Our Own Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador Social Studies



Teachers on Wheels Inc.

Thomas V.C. Dawe

Table of Contents

Newfoundland and Labrador Geography	**1**
The Maritime Archaic People	**20**
The Palaeo and Dorset Eskimos	**23**
The Beothuk	**25**
The Vikings	**33**
The Inuit	**38**
The Innu	**49**
The Mi'kmaq	**58**
The Métis	**62**
The Early Newfoundland and Labrador Fishery	**64**
The Truck System	**75**
Sir Wilfred Grenfell	**77**
World War I	**81**
The Women's Suffrage Movement	**86**
World War II	**89**
Confederation	**95**
Resettlement	**98**
The Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Flag	**104**
Official Name Change of Province to Newfoundland and Labrador	**107**
Glossary	**108**

Our Own Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador Social Studies

Teachers on Wheels Inc.

Thomas V.C. Dawe

Newfoundland and Labrador Social Studies for the Beginning Adult Reader is a project of Teachers on Wheels Inc.

Author: Thomas V.C. Dawe, M.Ed. (Literacy)

Funding assistance was provided by the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources and Skills Development, Government of Canada.

A very special thanks to the learners and staff of the Rabbittown Learners Program.

For Information, contact:

Teachers on Wheels
P.O. Box 8455, Station A
St. John's, NL
A1B 3N9

Telephone (709) 738-3975
Fax (709) 754-4418

Copyright © Teachers on wheels Inc. and Thomas V.C. Dawe. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system now known or to be invented, without permission. All rights reserved.

Newfoundland and Labrador Geography

Newfoundland and Labrador covers 405,720 square kilometers of land. It is seven times larger than Nova Scotia. Labrador makes up 72.5% of the province. It contains 5.3% of the population.

Newfoundland holds the most northeastern part of the Appalachian mountain range in North America. Labrador is the most eastern part of the Canadian Shield. The Canadian Shield is a region that stretches from Labrador to Western Canada and the northern United States. This region is made up of volcanic rocks and coniferous trees.

During the Ice Age, glaciers covered Newfoundland and Labrador. These smoothed the landscape, dug lakes and carved deep valleys. Valleys along the coast were flooded by the sea. This left deep fjords. Glaciers carved a large number of protected harbours.

Glacial scouring action was not even throughout the province. Moving glaciers carry gravel and sand. This is called glacial till. Much of Newfoundland and Labrador is covered by glacial till that was left behind. This material often determined where farming and wildlife would succeed later.

The physical nature of Newfoundland and Labrador gives people the resources to live there. Native peoples hunted, fished and gathered. Europeans settled where raw materials could be found for export. The bedrock in some places yielded rich ores for mining. There has been fishing offshore. The offshore has also yielded rich oil reserves in recent years.



Northern Labrador

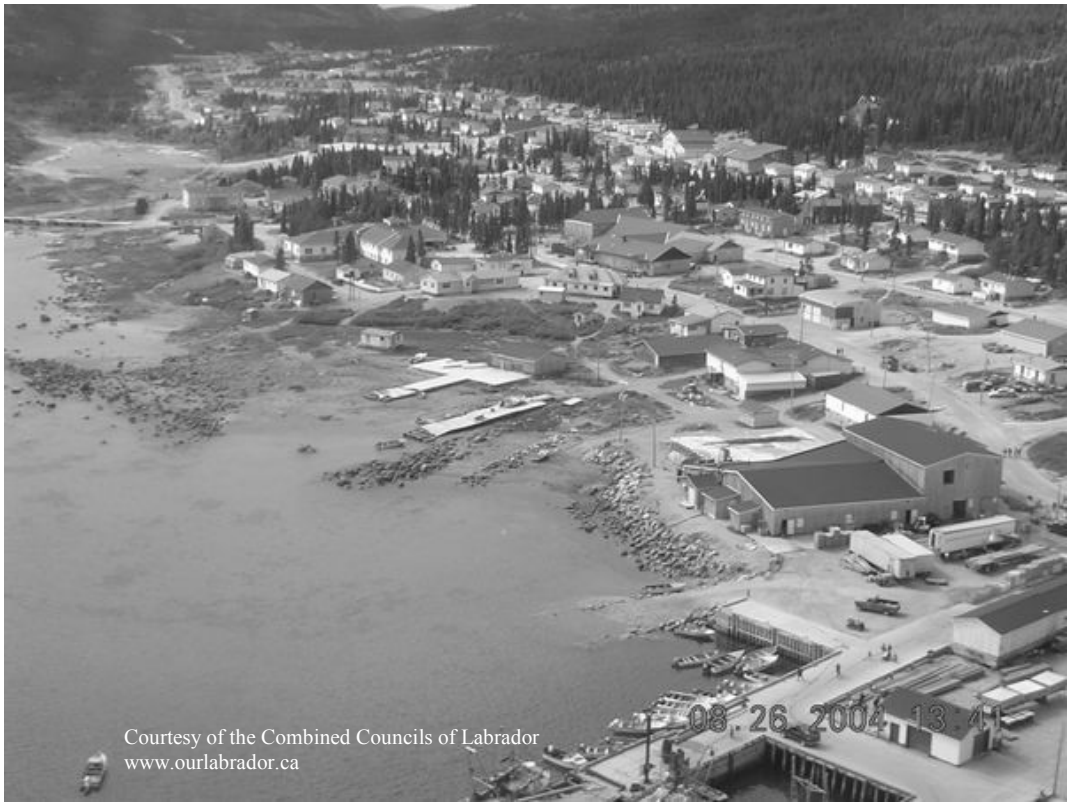
The western border of this region is made up of high land between Quebec and Labrador. The east is bound by the Labrador Sea. Northern Labrador is mostly made up of mountains. The highest peak is the Torngat range. It rises to over 1525m above sea level.

Most of northern Labrador is made up of tundra plants and barren rock. The past work of glaciers can be seen in the peaks and fiords. Valleys are broad and deep. Glacial till is found at the bottoms of these valleys. Forests have grown up from the soil left behind by glaciers.

Winters are very cold. January temperatures at sea level average –18° C. Summers are short with a few warm days. The temperature around the coast often falls to around 6°-10° C. The southern part of this region is slightly warmer. Yearly precipitation is light (46-70 cm). Half of this falls as snow. The northern Labrador coast is blocked by pack ice from December to June.



The population of northern Labrador is sparse. It is mostly made up of first nations people. A small number of settlements are spread out on the coast. These have depended on the fishery, hunting seals, the fur trade, and more recently, mining.



The Town of Nain

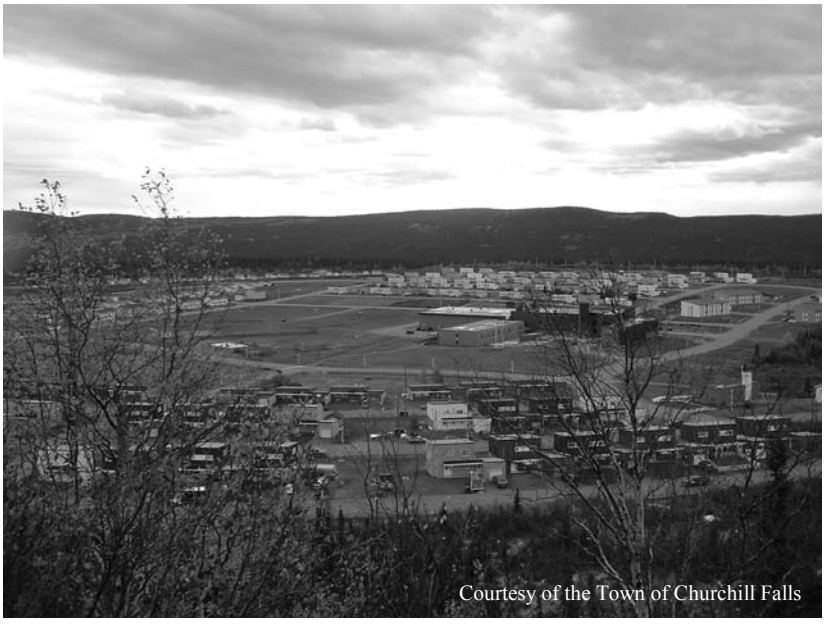
The Labrador Interior

The Labrador interior includes the Labrador Plateau. This region has a number of lakes. It also serves as the source of the Churchill and Eagle rivers. A number of streams flow south to Quebec from this region.

The western Labrador interior is boggy with scrubby forests and thin soil. The bedrock holds a large amount of iron ore. Thicker soils have been left by glaciers in the east. These support rich evergreen forests.

Because the Labrador interior is far from the ocean, the climate varies greatly. Winters are very cold. January temperatures average around –22° C. Summers are short but warm. July temperatures range from 13°-16° C.

Most people in the Labrador interior live in one of five large towns. Wabush (pop. 2300) and Labrador City (pop. 9100) are iron-mining towns. The Town of Churchill Falls (pop. 650) supports a large hydro dam. The population of Happy Valley / Goose Bay in 2001 was 7969. Many of these people work at the military base and airport. The Labrador interior has also supported forestry from time to time.



The Town of Churchill Falls

Southern Labrador

Southern Labrador takes in the coast from Groswater Bay to the Strait of Belle Isle. Many bays and islands are found along this coast. Deep soils were left at the heads of these bays by glaciers. These soils support rich forests.

Winters in southern Labrador are cold and snowy. January temperatures hover around –15° C. Summers on the coast are cool and wet. These are warmer inland. The southern Labrador coast is blocked with arctic pack ice from December to May.

In the 19th Century, fishing companies from eastern Newfoundland spent the summer seasons in southern Labrador. Small, spread-out towns grew up from good harbours and rich fishing. Most people in southern Labrador today make their living from the fishery. Some may also take part in logging, trapping and picking bakeapples.



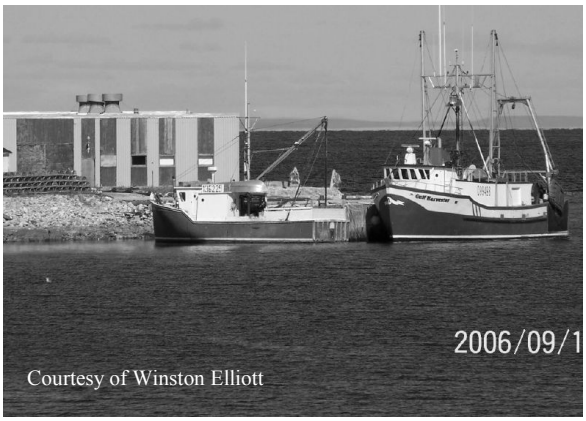
The Great Northern Peninsula

The Great Northern Peninsula is narrow and makes up the northern part of the island of Newfoundland. The coastal plain in the west is covered by glacial marine deposits. These have dried and been pushed high by movement in the earth. Hills rise steeply in the west from a narrow coastal plain to over 600m. Flat-topped mountains are cut by rivers that flow to the east.

The Great Northern Peninsula has a lot of barrens with low tundra-like plants. Forests grow on the slopes of hills and the coastal plain. Bogs are found where drainage is poor.

Summers on the Great Northern Peninsula are warm. Winters are cold. Sea ice surrounds the coast from January to late spring.

Towns on the Great Northern Peninsula are linked by roads on the western and northern shores. People have settled along these shores. Shallow waters off the west coast have been ideal for cod and lobster fishing. Lumber and small mining operations have carried on in this region. There has been some farming. Some people grow vegetables for their own use.



The Wharf in Brig Bay

St. Anthony is on the northern tip of the Great Northern Peninsula. It is the largest town on the peninsula. St. Anthony has a population of about 3200. It is a medical and supply service centre.

The West Coast

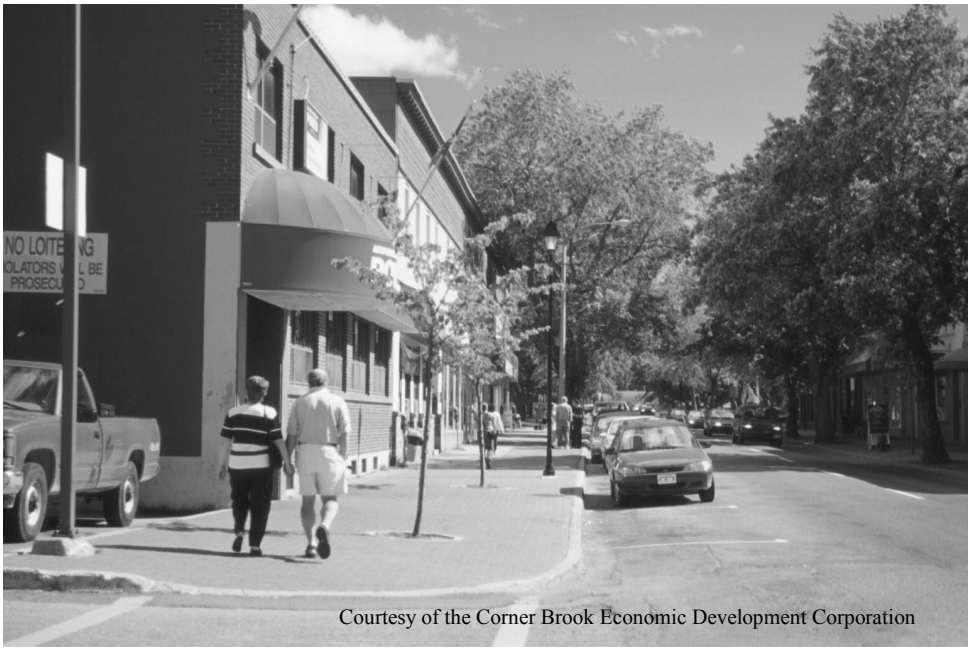
The west coast region of the island of Newfoundland is made up of mountains. Some flat-topped mountains reach to over 790m.

