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Cover Page Footnote

This article is a revision of a paper presented at the Society for Historical Archaeology 1999 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City in the symposium, "Chapters in the Early History of Historical Archaeology," chaired by Robert Schuyler and Richard Veit. I want to thank richard Koke for his comments on an earlier draft of this paper and for sharing with me his memories of an earlier time. I also wish to thank Paul Huey, who provided four of the photographs that appear in this article, and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation which printed photographs that were used in this article.

Early Military Sites Archaeology in New York State: An Interview with Richard J. Koke

David R. Starbuck

Military sites archaeology in New York State originated in the early 20th century with the pioneering work of William Calver and Reginald Bolton, working through the auspices of The New-York Historical Society. One of their youngest associates was Richard J. Koke who later assembled many of their articles into the seminal volume, History Written with Pick and Shovel. Koke was one of the best military sites archaeologists of his day and has a superb recollection of what it was like to conduct archaeology in the 1930s. This article presents some of Koke's memories, based on two interviews conducted with him in 1998. Examples of subsequent military sites archaeology in New York State are then presented so that the reader may compare early research endeavors with the development of modern historical archaeology as a more problem-oriented discipline.

L'archéologie des sites militaires dans l'Etat de New York a pris naissance au milieu du XXe siècle avec les travaux pionniers de William Carver et de Reginald Bolton réalisés sous les auspices de la Société historique de New York. Un de leurs plus jeunes associés a été Richard J. Koke qui a réuni plusieurs de leurs articles dans le volume intitulé , History Written with Pick and Shovel. Koke a été un des meilleurs archéologues de sites militaires de son temps et possède un superbe souvenir de ce que c'était que de faire de l'archéologie dans les années 1930. L'article présente certains des souvenirs de Koke fondés sur deux entrevues qu'il a données en 1998. Il est ensuite cité quelques exemples d'archéologie de sites militaires pratiquée subséquemment dans l'Etat de New York afin de permettre au lecteur de comparer la recherche primitive avec l'archéologie historique moderne en tant que discipline davantage appliquée à la résolution de problèmes.

Introduction

The names Calver and Bolton are primarily associated with a volume that first appeared in 1950, the classic *History Written with Pick and Shovel*, one of the earlier overviews in the field of historical archaeology. By the time the book appeared, however, both Calver and Bolton were already dead (Calver died in 1940 and Bolton in 1942), and the volume was actually a reprinting of articles that they had written many years earlier. Their books and articles described the historic sites archaeology they had conducted from the 1910s through the 1930s, chiefly in New York City and the Hudson Highlands. Both were superb writers, sometimes putting modern archaeologists to shame, yet by profession Bolton was an engineer and Calver a machinist. As they pursued

their hobby, surrounded by a large group of self-taught archaeologists, they excelled as cartographers and photographers and were superb at identifying material culture. One of them, Bolton, deserves credit for publishing what may be considered the first true synthesis in the field of historical archaeology, his elegant *Relics of the Revolution* (1916) (FIG. 1). In *Relics of the Revolution* and in *Washington Heights, Manhattan: Its Eventful Past* (1924), Bolton authored scholarly syntheses of military sites archaeology a full 70 to 80 years ago.

But was their work truly "historical archaeology," or must Calver and Bolton be viewed as merely avid collectors? It is easy to skim *History Written with Pick and Shovel*, noticing the illustrations of buttons, coins, sleeve links, and belt plates, and to conclude that they were nothing more than old-fash-

RELICS OF THE REVOLUTION

THE STORY OF THE DISCOVERY
OF THE BURIED REMAINS OF MILITARY LIFE
IN FORTS AND CAMPS ON
MANHATTAN ISLAND



By

REGINALD PELHAM BOLTON

Trustee of

The American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society

Member of

The New York Historical Society, The City History Club, Etc.

Author of

"The Defense and Reduction of Mount Washington"
"The Indians of Washington Heights," Etc.

Published by the Author, 55 Liberty Street, New York City
1916

Figure 1. A contemporary advertisement for the *Relics of the Revolution* (Bolton 1916).



Figure 2. Richard J. Koke and his wife Mary, Peru, New York, Nov. 14, 1998. (Courtesy of Paul Huey.)

ioned antiquarians. After all, archaeology around the turn of the century was a long time ago, and Calver and Bolton have been dead for about 60 years. In order to understand better the context within which they worked, however, I managed to locate and interview Richard J. Koke, the man who compiled *History Written with Pick and Shovel* some 50 years ago. Koke was Curator at The New-York Historical Society at the time, and that is the institution where most of the Calver and Bolton manuscripts and artifacts continue to be stored. Koke wrote the introduction to the book and was a very important excavator in his own right in the 1930s, digging at Fort Montgomery from 1935 to 1937 while he was a historian at the Trailside Historical Museum, and at Stony Point from 1937 until 1940 while he was curator at the Stony Point Battlefield Museum.

In the 1930s, Richard Koke wrote excellent archaeological reports that are still being used by the New York State Bureau of Historic Sites. After World War II he never returned to archaeology and spent the rest of his professional life as a curator. Fortunately, Koke was much younger than Calver and Bolton, and his long separation from the field of archaeology has made it possible for him to speak to the goals and concerns of the 1930s, "uncontaminated" by 60 years of evolving techniques and academic theorizing.

