record the passing of a people (*ibid.*).

The funereal tones of Mowat's writing are clear. And to add effect, the portrait and the photographs are of a people "in the context of their world in its grimmest and most formidable aspect, in the hard, bleak days of winter" rather than in spring, summer and fall as well as winter. This is a portrait of "a people in the winter of their time" (*ibid.*).

If Mowat was there to see what he thought was the end of a way of life, Horwood's venture "beyond the road," with photographs by Steven Taylor, published in 1976, allowed him tell the story of:

... a people caught in the most painful stage of transition, a people whose roots have been destroyed so recently that they have been able to make no new sustaining growth (Taylor and Horwood, 1976: 7).

Horwood was on Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula to "listen ... to voices from the past," to the "people whom the world has left behind," in:

A human backwater, where men stagnate, or emigrate, or struggle against impossible odds to preserve a spirit and a way of life that belongs to the past (*ibid.* 27).

And the radical Horwood, who had fought for the betterment of workers and for Confederation in his youth, is now less sure about the benefits of what he fought for:

With the road came the welfare state, and overnight everything was changed. Greatest of all was the change in the people. Men whose fathers had toiled every daylight hour in boat or fish shed or field or forest, using their wits as well as their strength in the struggle for mere survival, suddenly found themselves with time to contemplate the harshness of their lot, with worries about the cost of living, the price of gasoline and the weakness of the TV signal (Taylor and Horwood, 1976: 27).

There is a remarkable similarity between Mowat's *Rock*, published in 1968, shortly after he left Newfoundland, and Horwood's *Beyond the Road*, published in 1976, the year before Horwood left Newfoundland to live in Nova Scotia. They are both requiems for a vanishing way of life, the one dealing with the South Coast the other with the Northern Peninsula. The authors come to praise, but they also come to bear

witness to and lament what they see as the end of a way of life. They were there for the burial and then they left.

## SMALLWOOD AND CULTURAL NATIONALISM

It is reasonable to suppose that Smallwood was sympathetic to the kind of cultural-historical projects being proposed by Mowat and Horwood in the mid-1960s. Smallwood's book *The New Newfoundland*, published in 1931, was essentially an exercise in boosterism (Smallwood, 1931). However, in his *Book of Newfoundland* project, the first two volumes of which were published in 1937, he revealed a deep interest in, and commitment to, all things Newfoundland. This publication was part of an attempt on the part of Smallwood to stimulate what might be called a national revival in the wake of the events leading to the ending of responsible government in Newfoundland in 1934 — an event which had been a blow to many Newfoundlanders.

Smallwood described Newfoundlanders as “the most tenaciously nationalistic and patriotic people in the world,” arguing that it would take “more than a storm to destroy their pride” (Smallwood, 1937a: 1). He urged Newfoundlanders to be “less aggressively patriotic and proud,” hinting that this attitude might be seen as evidence of a deep seated sense of inferiority (*ibid.* 2). However, at the same time he saw potential in the sense of nationalism:

... I hail this pride of the Newfoundlander in his country as one of the most promising *media* by which Newfoundland will overcome her troubles and carve a great future for herself (*ibid.* 2).

He also urged Newfoundlanders to accept some of the blame for the country's “backwardness” (*ibid.* 1-2). Here, in the course of condemning the intense, bitter individualism which he identified as a characteristic of the people, he posed this question:

Have we not failed almost completely in the one virtue that the modern world has made an absolute essential: the ability and the desire to co-operate to achieve a commonly desired end? (*ibid.* 2).

Smallwood set out to create a new sense of community, feeling strongly that conditions were ripe for such an effort:

Newfoundland is just now in a state of foment, of fertilization. To him that hath eyes to see and ears to hear, the signs of the times are brilliantly clear. Newfoundland is



in actual process of new birth, in the first tentative stages of a renaissance (Smallwood, 1937b: 23).

Smallwood's Newfoundland nationalism was about "the people" not the state or the government:

Governments come and governments go, but the people live on forever, their experiences becoming ever more enriched by vicissitudes, failures and successes. The natural resources remain. Governments are artificial and superficial things at best. It is the genius of a people that counts. What will make Newfoundland great and prosperous is not this or that government, this or that form of government; but rather that unconquerable, invincible, dogged courage and spirit so eloquently typified by Basil Gotto's bronze statue in Bowering Park of "The Fighting Newfoundlander ...". It is the people who count; they, and their inherent qualities of mind and heart (Smallwood, 1937b: 3).

Similar themes were developed in his later work in the 1930s and early 1940s, especially his newspaper column, "From the Masthead" and his *Barrelman* program, which made him Newfoundland's best-known radio personality (Narváez, 1983; Webb, 1998).