The Humber and Grand Codroy rivers have cut valleys through the west coast region. Most of the valley slopes and flatlands are covered with deep glacial soil. This soil supports rich forests. Level land around Deer Lake is the result of past glacial work. Raised deltas around St. George's Bay are also the work of glaciers.

Winters in the west coast region are cold but not severe. Sea and harbour ice may block the Bay of Islands for a month in late winter. Summer temperatures average 16° C.

People have settled along the coast in this region or along the Humber or Codroy rivers. Towns on the coast have relied on the fishery. The inland region supports forestry and hydro projects. Good soils in Deer Lake, St. George's Bay and the Codroy Valley support farming. Gypsum and limestone have been quarried in this region.

Corner Brook in the Bay of Islands is the largest centre on the west coast. It has a population of 20,105. Corner Brook is a centre for industry, trade, education, health and transportation.

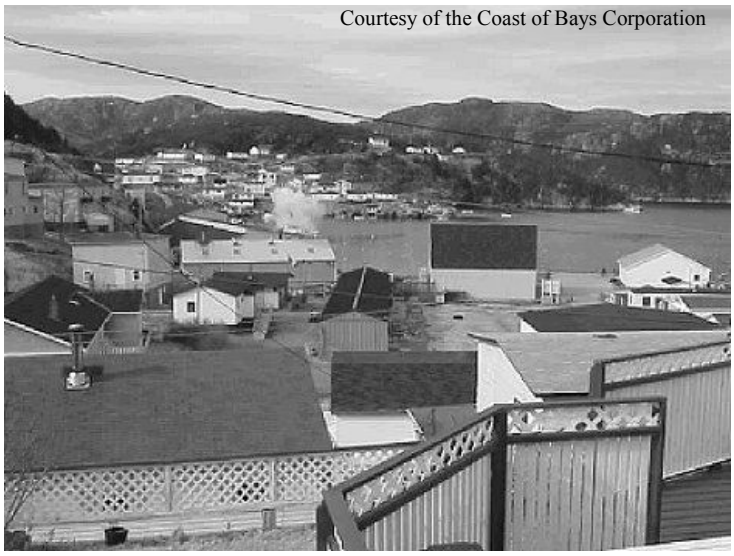


Downtown Corner Brook

The South Coast

The south coast region of the island of Newfoundland is mostly hilly, barren and covered with moss. Bays are long and deep. These were carved by glaciers. Forests grow in glacial soils where bays reach inland and slopes are not too steep. There are thousands of ponds.

The south coast has a marine climate. Winds blow on shore from the sea. Winters are mild. January temperatures average -6° C. Summers are cool to warm with an average temperature of 14° C. Total yearly rainfall is high (average 125cm). The south coast is free of ice year-round.



The Town of Gaultois

Towns on the south coast were once scattered and isolated. Today, most people in the region live in a few large towns. Most of these towns have been based on fishing. A group of towns around the head of Bay d'Espoir support logging and a hydro development.



Workers in the Gaultois Fishplant

The Central Region

The central region has a number of small mountain ranges and peaks. To the north, it is barren with thousands of ponds and bays. Glacial debris is thick on the slopes of the Exploits, Gander and Terra Nova rivers. This soil has allowed rich forests to grow. Wilderness in the central region supports caribou, moose, bears and other fur-bearing mammals.

The climate in the central region is not severe. It is warm in summer and cold in winter. 100cm of precipitation falls per year. A quarter of this falls as snow.

Towns have grown up in the north of this region. These are mostly based on natural resource industries such as mining and forestry. The port of Botwood in Exploits Bay had a population of 3221 in 2001. It serves as an export centre. Gander had a population of 9651 in 2001. This town supports an international airport. Gander is a trade, medical and transportation service centre. Grand Falls-Windsor was built on forestry and supports a paper mill. Grand Falls-Windsor had a population of 13,340 in 2001.



Gander International Airport

Arrow Air Flight 1285

At 6:45am, December 12th, 1985, Arrow Air Flight 1285 took off from Gander. The DC-8 with a crew of eight had been chartered to carry 248 US peacekeepers home to Kentucky. They had just finished a six-month mission in the Sinai. The aircraft stalled and crashed just after takeoff. The fire burned for four hours. This was the greatest loss of life in a plane crash in Canada.

There has been some debate since that time as to the cause of the crash. Most members of the Safety Board believed that the cause of the stall and crash could not be found. Icing on the plane was believed to have played a role. This is the official version of events.

A minority of the Safety Board felt the crash might have been caused by a blast in the cargo hold. This would have caused a fire in-flight and loss of control. Some have gone as far as to assert that the US military had destroyed their own plane. None of this has ever been proven.

A memorial to the victims was built at the crash site near Gander Lake.



The Silent Witnesses Memorial

The Northeast Coast

The northeast coast stretches from White Bay to Conception Bay. It is made up of bays, peninsulas and islands. The coast has steep cliffs and deep sheltered harbours. The inland landscape is just above sea level and rugged.

The northeast coast has a moderate climate. Summers are warm. Winters are not too cold. There is an average of 100-112cm of precipitation per year. This falls evenly all year. Snowfall is often heavy. Ice blocks the coast from January to March or April.

The northeast coast has a few large and a number of small towns. These are evenly spread along the coast. Towns have grown up around mining, the fishery, supply and service. This region also supports some farming.

Avalon-Burin

The Avalon-Burin region runs along the southeast coast of the island of Newfoundland. Waters along the coast are deep with good harbours.

The Avalon-Burin region is the mildest and wettest of the province. Arctic ice rarely reaches this coast. Winter temperatures average -3° C. Summer temperatures average over 16° C inland, with a few degrees lower on the coast. Fogs are frequent on the coast. An average of 150cm falls per year. Ten percent of this falls as snow.

Many towns in this region are based on the fishery. Some larger towns in this region have grown as supply and service centres. Marystown supports a shipyard. Rural areas of this region support some farming.



The Port of Marystown

St. John's is the capital city of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is found on the northeast coast of the Avalon Peninsula. St. John's is a centre for government, trade, transportation, education and medicine. The population in 2001 was 99,182.



St. John's Harbour

Questions ?

1. How did glaciers shape the Newfoundland and Labrador landscape during the Ice Age?

2. What do you call gravel and sand left over by glaciers?

3. At what time in the year would you expect the northern Labrador coast to be blocked by pack ice?

4. Describe the valleys in northern Labrador.

5. What industry forms the basis for the towns of Wabush and Labrador City?

6. The Labrador interior is far from the ocean. How does this affect the climate?

7. How do most people in southern Labrador make their living today?

8. What is the largest town on the Great Northern Peninsula?

9. What are the good soils in Deer Lake, St. George's Bay and the Codroy Valley used for?

10. What is a marine climate?

11. About how much of the yearly precipitation in the central region falls as snow?

12. Describe the weather in winter on the northeast coast.

13. What town on the Burin Peninsula supports a shipyard?

14. Describe the weather in the Avalon-Burin region.

Things to Think About

1. Towns in Newfoundland and Labrador were often based on access to resources. Name some resources that help support the region in which you live. Can you think of resources that were once important to your region, but are no longer being used?

2. Make a list of any features in your region that you feel may be the result of the work of glaciers.



The Maritime Archaic People

The history of the Maritime Archaic people traces back 9000 years. They lived in Newfoundland and Labrador for 5000 years. These early Indians spread along the whole Labrador coast and much of the coast of Newfoundland.

In 1973, workers were building a road near L'Anse-Amour in southern Labrador. They found a wide mound of rock. Archaeologists from Memorial University arrived the next year. They removed the cover of rock and began to dig. At one metre, two rows of rock were found standing on edge. At two metres, they found the skeleton of a child of about twelve-years. The body had been placed face down in the sand. A large flat rock lay on the child's back.

A flute with two holes was found in the grave. It had been made from the hollow bone of a bird. Stone knives and spear points were found near the head of the child. Parts of a toggling harpoon were found beneath the skeleton. This harpoon shows how advanced these people were as hunters. It allowed them to hold onto seals and other prey after first wounding them.

The L' Anse-Amour site held the remains of two fires. Charcoal from one of the fires dated back 7500 years.

The remains of a Maritime Archaic community were found near Port au Choix, on the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland. This site dates back 3500 years. Remains found in graves were covered with red ochre. This substance was made from powdered iron ore. Its use shows strong spiritual beliefs. A set of sewing tools, an antler comb, and a stone carving of a killer whale were also found.

The Maritime Archaic were muscular, with good upper body strength. They had broad heads, pronounced cheekbones and narrow noses. These Indians lived by hunting, fishing and gathering. They had a diet rich in protein. The Maritime Archaic were a healthy people.

The Maritime Archaic in Labrador were the first to find and use large rock deposits of Ramah chert (or Ramah quartzite). This rock is found only in Ramah Bay. It is grey in colour, often with black banding. Light passes through it. Ramah chert was chipped to make points for spears, knives, and other tools and weapons. Some of these items have been found as far away as what is now the American state of Maine. This shows trade routes that go back 4000 years.

Questions ?

1. What was found beneath a mound of rock near L' Anse-Amour in southern Labrador?

2. What did the presence of the toggling harpoon at the Maritime Archaic gravesite tell us about their hunting ability?

3. What covered Maritime Archaic remains found in graves near Port au Choix, on the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland?

4. How did the Maritime Archaic obtain food?

5. How did the Maritime Archaic in Labrador use Ramah chert?

The Palaeo and Dorset Eskimos

About 4000 years ago, the Palaeo-Eskimos arrived in the Canadian Arctic from what is now Alaska. They later moved south. Some Palaeo-Eskimos came to live on the island of Newfoundland. They spread to almost every region of the coast.

Palaeo-Eskimos were nomads. They often moved from place to place. Dwellings were built partly into the ground. These may have been covered with skins. Flat stone slabs made up the floor. Part-time dwellings were likely used for seasonal camps. These were simple structures. A rock face would often be used as a wall.

Palaeo-Eskimos hunted and gathered food. Their efforts were often focused on sea mammals. Tools and weapons were made of wood, antler, bone, ivory and stone. Stone tools included harpoons, knives, scrapers and other smaller blades. These were made by flaking or chipping coloured, fine-grained cherts. Palaeo-Eskimos used toggling harpoons. They are believed to have learned to use these from the Maritime Archaic Indians. Palaeo-Eskimos are also known to have used bows and arrows.

The Palaeo-Eskimos are believed to have evolved into Dorset Eskimo culture. These people did not move around as much. Winter and spring were spent in camps along the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. They would move in pursuit of harp seals that came down on the northern ice floes.

Dorset religion is thought to have been animistic. All things and beings were believed to have their own spirits. They believed that spirits governed all human and animal life. Dorsets are known for carving figures from soapstone, ivory, antler and bone.

The remains of a Dorset settlement with 50 dwellings was found near Port au Choix. It is thought to date from 1400-1900 years ago. This site was likely a base camp. The presence of bones points to the use of harp seals for meat, fat, oil and skins. Seal oil was used for cooking. It was also used in soapstone lamps for heat and light. Much of the soapstone came from what is now Fleur de Lys, on the Baie Verte Peninsula of Newfoundland.

Dorsets disappeared from Newfoundland 1300 years ago. They disappeared from Labrador 700 years later.

Questions ?

1. The Palaeo-Eskimos were nomads. What does this mean?

2. What were used to make up the floors in Palaeo-Eskimo dwellings?

3. Who are the Palaeo-Eskimos believed to have learned the use of toggling harpoons from?

4. What animal did the Dorsets rely on for meat, fat, oil and skins?

The Beothuk

The Beothuk are believed to have been an Algonkian Indian tribe. This would make them related to the Micmac, Montagnais and Naskaupi Indians. It is said that the Beothuk were lighter in colour than other North American Indians. They were also a little taller. The Beothuk used red ochre to paint their bodies and the things they owned. Europeans called them “Red Indians”.

Life for the Beothuk centered on the Exploits River in central Newfoundland. Their main food source was caribou. The Exploits crossed routes where caribou were known to travel. The Beothuk built fences along the river to trap caribou. When blown by the wind, the fences frightened and confused the caribou. The Beothuk killed them from half-circle mounds of earth nearby. The meat was stored in large structures near the banks of the river.

Winters were spent at Red Indian Lake, at the head of the Exploits River. They had access to Notre Dame Bay in the summer. The sea offered birds, seals and fish.

The Beothuk hunted with bows and arrows, spears and harpoons. Children’s toys were made from birch bark. Clothing decorations were made from bone. Birch bark was sewn with tiny roots to make pots and kettles.

Diet

Meat was stewed in boiling water. Rocks were heated in the fire and dropped into pots. Meat was also roasted on spits over open fires.

During winter and lean times, Beothuks ate dried meat and fish. A kind of cake was made from boiled seabird eggs. A pudding was made with liver, eggs and seal fat.