Acting on a tip from Paul Huey, I found Richard Koke living in the town of Peru, New York, just south of the Canadian border (FIG. 2). When I interviewed him in 1998 he was 82, with a curator's memory for details and eager to reminisce about Calver, Bolton, and the others who founded military sites archaeology in New York State. I tape-recorded Koke during two lengthy interviews on November 12 and 14, and through him I was transported back to the days of Calver and Bolton.

1998 Interview with Richard J. Koke

When and where were you born?

I was born in New York City on September 19, 1916.

What first caused you to become involved in archaeology?

I had always been interested in history. When I was a kid, I lived in the city just a few blocks from the American Museum of Natural History. I was in and out of the place all the time. You would go there and watch the dinosaurs and all that sort of thing. They had this wonderful collection on display of Indian artifacts found on northern Manhattan Island in the Inwood section by these explorers, Calver and Bolton. I got interested in that, and of course I started wandering around and going up there and seeing the sites.

And in the course of time, it was 1934 or so, I met Calver, and I knew him until he died in 1940. We used to chat all the time. I would go up to his house and chat about the digging and of course the name of Bolton came up. I met Bolton once. Calver and Bolton were great buddies. Calver was born in Brooklyn in 1859 and when he was a boy, his family went

out of town and lived up at Garrison, New York, across the Hudson River from West Point about ten years, during the time of the Civil War and into the 1870s. Calver used to meet James Nelson, one of the local antiquarians up there. Nelson was a farmer who was interested in history, and he used to get military buttons. Somebody would send him military buttons from New York saying these were all Revolutionary War buttons and what were they? Nelson kept many of these.

Calver developed an interest that way, and also through the fact that near Garrison were the remains of an old Revolutionary War camp, which he did nothing with at the time. But eventually he left Garrison, and in the 1870s he got a job as a machinist and worked with the railroads in the West and up in Canada. In the early 1880s he came back to New York and got a job with the transit system, the old elevated system, as a machinist and eventually became foreman of the elevated machine shops up at 99th Street, 2nd Avenue/3rd Avenue, a position which he held until he retired in 1930. When he got to New York in the 1880s, the Inwood section of northern Manhattan was all open country then, farms and whatnot. It wasn't built up the way it is now. Basically it was about ten miles out of town, and at that time there were people up there who hadn't been down to the city in ten years. But Calver wandered around, he met these local people and started finding arrowheads. He first became interested in the Indians. There was one spot there, on the east side of Inwood hill, that was the site of a large Indian village, and wandering through there he'd find pewter buttons. At the same time he was doing that, this other chap, Reginald Pelham Bolton, sort of appeared on the scene.

Bolton was an Englishman, he was born in 1856, and he came over to America in the late 1870s for a few years. He was an engineer, he worked down in Delaware and then he returned to England. He came back in 1890, settled in New York, and bought a new house up on 158th Street in Manhattan. He started getting interested in the history of the place. Of course at that time, even where he was living at 158th Street, it was still relatively open. Bolton's house is still there at 638 West

158th Street. That's west of Broadway, going down toward the Hudson River, one of a series of row houses.

Calver's last home was an apartment at the corner of 136th and Broadway. But before that, in the 1890s, he lived on East 107th Street, and then on East 112th Street, West 116th Street, West 114th, West 112th, and then he went up to the Bronx and lived on Hewett Place. He moved to 600 West 136th Street in 1915, and he lived there until he died. His work was over on East 98th/99th Street, near 2nd and 3rd Avenues. It's Harlem now. It's still sort of open.

This digging and historical research was a hobby with all these chaps. Calver started wandering around up in the northern area of Manhattan Island in the 1880s, during the course of which he met Alexander Chenowith, who was an engineer with the Croton Aqueduct system. Now Chenowith was based up at the Highbridge section of northern Manhattan, the Washington Heights area, and he used to wander up through the Inwood area too. He became very much interested in the Indians, he found a lot of Indian material, and he excavated one of their rock shelters. Calver ran across Chenowith, among others. It's an interesting thing, with both Calver and Bolton, that they started out looking for Indian material. Calver eventually drifted more into the military end of it.

Bolton started out with the Indians, then he got interested in the Revolutionary War, and wrote and excavated for years in that field. Later in life, in the 1920s and '30s, he drifted back into Indian research more than the others (FIG. 3). But while they were traveling through Inwood, looking for Indian remains, he also began to find surface finds of buttons and so forth up at the Seaman Avenue area where there was one of these large Indian camps. This later proved to be also the site of the Revolutionary War hut camp of the 17th Regiment of Foot, located on Dyckman farm (FIG. 4). Eventually, wandering through the streets and observing the cuttings, they would find the traces of these huts coming out, and they excavated. It's a fascinating story.

Calver and Bolton didn't become tied up with The New-York Historical Society as a field exploration committee until 1918. They



Figure 3. Edward Hagaman Hall (left) and William Calver (right) excavating Indian shell pocket, 212th Street, New York City, 1904. (Collection of The New-York Historical Society, negative #1603.)



