

The Loyalist Site on the Bliss Islands, Charlotte County, New Brunswick

University of New Brunswick
Archaeological Fieldschool

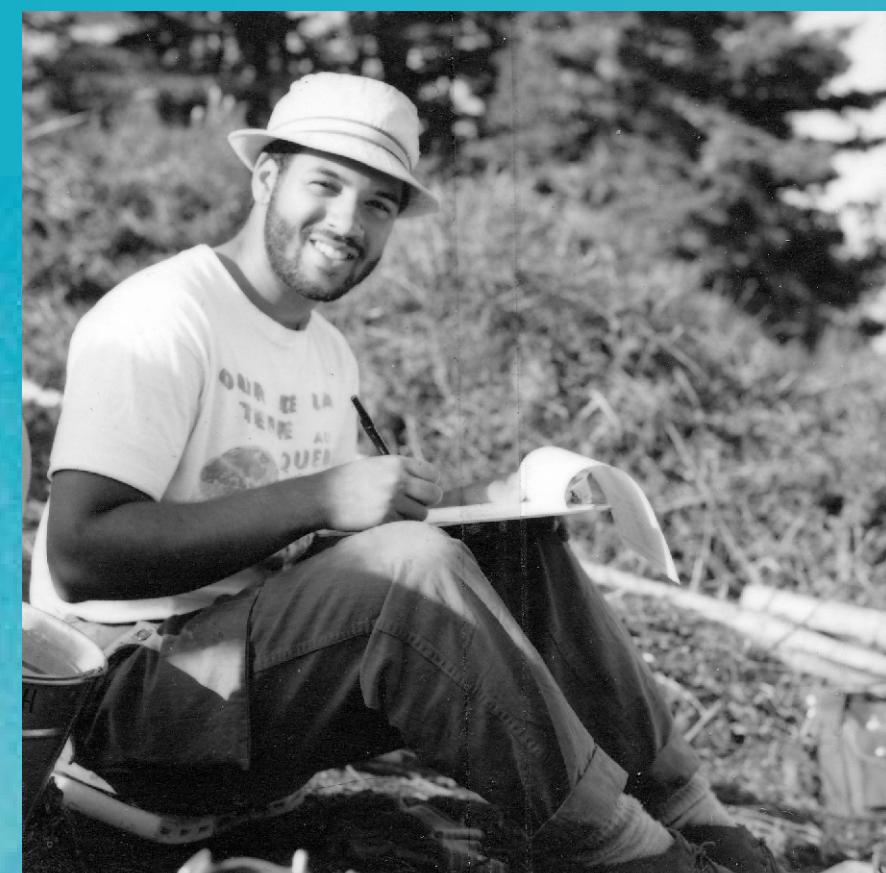
THE SAMUEL BLISS FAMILY HOMESTEAD (BgDr66)

The Loyalist Site on the Bliss Islands represents one of the earliest Loyalist settlements in Charlotte County. During the winter of 1783-84, Samuel Bliss and several comrades who he had served with him in the British military during the American Revolution constructed a house on the islands. Bliss received the islands as a land grant in 1784, while the area was still part of Nova Scotia; his grant was renewed under New Brunswick title in 1786.

Samuel Bliss and his family lived on the islands that were subsequently named for them from 1784 until Bliss's death in 1803. They operated a subsistence farm and fished the adjacent waters. Bliss was also involved in several commercial enterprises: He owned a schooner, *The Hazard*, with which he brought potatoes from Nova Scotia to St. Andrews, and had shares in lime kilns on the Letang Peninsula where the town of St. George was originally located.