Dress

Beothuk men wore a poncho-shaped garment that reached the mid-calf. This was made of two caribou pelts sewn together. Holes were made in the skin with an awl. This was then laced with sinew. Women's clothing was similar. Hoods were attached to the poncho. Hoods were sometimes used to carry infants.

During winter, the Beothuk wore caribou-skin leggings, moccasins and mitts. These were smeared with a mixture of ochre and oil. The hair side was turned in.

Canoes

The Beothuk birch bark canoe was unique. It had ribs of conifer wood. This frame was covered with large strips of birch bark. These strips were sewn together along the bottom with split spruce roots. Seams were caulked with a mixture of ochre and oil or pitch.

Large stones were placed in canoes for ballast. This caused them to sit deeper in the water and made them more stable. Sods and moss were placed on the stones so that paddlers could kneel. The blades of the paddles were quite long. Sails were sometimes used.

Beothuk canoes weighed only 50kg. It is believed that the largest were over 7m long.

Housing

Mamateeks were cone-shaped houses. These were built from raised poles covered with sewn birch bark. This was held in place by a second frame of poles. The outer layer was covered with birch bark. By the late 1700's, some Mamateeks were covered by sails obtained from white settlers. The whole structure was insulated with dried moss. Winter mamateeks had permanent foundations. These housed 12-30 people.

A raised fireplace sat at the centre of the Mamateek. Smoke from the fire escaped through a hole in the roof. Shallow sleeping pits circled the fireplace. These were lined with soft furs or boughs.

Medicine

Pounded iron sulphide was mixed with oil and applied to a sore head or neck. This was said to cure in a matter of days. An extract of dogwood bark was drunk for stomach pains. Women's milk was used to bathe sore eyes. Steam huts were used by the Beothuk to treat stomach illness, back pain, rheumatism and tuberculosis.

Burial Practices

The most common method of Beothuk burial was to wrap a body in birch bark. This was then covered in stones. If the ground was soft, the grave could be sunk in the earth. Stones would not be used in this case.

Another burial method used a scaffold. The body was wrapped in birch bark. The body and personal property were placed about 1.3m above the ground.

There was a burial method that involved a box on the ground. The body was wrapped in birch bark. It was then bent and placed on its right side in the box.

There was a report of a burial site using a hut-like structure. Square poles were used for flooring. The roof was covered with tree bark. A number of bodies were wrapped in deerskins and laid out on the floor.

Beothuk burial shrouds and objects left in graves were covered with red ochre.

Conflict With the White Man

John Guy was the founder of the first Newfoundland colony. In 1612, Trinity Bay fishermen told him that bands of Beothuk were coming down to the coast in summer. Guy met with a small band of Beothuk. They welcomed him with singing and dancing. The Beothuk were eager to exchange gifts. They all agreed to meet and trade at the same place the next summer. Guy went home to England and did not return.

The next year, an English ship anchored off the same beach where Guy had traded. Beothuks headed out to the ship by canoe. Others danced and sang on shore. The ship's crew mistook their actions as hostile. They fired the ship's guns. The Beothuk fled into the woods. There was little peaceful contact between Beothuk and whites after this event.

In the 1700's, Europeans settled in Notre Dame Bay. They soon began to move up the Exploits River. The settlers began to compete with Beothuk for fresh water, game and fish. This also reduced Beothuk access to sheltered beaches for landing canoes. Hatred and violence followed. The Beothuk were denied access to the coast. They were forced to survive inland. This reduced year-round food supplies for Beothuk.

There were a number of attacks on Beothuk by some Notre Dame Bay trappers and fishermen. Settlers raided Beothuk camps to steal furs. Some of this was provoked by Beothuk who stole salmon nets and supplies. The Beothuk were not a warlike people. They had never learned the use of firearms.

Hunting Beothuk became a kind of sport for some whites. Their murder was not recognized as a crime until the term of Governor Sir Hugh Palliser (1764-1768). Threat of prosecution had no effect. No one was ever punished for killing a Beothuk in Newfoundland.

The government took measures to reach out to the Beothuk and prevent their demise. This only added to their fear and hatred of white people. Five missions were carried out to help improve relations. The government later offered a reward of 50 pounds sterling to anyone who could bring a captive Beothuk to St. John's. It was hoped that this captive could be used to promote peace and trade. The plan backfired. Whites killed Beothuk men to kidnap their women and claim the reward.

Desmaduit was captured on the shore of Red Indian Lake. She was given the name Mary March. March was the month during which she was captured. Mary March was taken to Twillingate. A missionary cared for her. Mary March later spent a number of months in St. John's. The time came for her to return to her people and help build relations with the whites. Mary March died on ship during the journey. She was placed in a coffin and returned to the site of her capture. The Beothuk later took the body out of the coffin and buried it.

Shanawdithit was captured in the spring if 1823 with her mother and sister. The women spent a few weeks in St. John's. They were then returned to the Exploits with presents to take back to their tribe. The women turned up in an English settlement after failing to find their tribe. By 1828, Shanawdithit was living in St. John's. She was the last known Beothuk. Shanawdithit had

a talent for drawing. She used this talent to tell others of Beothuk life. Shanawdithit died of tuberculosis in June 1829.

It is believed that there were never more than 500-600 Beothuk at any one time. They became extinct in the 1820's. Murder, tuberculosis and malnutrition were all factors. A shrinking caribou herd may have also played a part.

Questions ?

1. What gave the Beothuk their red colour?

2. What was the main food source for the Beothuk?

3. How did the Beothuk boil water?

4. What did the Beothuk do to make their canoes more stable?

5. What did the Beothuk use to insulate their Mamateeks?

6. What did the Beothuk get from white settlers to cover their Mamateeks?

7. Settlers denied the Beothuk access to the coast. What effect did this have on them?

8. How many people were punished for killing Beothuks in Newfoundland?

9. Why did the Newfoundland government offer a reward for any Beothuk brought back alive to St. John's?

10. List some factors that played a role in the demise of the Beothuk.

Things to Think About

Name some causes of conflict between Beothuk and white settlers. Do these types of conflicts still occur between groups of people in the world today? Discuss.



The Vikings

Vikings were Norse-speaking people from Denmark and Scandinavia. The word *Viking* comes from the Norse word *vikingr*. This means pirate or raider. Over 1000 years ago, the Vikings spread throughout Europe. They reached the Mediterranean, parts of Russia and the Near East. Vikings were the first Europeans to step foot in North America.

Vikings have often been described as warring pagan hordes. More civilized coastal dwellers looked on them with terror. Yet, there was much more to the Vikings than murder and plunder. Norse society was made up of warrior elites, slaves and freeborn land users. They were great explorers. The Norse found new lands and opened up trade. They governed and brought justice to conquered regions.

Viking Ships

The Norse were master shipbuilders. Vessels were made from oak or pine planks. Boards overlapped and were held in place with iron rivets and washers. These ships had no decks. Each had a large, four-sided sail made of coarse wool. There were holes for long oars near the top of the ship's sides. This allowed the crew to row if there was no wind, or more speed was needed. The ship was steered by a large wooden paddle on the right (starboard) side, near the stern.

Longships were used for raiding. They were made for storming ashore. Longships were fast. Each could carry 200 men. The crew would hang shields along the sides of the longboat. This kept them close on hand for fighting and protected the oarsmen.

Knarrs were slower than the longships. They were built to carry freight. Knarrs were used to explore and travel between colonies. They were 16m long and 5m wide. Knarrs were built strong for long ocean voyages. Each could carry up to 15 tons of cargo. The fore and aft decks could hold about 30 people. These decks could also hold a number of animals for food and milk on long journeys.

Vikings in the New World

By the early ninth century, the Norse began to shift from raiding to starting colonies. Much of what we know about Viking exploration comes from the Norse sagas. These began as oral stories and were later written down.

In 986, Bjarni Herjolfsson and his crew sailed for Greenland from Iceland. The harsh Atlantic weather blew them off course. They sighted thickly wooded land. Nobody went ashore. These were the first known Europeans to have seen North America.

In 1001, Leif Eriksson sailed with a crew of 35. He wished to retrace Bjarni's voyage. They sailed west and beached their ship. The group spent winter in this land. There were plenty of salmon, forests, pasture and wild cereal grain. Eriksson called this place Vinland (vine land) because of the "wild grapes". They sailed back to Greenland in the spring of 1002. They brought back a cargo of timber and grapes.

It was said that the Vikings met natives on the coast of Vinland. These people used canoes made of skin. The canoes were rowed using double-bladed paddles. The Norse referred to these natives as "Skraelings". They described them as small and hostile. Conflict soon followed. Over time, this conflict may have forced the Norse to leave Vinland.

L'Anse aux Meadows

L'Anse aux Meadows is in the most northern region of the island of Newfoundland. In 1960, Dr. Helge Ingstad, a Norwegian explorer, found the remains of a Norse settlement. Faint outlines of a number of old foundations were noted. These were grown over by weeds and grass. Excavations took place from 1961-76.

Site excavation showed the presence of sod structures. Ore from local bog iron was found near the remains of the houses. Bog iron was taken from beneath the turf. A blacksmith would use this to make weapons and tools.

This site yielded a number of artifacts, including a stone lamp and bone pin. A bronze ring-headed pin was found. This type of pin was common in Viking times. It allowed one to fasten a cloak over the shoulder. This left an arm free to wield a sword or axe.

A soapstone spindle whorl was also found. This tool was used to make clothing from sheep's wool. Fleece was twisted into yarn. The sagas told of women being brought to the colonies. The presence of the whorl indicates the presence of women and livestock at L'Anse aux Meadows.

The artifacts were similar to those of former Viking settlements in Greenland. The houses also appeared similar in structure. Carbon dating of the artifacts showed them to be roughly 1000 years old. This would have dated them to the time of the Vikings.

There has been some debate as to whether L'Anse aux Meadows was the Vinland from the Norse sagas. Wild grapes have never grown that far north. Also, the Vikings would erect stones with runic symbols carved on them. These were placed in memory of those who had died. No rune-stones were found at L'Anse aux Meadows. This indicates a short-term transit site, rather than a colony. One thing we can be sure of is that L'Anse aux Meadows was an active Viking port.

Questions ?

1. What does the word *Viking* mean?

2. What was used to make the sails of Viking ships?

3. Why did longboat crews hang shields along the sides of their vessels?

4. What did the name Vinland come from?

5. How did the Vikings describe the Skraelings?

6. Why did Vikings erect rune-stones?

Things to Think About

Some believe that L'Anse aux Meadows is the site of Vinland from the Norse sagas. Do you agree? Why or why not?



The Inuit

The Labrador Inuit can be traced back to the Thule Eskimos. The Thule came to the Canadian Arctic from Alaska. They reached Labrador at about 1400 A.D. Labrador Inuit share language and culture with Inuit in other arctic regions. The Labrador Inuit language is called Inuktitut. The word *Inuit* means *people*. Some called them *Eskimos*. This was a term of contempt. It meant *eaters of raw flesh*.

Inuit Hunting

The Inuit were nomad hunters. They hunted with harpoons, spears, bows and arrows. Snares and traps were also used. There was plenty of food in Labrador at times, but this was governed by the seasons. Food was stored to allow people to survive long winters. Caribou, seal and whale meat was stored under rocks. Food was always shared among neighbours.

Seals were killed on the ice in the spring. The hunter would crawl on the ice and act like a seal. Once he was close enough, he would kill the seal with a spear.

In the summer, the Inuit would gather in large groups to fish and hunt seals. Kayaks were used to hunt seals in the summer. Bone-headed spears were fastened to lines of skin and hide. Bladders were filled with air and attached. A harpooned seal would sink if these floats were not used. Inuit built stone dams on rivers and speared arctic char. During August, they would move inland to hunt caribou.

The Inuit returned to the coast in late October and early November. Great numbers of harp seals would be offshore at this time. Baleen whales would also come to the coast to feed before land-fast ice formed.

Inuit whalers hunted the Greenland right whale. Crews would sing songs to attract whales. The Inuit would chase whales in large boats called umiaks. One big whale could support a large winter camp. Whale blubber was eaten and used to fuel soapstone lamps. Whale skin was also eaten. Baleen was used to make bird snares, drinking cups and fishing line. Greenland right whale numbers declined in the late 18th century.

The Inuit hunted ringed seals, walrus and seabirds during winter. They would look for air holes in the ice where seals would come to the surface to breathe. A piece of bone or ivory would be tied to a string and placed in the hole. When this marker moved, the hunter would drive a spear into the seal.

Inuit Technology

The Inuit used bones and caribou antlers to make tools. Flesh was scraped from caribou hides. These were made into warm clothing. Caribou sinew was used to stitch boots and clothing. Sealskin was also used to make clothing.

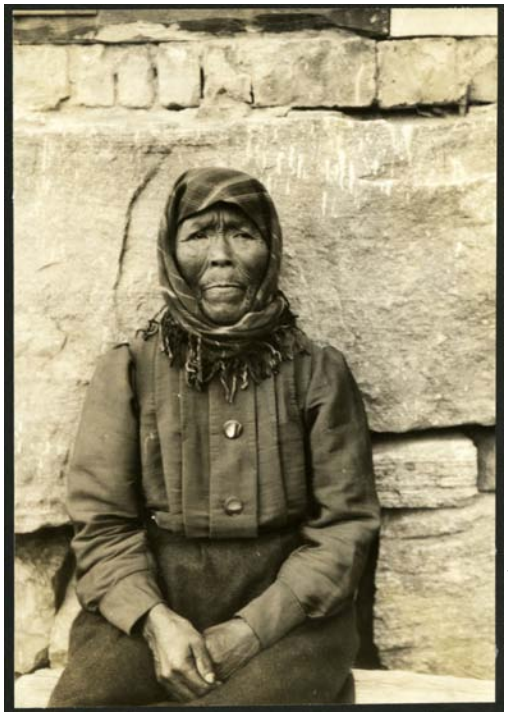
The Inuit traveled in watertight covered canoes called kayaks. These were made with sealskin. Umiaks were larger boats. Dog teams were used to pull wooden sleds called komatiks.