Figure 4. Stone fireplace of dug-out Hut S, on the Dyckman Farm. Reginald Pelham Bolton is standing and William Calver is seated next to this very intact hut fireplace at the 17th Regiment camp. (Collection of The New-York Historical Society; also in Calver and Bolton 1950.)



Figure 5. "British Hut Camp on the Dyckman Farm", an oil painting of the British 17th Regiment camp by John Ward Dunsmore (Bolton 1916).

were digging for 15–20 years before that. The artifacts they found were variously disposed of in their own collections. They gave to the American Museum of Natural History the Indian material they found in the 1880s, 1890s, and the first decade of the 1900s. Their digging period in the Hudson Highlands was very short because they had to go from New York, and they could only spend a few hours at a time.

Which archaeologists did you work with before you began directing your own digs?

I knew Calver for six years before he died, and I was interested in this sort of stuff as an offshoot of first seeing it in the American Museum of Natural History. He used to tell me all these things, and I used to ask him. These chaps, they all complemented one another. Calver was good at excavation, but he was also good at writing and photography. He used to photograph all of these places, and

the old glass negatives are all in the collection of The New-York Historical Society. I went over them and catalogued them. As for Bolton, he was good at writing, but he also was a cartographer so he produced the maps of the sites they excavated.

John Ward Dunsmore was very active with them at the time of the First World War and was a very good artist. Being an artist, Dunsmore was able to draw reconstructions of the Revolutionary War hut camps, and in one case he prepared an oil rendition of what the British 17th Regiment camp looked like (FIG. 5). I only met Dunsmore once, as he was closing his studio. I went down there with Leroy E. Kimball and he had a lot of musket balls, artifacts, and buckles in his own collection which he gave to the Stony Point Battlefield Museum. The stuff he gave was from the 17th Regiment camp.

They also had their own little collections, stuff they liked. Calver had a very good col-

lection of buttons. That was the basis of all the articles he wrote. After he died, his button collection went to Oscar T. Barck, a wonderful man. Barck lived in Brooklyn and sort of drifted in with them about the time of the First World War. He was a bookkeeper or accountant for a well-known clothing store down on Broadway. When Barck died in 1952 or 1953 (he's buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery in Flushing), the collection was sold to a button collector.

Calver died in '40, Bolton in February of '42, and Edward Hagaman Hall died in 1936 or 1937. Hall sort of hooked up with them in northern Manhattan and in the adjacent mainland of Bronx about 1903 or 1904. Hall was such a wonderful student, the man was fantastic. He was secretary of the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, he was a writer, he could draw beautiful maps, and he was a wonderful chap. He was one of those quiet fellows in the background nobody ever hears of, but if it wasn't for people like that, you wouldn't have anything to work with at all. Hall and Bolton were the two that dug up the remains of Margaret Corbin down below West Point. She's reinterred in the West Point Cemetery, and it was Hall and Bolton who did that. At that time, knowledge of these sites was sort of in its infancy, and there wasn't a broad knowledge or general interest in archaeology. None of these fellows was looking for money, they were just interested.

One chap with Calver and Bolton, Thurston, just happened to live in a house up in the Bronx, and he'd see these two fellows, Calver and Bolton, in the field next door, digging away. One day he walked over and said, "what are you fellows looking for?" And then they told him, we're looking for this and that, you know, Fort whatnot. And the first thing you know, he was recruited, and they used him. But Thurston used to complain later on that Calver and Bolton would use him for the heavy digging, and when they got down 3 to 4 feet into the earth, looking for these old hut sites, then they would take over. You know, when they got down to the artifact-bearing level, then they would say, "You go sit over there, and we'll finish up."

But Calver and Bolton basically were the ones who really got everything going. They

found a lot of these Revolutionary War military camps over the years on northern Manhattan Island, like the hut camp of the British 17th Regiment of Foot, the Fort Washington barracks, the hut camp of the Hessian Body Regiment, Fort George, and Fort Tryon. They were excavating all over the place, and at the same time they were also excavating the sites of colonial houses.

Much later, in the '50s and '60s, Theodore Kasimiroff became very much involved because they were clearing blocks of buildings to build skyscrapers. In the early days, the shoreline of New York expanded into the Hudson River, so clearing away and going down, they started encountering logs from all of the old wharves that were put up in the 1700s and 1800s. They found some of the elements of ships. Kasimiroff got involved in that, and he was down there all the time, digging and taking photographs. I heard him give a speech, absolutely fantastic. But he died without writing anything.

Were there any archaeologists who were not liked within the field? Were there "young Turks" versus older, more-established archaeologists?

Any archaeologists not liked? No. There were not that many around.

Young Turks? No. They weren't vying for attention. There was no jealousy or anything like that. Calver had a very extensive correspondence with military students throughout the country and in England also, with the British units. There was camaraderie. They would get together and talk about the places they had dug.

Were training sessions held to teach how to do archaeology? Were archaeology meetings or conferences held on a regular basis? Did professors conduct anything like the modern summer field schools in archaeology?

When I was at Bear Mountain State Park, from '35 to '37, and we were working on excavating the outer redoubt at Fort Clinton, some of the helpers we had were CCC and WPA workers. They were all part of the government relief program. It was just come on over, they shoveled and shook the sieve, and if something turned up, everybody saw it. We didn't have a training course or anything like that.



