A REPORT ON THE
CAROL BRICE-BENNETT
ARCHAEOLOGY COLLECTION
FROM HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY, LABRADOR

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Foreword

It is an honour and a privilege to introduce the Newfoundland and Labrador Archaeological Society’s fourth Community Collections Archaeological Research Project (CCARP) report, this one highlighting the Carol Brice-Bennett Collection. CCARP is funded by the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador through its Cultural Economic Development Program and it involves the analysis of archaeological material, and in this case ethnographic material as well, that was collected by private individuals in the province. In Newfoundland and Labrador the only legal way to collect archaeological material is under a government issued permit which comes with terms and conditions related to things like reporting and to the submission of collected artifacts within certain timeframes. Private collection occurs outside of this system and although archaeologists have sometimes been given access to artifacts in private hands over the years, detailed analyses of private collections by professional archaeologists have not been particularly common prior to the CCARP program. As my predecessors have been careful to point out, we are not encouraging private collecting with this program. Instead our aim is to bring information on artifacts in private hands to a broad audience, and to help educate the public on what to do if archaeological sites and artifacts are incidentally encountered.

In 2014 Robert Anstey produced a report on artifacts collected by his father James Anstey in the archaeologically rich area of Back Harbour, Twillingate. In 2015 the NLAS published John Andrew Campbell’s analysis of material found by Baxter and Bernice Andrews at Cape Island, Cape Freels, which is another part of Newfoundland which has great potential for shedding light on the history of humanity on the island. Our third report from 2016 highlighted the Bill Melbourne collection from Burgeo on the south coast of Newfoundland which was prepared by Instructor Tim Rast and Memorial University archaeology students. All three of these reports have contributed to what we know about the island’s past and include information going back to some of the earliest known peoples to inhabit Newfoundland.

The following report is the first in our series to deal with artifacts from Labrador. Written by Memorial University MA candidate Anatolijs Venovcevs, it involves archaeological materials collected by Carol Brice-Bennett from Hebron, Okak, Battle Harbour and Red Bay in Labrador, as well as archaeological and ethnographic materials from Conception Bay, Newfoundland.

Brice-Bennett herself played a very significant role in Labrador history, being heavily involved in the early stages of the successful push by the Labrador Inuit Association for a land claims agreement and self-government. She directed the original associated land use and occupancy study, and was the editor of the resulting 1977 publication which was the foundation of the land claims process for Labrador Inuit. This document, entitled Our Footprints are Everywhere, includes a substantial chapter she wrote on the Nain and Hopedale regions and remains essential reading for Labrador students, scholars and civil servants to this day. Over the years she conducted other research for the Labrador Inuit Association, and in 2000 she published a book on the closure of the north coast community of Hebron and the relocation of its people, and another on the history of the Inuit community of Hopedale in 2003. In 2016 she left Labrador and before leaving she made arrangements to deposit a considerable personal collection of books, archival records, reports, ethnographic and archaeological materials with the Labrador Institute, a Memorial University campus located in Happy Valley-Goose Bay which she directed from 1985-1996. It is the latter two categories of materials that are the subject of this report.

NLAS President
Nain, Newfoundland & Labrador
March 5th, 2017
Introduction

For the past three years, the Newfoundland and Labrador Archaeological Society (NLAS) has sought to engage with archaeological material stowed away in the lockers, sheds, attics, and shoeboxes of the province through its Community Collections Archaeological Research Project (CCARP) (NLAS 2014; Anstey 2014; Campbell 2016; Rast et. al. 2016). The goal of this project has been to locate and engage with individual collectors of archaeological remains and foster a trusting relationship to allow archaeologists to catalogue and analyze their collections. In so doing, the archaeological material that would otherwise be forgotten in their personalized repositories was brought to light for study and inclusion in the collective heritage of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Background

The Carol Brice-Bennett Collection is a mix of material collected throughout the province. The material was donated by Carol Brice-Bennett, the former director of the Labrador Institute in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. It was stored at the institute for a year until it was brought to light for analysis in this project.