Inuit Society

Inuit culture has always been rich with games, song and dance. The Inuit lived in bands. The size and makeup of a band changed with the seasons, resources, work to be done and social factors. Each band would take on the name of the place where they lived. Decisions were made and disputes settled by a council of males.

Families lived in cone-shaped tents during the summer. Winter camps were small. Sod houses were partly dug into the ground. These were framed with the bones of right and bowhead whales. A large snowhouse was sometimes built for group events. This was called a kache. Visits between winter camps were frequent when there was a lot of food. Temporary snow houses were used on hunting trips.

An Inuit family would often be made up of a number of generations. Some men would have more than one wife. Inuit women had little social status. A wife was the property of her husband. A woman was valued for the work that she did around the home. Men and women took meals separately. Marriage and divorce took place with little fanfare.



PANL VA 117-22.1 – Courtesy of the Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Archives

An Inuit Woman (circa 1900)

Inuit children were named at birth. A nickname would later be given to reflect some unique trait. Infants were often named after a person who had just died. This practice was called atitsiak. Inuit children had bone and ivory toys. Girls played with dolls. Inuit parents never hit their children.

Young children would begin to learn adult skills. Girls helped around the home. Boys practiced using harpoons, bows and arrows. A boy was seen as an adult when he had proven himself as a hunter. It was common for boys not to marry until their late teens. The faces, arms or legs of girls were tattooed at puberty. Clothing and hairstyle would also change at this time. Parents sometimes preplanned the marriage of their female children.

Inuit Religion

Inuit tradition held that any animal or physical object has its own soul or inua. Gods were believed to control human access to the land and sea. Hunters credited their success to the gods. Rituals were performed to appease them. A female god, Superguksoak, controlled land animals. Her husband, Torngarsoak, controlled sea animals.

The Inuit feared death and the spirits of the newly deceased. Camps were sometimes abandoned when a death occurred. Steps were taken to prevent the spirit of a dead person from re-entering a house. Personal items and tools of the deceased were often placed in the grave. Graves were covered with rocks to protect them from animals. Charms were worn for protection. The Inuit would sometimes seek the help of a shaman. The shaman was held in high regard among Inuit.

The Inuit and Early Europeans

At around 1500 A.D., Europeans began to fish on the Strait of Belle Isle and the south coast of Labrador each summer. We know little of how the Inuit and Innu lived from the reports of these visitors. The white men dismissed both groups as “savages”. The Inuit saw whites as greedy and violent. Early contact between Inuit and whites was often hostile. The Inuit referred to outsiders as *Kablunaet.* This meant *sons of dogs*.

Some peaceful trade did occur. Each summer from 1500 - 1771, bands of Inuit would travel by boat from the north Labrador coast to the Strait of Belle Isle. They would trade with the white fishermen. Sometimes they would raid their fishing stations.

The Inuit sought iron tools and wooden boats. They would offer whale baleen, furs and seal fat in return. White traders often gave rum and trinkets to the Inuit for fur and fish. European goods were carried north to Inuit who had no contact with the whites. The Inuit of what is now Hopedale would relay the goods from the south to the north.

Some Inuit traveled with circuses in Europe and the United States. Some of these returned to their communities and brought disease.

The Moravians

The Moravians were a European Christian sect. In 1769, the Moravians obtained a grant of 40,500 hectares of land from the British Government. This was to be used as a northern Labrador reservation for Christian Inuit.

A missionary arrived in Labrador bearing gifts. The Inuit were asked to mark a document to approve handing over land to the missionaries. This was likely strange to the Inuit. Owning land was a European concept.

Boundary stones were laid. The first permanent missionaries arrived in 1771. The new mission was called Nain. This mission marked a change in the way that Inuit and whites viewed each other. A number of other missions were later set up.



The Moravian Mission at Hopedale (1913)

The Moravians worked to promote literacy for reading the Bible. Missionaries ran trade stores and cared for Inuit who were ill. Inuit families lived at mission stations from Christmas to Easter. The rest of the year was spent hunting and fishing at outlying camps.

The Inuit were slow to convert to the Christian faith. The missionaries required more than a show of interest before baptism. Five years passed before the first Inuit convert at Nain. The number of new converts began to rise quickly between 1799 and 1804. There had been great hardship during this time because game was scarce. The mission was seen as a refuge from social conflicts. Conversion offered Inuit women an increased social role and status. The appeal of Christian moral and social codes began to grow.

The missionaries wanted the Inuit to fish for cod. To the Inuit, cod fishing had always been work for women and old people. The fishing season occurred at a time of the year when caribou pelts were best for making winter clothing. Those who chose to fish would have to rely on clothing brought in from Europe. The Inuit cod fishery increased dependence on trade goods.

Large winter sod dwellings would often house about 20 people. Missionaries saw these as promoting poor health and "sinful" living. They pressed the Inuit to use single-family wooden houses. These were heated with wood. Finding and cutting wood reduced the time that the Inuit could spend sealing.

In 1926, the missionaries leased their trading rights and property to the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). The work of the HBC was focused on the fur trade. This further hampered Inuit hunting and fishing. They came to rely more on food imports. Inuit health declined as a result.

The Inuit Today

HBC stores were given over to the Newfoundland Government in 1942. The government set up an agency to make the Labrador economy more like it was before the HBC. This became the Labrador Services Division. Government programs were offered for Inuit and Innu. After confederation, the federal government took responsibility for the Labrador Inuit.

In the late 1950's, Nutak and Hebron were closed. These were the two most northern Inuit towns. The high cost of services was cited. The Inuit were not consulted. Residents were moved. This caused an array of social problems.

For today's Inuit, the ancient exists along with the modern. Inuit hunters still hunt caribou. They now use snowmobiles instead of dogsleds. The igloo still provides a temporary shelter. A wood saw is now more likely to be used than a bone snow knife.

In the summer, Inuit families travel by boat to fishing camps on islands or bays. Arctic char and salmon are netted. The Inuit hunt seals, dolphins, seabirds and caribou. They now stay in canvas tents heated with metal woodstoves.

Community councils were formed in all Inuit communities in the 1970's. These partnered in projects with other levels of government. The councils seek to maintain and enhance the Inuit way of life. They strive to reduce harmful effects of change. The councils also seek a greater say for the Inuit in how their culture evolves.

The Labrador Inuit Association (LIA) was formed in 1973. In May 2004, LIA members approved the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement. The land claim settlement area is called Nunatsiavut. The word *Nunatsiavut* means *our beautiful land*. The Nunatsiavut constitution was adopted in December 2005. The Nunatsiavut Government has the power to pass and enforce laws. They can also raise and spend Inuit public money.

Questions ?

1. What does the word *Inuit* mean?

2. Where did the Inuit store caribou, seal and whale meat?

3. How did Inuit hunters get close enough to seals to kill them with spears?

4. What did the Inuit use to pull their komatiks?

5. Who made decisions and settled disputes in Inuit society?

6. When was an Inuit boy seen as an adult?

7. Why would the Inuit have found it strange to be asked to sign over land to missionaries?

8. Why did the Moravians promote literacy?

9. Why did the Moravians not approve of the large winter sod dwellings used by the Inuit?

10. How did the use of food imports affect the Inuit?

Things to Think About

1. Food was always shared among neighbours in Inuit society. Why do you think this was necessary? Would you expect to see more or less of this in modern times? Discuss.

2. White men sometimes dismissed Inuit as “savages”. The Inuit saw whites as greedy and violent.

   People sometimes have a negative view of those who are different. Why do you think this occurs? Can you think of solutions?



The Innu

The Innu are a First Nations people found in northeast Quebec and Labrador. The word "Innu" means "human being". The Innu language is called "Innu-aimun." The Innu can be traced back 1200 years to the Point Revenge people. Archaeological links from before this time are scarce.

The northern Innu were called Naskapi. The southern branch were called Montagnais. The Montagnais (mountaineers) lived near the south coast of Labrador. The Naskapi lived in the barrens to the north. The Naskapi called themselves *Nonenot*. This term means “true men”.

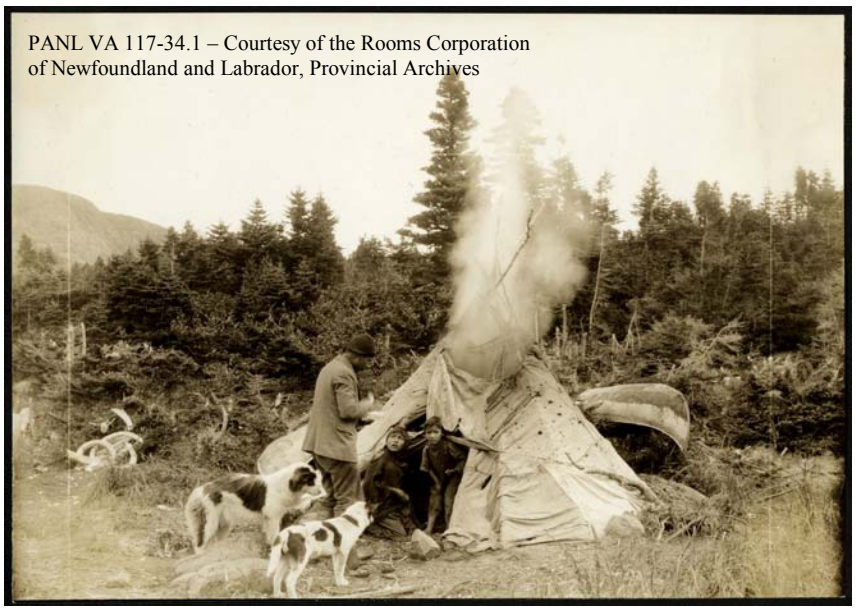
The Innu are Cree in language and culture. The Cree live in the northern forests. They can be found from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains. The Cree are part of the Algonquian language family.

The Innu were never farmers. Early Innu were nomad hunters. They were known for taking long journeys. This was more so when food was scarce. Most of their time was spent inland. The Innu hunted caribou, beaver, bears and wild birds. They fished in rivers and lakes. The Innu gathered wild berries and eggs on the coast in summer.



An Innu Summer Camp on Grand Lake (circa 1900)

Innu technology was geared to movement and sub-arctic survival. They traveled by birch bark canoes, snowshoes and sleds. Wood, stone, bone and hide were all used. Buckets were made of birch or spruce bark. Innu dwellings were covered with birch bark or hide. The mitshuap was a cone-shaped tent.



Innu at Davis Inlet (circa 1900)

Innu medicines were made from wild plants. Sweat baths were also used. A small tent was set up. The patient went inside. Hot stones were placed in the tent. Water was poured on the stones. The patient was sometimes rolled in snow or dipped in a cold lake after steaming.

The Innu and the Caribou

The Innu depend on the caribou. These have been hunted for food, clothing and shelter. Caribou skin was sometimes used to cover canoes. In the past, the Innu would gather where large numbers of caribou came together. At other times, they spread out in small bands. A hunter's status was based on success in the hunt and gifts of meat to others.

In winter, caribou were driven into snowbanks and speared. In summer, they were speared while crossing streams or lakes. Meat not eaten on the spot would be cut into strips. This would be dried in the sun. Dried meat was stored on a scaffold.

Sinews from the backs and legs of caribou were used as thread by Innu women. Needles were likely made from caribou horn fragments.

The Innu would hunt in small bands or family groups. Children would be sent ahead to break the trail. Those who performed well would be chosen as scouts and runners for the tribe. Innu boys could join the council of men after killing a caribou or bear.

Women performed most of the work in an Innu camp. They set up tents, cut wood, built fires, prepared meals, and carried water. Young girls helped their mothers.

Innu Religion

Roman Catholic missionaries converted many Innu. Traditional Innu religion still remains. It reflects a kinship with animals. Animals are seen as more than just prey. Like themselves, animals are believed to have their own spirits.

The Innu seek to commune with spirits. Spirits are believed to control animals and nature. Contact with spirits comes through dreams and singing with drums. There is a practice in which a tent is shaken. A shaman then enters the tent and talks with spirits. Marks on a charred shoulder blade are also read.

The Innu hunt for only what they need. Little is wasted. The Innu believe that animals give themselves up to be hunted. This will occur as long as proper rituals are carried out after hunting. The makushan is a ritual feast of caribou fat and bone marrow. It is held after the hunt. Parts of the animal that cannot be eaten are still sacred. Bones are hung for display or disposed of with care.

The Innu and the Inuit

Labrador oral tradition suggests that the Innu and the Inuit were always at war. Today it is believed that the Innu were alone on the Labrador coast until about 1300 AD. The Thule Inuit began to arrive from the north. The Inuit moved south during the 17th and 18th centuries. This pushed the Innu back and denied them access to the coast. Some raiding between the two groups was likely. Yet, there is no evidence of full-scale warfare. Neither group has a tradition of war.