As Webb shows, the newspaper and radio work aimed to make Newfoundland better known to Newfoundlanders and, by this means, to create both a sense of community and a confidence in the country's future. Of the *Barrelman* radio program, Webb states:

... the programme strove to create a nationalist Newfoundland culture that was non-ideological. While the programme validated some cultural elements, clearly Smallwood was selective in his borrowing from that culture. He chose the programme's content with a political agenda of fostering a rebirth of the Newfoundland spirit and creating greater self-reliance among the Newfoundland people (*ibid.* 167).

Smallwood was attempting to spark a kind of cultural revolution in the 1930s and early 1940s which is perhaps not too far removed from what Mowat and Horwood were trying to do in the 1960s. His program created an audience, contributed towards the creation of a "nationalist popular culture" (*ibid.*) and made him a household name and national figure in Newfoundland, a fact which was to be of immense importance during the Confederation campaign of the late 1940s.

Smallwood's passionate interest in Newfoundland's past, its oral traditions and its language (*ibid.*: 175, 181) continued after he became premiere of the new Canadian province in 1949. It was in part through the establishment of Memorial University that he sought to pursue this interest. In comments made in 1949 during the second reading of the Act which raised Memorial University College to full university status, Smallwood outlined his commitment to "do something to see to

it that our distinctively Newfoundland culture and consciousness do not disappear and are preserved and maintained down to many generations in the future" (Smallwood, 2000: 3). He argued that Memorial would be a means of achieving this goal.

## CULTURAL REVIVAL

Mowat and Horwood never got to undertake the reclamation projects they had outlined in the mid-1960s, even though they did write books and articles about Newfoundland. But the reclamation work was being done. Memorial University of Newfoundland was already heavily involved in the kind of work proposed by Horwood/Mowat by the time their proposal was penned. Research into the origins of place and family names in Newfoundland was firmly established in the 1950s. This research, and historical research generally, was facilitated by a Carnegie Corporation grant. An interest in folklore and dialect was also in evidence in the English Department in the 1950s (Halpert and Rosenberg, 1974).

This interest flowered in the early 1960s as part of a growing interest in what E.R. Seary called "regional humanism" (Seary, 1966). It was this interest which eventually produced both work on Newfoundland family names and the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*. Folklorist Herbert Halpert joined the staff of the English Department in 1962. Folklore courses were first offered within that Department until, in 1968 a separate Department of Folklore was established. Along with the development of a regional focus in teaching English and folklore, research activities in these disciplines burgeoned in the 1960s. Linguists, anthropologists and folklorists began the collection of customs, songs, tales, sayings, and beliefs as well as descriptions of activities such as boat building, sealing and various kinds of craft work. The Canada Council provided funds for this research. To handle the growing collection of material a folklore archive was established under the direction of Neil Rosenberg.

Other developments at Memorial, documented by Baker (1994), show that the University also increased considerably its activity in the general area of Newfoundland Studies in the late 1950s and the first half of the 1960s. A graduate program in history was developed and the collection of historical documents which would form the basis of a provincial archive was started. The archive was established in 1960 under government control (Baker, 1993).

The establishment of the Extension Service by the University in 1959 was another important event in the period. By the early 1960s the Service was providing community development in various parts of the province and promoting art, music and drama programs. The establishment of the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) dates from 1961. This led to an expansion of social and economic research in the province. Much of this research was focussed on rural areas in the 1960s (Baker, 1999).

Smallwood is a key figure in these developments in that he created the policy framework and the institutions within which the growing interest in Newfoundland culture and history would flourish. In accepting the nomination for the Presidency of a reorganized Newfoundland Historical Society in 1966, Smallwood is reported by the *Newfoundland Quarterly*, the official organ of the Newfoundland Historical Society, to have expressed the fear that “much of our heritage would disappear unless the older generation acts quickly to preserve it” (*Newfoundland Quarterly*, 1966).

The Newfoundland renaissance which Mowat sought to spark was already smouldering when, with Horwood’s assistance, he issued his historical reclamation proposal and cultural manifesto in the mid-1960s. It was a significant blaze by the time that Sandra Gwyn wrote about it in the mid-1970s, significantly identifying Memorial University and especially its Art Gallery as the “crossroads and command post” for the “cultural revolution”:

There, director, Edyth Goodridge runs what she calls “sort of an open forum and information exchange for painters, sculptors, actors, directors, fiddlers, poets, playwrights, community planners, architects, folk-singers, film-makers, photographers, visiting feds, ecology freaks, conservation nuts, and anyone else who happens to be on the go (Gwyn, 1976: 41).