The material consists of 35 artifacts – seven pipes from Conception Bay, Newfoundland; eight spoons, two forks, and four lead line weights from Bareneed, Port de Grave Peninsula, Conception Bay, Newfoundland;
one stone point from Okak Bay, Labrador; ten lithic artifacts from Battle Harbour, Labrador; two tile fragments from Red Bay, Labrador; and one brick from Hebron, Labrador (Figure 1). The discussion that follows tackles each of these groups in turn.

**Smoking Pipes from Conception Bay**

Brice-Bennett purchased the smoking pipes in the collection from a second-hand store in Conception Bay whose owner was a scuba diver who found them while exploring the bay (Figure 2). She used them as teaching specimens as they represent good examples of nineteenth and early twentieth century smoking pipes (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, February 3, 2017).

Historically, clay smoking pipes were the most popular form of tobacco consumption. They were produced out of white, kaolin ball clay from the late sixteenth to the mid-twentieth century. They were cheap, fragile, and expendable and are thus plentiful on European and historic indigenous archaeological sites. They were often decorated and stamped with identifying characteristics and thus can be easily dated by archaeologists (Bradley 2000:104).

Out of this collection, two smoking pipes were complete. The first is an unmarked and undecorated pipe with an oblong, slightly curved stem with no evidence of use within the pipe (Plate 1). The second is a short, stubby pipe with a raised ridge around the bowl and a flattened spur (Plate 2). The stem is impressed with the maker’s mark “W CHRISTIE” on the left and “LEITH” on the right (Plate 2).

The W CHRISTIE - LEITH pipe was produced by William Christie’s pipe company that started to operate on Craignestock Street in Glasgow in 1877 (Innes and Murtagh 2008:14). The Leith factory opened in 1900 and continued producing pipes until 1962 making it one of the last clay smoking pipe factories to close (Innes and Murtagh 2008:18). This indicates that the pipe had to be produced between 1900 and 1962.

The other five pipes all consist of a bowl, spur, and a partial stem. Three of these do not have any maker’s marks but could be roughly dated by their bowl shapes.

The first is a moulded pipe bowl with a Prince of Wales feather on the front and the back and a wreath around the top (Plate 3). Given its shape, it could date from approximately 1720 to 1820 (Atkinson and Oswald 1980:373).
The next pipe bowl is an interesting specimen with moulded spikes around the base, stem, and neck. The bowl is unused but there are significant rust stains on the bowl. Given its short, stubby shape, it appears to be from the early nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century (Plate 4).

The last of the unmarked pipes has a moulded fish scale design over much of the bowl, moulded dots near the neck, and large protruding, well-pronounced spur. The bowl is well-used and the stem appears to have some indiscernible recent writing on it in ink or sharpie (Plate 5). Given its shape, it could date from 1780 to 1820 (Walker 1979:1551).

Finally, the last two smoking pipe bowls contain maker’s marks that could be dated. The first of these pipes has a cross-hatched heart on the right hand side of the bowl, “TW” impressed on the back, an “E_” impressed on the left and “AD” on the right hand side (Plate 6). The pipe was most likely made by T Whyte & Co, a company based in Edinburgh.
between 1823 and 1876 (Bradley 2000:117). The cross-hatched style seems to be a trade mark of the company as several designs with a TW stamp and a cross hatched motif have been found all over Scotland and northern England (Harman 1987).

The other pipe fragment is moulded with the words “RAOB” on the front of the bowl with a set of buffalo horns below that. The bowl is well used. The stem contains a partial maker’s mark “Wm. T_” on the left and “_TLE” on the right (Plate 7). While the manufacturer of this pipe could not be identified, ROAB stands for Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes, a fraternal organization started in London in August 1822. The pipe postdates 1850 when the words “Royal” and “Antediluvian” were added to the organization (Dennis 2008:70).
Silverware and Line Weights from Bareneed

Unlike most of the items in this collection, the silverware and the line weights are not archaeological material. They were collected by Brice-Bennett from the restoration of her house in Bareneed on the Port de Grave Peninsula in Conception Bay (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, February 3, 2017) (Figure 3). For this reason, they were given the ethnographic designation “01N/11 Ethno.”