Figure 6. Probably hut #2, also called Hut B, 17th Regiment hut camp, Dyckman farm, ca. 1914. William Calver is standing at right (with spade-fork); Reginald Pelham Bolton is in the excavation. (Collection of The New-York Historical Society, negative #5502-A.)

Archaeology meetings? You would hear about them, but not much.

Summer field schools? No.

Did you make a living full-time from doing archaeology? Was archaeology viewed as just being a hobby?

I did while I was at Bear Mountain, but it was museum work per se. I think that people were interested and doing it on their own, feeling "This is a lot of fun and I like it," just like Calver and Bolton. They had other jobs, and archaeology was just a hobby, a nice outlet. About the only places where they made a living from archaeology were places like the American Museum of Natural History.

What other types of workers did you use? (And what were their ages?) Did you know any African-

Americans who took part on digs? Any women? Did you let youngsters participate?

Ages? I would say in their twenties or so. In the '30s it wasn't a matter of large groups or anything. Just a few people and that's it.

African-Americans? No.

Women? No. But in 1967, Jack Mead was the director of the Bear Mountain Trailside Museum that was doing some of the later archaeological work at Fort Montgomery, which is just across the creek. He had a girl working there with him.

Youngsters? Well, no. They used to bring school groups around to watch us dig, but they did not do the actual digging.

Did the public come to visit your digs? Did children often ask you how to become archaeologists?

The Public? Yes (FIG. 6).



Figure 7. Reginald Pelham Bolton (far right) and William Calver (at bottom) excavating at Fort Montgomery, a "circular stone watchtower or blockhouse on line of walls at south entrance of the fort, summer of 1916." (Collection of The New-York Historical Society, negative #27477.)

Children? I don't remember, but they would show up and say, "Ooo, look at the cannonballs" and all that. I don't recall them ever asking, "How do you get involved with that?"

At which sites did you personally direct the projects?

I worked at Bear Mountain State Park and at Stony Point Battlefield Historic Site, both owned by the State of New York. Stony Point Battlefield was acquired by the State in 1897 and was held in custody (for the State) by the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society (AHPs) from 1897 to 1946, and by the Palisades Interstate Park from 1946 to the present. It was under the administration of the AHPs when I was there in the 1930s and 1940s. James Burggraf was also down at Bear Mountain when I was there, and he continued for some years afterwards. His big interest was in the Indians, and he found a lot of rock shelters.

The Bear Mountain Bridge was built in 1923 or 1924, and at that time nobody involved with the Bear Mountain Bridge knew anything about the fort that was there or was interested in it. The Trailside Historical Museum was built in 1934, and some of the other buildings were earlier, but it wasn't until I got there in 1935 that any thought was given to archaeology. The attitude was, "The fort was there, it was captured by the British, that's nice."

In 1916 Calver, Bolton, and Hall were up at Fort Montgomery, scouting around some of these buildings, and they did a little excavating in the remains of the main barracks foundation and in front. They also excavated a circular pit there. It went way down, they never could figure out just what it was, but when they dug down, they found timbers and spikes. They didn't do much, one day's work, that sort of thing (FIG. 7). They prepared a report, but nothing came of it. When I got there in 1935, I made a query, learned that they had been there, and two copies of the

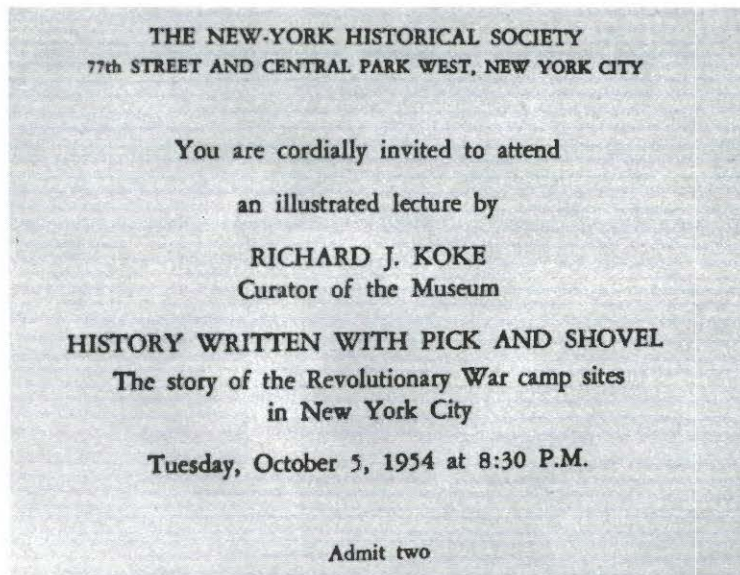


Figure 8. A printed invitation to attend a 1954 lecture by Richard J. Koke at The New-York Historical Society. (Courtesy of Richard J. Koke.)

report did turn up. One was in the file of the Palisade Interstate Park, up at Bear Mountain, and the other was in Bolton's file.