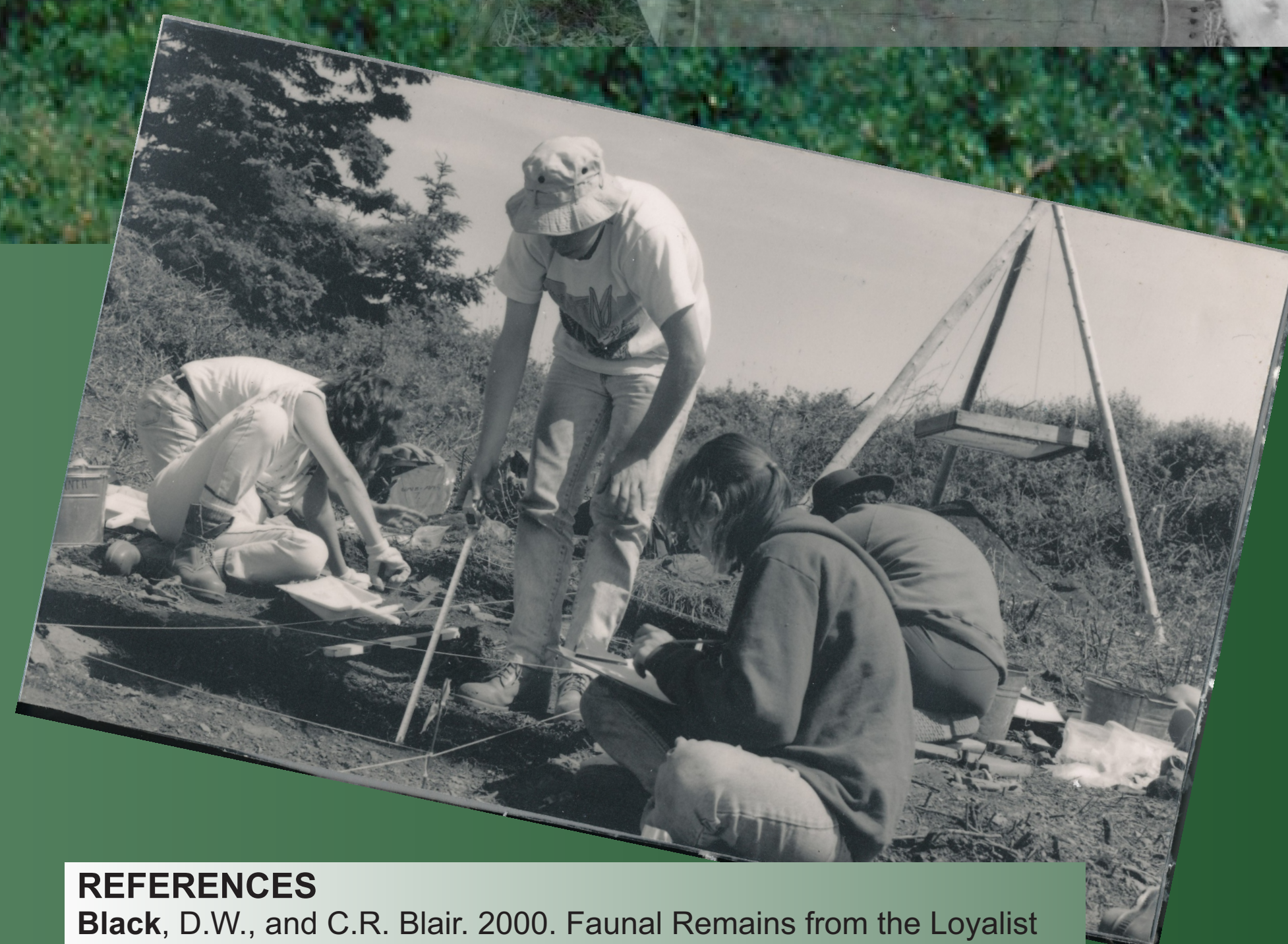
The homestead was abandoned after Samuel Bliss's death, and the site remained mostly undisturbed after the house collapsed sometime in the middle of the 19th century. In 1983, when the location was recorded as an archaeological site by David Black, all that remained on the surface was a shallow, rock-filled depression overgrown by brambles.

Beneath the surface are well-preserved traces of the Bliss family's life on the islands. During the summer of 1992, students from the University of New Brunswick excavated 10 m² of what may have been a dooryard immediately west of the house. They uncovered building stones, bricks and mortar, window and container glass, ceramics, fragments of metal tools and fittings, and food remains (the bones of domestic and wild animals). In the years since, the artifacts and other materials recovered from the excavation have been studied at the university.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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