Brice-Bennett believes that the house was built after World War I given a lot of newspapers dating after 1918 beneath the linoleum floors. They were being used for insulation and to reduce dampness (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Among the silverware, there are six teaspoons, two tablespoons, and four forks. Four of the teaspoons are identical and seem to come from a set (Plate 8). The teaspoons have a tipped pattern and are electroplated – a method that was invented in England slightly before 1840 that consisted of covering a base metal with a coating of silver by electrolysis (Kenyon 1983a; Light 2000:14).

The maker’s mark on the handles from these spoons is “B” over a flower over “&” over “S” over “H” (Plate 9). This maker’s mark is as yet unidentified, and it has been suggested that it could represent a forgery – a way to sell a cheap, inferior product at a higher rate to the uninformed consumer (Robyn Lacy, personal communication, February 17, 2017). These practices were common in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, to which most of the datable material from this collection is attributed.
There is one other unidentifiable maker’s mark in this collection. It is also an electroplated spoon with a tipped pattern and on the handle it contained an impressed maker’s mark “BISHOP” (Plates 10 and 11).

Despite there being many “Bishops” in the silverware industry both in England and in America, only one reference to this maker’s mark was identified— a possible connection to Joseph Bishop from Wilmington, North Carolina, who operated from 1816 to 1822 (Chinese Argent 2016). Given that electroplating was invented after this date, this is unlikely.

The only teaspoon maker’s mark that could be identified came from another electroplated spoon with a tipped pattern. On the handle the maker’s mark read “D&A” over a “B” “E” “P” and a globe written sideways (Plates 12 and 13).

The maker’s mark indicates that the spoon was made by Daniel & Arter LTD from Birmingham, England (Giorgio 2017b). The
The firm was established by Thomas Henry Daniel and Thomas Richard Arter in Birmingham in the late nineteenth century and was active at the Globe Nevada Silver Works. The first sterling silver hallmark was entered into the Birmingham Assay Office in 1882. The firm continued to operate until the 1930s (Giorgio 2017b). The absence of a crown on the maker’s mark indicates that the spoon was produced after 1896 thus giving it a tighter date range of 1896 to 1930s (Giorgio 2017e).

The “B”, “E”, and “P” marks indicate the quality of the spoon. “E” and “P” stands for electroplated and “B” represents a third-quality product with 16 grams of silver used on 12 pieces or approximately 1 1/3 grams per table spoon or fork (Giorgio 2017a).

The two table spoons are both Winsor-shaped and have what appears to be white staining around the bowl and much of the neck as if they were used to mix paint (Plate 14).

On the back of the stems, the spoons are imprinted with the words “SHEFFIELD PLATE” (Plate 15). This is a type of metal that was invented in 1743 through a fusion at high temperature of a copper sheet sandwiched between two sheets of silver foil. It was most popular between 1765 and 1825 (Kenyon 1983a; Light 2000:14-15). This suggests that the spoons could be approximately 200 years old but may have been used to mix paint at some point when they were not considered valuable enough for use at the table.

Both of the forks in the collection were made of pure metal with four tines (Plates 16 and 18). While some have suggested that tines could be a way to date an item, they are an unreliable indication of age (Kenyon 1983b). Of more importance is the fact that both of the forks are single-piece and lack a handle made from a different material. Before the 1920s,
bone, wood, and celluloid handles were common while they all but disappeared during the 1930s in favour of all-steel cutlery (Dunning 2000:42-43).