We decided to do some archaeological work, and I was digging down at Fort Montgomery from 1935 to 1937 and at Stony Point Battlefield from 1937 through the next three years or so. A big added incentive was when John D. Rockefeller got the idea to restore Williamsburg. The Rockefeller people said okay, go do it, and started the restoration work. But in order to do it, they first had to have some archaeological knowledge. That's when you can say a lot of this began. But then the war came on, and I went back to Stony Point Battlefield for a summer later on in 1946 or 1947. I was also at Saratoga National Historical Park in 1947 for about eight months. They had done some work before I got there, at the Balcarres Redoubt. Later in 1947 I went to the New-York Historical Society, and I was there for thirty-odd years as a curator.

Did you publish most of your work? Do you still have any unpublished manuscripts? Do you wish you could have published more?

Yes. I put it down in black and white, on both Bear Mountain State Park and Stony

Point Battlefield, and I'd like to publish on all of this early stuff. It's just a matter of being able to handle one thing at a time, and I've got other things to do first. We were down at Stony Point this past spring, and I was surprised. They have got a lot of the things I wrote in the files down there. I found a few maps there that I didn't even remember doing.

Were you asked to give many public presentations/talks about your work? To what sorts of groups?

I talked at New-York Historical on *History Written with Pick and Shovel*, on the Calver and Bolton diggings (FIG. 8); at the Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan; and at the New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site in 1966, to the first meeting of the Symposium on Northeast Historical Archaeology.

Did the press take an interest in archaeology back then?

The newspapers used to cover Calver and Bolton. You'd see these articles about finding this, finding that. The reporters were interested in digging, you know. Calver and Bolton didn't go out looking for them. Because of all their work they became widely

known, and every now and then all of these reporters would show up and want to know this and want to know that.

What relevant books were available to you back then, written by or for archaeologists?

I used to read the things that Calver and Bolton wrote, and they wrote quite a bit. Calver published a lot on the military accoutrements, buttons, badges, belt plates and all that sort of thing, which were published by The New-York Historical Society. Some were also published by the Fort Ticonderoga people.

Did you ever dig prehistoric sites?

Just the historic. What I dug was just the military.

Are there any sites that you would still like to see excavated?

There are a lot of lost camps in the Hudson Highlands. It's interesting that Calver and Bolton started out in the New York City area, and then they expanded their activities to a very prolific military site on Staten Island, the Richmond redoubts, and here and there. What they did was drift up to the Hudson Highlands where there were a lot of these military camps of the American Revolution. Some of these places were occupied as adjuncts for the defense of West Point. They went under a variety of names and were mentioned in diaries and orderly books, like Soldiers' Fortune, and New Boston, and Hampshire huts, Connecticut village, York huts, and there was Camp Robinson's Farm and a number of others. They were occupied during the war, and when the Revolution ended, in 1783, the camps were abandoned. Over the years, they just were forgotten, buried in the wilderness.

Calver and Bolton developed an interest in that, and they managed to dig up quite a few of those camps. They were always looking for others, but there were some they could never pinpoint.

Were your excavations monitored by any state- or federally-employed archaeologists? Who?

When we dug in the 1930s at Bear Mountain and at Stony Point, there was nobody

around to monitor. We just said, "let's find out what's here" and started working. In the '30s, Calver was interested in the military fort on Constitution Island, from the 1775-1777 period, and they had a lot of WPA and CCC help around. I don't know who started this idea, but the federal government got interested in repairing part of the ruins at Fort Constitution. They sort of had that sort of supervision going on for that period, which was supervised by the National Park Service and its office at Morristown, New Jersey. Dr. Francis Ronalds was the man in charge at the time. Melvin Weig was another chap under him who was involved at Constitution. Back in the 1930s, the National Park Service also sort of had their eye on Fort Ticonderoga, hoping that Stephen Pell (the Pell Family) would turn the fort over to them.

I remember, back in the '30s, one of those walls at Fort Ticonderoga caved in, or was ready to cave in. They blamed Milo King for it. Milo King was the general manager under the Pells. Milo King and Stephen Pell had served in World War I in Europe, and they became friends. After the war, Pell gave King his job as manager, as supervisor, of the activities up at Ticonderoga. Of course they were doing all of this repair work, and at some point in the '30s some wall buckled or broke, and they blamed King for it. King eventually left them and moved up to Port Henry and opened up a liquor store.

What excavation techniques did you use? How did you decide where to dig?

An example would be the hut camp of the 17th Regiment of Foot, the British camp that Calver and Bolton consented to work on (FIG. 9). In the course of street excavation, signs of some of these huts would appear. They excavated them, fireplaces and whatnot, at which point they figured the huts were spaced "x" number of feet apart. Once they arrived at a pattern—i.e., the line was going in this direction, and they were spaced "x" far apart—then they could measure over so many feet and dig down and strike another hut. Calver developed what they called a sounding rod, a long rod with a handle on it for probing, and they just thrust it into the earth. If there was a hard-packed floor level below the surface,

