

**Guide to the  
Jesse Blackstone Papers**

**Accession Number: 1998-025**

**Special Collections  
Tuck Library  
New Hampshire Historical Society**

# Jesse Blackstone Papers

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## Collection Overview

**Title:** Jesse Blackstone Papers

**Bulk Dates:** 1940s through 1960s

**Accession Number:** 1998-025

**Physical Description:** Total 4 boxes

**Provenance and Acknowledgements:** The Society acquired the Jesse Blackstone Papers in 1998. The collection was purchased from Jesse's daughter Jane Blackstone.

**Processor:** Hilary Anderson

**Access Restrictions:** No restrictions

**Copyright:** For permission requests to publish material from this collection, contact the Special Collections Librarian for copyright information.

**Repository:** Special Collections, Tuck Library

**For Additional Information:**

Special Collections, Tuck Library  
New Hampshire Historical Society  
30 Park Street  
Concord, NH  
603-856-0600

**Summary:**

The collection is comprised of approximately 140 folders in 4 boxes of master-woodcarver Jess Blackstone's carving notes, sales receipts, and images probably used as reference. Also there is a folder containing a bird book that Jess probably used extensively as reference.

## Biographical Note

Jesse Blackstone (often spelled Jess) (1909-1988), was born in Melrose, MA, attended Cambridge (MA) Art School, and then studied under a wood carver in Maine. He and his father Arthur Blackstone, formed a small business of hand-carved bird models in Melrose. In 1943 the Worcester Art Museum had an exhibit, "Contemporary New England Handicrafts," that featured bird carvings by Jess and his father. After serving in WWII in Europe, Jess carved the birds he had observed in Germany, which still exist in various collections including the New Hampshire Audubon Society. Jess had joined the League of New Hampshire Craftsmen in 1940 and it proved to be a primary outlet for his carvings. He volunteered with the League and taught woodcarving and pottery as well. He soon developed a following for his carvings and had a base of regular customers. The Blackstone family moved to Pembroke, NH in 1949. Jess was also an excellent ornithologist as well as a meticulous record-keeper of the information of each carving.

After producing 8,500 to 8,750 carvings, Blackstone's production had dropped dramatically by 1980.

**Source:**

Jim Cullen, "Jess Blackstone: a New Hampshire miniaturist in the New England Tradition,"  
*Decoy Magazine*, July/August 2001.

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection includes images of birds, descriptions of carvings with color notations, research notes and files, paper patterns, sales receipts, tools, and samples of his work in all stages of production. The Museum has in their collection Blackstone's tools such as drills knives, unfinished birds

**Contents**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	1	Blackbirds, yellow-headed, red-winged, etc.—Images
1	2-3	Bluebirds—Images, description, and sales
1	4-5	Bob-White Quail—Images, description, and sales
1	6-7	Bob-o-link—Images, description, and sales
1	8-9	Buntings—Images, description, and sales
1	10-11	Cardinals—Images, description, and sales
1	12-13	Catbird, Mockingbird, Thrasher—Images, description, and sales
1	14-15	Chickadee—Images, description, and sales
1	16	Cranes—Images
1	17	Crossbills—Images
1	18	Doves—Images
1	19-20	Ducks, Wood ducks—Images, description, and sales
1	21	Ducks, General-all—Images
1	22-23	Ducks, Sea ducks, general—Images, description
1	24	Ducks, General-all—Description
1	25	Eagle—Images
1	26-27	Finches, general—Images, description, and sales
1	28	Flycatchers—Images

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	<b>Description</b>
2	1-2	Geese, all—Images, description, and sales
2	3-4	Gnatcatchers—Images, description, and sales
2	5-6	Grosbeaks—Images, description, and sales
2	7-8	Grouse, ruff—Images, description, and sales

2	9	Gulls, terns—Description, and sales
2	10	Heron, great blue—Description and sales
2	11-12	Hummingbirds—Images, description, and sales
2	13-14	Jays, blue, Canada, Calif. —Images, description, and sales
2	15-16	Junco—Images, description, and sales
2	17-18	Kingbirds—Images, description, and sales
2	19	Kingfisher—Description and sales
2	20	Kinglets—Sales
2	21	Loon—Sales
2	22-23	Meadowlark, Bob-o-link—Images, description, and sales
2	24	Nutcracker—Images
2	25-26	Nuthatch—Images, description, and sales
2	27-28	Orioles—Images, description, and sales
2	29-30	Ovenbird—Image, description, and sales
2	31	Pelican—Image
2	32-33	Pheasant—Images, description, and sales
2	34	Phoebe—Images and sales
2	35-36	Plovers, all—Images, description, and sales
2	37	Pipit—Images
2	38-39	Redpoll—Images, description, and sales
2	40	Red-winged blackbird—Description and sales
2	41-42	Robin—Images, description, and sales

**Box Folder Description**

3	1-3	Siskin—Images, description, and sales
3	4-6	Snowbunting—Images, description, and sales
3	7-8	Sparrows, all—Images, description, and sales
3	9	Swallows, purple martin—Images
3	10-14	Tanager, western and scarlet—Images, description, and sales
3	15-16	Thrasher, brown—Images, description, and sales
3	17-18	Thrushes, wood—Images, description, and sales
3	19-21	Titmouse—Images, description, and sales
3	22	Tower—Images and sales
3	23-45	Warblers, general—Images, description, and sales

**Box Folder Description**

4	1-3	Waxwings—Images, description, and sales
4	4-5	Woodcock—Images, description, and sales
4	6-11	Woodpeckers, all—Images, description, and sales
4	12-13	Wrens, all—Images, description, and sales
4	14	Various birds sales
4	15	Beadleston collection
4	16	Briggs collection
4	17	Doherty collection

4	18	Fuller collection
4	19	Gressler collection
4	20	Greene collection
4	21	Judkins collection
4	22	Maisus collection
4	23	Driftwood models, sales, and mounts
4	24	Sales, by date, and miscellaneous descriptions
4	25	Workslips
4	26	Artists, nature illustrators
4	27	Index to bird numbers
4	28	Bird lists, seen & heard, and checklists
4	29	Miscellaneous
Envelope		Blackstone's copy of Roger Tory Peterson's <i>A Field Guide to the Birds</i> , Boston, Houghton, Mifflin, 1947. Title page contains the "Blackstone Bird Models" stamp.
Tracings		Artist—Bird carver