One of the forks was impressed with the mark “W NICKEL SILVER 18” on the neck (Plate 17). This is an indication of metal quality. Nickel-silver is an alloy of copper, zinc, and nickel which was first invented by the Chinese and then brought to Europe in the 18th century. It came into production in the late 1820s but became the preferred base metal for silverware until the 1850s when electroplating superseded other plating methods (Light 2000:6-7).

The other fork has a maker’s mark imprinted on the handle – “T. WILKINSON AND SON” over “BIRMINGHAM” stamped in very small letters in rectangles (Plate 19). This firm was founded by Thomas Wilkinson in Birmingham, England in 1832 and was active at Pelican Works with the trade mark “Pelican Ware.” The firm moved in 1840 to High Street in Sheffield and continued until 1932 when the business was sold (Giorgio 2017c). Given that this is an all-metal fork, the date would fall between 1867 and 1932.

Finally, the lead line weights are un-dateable but interesting objects. They consist of rolled lead pieces that would have been heated and melted down and then rolled around a piece of twine for use as weights on a fishing line. There are four in the Carol Brice-Bennett collection, one of which still has a visible piece of fishing line attached (Plate 20).
Plate 20: Lead line weights.

**Stone Point from Okak**

This collection consists of a stone point that Brice-Bennett found in front of a fox hole inside Okak Bay at a place she referred to as Tikkigatsuk (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, February 21 and 22, 2017). The point is a complete, asymmetrical, side-notched tool made from Ramah chert (Plate 21), a very popular, high quality material that was used extensively in North Atlantic prehistory (Keddy 2015:27).

Given its style, the point appears to be from the Maritime Archaic period. This group were the first people to inhabit the province, with sites dating between 6,500 and 3,200 BP in Labrador (Rankin 2008:22). Their economy and life ways revolved around the exploitation of coastal resources like marine mammals, fish, sea birds, and shellfish while making forays into the interior to hunt caribou in the colder months (Rankin 2008:4-5; Wolff 2008:41-44). The Maritime Archaic are also known for their rich mortuary tradition with several burial mounds being documented around the province (Wolff 2008:44-48).

Through discussion with Jamie Brake, from the Nunatsiavut Archaeology Office, it was suggested that the point must have come from the vicinity of Tikigatsiak Point 1 – a registered Maritime Archaic site, HiCo-01 (Jamie Brake, personal communication, February 23, 2017) (Figure 4).

Plate 21: Maritime Archaic point from Okak Bay.

Figure 4: Tikigatsiak Point within Okak Bay.
The site was first recorded by Steven Cox as part of his PhD research. Cox documented a Maritime Archaic presence on a terrace 21 metres above sea level (Cox 1977). A recent visit by the Nunatsiavut Archaeology Office archaeologists identified a probable Maritime Archaic burial at the site (Brake and Davies 2016:34). This point is the third artefact to be recorded from this site to date.

Lithics from Battle Harbour

Archaeologists have recognized Battle Harbour as an important Palaeoeskimo site with both Dorset and Groswater components since William Fitzhugh surveyed the area in the early 1980s (Figure 5). The strategic location on the Battle Harbour islands made it an ideal place to camp and hunt harp seal during their migration (Fitzhugh 1982:48).

The Dorset Palaeoeskimo period lasted in the province between 2500 and 700 BP and represents an assemblage consisting of tip-fluted harpoon ends, triangular and thumbnail scrapers, and microblades (Rankin 2008:14; 22; Anstey 2011:6-7). Unlike the Maritime Archaic, the Dorset culture was adapted exclusively to utilizing the marine environment. While they may have gathered berries, fished, and hunted caribou near the shore, they primarily relied on harp seals as their main food source (Wolff 2004:77). Winters were spent hunting seals and whales on the ice edge (Rankin 2008:15-16).

Fitzhugh recorded the site as Battle Harbour 1 (FbAv-01) and described a number of Dorset artifacts, debitage, fire-cracked cobbles, and hearth slabs on the surface extending for hundreds of meters. Some in situ remains were also recorded (Fitzhugh 1982:48-49).