Any conflict between the Innu and Inuit had ended by the mid-19th century. A trading post was built in 1913 for the Innu at Voisey's Bay. Both Innu and Inuit used this post. There was no open conflict. Today, both groups share rights to parts of the Labrador coast.

The Innu and the White Man

The Innu had little contact with early Europeans. They began one of the first known game preserves in the early 17th century. Its purpose was to keep white men and other Indians from their lands.

The Innu visited Basque fishermen at their stations in southern Labrador. These summer trips to the coast became more frequent. Many of these coastal meeting places became year-round Innu villages in the 20th century.

The Innu were not warlike. There were clashes with Inuit, Iroquois and early Europeans. The Innu aided the French in wars with the British. This put them in contact with Christian missionaries.

European trading posts appeared in Labrador in the mid 1700's. There was demand for fox, beaver, marten and mink furs. The Innu were forced to choose between trapping furs for trade and hunting for food. When the hunter tended trap lines, his family lived mainly on flour and tea. Some trappers starved when furs were scarce. Many trading posts later closed. For most Innu, trapping remained a sideline to hunting.

The use of rifles caused some game animals to become scarce. Many Innu starved as caribou herds declined in the early 20th century. The use of guns also reduced the need for large teams of caribou hunters.

The Innu and Modern Times

Before the settling of the Quebec/Labrador boundary dispute in 1927, Newfoundland leaders saw the Innu as "Canadian Indians". The 1927 border cut through the heart of Innu lands. The Innu were allowed to move freely between bands, as long as there were links of kinship. Dividing Innu lands caused problems with provincial game laws. It also hindered land claims.

The 1950's saw increased industry in Labrador. This did little good for the Innu. Few found jobs in the mines. Hunting and trapping lands were lost with the Churchill Falls Hydro project. Many Innu lost hunting gear in the flooding.

In the 1960's, the Newfoundland government settled the Innu at Sheshatshit and Davis Inlet. They were one of the last First Nations groups in Canada to be permanently settled. Each community had its own schools and elected band councils. Band council chiefs deal with provincial and federal governments.

Growing Innu dependence on government kept them near their villages. This was harmful to their society and culture. Adults could no longer make a living by hunting and trapping. Schools kept children from their parents. Children were no longer taught hunting as a way of life. Innu language and culture were threatened.

Growing social problems brought about Innu political movements. The Naskapi Montagnais Innu Association in Labrador was formed in the 1970's. This later became the Innu Nation. The Innu Nation worked to improve life in the villages and help people return to hunting and trapping.

The Innu have tried to maintain their lifestyle by hunting a number of months per year. This has not been easy. Some Innu leave the village for long periods in the winter. Aircraft, snowmobiles and two-way radios are now used.

The Innu are involved in running their schools. Improved housing programs are ongoing. Substance abuse programs have been put into place.

In 2003, the community of Natuashish was built. This was part of the Mushuau Innu Relocation Agreement (MIRA). The Innu from Davis Inlet moved to Natuashish. This was done to address social problems.

Today, there are two Innu First Nations in Labrador - The Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation and the Mushuau Innu First Nation in Natuashish. Innu culture is alive and well. Books have been published in the Innu language. Innu music artists have seen a great deal of success.

Questions ?

1. What is the meaning of the word "Innu"?

2. How did the Innu use caribou?

3. How did an Innu hunter gain status?

4. How did Innu children take part in hunting?

5. What did Innu boys have to do to join the council of men?

6. How are animals viewed in traditional Innu religion?

7. Why did the Innu set up game preserves in the 17th century?

8. How did rifles impact Innu hunting?

9. How did the 1927 Quebec/Labrador boundary impact the Innu?

10. How did the Churchill Falls Hydro project affect the Innu?

Things to Think About

Discuss some of the risks of the trapping lifestyle that were faced by the Innu. Do people today have more freedom to choose their work? Why or why not?



The Mi'kmaq

The Mi'kmaq are Algonquian in language and culture. There were 4000 of them in the Maritimes and Gaspé Bay region when the Europeans arrived. The Mi'kmaq called themselves *Einu.* This term means *people*. The Newfoundland Mi'kmaq are known as Taqamkukewa'q. This term means *people of the land across the water*. The Newfoundland Mi'kmaq lived far from other natives. This helped preserve lifestyle and culture.

The Mi'kmaq in Newfoundland

It is not certain when the Mi'kmaq first came to Newfoundland. They have been there for at least two hundred years. Mi'kmaq oral tradition holds that they were living in Newfoundland before European contact.

There have been a number of theories as to why the Mi'kmaq came to Newfoundland. Poor hunting during the early fur trade caused game on the mainland to become scarce. There was good hunting and fishing in Newfoundland. The Mi'kmaq sided with the French in early conflicts with the English. This made for poor relations when the English settled in Nova Scotia.

Some believe that the French brought the Mi'kmaq to Newfoundland in the 16th and 17th centuries. It was said that they were paid a bounty for each Beothuk killed. There is no evidence to support this claim. Oral tradition has it that the Mi'kmaq once lived in peace with the Beothuk. When conflict arose, the Mi'kmaq won out. They had learned the use of guns from the French.

Mi'kmaq Life

The Mi'kmaq were nomad hunters, fishers and food gatherers. They hunted in small family groups. The Mi'kmaq often fished at night for eels and salmon. Two men would go out in a canoe. A torch would be lit and fastened to the bow. One man would steer from the stern. The other would stand over the light with a spear. Fish would come to the light and be speared. Wild birds were also hunted this way. The Mi'kmaq were also expert trappers.

Mi'kmaq canoes were made of birch bark. These were light, seaworthy and easy to repair. The Mi'kmaq used a number of canoe types. Some were made for rivers and lakes. Sea canoes were larger. These could be used to travel from Nova Scotia to the Magdalen Islands or Newfoundland.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Mi'kmaq traders began to use small European sailing boats (shallops or chaloupes). They served as middlemen in the trade of goods for furs. Mi'kmaq trade networks ran from the Strait of Belle Isle to what is now the coast of Massachusetts.

Mi'kmaq Culture

The sun was special to the Mi'kmaq. They saw the natural world as one with the spiritual. Like people, animals, the sun, rivers or rocks could have spirits. These could take the form of a person. The Mi'kmaq believed that the universe was filled with a spirit called *mntu* or *manitou*.

The Mi'kmaq had *shamans* called *puoin.* These had the power to cure or cause illness. The *puoin* were relied on to relate the spiritual world to the people. Christian missionaries tried to discredit their work. Despite this, many old beliefs and practices persist today. There has been some loss of Mi'kmaq language. The Catholic Church frowned on its use. The marriage of Mi'kmaq men to white women impaired the teaching of language during child rearing.

The Mi'kmaq Today

There are a number of regions in Newfoundland with people of Mi'kmaq ancestry. Many of them are at Conne River, Bay d'Espoir, on the island's south coast.

The Conne River Mi'kmaq elected a band council in 1972. In 1973, the Federation of Newfoundland Indians was formed. This body was used to promote Federal recognition of Newfoundland Mi'kmaq. In 1984, the Conne River Mi'kmaq were recognized as status Indians. In 1987 Conne River gained Indian Reserve status. Aquaculture, outfitting and logging flourish at Conne River.

Questions ?

1. The Newfoundland Mi'kmaq are known as Taqamkukewa'q. What is the meaning of this term?

2. What put the Mi'kmaq at odds with the English?

3. How did Mi'kmaq hunters attract fish and birds to hunt at night?

4. How did the Mi'kmaq view the natural world?

5. What factors worked to reduce the use of the Mi'kmaq language?

The Métis

The term *Métis* means mixed. It is used to describe people with both European and aboriginal ancestry. In the early 19th century, British trading companies brought men from Europe to work in Labrador. Some of them settled in Labrador. Many of these men had trouble finding wives. There were many more men than women along the southeast coast of Labrador. Few of the women were white. Many of these men married Inuit women. Today's Métis trace their roots to these unions.

Métis life centred on the seasons. Inuit and European practices and beliefs were maintained. Summers were spent hunting water birds and seals. Salmon and cod were caught from stations on the coast. Winters were spent in bays and coves. During winter, the Métis trapped and hunted.

Métis social life also revolved around the seasons. Families often lived alone during winter. This made it hard for them to keep in touch with other families. Social contact with other Métis and Newfoundland fishermen was more common in the summer.

The fur trade flourished in the early 20th century. Métis trappers moved inland. They trapped along a number of rivers that empty into Sandwich Bay and along what is now the Churchill River. Trappers worked alone. Their wives stayed home and cared for their families. The Great Depression weakened the fur trade. This made the tough lives of trappers even tougher.

The Newfoundland government closed many small Métis towns in the 1960s. People were moved to larger, more central communities. These were thought by the government to offer more opportunity.

The Labrador Métis Association was formed in 1985. It represented Métis living south of lands claimed by the Labrador Inuit. The Labrador Métis Association changed its name to the Labrador Métis Nation in 1998. Staying true to their roots, today's Métis remain closely tied to both land and sea.

Questions ?

1. What is the meaning of the word *Métis*?

2. Why was it hard for European men in 19th century Labrador to find wives?

3. How did the Métis support themselves during winter?

4. Describe Métis social life during winter.

The Early Newfoundland and Labrador Fishery

In late 15th century Europe, a new food source was needed to feed the growing population. The Newfoundland and Labrador fishery was started to address this need. Throughout much of its history, the fishery has been based solely on the Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*). These were found in great numbers along the coast. The Labrador Current wells up on the Labrador Banks and the Grand Banks. This current is rich in plankton and is ideal to support marine life.

Early Fish Processing

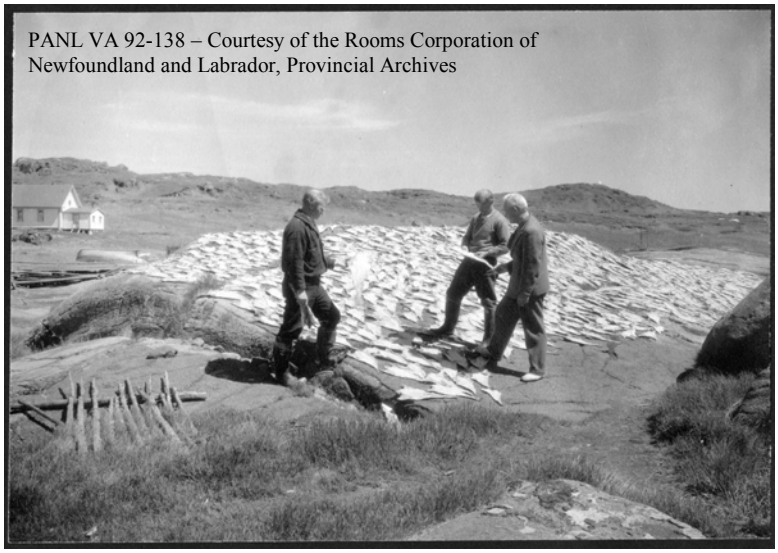
For hundreds of years, cod was caught from open boats using baited hooks. It was split, salted and dried in the sun. Salt cod was rich in protein, lightweight, well preserved and suited for long distance transport.

Cod was brought ashore and cured on covered platforms called *stages*. Each stage had a table where fish was cut, gutted and split. The waste was thrown into the sea through the *trunk-hole* in the stage. The split fish was placed in a barrel. When filled, the barrel was carried to the salter.

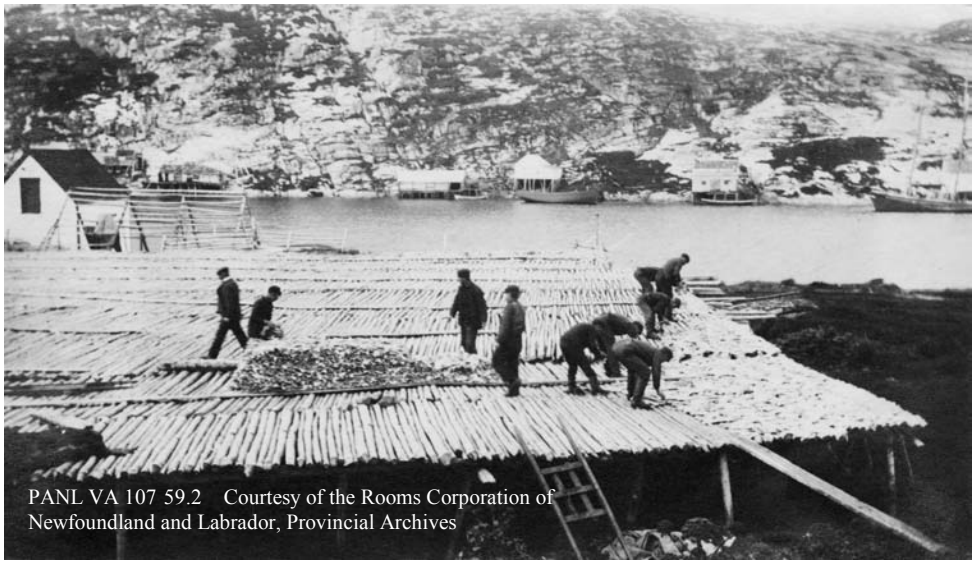
The success or failure of a fishing season was tied to proper salting. This was a process that required skill. Fish was placed in layers on one side of the stage. Salt was spread on the fish by hand. Size and thickness were taken into account. Too much salt would leave the meat dark, moist and tending to break into pieces. Too little salt would allow the fish to spoil quickly.