Farley Mowat and Harold Horwood’s proposals might well have been enthusiastically embraced by the crowd described by Edyth Goodridge as being at the heart of the cultural revolution, except by that time Mowat at least was *persona non grata* in Newfoundland. Along with Parzival Copes, Mowat had become something of a folk devil for the cultural nationalists — Copes for providing an intellectual justification for resettlement, Mowat for besmirching the name of Newfoundland and attacking the seal hunt. It is true that Newfoundlanders, including Harold Horwood, attacked the seal hunt with just as much vigour as did Mowat, but, in a growing age of neo-nationalism, it was the fellows from upalong who were the particular focus of the anger of those who sprang to the defence of Newfoundland.

Mowat may not have sparked the cultural revolution, but his efforts surely added fuel to the already smouldering fires. On the basis of the evidence provided here, Mowat, Horwood and even Smallwood can be seen as key figures in the development of Newfoundland’s cultural renaissance.

The irony of the situation is that two of these figures became folk devils for those involved in the cultural revolution in the 1970s. Mowat’s fate was similar to that of J.R. Smallwood, the man who, more than any other, had created the conditions for the cultural revolution, but who, as Richard Gwyn notes in the “Afterword” to a new edition of his book *Smallwood: The Unlikely Revolutionary* (1999), ended up by being castigated by the revolutionists.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The comments of Peter Neary, Ronald Rompkey and Robert Thomsen on an earlier draft of this paper are very much appreciated.

<sup>2</sup>For a more sober assessment of Newfoundland's "cultural and literary ferment" see Patrick O'Flaherty (1978).

<sup>3</sup>I outlined a project to investigate this area in the late 1980s (Overton, 1987). The project was not completed although some of the research on which this paper is based was conducted when I was a Canada Research Fellow in 1988-89.

<sup>4</sup>A useful discussion of Mowat is to be found in O'Flaherty (1979: 176-180). My essay "A Whale for the Killing and the Politics of Culture and Ecology," first published in 1987, should also be consulted (Overton, 1996: 62-80).

<sup>5</sup>Presumably the reference is to Mowat's *Maclean's* article of 1958 (Mowat, 1958).

<sup>6</sup>It was to Jamaica that William Coaker, Smallwood's hero and founder of the Fishermen's Protective Union, went when he retired.

<sup>7</sup>The bringing of John Kenneth Galbraith to St. John's to receive an honorary degree from Memorial University in the Fall of 1999 is reminiscent of Smallwood's celebration of well-known writers/thinkers in the mid-1960s. It is perhaps significant that Ed. Roberts, who organized the Mowat trip to St. John's for Smallwood, is now head of the Board of Regents of Memorial University of Newfoundland. Galbraith's visit in 1999 gave rise to some controversy because of the high cost of bringing him to Newfoundland. At Galbraith's request, Premier Brian Tobin flew to Boston on a special jet to pick up Galbraith, who is now quite frail, because Joey had made the same arrangement in the mid-1960s when he brought Galbraith to St. John's for a "Thinkers Conference."

<sup>8</sup>According to Gwyn (1972: 307) Spencer Lake was the "squire" of Burgeo. He owned local fish plants and stores and was mayor of the town. He "lived in luxury, surrounded by a menagerie that included a stable of riding horses, and a trio of South American Llamas". He was fiercely anti-union.

<sup>9</sup>The reference is to Kenneth Peacock's *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*, published in 1965 (Peacock, 1965). Peacock's material was collected in six short field trips between 1951 and 1961 (*ibid*: Volume 1, xx). Peacock explained that, although not a member of the "rare-gem school" of folk song collecting, he was of the opinion that collectors should be "more ruthless in sifting out poor material at the source before it can clutter up our already overburdened and understaffed archives" (*ibid*: xxii). Peacock clearly weeded out the "duds" before publication.

<sup>10</sup>This appears to be a mistake on Mowat's part. Presumably he was referring to Term Twenty-Nine, one of the Terms of Union of Newfoundland with Canada which became the source of conflict between the Smallwood and the federal Progressive Conservative government of John Diefenbaker in 1959.

<sup>11</sup>Kent was eventually found and contacted by the Newfoundland government in the winter of 1967. In July 1968, at the invitation of Smallwood, the 86 year-old artist returned to St. John's for one of Smallwood's dinners. The occasion "dripped with Dickensian sentimentality," according to *Time* ("Newfoundland: Sentimental Journey," *Time*, Volume 92, Number 5, August 2, 1968: 11). Kent himself wrote an account of his Newfoundland experiences (Kent, 1968), which was later published by Smallwood in his *Book of New-*

foundland (Kent, 1975). Smallwood also wrote something about Kent's return (Smallwood, 1978).

<sup>12</sup>The election of 1966 gave Smallwood and the Liberals 39 and the Progressive Conservatives only 3 of the total seats (Noel, 1971: 281). This was Smallwood's biggest majority since Confederation.

<sup>13</sup>A main source for Horwood is O'Flaherty (1979: 161-71).

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