The site was revisited by Marianne Stopp and Douglas Rutherford in 1991 who dug three test pits and surface collected several artifacts and again by Stopp in 2002. The latter episode noted that the material was no longer apparent on the surface due to the developments by the Battle Harbour Historic Trust which scattered gravel over the store thus covering previous areas of surface finds (Stopp and Rutherford 1991:98; Stopp 2003:4).

The dumping of gravel in the late 1990s/early 2000s provides a good limit for the date when artifacts from this site were collected. In fact, people had been picking up artifacts from FbAv-01 for years (Stephen Hull, personal communication, February 6, 2017). Brice-Bennett herself found the artifacts in her collection in the early 1990s (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, February 24, 2017).

In total, the collection contains 10 lithic artifacts. These consist of five bifaces, one
scraper, three endblades and one microblade (Plate 22). Four of the lithics, A, F, G and J are made from Ramah chert, with the remainder are made from cherts of undetermined sources. Some of the bifaces and the scraper also show evidence of retouch and use wear. Culturally all items fall in the generic category of Palaeoeskimo with A, C, F, H and J being dentified specifically with Dorset Palaeoeskimo collections.

**Ceramic Tiles from Red Bay**

Brice-Bennett recovered the tiles in a mound of debris near a Basque work station on Saddle Island just outside of Red Bay (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, February 22, 2017). She used them for teaching.

There are six Basque sites in total on Saddle Island (Figure 6) and it is unclear from which the tiles came from. From archaeological research at the world-famous whaling station, it is known that red tile was used extensively to cover the structures associated with whale blubber processing (Tuck 2005:2). Tiles covered the roofs of buildings where the whale blubber was rendered and the cooperages which produced the barrels for its

Plate 22: Artifacts from the Battle Harbour site. Top: A) biface, B) scraper, C) endblade base, D) side-notched biface or knife, E) biface; Bottom: F) biface, G) microblade, H) endblade, I) biface, J) endblade.
shipment. Tiles were a requirement for the long whaling season and the often inclement conditions while ethnographies of Basque society point to tiles being symbols of ownership and permanence (Tuck 2005:3). Occasionally they were also used for making drains (Tuck 2005:14).

Both of the tiles in this collection are made from coarse red earthenware, tempered with sand and organics with a stick-smoothed upper surface and a sanded, rough bottom surface (Plates 23 and 24).

Figure 6: Basque-component sites at Saddle Island just outside of Red Bay, Labrador.

Plate 23: Red Bay Basque Tile (1)

Plate 24: Red Bay Basque Tile (2)

Brick from Hebron

Brice-Bennett recovered the brick from Hebron during the 1999 reunion of former residents. According to her, the brick was found near one of the earliest buildings on the site and was used to hold down the tent wall or tarp while a lot of the wood planks from the old building were used as firewood during the reunion (Carol Brice-Bennett, personal communication, January 21, 2017).

Hebron is the site of a Moravian Mission community established in 1830-1831 and was relocated in 1959 when the Newfoundland government closed the village store and relocated the families further south (Loring and Arendt 2009:33-34). The mission building is currently undergoing restoration and is home to several people during the summer months, and also receives many visitors throughout the year (including cruise ships).
The brick found is wedge-shaped and displays evidence of being hand manufactured. It is likely that it was made in a water-lubricated mould, as can be seen from the smooth texture on its four sides and trimmed with a wooden stick, as seen from the shallow parallel striations across the top (Plate 25). These small details are helpful in differentiating bricks made by different manufacturers or even different brick makers (Gurcke 1987:104-106). The shape of the brick, a wedge, is indicative that it was used for a specific architectural purpose – like building an arch or a circle, instead of being used as part of a wall (Gurcke 1987:119-120).

The brick is impressed with the maker’s mark “HICKMAN & CO” over “STOURBRIDGE” (Plate 34). Hickman was a very common and long lasting firebrick manufacturer (Gurcke 1987:66-67). The maker’s mark suggests that it was made between 1865 and 1929 by a firebrick making company from Stourbridge, England (Gurcke 2017; Karl Gurcke, personal communication, February 7, 2017).