The fish was left in salt for five or six days. It was then washed in large troughs of seawater. Each fish was taken out of the trough and cleaned with a wool cloth. It was then laid on the stage floor to drain.

After a day or two, the fish was laid out to dry on a wooden structure called a flake. The fish required a free flow of air for about six weeks to dry. A single drop of rain could spoil the lot. Fish could also be laid out on boughs or a beach. Using the beach was a bit more risky. The fish could burn if the rocks on the beach became too hot from the sun.



Men Drying Salt Cod on the Rocks – Red Bay, Labrador



Drying Cod on the Flakes – Labrador (1912)

For a longer fishing voyage, the fish would be caught and gutted to avoid spoilage. If fish had to be kept on a vessel for a long time, *green fish* was made. This fish was cleaned, split, heavily salted and stored in layers. The fish was later washed, drained and dried in port.

The Labrador fishery required a lot more salt for curing. In this case, fish was dried in the cold. The final product was softer than that of the Newfoundland fishery. This product was preferred in some parts of southern Europe.

The Fishery as Trade

The Newfoundland and Labrador fishery was one of the main oversea trades for Britain between 1550 and 1800. In 1784, it was said to be second only to the West Indies as a western source of wealth for Britain. Fish was exchanged for Spanish gold and products from southern Europe. In times of war, seamen were drawn into the Royal Navy from the Newfoundland fishery.

The Newfoundland fishery was a major employer for British shippers and seamen. Vessels required outfitting. Fishermen required clothing, food and supplies. Fishing gear had to be produced.

The benefits of the Newfoundland and Labrador fishery seemed to depend on its migratory nature. Settlement would reduce the need for ships and seamen from England. This would reduce the supply of men for the navy. Settlers would likely buy supplies from America. Local merchant profits would stay in Newfoundland or America. Settlement in Newfoundland was frowned on for many years by the British government.

There was little or no market for Newfoundland cod in England. This trade relied on the decline of fisheries in Spain and Portugal. These had suffered in the late 1500's from attacks on shipping and trade. English privateers played a role in these attacks. In the 1600's, the British government destroyed the Spanish and Portuguese fisheries off Newfoundland. This allowed them to control cod markets in Spain, Portugal and Italy. The Newfoundland fishery flourished and led to English and Irish settlement.

The Fishery Under Threat

In the 1600's, the English suffered attacks by the *Sallee Rovers*. These Islamic pirate seamen came from all nations. The Sallee Rovers sailed out of North Africa. Captured seamen were given a choice. They could be killed. They could convert to Islam and join the rovers. They could also be kept as slaves. Families of the captured would have to raise money to pay a ransom. As late as 1680, West England church records showed money being raised to purchase freedom for Newfoundland fishermen captured by the Sallee Rovers.

In 1689, war broke out between England and France. The English government banned fishing ships from sailing to Newfoundland. Crews were now needed by the navy. The English fishery in Newfoundland survived only through the work of 1000-2000 settlers who remained to fish the coast. This coast, from Trepassey in the south to Bonavista Bay in the north, became known as the *English Shore*. The French captured most of the island of Newfoundland. Many English settlers were sent back to England. The English later took back Newfoundland in 1698.

The Newfoundland fishery was challenged again in 1702. This time, England went to war with both France and Spain. The French destroyed settlements on the English Shore between 1702 and 1710. St. John's was captured twice. The British won the war in 1713. This gave them sole control of Newfoundland. The French were expelled from the south coast of the island. They were given some rights to the Newfoundland coast from

Cape Bonavista to Pointe Riche in the northwest. This stretch of coast became known as the *French Shore*.

The early 1700's saw failure in the inshore fishery. In 1715, a Devonshire ship owner sent an open fishing boat to the Grand Banks. The Bank fishery saw steady growth into the late 1700's. From 1765 - 1775, over 200 bankers sailed each year from West Country ports. These worked out of St. John's and harbours as far as St. Mary's.

In the 1700's, a downturn in the fishery made it harder to recruit men from the West Country. Many feared not earning enough to pay for their return home. Ireland suffered a potato famine. Irish migrants became a new source of labour for the fishery.

The Newfoundland fishery felt the effects of the American Revolution in the late 1700's. Settlers were cut off from supplies of bread and flour. The war also closed foreign markets to fish. Fishermen were captured at sea or forced to serve in the Royal Navy. Many boat keepers lost their fishing gear and were stranded in Newfoundland. Many of these chose to stay and become settlers.

England went to war with France again from 1793 to 1815. This caused another collapse of the Newfoundland migratory fishery. By 1800, the permanent population of Newfoundland was large enough to catch and cure enough fish to meet market demand.

Questions ?

1. Why is the Labrador Current ideal to support marine life?

2. Why was salt cod such an ideal food source?

3. What would happen to fish when it was not properly salted?

4. Why was drying fish on the beach more risky than drying it on stages?

5. What was *green fish?*

6. Why was salt fish from Labrador preferred in some parts of southern Europe?

7. Why was settlement in Newfoundland frowned on for many years by the British government?

8. What did the families of seamen captured by the Sallee Rovers have to do to get them back?

9. How did the American Revolution affect the Newfoundland fishery?

Things to Think About

1. European settlement in Newfoundland and Labrador depended on the fishery. How great a role does the fishery play in the province today? Do you expect it to change in the future? Discuss.

2. The Newfoundland and Labrador fishery has suffered a number of downturns since the 15th century. What are the risks to a community that is based on a single resource or industry? Are there things that can be done to offset this risk? Discuss.



Pirates

A pirate is defined as someone who attacks and steals from ships. A privateer is sponsored by a government to attack ships of another nation. American privateers were active in Newfoundland waters during the War of Independence and the War of 1812.

Pirates are known to have sailed off Newfoundland since the 1500's. Ships going to Europe from the fishery were attacked and their cargoes stolen.

Pirates found crews on the Newfoundland and Labrador fishing banks. Fishermen could often be tempted to leave their lives of poverty and hardship. Pirates who were caught could expect to be tried and executed. Their corpses would be hung in public as a warning to others. Some bought pardons for their crimes. Some retired wealthy and respectable.

The Cobhams

Eric Cobham was born in 1715 in Poole, England. As a boy, he worked as a smuggler between England and France. After serving a prison sentence, Eric worked as a clerk at an inn. He

stole a bag of gold from a guest. The innkeeper was later hanged for the crime.

Eric used his money to buy a small ship with fourteen guns. He set out to become a pirate. Eric married Maria Lindsay and she joined him in his crimes. Maria always wore the naval uniform of a dead British seaman. She is said to have poisoned the crew of one ship. Others were sewn into sacks and thrown into the sea alive. Maria once tied the captain and two mates of a captured ship to a windlass. She then used the men for target practice.

The Cobhams are believed to have sailed out of Sandy Point, St. George's Bay. For twenty years, they preyed on shipping along the St. Lawrence routes. The Cobhams mostly stole furs. These were sold for high prices on the black market. Little was known of the Cobhams. Captured crews were killed and their ships scuttled. Owners of lost ships assumed their vessels had been lost in storms.

In 1760, Eric retired to an estate in France. He lived out the last twenty years of his life among the gentry. Eric served as a judge during this time.

Though retired, Eric was still a pirate at heart. While sailing with servants in the English Channel, he found a brig that was not moving. There was too little wind for its sails. The ship was destined for England from the West Indies. Eric and his servants captured the ship. The crew were murdered and dumped into the sea. The ship and its cargo were sent to France to be sold.

Maria went insane during her time in France. She poisoned herself and died in 1770. Eric died of natural causes in 1780. Before dying, he confessed his crimes to a priest. Eric asked that the story of his life be published after his death. Many copies of this book were later purchased by his family and destroyed.

The Truck System

The truck system was a practice once used by merchants in Newfoundland and Labrador. It dates back to the early days of settlement. Merchants would provide fishermen with goods and fishing gear on credit. The value of a fisherman's catch would later be used to pay down the debt. Credit notes would be issued if the value of a fisherman's catch was more than the amount of debt incurred.

Higher prices were charged for items advanced on credit. This was to cover a merchant's risk of loss if debtors were not able to pay. The value of a season's catch would often be set quite low due to markets and the need for profit. The assigned value of the catch would often fall short of the cost of the advanced goods. Fishermen would fall further into debt as they tried to provide for their families through winter. The result was a constant cycle of poverty.

The truck system was still in use in the 1930's. A 1937 inquiry into the fishery noted that many fishermen were still using credit. Some even did so when they had enough cash on hand. It was said that buyers would be more likely to purchase fish from those who owed them money.

Labour and cooperative movements opposed the truck system. Governments discouraged it through new laws. The increased use of cash also helped put an end to the truck system.

Questions

1. What happened if the value of a fisherman's catch was more than the amount of debt incurred?

2. What factors acted to lower the assigned value of a season's catch?

3. Why did some fishermen still use credit when they had enough cash on hand?

4. What factors helped to put an end to the truck system?

Things to Think About

1. Who do you feel gained most from the truck system? Why?

2. Governments discouraged the truck system through new laws. Do you feel that governments should become involved when it appears that people are being exploited? Discuss.

3. The truck system left many families in a constant cycle of poverty. Do people in modern society still find themselves trapped in long-term poverty? If yes, what do you see as root causes?



Sir Wilfred Grenfell

Dr. Wilfred Grenfell was a graduate of the London Hospital Medical College. At one time, he had wanted to be a preacher. Grenfell became involved with the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. The mission provided services while handing out Bibles and religious tracts.

By the 1800's, the only medical service in Labrador was a poorly equipped ship sent from St. John's to sail the Labrador coast. In 1892, the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen sent Dr. Grenfell on a hospital ship to the Labrador coast. He was shocked by the poverty and disease among the people.

Dr. Grenfell went back to England to raise funds for a mission. He returned to Labrador in 1893 with two nurses and two doctors. Hospitals were set up in Battle Harbour and Indian Harbour. Groups in Canada, Britain, the United States and Newfoundland worked to support Grenfell's mission.

The first hospital at St. Anthony was a single room in a settler's house. Dr. Grenfell and the local men cut wood to make a framework for a cottage hospital. This became the headquarters for the Grenfell Mission.



PANL VA 92-140 – Courtesy of the Rooms Corporation of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Archives

Dr Grenfell with a Patient at Red Bay, Labrador

A Brush With Death

Dr. Grenfell's work came with some danger. One day, he was crossing a frozen bay with a dog team. The ice began to break up under them. Grenfell and the dogs made it onto an ice pan that was moving out of the bay.

To keep from freezing, Dr. Grenfell killed three of the dogs. He then wrapped himself in the skins of the dogs. Grenfell spent the night huddled with the other dogs to survive the cold.

In the morning, Dr. Grenfell made up a pole by lashing the leg bones of the dead dogs. He fastened his shirt to the pole as a flag. Grenfell waved this flag to get attention. The flag was seen and Grenfell was rescued.

Dr. Grenfell the Man

The people's social welfare was always a prime concern for Dr. Grenfell. Schools and orphanages were built. Grenfell helped fishermen start cooperatives to get fair prices for their catch. Crafts such as carving and mat making were also encouraged.

Dr. Grenfell made some enemies. He saw church-run education as backward and wasteful. This put Grenfell at odds with the churches.

Dr. Grenfell condemned the credit system used in the fishery. Merchants and government in St. John's saw him as wanting too much change too quickly. St. John's merchants saw his giving clothes to the needy as a threat to their business.

Dr. Grenfell sailed the coast of Labrador to meet the people's needs. This gave him great knowledge of the sea. Grenfell was certified as a master mariner. King George V made him a knight in 1923.

The International Grenfell Association

The International Grenfell Association (IGA) was set up in 1914 for the people of northern Newfoundland and Labrador. The IGA was also tasked with governing the groups that raised funds and recruited for it.

The Grenfell health services were run by the IGA until 1981. The Grenfell Regional Health Services Board was set up. It was made up of people from Newfoundland and Labrador. The people were given a say in their own health care. The IGA remained to support the work of the new board.

Questions ?

1. Describe medical services in Labrador before Grenfell arrived.

2. Where was the headquarters for the Grenfell Mission?

3. Why did Grenfell help fishermen start cooperatives?

4. What was Grenfell's view of church-run education?

5. How did merchants and government view Grenfell?

World War I

World War I began in August 1914. The closest thing to a military force at the time in Newfoundland was a branch of the Royal Naval Reserve, the St. John's Rifle Club and four church boys' cadet corps. There were also branches of the Legion of Frontiersman. These were made up of veterans and men with woods and sea experience. It was decided that Newfoundland would support the British war effort by raising land and sea forces. The Newfoundland Regiment and naval reserve were expanded.

The Newfoundland Regiment fought the Turks in Gallipoli. On July 1st, 1916, the regiment advanced near Beaumont Hamel in France. The ground was pitted with shell craters and strewn with barbed wire. The Germans had trained their guns on this area. Of the 800 men sent into battle, 700 were killed, wounded or listed as missing. Many losses followed in October.

The number of new recruits could not keep pace with the losses. At that rate, it was feared that the Royal Newfoundland Regiment would cease to exist. In St. John's, it was felt that the honour of the country was at stake. There was less support for the war in the outports. The fishery was healthy and required a supply of healthy young men. Poor recruiting also hampered the outport war effort. Newfoundlanders remained very patriotic. Great fundraising drives were held in aid of those at the front.