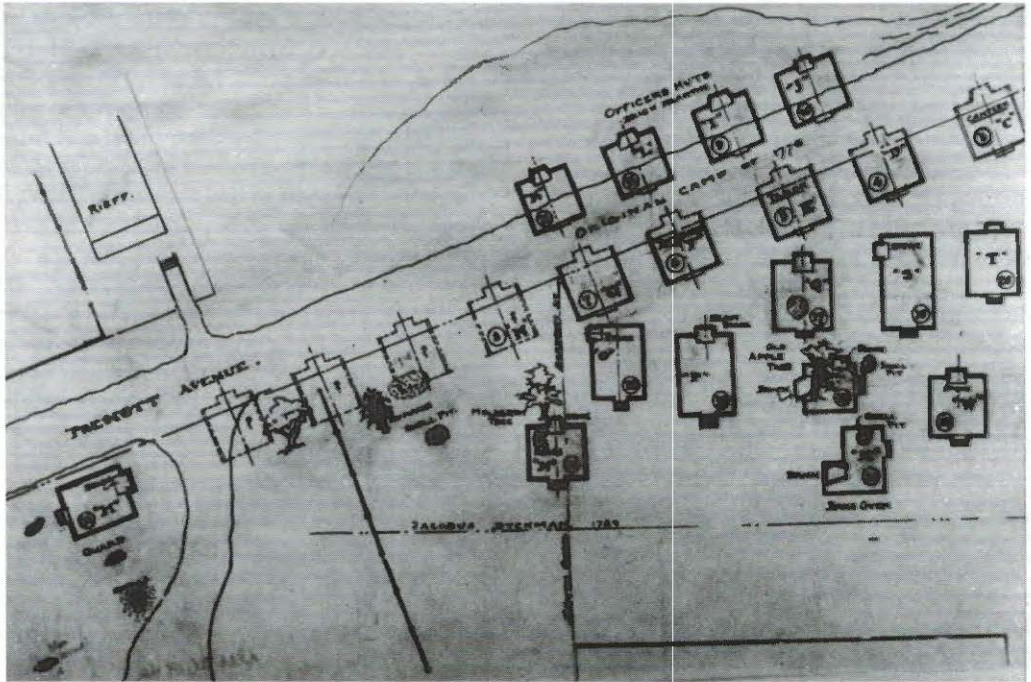


Figure 9. Part of the plan by Reginald Bolton of the British 17th Regiment camp on Dyckman Farm, drawn before August 1918. (Courtesy of Richard J. Koke.)

they would strike it, and they would figure this must be a hut. They were very good at doing that.

What did your typical excavation equipment consist of? Did you sift everything? What determined when you sifted the dirt?

The shovel, the sifter, and that was it (FIG. 10). We sifted everything though. If we had to cover a certain area, we sifted every shovelful. Trowels? No.

Which features or artifacts did you map or photograph in situ?

I don't recall that we photographed in the outer redoubt at Fort Montgomery. We just worked along, we didn't photograph anything in situ. We had a constant floor level in the fort. The objects that must have fallen, the cannonballs, were all in that level. At Stony Point Battlefield, one of the redoubts there, I struck the remains of the charred gun platform. After the Americans captured the

British works, they burned everything. So we found the charred remains.

As you finished each project, where did the artifacts usually go for storage? Where did your excavation records go?

Artifacts? At Bear Mountain State Park, and at Stony Point Battlefield too, they went into the museum collection. They stayed right on the grounds.

Records? The ones I did are down there. I wrote them up at Bear Mountain.

Did you view yourself as asking serious "research questions" about the past, or were you chiefly looking for interesting artifacts and interesting features? That is, what did you hope to learn? Were you chiefly attempting to learn more about military life styles, about differences between soldiers and officers?

Both at Stony Point Battlefield and Bear Mountain State Park, we were interested to find what the character of the site was like.

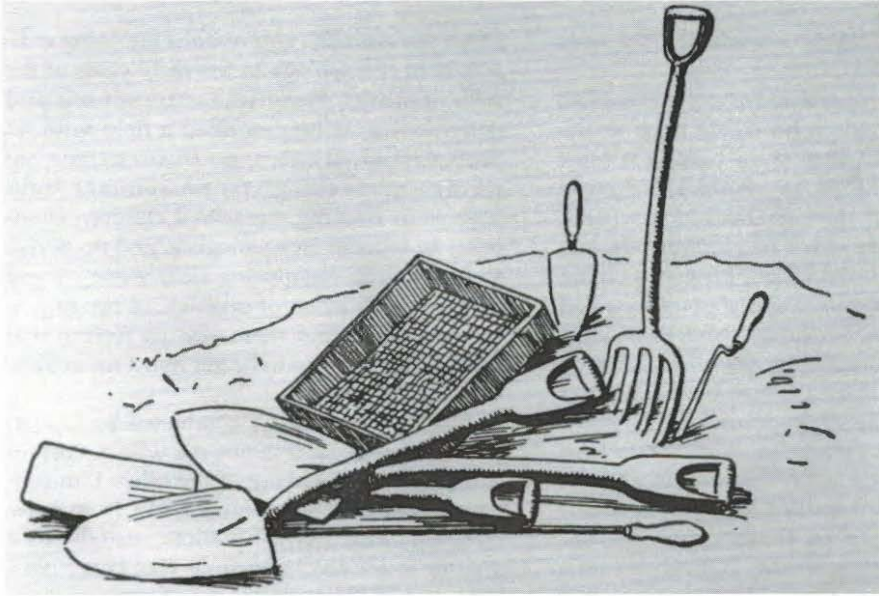


Figure 10. Some of the typical excavation tools of the early 20th century. Taken from the printed invitation to attend Richard Koke's lecture at The New-York Historical Society (see FIG. 8). (Courtesy of Richard J. Koke.)