Firebricks are made from special clays, called fire clays, and have a greater resistance to heat. They can withstand temperatures from 1,100°F (593°C) to over 3,000°F (1,649°C). They are able to resist physical and chemical abrasion as well as thermal stress. Such bricks are usually meant for kilns, blast furnaces, smelters, and boilers and are far more expensive than regular bricks (Gurcke 1987:99).

What makes this brick even more interesting is the fact that there is no evidence of mortar – it was not used as part of a chimney or a building – and the fact that there is no abrasion that would come from being part of ballast – it had to have been purposefully shipped to Hebron as cargo. That poses a very interesting question – what were the Moravians in northern Labrador doing with an industrial-grade brick?

The likeliest theory is that it was brought to the site for a cool-heat operation, like a smithy, that would only require a few dozen
bricks (Karl Gurecke, personal communication, February 7, 2017). Previous excavations have uncovered hand-forged nails and pintles at the site (Loring and Arendt 2009:40–48). The smithy at Hebron was located in the main mission building in the north-western part of the structure (Figure 7) (Jamie Brake, personal communication, February 9, 2017).

Unfortunately, investigation of this feature has been very brief and so far limited to an opportunistic trip in 2008 (Brake 2009). A photograph of the workshop area with the floorboards pulled up shows a wedge-shaped arrangement of bricks that could have been a forge (Plate 26).

It is possible that the firebrick in the collection was removed from its original location in the smithy and moved down to one of the early buildings near the shore during the stabilization work that took place at Hebron starting in at least the 1970s (Jamie Brake, personal communication, February 9, 2017). If this is really the provenience of the brick, this analysis has shed some light on a little-understood chapter of the construction of the Hebron mission house and the source and nature of some of their construction material. However, it should also be noted that bricks and mortar were plentiful throughout the site (Loring and Arendt 2009:49).

**Conclusion**

Even though the context of the items within the Carol Brice-Bennett collection may have been lost, they still have value in the stories they contain and in the information they provide regarding the cultural heritage of the province.

The silverware from the house in Bareneed and the smoking pipes from the bottom of Conception Bay supply useful information about the sorts of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century material culture that was available on the island of Newfoundland. The stories within the objects speak of fraternal orders and possible forged hallmarks making teaspoons pass for something more expensive than what they actually were. The tiles from Red Bay remind us of the lengths the Basque whalers went to properly establish their premises in southern Labrador. The stone point from Okak Bay represents a third of all material recovered from that Maritime Archaic site while ten more artifacts are now analyzed for a Dorset site which has since been covered over with gravel. Finally, the brick from Hebron has opened up an interesting inquiry about very expensive industrial-level products being employed in the construction of a Moravian mission in northern Labrador - a question which future research at Hebron should address.
While projects such as this one are important in adding to the further understanding of the province’s past and establishing a healthy working relationship between the archaeological community and the general public, it should be remembered that unlicensed scavenging is considered illegal under the Newfoundland and Labrador Historic Resources Act (see http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/h04.htm for details). Any time an artifact is removed from its original spot, its context is lost and part of that story can no longer be recovered. Therefore, if one were to pick up an artifact or come across something of archaeological importance, it is important to write down when and where the object was found and, ideally, take a GPS location with a cellphone or any other device. Then, one should contact the Provincial Archaeology Office (or the Nunatsiavut Archaeology Office if the location is within the Inuit Land Claims area) so that they can do a proper investigation of the find.

In the meantime, the archaeological community will continue reaching out to people with private collections to step forward so that their materials can be analyzed, catalogued, and photographed for posterity. Nowhere is this more true than in Labrador where vast expanses of land and fewer opportunities for archaeological work requires community cooperation for research to take place. It is hoped that more people will share their collections, for the benefit of the public.
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