Soldiers Leaving St. John's for the War - 1916

The idea of conscription was later raised in Newfoundland. This produced heated debate. The Military Service Act was passed in 1918. It required single men from 19-25 years to register or apply to be exempt. The threat of conscription was enough to compel many to enlist. Enough came forward to meet recruiting targets. None of the men who registered were ever required to report for duty.

People in Newfoundland were divided over the process used to choose officers. It was believed that St. John's men were chosen above outport men; Protestants over Catholics; wealthy over working class. Social standing was seen as having more weight than experience in battle.

World War I brought booming trade to Newfoundland. Imports more than doubled in value. Exports soared. A sharp rise in the price of cod came with record catches. Newfoundlanders seemed to take pride in the role that they had played in the war.

In spite of the boom, Newfoundland suffered a shortage of cash after the war. Government revenues did jump during the war. Increased government cash flow was grossly outstripped by a rise in public debt. The cost of the war continued long after it ended. Pensions and interest on war loans had to be honoured.

Nearly 4000 Newfoundlanders were killed or wounded in the First World War. After the war, Newfoundland bought 100 acres of land at Beaumont Hamel. This was done in memory of those who had died there. A bronze caribou statue was built in the Newfoundland Park. The caribou is a symbol of the Royal Newfoundland Regiment.

Questions ?

1. Why was it feared that the Royal Newfoundland Regiment would cease to exist?

2. Why was there less support for the war in the outports?

3. Why was the process of choosing Newfoundland military officers seen by many as unfair?

4. How did World War I affect trade in Newfoundland?

5. Why did the cost of the war continue in Newfoundland long after the war had ended?

6. What is the meaning of the bronze caribou statue built in the Newfoundland Park at Beaumont Hamel?

Things to Think About

People in Newfoundland were divided over the process used to choose officers. It was believed that St. John's men were chosen above outport men; Protestants over Catholics; wealthy over working class. Social standing was seen as having more weight than experience in battle. Do you feel that social standing still plays a role in decisions that are made today? Why or why not?



The Gas Mask

The Germans first attacked Newfoundland soldiers with gas in 1917. Medical officer, Lieutanant-Colonel Cluny MacPherson of St. John's invented the gas mask. It was a helmet made of fabric treated with chemicals. A tube was used for breathing out. These masks protected against chlorine gas that killed or injured when inhaled. They gave some protection from mustard gas, which burned on contact. The entire British army was soon equipped with gas masks.

The Women's Suffrage Movement

The term "suffrage" refers to the right to vote in political elections. In March 1891, fifty St. John's women donned white ribbons. The ribbons were symbols of purity. These women marched to the Colonial Building. They marched to ask Government for the right to vote in local elections.

There was a women's suffrage movement in Newfoundland in the 1920's. Many of its leaders were well-known St. John's women. About a quarter of the leaders were born outside Newfoundland. Many of the Newfoundland-born leaders had traveled abroad. Many members were active in church and community. Some were professionals such as teachers and nurses. Mothers and daughters often worked together in the movement. The Newfoundland suffrage movement forged worldwide links with other groups.

The suffragists maintained that work done by women in the home was a benefit to all society. Some women were wage earners. They needed the right to vote to gain equal pay for equal work.

In 1920, the suffragists issued a petition. It affirmed the work of women in the home. The petition also stated that women should be equal partners in marriage. Women were not turning their backs on work in the home. They were seeking to be more involved in public affairs such as health, education and welfare. The petition referred to the work of women in the home, factories, offices, shops and the fishery. During the next five years, 20,000 women signed their names.

The suffragists used newspaper articles, letters to the editor, public polling and ads on movie picture screens. They were not able to get the laws that they wanted passed in 1921. The campaign went on quietly for the next few years.

In March 1925, women's suffrage was voted on in the Newfoundland legislature. It passed unanimously. Women over 25 were granted the right to vote and run for office. Men were allowed to vote at 21 years. The 1928 election saw a 90% turnout of eligible female voters.

Questions ?

1. What does the term "suffrage" mean?

2. What was the meaning of the white ribbons worn by St. John's women?

3. How did suffragists view the work of women in the home?

4. Why was the right to vote important to the suffragists?

5. How did the suffragists get their message out?

Things to Think About

1. Suffragists maintained that work done by women in the home was a benefit to all society. Do you feel that this kind of work is valued by society today? Why or why not?

2. Suffragists worked to give women a greater role in society. Do you feel that women are treated as equal partners in society today? Why or why not?



World War II

In September 1939, Britain declared war on Germany. This brought Newfoundland into the Second World War. The war in Europe began with a string of quick victories for Germany. It was feared that Britain would be invaded. A British defeat would allow Newfoundland to be used as a base against the rest of North America.

The first thing to do was to prepare the defence. The Newfoundland Militia was raised to protect Bell Island and key points along the coast. It was a full-time active service. The Newfoundland Militia was renamed the Newfoundland Regiment in 1943. This was later placed under Canadian command.

In the First World War, Newfoundland raised troops to send overseas. This was costly in terms of men and money. Newfoundland soldiers in the Second World War served in British land, sea and air units. Conscription was not used.

Newfoundlanders served with Canadian and other Allied forces. The Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit cut timber in Scotland. Newfoundland seamen volunteered to man British merchant vessels. This was very dangerous because of the German u-boat threat.

Radio, radar, loran navigation, seaplane and artillery sites were scattered throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Air bases at Gander, Torbay and Goose Bay were used to protect convoys at sea. Gander and Goose Bay were also used to ferry new military planes from North America to Europe.

In 1940, a lend-lease agreement was made between Britain and the United States. This gave the United States leases to a number of bases for 99-years. Lend-lease gave the United States an army base near St. John's, an airbase at Stephenville, and an army/naval base at Argentia. Britain received 50 old destroyers and other military equipment.

In 1942, a Canadian naval base was built in St. John's. This became the main western base for Allied convoy escort ships. Canada built air bases at Torbay and Goose Bay.

Canadian troops were sent to defend the Gander airbase and the Botwood seaplane base. Newfoundland and Canada maintained a series of coastal defence guns.

The Atlantic Conference

In August 1941, the first meeting between allied leaders took place at sea off Argentia. United States President Roosevelt met with British Prime Minister Churchill. The United States had not yet entered the war. President Roosevelt pledged further aid to the British. The Atlantic Charter was proclaimed. It set down the shared world goals of Britain and the United States.

The War Hits Home

In 1942, there were two u-boat attacks near Bell Island in Conception Bay. Two ships were destroyed at anchor. Two ships were destroyed while sailing as part of a convoy. There was a loss of 69 lives. A u-boat sank the *Caribou* that same year. It had been sailing as a ferry between Port aux Basques and Canada. This came with a loss of 137 passengers and crew.

The Impact of the War on Newfoundland

World War II brought millions of dollars to Newfoundland. Foreign servicemen had money to spend. Newfoundlanders seemed to get along well with these servicemen. Americans were seen as wealthy and kind. American culture was shared through radio and recreation events.

Nearly 20,000 Newfoundlanders were employed building bases. Men were needed to work on the docks. There was increased demand for fishermen, miners and loggers.

Government revenues jumped to record levels during the war. Spending on social services increased by millions of dollars. Roads, housing, hospitals and recreation facilities were built. Health care was improved. All children 7-14 years old were required to attend school.

A Labour Relations Office was set up to govern wages, hours, working conditions and workforce issues. Rent and price controls were imposed. The Newfoundland Fisheries Board was set up to keep the price of fish high and stable. An act was passed in 1944 to prevent the payment of wages in forms other than cash.

Trade patterns were changed by the war. Newfoundland trade with Canada increased. Trade with Britain decreased.

The Knights of Columbus Fire

On December 12th 1942, *Uncle Tim's Barn Dance* was broadcast by radio from the Knights of Columbus Canadian Army Huts. This was a recreation centre for servicemen.

Fire broke out as a Canadian soldier sang to a group of 500. It was hard for the crowd to escape the burning building. Exit doors opened inward. Windows had been blocked by plywood to hide them from enemy planes at night.

The fire killed 100 people and injured 107. A judicial report later stated that the fire was likely the result of arson.



The Knights of Columbus Site After the Fire

Questions ?

1. What brought Newfoundland into the Second World War?

2. What was feared would happen in Newfoundland if Britain were defeated?

3. Was conscription used in Newfoundland and Labrador to raise troops for the Second World War?

4. What was the danger for Newfoundland seamen who volunteered on British merchant vessels?

5. How were air bases in Newfoundland and Labrador used to support the war effort?

6. How did the lend-lease agreement between Britain and the United States affect Newfoundland?

7. How did Newfoundlanders view American servicemen?

8. How were Newfoundland trade patterns changed by the war?

9. What was the likely cause of the 1942 Knights of Columbus fire?

Things to Think About

1. A judicial report into the 1942 Knights of Columbus fire stated that it was likely the result of arson. Who do you think may have set the fire? Discuss.

2. American culture was shared with Newfoundland and Labrador through radio and recreation events. How is culture shared between countries today? What are some possible results of this kind of sharing?



Confederation

In 1838-39, a report by Lord Durham called on Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island to join with Canada. It was said that both would be better off. Newfoundland did not act on this advice.

In 1855, Britain granted Newfoundland Responsible Government. This was a system whereby government members were elected by and answered to the people. The British Crown maintained absolute authority.

In 1858, Canada proposed joining with other British colonies in North America. This did not get the support of Britain.

In 1869, the Newfoundland Government drafted terms of union with Canada. These were passed in the House of Assembly. Canadian Parliament approved these terms. All that remained was a vote in the Newfoundland Legislature. Newfoundland Prime Minister Frederick Carter called an election to let the people decide the issue.

An anti-Confederate campaign was launched. People spoke of "selling out" to Canada. There were fears that high taxes would be imposed by Canada on the people of Newfoundland. The anti-Confederate vote won out. People continued to debate the idea of Confederation in spite of this vote.

Newfoundland suffered the Depression of the 1930's. Thousands were without work. One third of the people were on welfare. Government spending was reduced to cope with the shortfall. No relief was in sight. Britain agreed to help. A group of officials was appointed by Britain to govern Newfoundland. This was called a Commission of Government. Newfoundland would be allowed to govern itself when it was able to support itself.

Finances had greatly improved in Newfoundland by the end of the Second World War. Newfoundland was again able to support itself.

Joey Smallwood led a campaign for Confederation with Canada. The Confederates argued that Newfoundland was too small to remain on its own. Confederation would make Newfoundland part of a large wealthy nation. It was said that the time was right to bargain with Canada. The Second World War had shown Canada the value of Newfoundland.

Peter Cashin led the anti-Confederate movement. They proposed a return to Responsible Government. Anti-Confederates remembered the struggle for Newfoundland to gain the right to govern itself. It was hoped by some that Responsible Government would lead to Newfoundland joining with the United States.

A Referendum on Confederation was held in 1948. There was no clear winner. A runoff vote was held with only Confederation and Responsible Government on the ballot. Confederation was favoured by 58% of the voters. Responsible Government was favoured by 42%.

Newfoundland and Canada began talks on Confederation. Terms of Union were signed in 1948. These were approved by the Canadian Parliament in 1949. Newfoundland became a Province of Canada later that year.

Questions ?

1. What did Britain do to help Newfoundland during the Depression of the 1930's?

2. Why did some Newfoundlanders fear Confederation?

3. What was the case in support of Confederation?

Things to Think About

1. Do you feel that Newfoundland is better off today for having joined Canada? Why or why not?

2. Try to imagine Newfoundland today if it had remained on its own as a country. What would be different?



Resettlement

Towns in Newfoundland and Labrador have always been resource based. Cod fishing allowed towns to spring up where there was access to offshore waters. The offshore seal hunt and migratory Labrador fishery helped St. John's and large towns in Conception Bay to grow.

Fresh fish processing and the use of deep-sea trawlers saw fishermen move from smaller outports to larger towns. Some towns sprang up and were strengthened by the railway.

Logging and shipbuilding allowed towns to grow at the bottoms of bays and along inland waters. A good supply of timber was a must. Forestry allowed the towns of Grand Falls and Corner Brook to spring up in the 1900's. Towns such as Millertown and Terra Nova were based on logging. Forestry was important to the port of Botwood.

World War II saw large military bases built at St. John's, Argentia, Gander, Botwood, Stephenville and Goose Bay. The growth of these bases caused an increase in demand for workers. This demand worked to centralize the population.

Why Resettle?

The term “resettlement” is used to describe the process of moving people to larger, more central areas. People in Newfoundland and Labrador have always abandoned towns when it was needed.

A tidal wave hit the south coast of Newfoundland in 1929. Twenty-nine people were killed. The cost of damage soared into the millions. Many left the low lands of the coast. Many of these moved to more sheltered harbours on the Burin Peninsula.

Imposed Resettlement

There have been times when people have been compelled by others to resettle. The Moravian Church, for example, sought to centralize the Inuit of northern Labrador.

Governments have long favoured having fewer towns with larger numbers of people. From 1954 to 1975, there were three government resettlement programs carried out in Newfoundland and Labrador. Small, remote fishing towns were closed down in favour of large growth centres.

It is always cheaper to provide services in more urban settings. The cost of telephone and electricity decreases per person as the population becomes more dense. By 1954, people in Newfoundland and Labrador were asking for equal access to health and education services. The government pledged to meet this demand.