We were just interested in learning what was underneath the earth and what the character of the fortification was like. Where was the floor level? Are there indications of gun platforms or parapets? It was more-or-less straightforward.

Was there a sense of some archaeologists chiefly being field technicians, some being synthesizers, and some being theoreticians? Was anyone viewed as being a theoretician at that time?

All that sort of stuff never entered our minds. None of it. None of them were archaeologists or archaeologically-trained. They were all in different fields. None of them were trained in the least. You could say, basically, for one reason or another, they just sort of drifted into it.

Was there a sense of urgency in your work? A sense that artifacts or sites had to be dug or rescued before they were lost forever?

No. We worked at it when we got a chance. The sites were there—for 150 to 200 years they were there. Nobody ever did anything with them so our attitude was, let's see what the ground reveals.

Of course, it's a whole different kettle of fish now. A lot of sites are in danger of being

destroyed, with some road coming through or a building, and they have to rush out to dig it. For example, with the African Burial Ground in lower Manhattan, they were putting up this Federal building, and all of a sudden they started screaming, "my God, my God, a graveyard, a graveyard. Don't do that, you'll destroy the best of it." They had to rush in.

Was there a belief that part of each site had to be left for future archaeologists, that it wasn't good to dig too much?

No. If we had the time, we would do the whole job. Some of these questions are things we never even thought of.

Were you the person who personally made the decision to publish History Written with Pick and Shovel and who decided which articles to reprint in the book? Were there many other articles written by Calver and Bolton that could not be included in the book?

I think I must have been the one who got the idea together. Of course, at The New-York Historical Society we all talked about it. The idea was to get the articles by Calver that had been published in the *Quarterly Bulletin of The New-York Historical Society* over a period of years, to get them all together because there

were a group of military students who were interested in that.

I remember one article we did not publish was by Bolton which he wrote back in the 1920s, on the excavation of the cottage of Anne Hutchinson in the Bronx. Anne Hutchinson came down from New England in the 1640s, driven out because of her religious beliefs, and she settled up in the Bronx area, in Pelham Bay Park. They thought at one point they had found the site of her house, and they excavated an old foundation up there which Bolton dug up and published under the heading of "Excavation of Mistress Anne Hutchinson's Cottage." But it turned out some years later that the house had actually stood in another place. Bolton had written this article, but it would have served no purpose to republish something that was wrong. Once you start getting a lot of these things down in black and white, people believe it.

Also, *History Written with Pick and Shovel* did not include the articles Calver wrote for the *The Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum*. It was just articles in the *New-York Historical Society Quarterly*.

Examples of Subsequent Military Sites Archaeology in New York State

For Richard Koke and his intellectual predecessors, Calver and Bolton, their brand of military sites archaeology in the 1930s and earlier may seem simplistic to us today, certainly unpretentious, and there is no denying that their techniques were unrefined. Still, it was a time when archaeologists with no formal training dug for the sheer pleasure of it, for the thrill of exposing huts, fireplaces, buttons, and the like. There were no research questions, yet the expansion of New York City in the decades that followed destroyed much of what remained. The data obtained by Calver, Bolton and their friends is practically the only archaeological record of the Revolutionary War in New York City, where so much once existed. No wonder Calver and Bolton are almost legendary today (Gruber 1984).

The reason for interviewing Richard Koke, one of the few historical archaeologists who survives from that era, was to learn more

about the attitudes and reasons for doing military sites archaeology in the early years of the 20th century. Koke was entertaining and enlightening as he described a field with no professional rivalries, no theoreticians, no women archaeologists, no summer field schools or training, no school children clamoring to become archaeologists, and no SHPO archaeologists monitoring field work. There also was little sense of urgency, of needing to "rescue" sites, and there was no feeling that part of each site had to be left intact for archaeologists of the future.

But the archaeology conducted by Calver, Bolton, and Koke was not the whole story in New York State. Many of the other 18th-century military sites running north from New York City also saw excavations, usually as a prelude to site reconstruction. (See Huey 1983, 1986, and 1997 for summaries of some of these other projects.) One of the better known examples was Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain, first opened to the public in 1909. The architect in charge of the restoration was Alfred C. Bossom, and his workmen dug around the foundations of the original walls and barracks buildings and saved the artifacts they found. Early activities at Ticonderoga were collecting, not archaeology as practiced in that day, but a serious amateur dig was conducted at Fort Ti in 1957, at which time J. Duncan Campbell exposed a storehouse and a blacksmith shop (Campbell 1958).

Just north of Ticonderoga, also on Lake Champlain, the French built Fort St. Frederic in 1734, and extensive digs were conducted there in the 1910s and 1920s. Much of the work was directed by Annie Witherbee, and bake ovens were exposed, part of the citadel, and a breech-loading swivel cannon. Since then, Fort St. Frederic and the English fort at Crown Point have seen a great deal of archaeology, with the best work directed since 1975 by Lois Feister, Paul Huey, and Charles Fisher, with teams from the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. These very successful projects at Crown Point have included digging inside the soldiers' and officers' barracks, and also inside provincial officers' huts (Fisher 1995). Lois Feister has been able to demonstrate archaeologically that the

floors and fireplaces in officers' rooms were much more expensively built than those in ordinary soldiers' rooms (1984).