The government hoped to industrialize the Newfoundland and Labrador economy. Fresh and frozen processed cod replaced the salt fish industry in the 1960's. Catches would now have to be quickly processed in a plant. These plants required docking, services and machines that could not be set up in every town. A large pool of workers was also needed.

The Resettlement Program

The Department of Welfare was tasked with helping families with moving costs. This money would be paid only if most people in a community agreed to move. Conflict arose between those who wished to take up the government's offer and those who wished to remain where they had always lived.

Some people moved their houses by floating them across water on empty oil drums. Churches were sometimes burned when towns were abandoned. This spared them from rot and the work of vandals. Between 1954 and 1965, 7500 people were moved. Over 100 towns were abandoned.

Government spending and employment caused further growth in larger centres. Better roads spurred the growth of towns near larger centres.

In 1965, the moving subsidy was increased. To receive this aid, people were required to move to certain growth centres. Services were less of a focus. Improved employment was the main goal. Between 1965 and 1975, nearly 150 towns were abandoned. Twenty thousand people were moved.

Some Effects of Resettlement

There was often a lack of jobs in growth centres where people were moved. Before resettlement, people in small towns often worked for modest earnings. Moving to larger centres left many to rely on unemployment insurance and welfare.

Many people who were moved felt that they had been forced to do so. Some resentment persists today. Active government support for resettlement ended with the defeat of Premier Smallwood in 1971.

Questions ?

1. What does the term “resettlement” mean?

2. Why would governments favour having fewer towns with larger numbers of people?

3. Fresh and frozen processed cod replaced the salt fish industry in the 1960’s. How did this affect settlement?

4. How did people float their houses across water?

5. Why were some churches burned when towns were abandoned?

Things to Think About

1. Can you recall any communities that have been resettled in recent times? Discuss.

2. Some people believe that resettlement persists today. Do you agree that this is happening? Should it be happening? Why or why not?

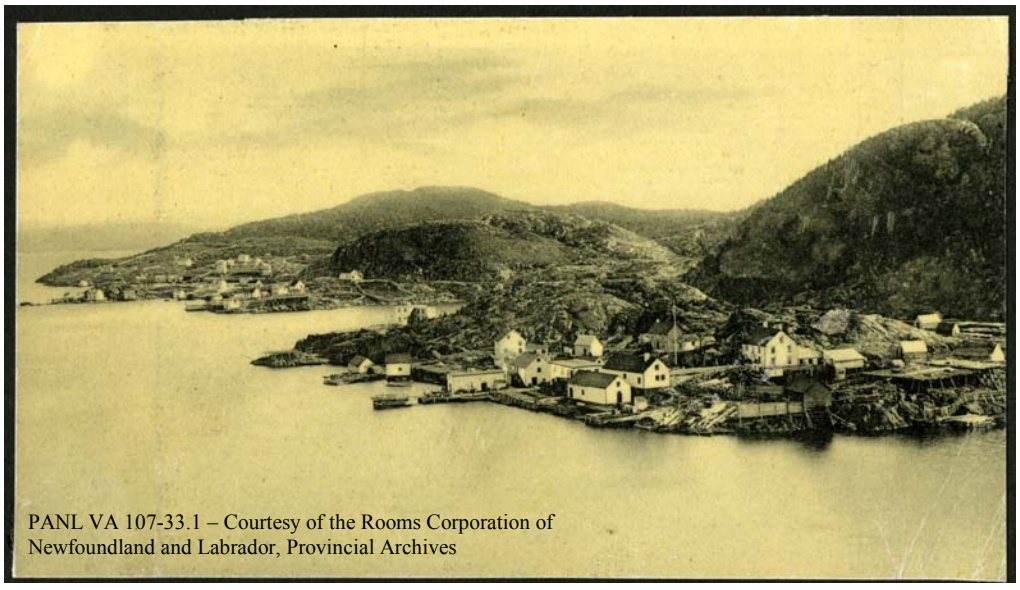


The Town of Exploits

The Town of Exploits was named for the Exploits River. It was built on an island in Notre Dame Bay. The Beothuk were once very active in this area.

Exploits is known to have been active since the 1700's. It was built on the inshore and Labrador fisheries. Small fishing boats and schooners were built in Exploits.

The population of Exploits declined after Confederation. Most of the population had been resettled by 1966. The United Church closed in Exploits in 1969. Five people remained in 1976.

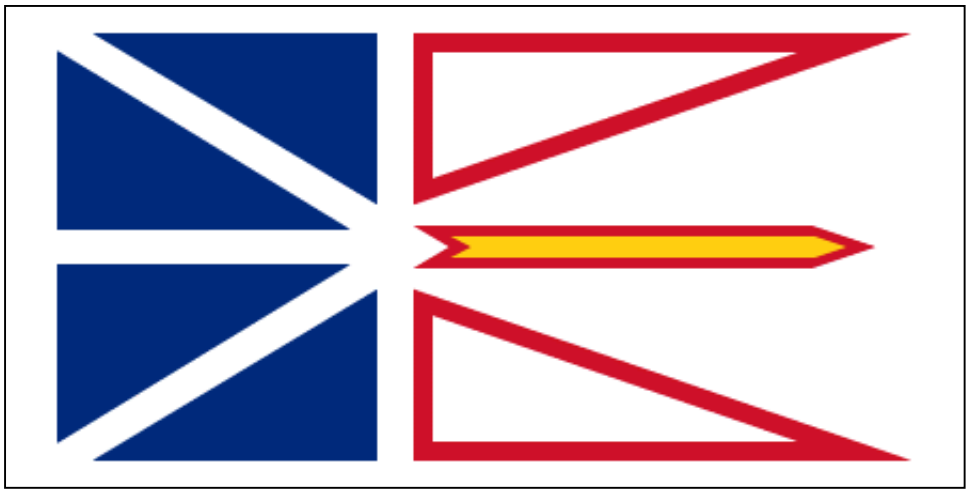


The Town of Exploits (1912)

The Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Flag

In 1979, the Newfoundland and Labrador House of Assembly set up a committee to look at the issue of a new provincial flag. It was agreed that this flag would have to be simple, unique and favoured by most people.

Newfoundland artist Christopher Pratt offered to design the flag free of charge. A group of six designs were drawn up by Pratt. A committee chose the final design. The flag was unveiled in April 1980. In May, the *Provincial Flag Act* was passed in the House of Assembly.



The white colour in the background of the flag represents snow and ice. Blue represents the sea. This colour is also found on the Union Jack and reflects the province's British roots. Red represents human effort. Gold represents self-confidence. The red and gold section is large and reflects the future.

The two triangles in red are symbols of the mainland and island parts of the province reaching forward together. The golden arrow points to a bright future.

A Christian cross can be seen in the flag. Beothuk and Naskapi ornaments can be seen. There is an outline of a maple leaf in the centre of the flag. The image of the tridents reflects ties to the sea. When hung as a banner, the arrow appears as a sword. This honours war veterans.

The Labrador Flag

The Labrador Heritage Society designed a Labrador flag in the 1970's. This flag reflects the people and the land.



The white bar represents snow. The blue bar represents rivers, lakes and the ocean. The green bar represents the forests.

The spruce twig is a symbol of the whole of Labrador. The black spruce is common to all Labrador regions. The three branches of the twig are a symbol of the Innu, Inuit and settlers of European descent.

Questions ?

1. What does the white colour in the background of the Newfoundland and Labrador flag represent?

2. There are two triangles in red on the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial flag. What do these represent? What does the golden arrow point to?

3. What do the white, green and blue bars represent on the Labrador flag?

4. What do the three branches of the spruce twig on the Labrador flag represent?

Official Name Change of Province to Newfoundland and Labrador

In the early 1990s, a movement began to recognize Labrador as a full partner in the province. In April 1992, the House of Assembly called on the provincial and federal governments to change the name of the province to Newfoundland and Labrador.

Public hearings took place throughout the province. These were reviewed by a Select Committee of the House. There was a great deal of agreement that the name should be changed.

In 1999, the House of Assembly passed a resolution for the Governor General of Canada to proclaim an amendment to the Constitution of Canada. This would change the name of the province to Newfoundland and Labrador. In 2001, the Canadian Federal Constitution Act was amended. This officially changed the name of the province to Newfoundland and Labrador.



Glossary

animistic ***a***	Attributes living souls to objects and nature
archaeology ***n***	The study of ancient peoples that often uses scientific excavation of physical remains
archaic ***a***	Ancient
artifact ***n***	A man-made object
atitsiak ***n***	The Inuit practice of naming an infant after a person who has just died
awl ***n***	A small tool for pricking holes in material
coniferous ***a***	Describes a tree that bears cones
conscription ***n***	A program for compulsory military service
cooperative ***n***	A business owned and run jointly by its members with profits shared among them
Einu ***n***	The term that the Mi'kmaq use to refer to themselves - meaning *people*

excavation *n* A site that is used to reveal or extract through digging

fjord *n* A narrow inlet of sea between high cliffs

Innu-aimun *n* The Innu language

Inua *n* The soul in Inuit belief that exists in all people, animals, lakes, mountains, and plants

Inuktitut *n* The language of the Inuit

kablunaet *n* An Inuit term for outsiders meaning *sons of dogs*

kache *n* A large Inuit snowhouse built for group events

kayak *n* A one-man Inuit canoe of light wooden framework covered with sealskins

knarr *n* A long-range Viking ship designed to carry freight while exploring and traveling between colonies

komatik *n* A long sled hauled by dogs or men and used for winter travel in northern Newfoundland and Labrador

makushan *n* A ritual Innu feast of caribou fat and bone marrow held after the hunt

mamateek *n* Beothuk winter housing

manitou *n* The spirit believed by the Mi'kmaq to fill the universe

migratory *a* Moving with the seasons

mitshuap *n* A cone-shaped Innu tent

Montagnais *n* Mountaineer – refers to Innu of southern Labrador

Nascaupi *n* Innu who migrated with the seasons from the Labrador interior to the coast

Nonenot *n* The term that the Naskapi use to refer to themselves - meaning “true men”

ochre *n* Earth used as pigment

peninsula *n* A piece of land almost surrounded by water

plankton *n* Microscopic life that floats in the sea or fresh water

plateau *n* An area of high level ground

precipitation *n* Rain or snow that falls to the ground

puoin *n* Mi'kmaq *shamans* who brought the spiritual world to the people and had the power to cure or cause illness

referendum *n* A process to refer a political question to the electorate for decision by direct vote

rheumatism *n* A disease marked by inflammation and pain in the joints, muscles or fibrous tissues

shaman *n* A witchdoctor or priest who is believed to communicate with gods or spirits

sinew *n* Tough fibrous tissue joining muscle to bone

skraelings *n* Natives met by the Vikings on the coast of Vinland who were described as small and hostile

spindle whorl *n* A tool used to make clothing from sheep's wool

sulphide *n* A compound of sulphur

Superguksoak *n* A female god of Inuit belief that controlled land animals – wife of Torngarsoak

Taqamkukewa'q *n* The term that Newfoundland Mi'kmaq use to refer to themselves - meaning *people of the land across the water*

Torngarsoak *n* A male god of Inuit belief that controlled land animals – husband of Superguksoak

tuberculosis *n* An infectious bacterial disease marked by small rounded swellings in the lungs

tundra *n* A vast level treeless arctic region where subsoil is frozen

umiak *n* An Inuit boat that is wider and deeper than a kayak and used to carry heavy loads of passengers and equipment

windlass *n* A machine for hauling or hoisting

Bibliography

Briffett, Frances B. The Story of Newfoundland and Labrador. Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1955.

Briffett, Frances M. More Stories of Newfoundland. Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1946.

Cochrane, J.A., and A.W. Parsons. The Story of Newfoundland. Toronto: Ginn and Company, 1949.

Cuff, Robert H., ed. A Coaker Anthology. St. John's: Creative Publishers, 1986.

English, L.E.F. Historic Newfoundland and Labrador. St. John's: Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1988.

Harris, Leslie. Newfoundland and Labrador. Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1968.

Horwood, Harold, and Ed Butts. Pirates and Outlaws of Canada. Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1984.

Horwood, Harold, and John de Visser. Historic Newfoundland. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Horwood, Joan. Viking Discovery. St. John's: Jesperson Press, 1985.

Joseph R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation. Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador. 5 vols. St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1994.

Major, Kevin. As Near to Heaven by Sea. Toronto: Penguin Books Canada, 2001.

Neary, Peter, and Patrick O'Flaherty. Part of the Main. St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1983.

Summers, William F., and Mary E. Summers. Geography of Newfoundland. Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1972.

Internet Sources

"Arrow Air Flight 1285". www.answers.com/topic/arrow-air-flight-1285, 20 January, 2006.

"A Scoff an' Scuff". www.ascoffanscuff.com, 20 January, 2006.

"City of St. John's". www.stjohns.ca, 20 January, 2006.

"Corner Brook". www.cornerbrook.com, 20 January, 2006.

"Geographyabout.com". www.geographyabout.com, 20 January, 2006.

"Labrador Innu". www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/irp/index_e.html, 1 December, 2005.

"Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage". www.heritage.nf.ca, 4 January, 2006.

"Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism Information". www.explorenewfoundlandandlabrador.com, 20 January, 2006.

"Nunatsiavut". www.nunatsiavut.com, 9 December, 2005.

"Town of Gander". www.gandercanada.com, 20 January, 2006.

"Wikipedia". http://en.wikipedia.org, 20 January, 2006.