Work on the Revolutionary War hut sites at the New Windsor Cantonment began in 1915 when William Calver, assisted by John Ward Dunsmore and Oscar T. Barck, excavated an officers' hut (Huey 1997:75), and then continued in the 1960s when John Mead excavated a Massachusetts Brigade hut site (1980). The 1980s saw renewed activity at New Windsor as the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation conducted several excavations there, and the director, Charles Fisher, produced a series of publications on hut sites, artifacts, and the "Temple of Virtue" (1983, 1986a, 1986b).

Some of the most extensive military sites archaeology in New York State has occurred at the Saratoga Battlefield (Saratoga National Historical Park), on the west side of the Hudson River about 30 miles north of Albany. It was there in the community of Stillwater that American forces stopped General Burgoyne's advance in the fall of 1777. Serious archaeology did not begin in Saratoga until 1940 and 1941 when Robert Ehrich worked there with laborers from the Civilian Conservation Corps, at which time they exposed sections of the British and American lines, together with the Balcarres and Breymann Redoubts (Ehrich 1942). Later, John Cotter excavated in the Balcarres Redoubt and at the Neilson farm, which had been occupied by American officers. Both Cotter and Edward Larrabee, working independently between 1958 and 1964, also dug in the yards around the Schuyler House in nearby Schuylerville, a prominent Hudson River home that had been burned by Burgoyne's forces during the British retreat (Cotter 1958; Larrabee 1960). In the 1970s, Dean Snow conducted in Saratoga one of the first mapping projects ever to be undertaken at any major historic battlefield in the United States. Between 1972 and 1975, Snow relied heavily upon low-level aerial photographs as he prepared a series of base maps that documented roads, earthworks, and foundations at the time of the battles (Snow 1977). Later, in the 1980s, David Starbuck directed excavations at the site of the American Head-

quarters and along some of the British defensive lines (Starbuck 1988).

Moving into central New York, archaeology was critical in the interpretation and reconstruction of the site of Fort Stanwix in Rome, where in 1970 the National Park Service commenced excavations at this Revolutionary War log fort. Fort Stanwix (1758-1781) halted a British army led by Lt. Colonel Barry St. Leger in 1777, and the 1970s saw the complete excavation and rebuilding of the fort as a major tourist attraction (Hanson and Hsu 1975).

Farther to the west, excavations at Old Fort Niagara State Historic Site have been ongoing since 1979 under the direction of Stuart Scott and Patricia Scott (Scott and Scott 1990). Located 14 miles north of Niagara Falls, Fort Niagara was begun in 1726, and it dominated the Niagara Portage route. While Fort Niagara was initially a French site, it eventually was surrendered to an attacking British army in 1759. Archaeology there has been used to aid in the interpretation of the still-standing fort, and comparatively little digging has yet been done relative to the immense size of the site.

Moving back to the eastern edge of New York, archaeology has also played a prominent role at Fort William Henry (1755-1757), a British outpost located at the southern end of Lake George. The site is best known as the scene of the action in James Fenimore Cooper's novel, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826). Stanley Gifford dug there in 1953 and 1954, just prior to the reconstruction of the log fort (Gifford 1955). Gifford was given just two years in which to locate original floor levels, the bases of stone walls, casemate rooms, and the boundaries of the fort. Most notably, Gifford dug a sizeable corner of the military cemetery which contained many smallpox victims who had died just before the "massacre" in August of 1757. Gifford's pioneering effort has now been followed by four years of excavations by Adirondack Community College, with students excavating in the parade ground, inside the fort's original well, and in dumps outside the fort. The current work, directed by David Starbuck, is intended to reassess the accuracy of the reconstruction that was done in the 1950s, but also to further doc-

ument just how the massacre transpired (Starbuck 1991, 1993, 1999).

Also in the village of Lake George, a French and Indian War redoubt, Fort Gage, was excavated in 1975 by Paul Huey, Lois Feister, and members of the Auringer-Seelye Chapter of the New York State Archaeological Association (Feister and Huey 1985). Because it was a salvage project necessitated by the construction of a Ramada Inn, it was possible to excavate only a portion of the fort, but there still was time to expose part of the moat, the breastwork, lime kilns, and a possible blockhouse that stood inside the fort.

More recent military research has included eight years of excavations (1991–1998) by Adirondack Community College at French and Indian War sites in Fort Edward on the Hudson River, where British huts, barracks, a storehouse, a latrine, and even a smallpox hospital have been exposed on Rogers Island (Starbuck 1997, 1999). Between Fort Edward itself, located on the east bank of the Hudson, and the huge Rogers Island encampment on an island in the river, teams led by David Starbuck have exposed and studied almost every category of short-term military structure that existed in the 1750s.

Final Thoughts

Looking back over the past 30 to 40 years, the above-mentioned projects are only a sampling of the many excavations conducted at 18th-century military sites in New York State. Researchers have now undertaken many more excavations at military sites in upstate New York than was ever possible in the New York City area. Once future archaeologists inevitably compare modern recording techniques and research questions with the accomplishments of Calver and Bolton over 60 years ago, they will no doubt conclude that strategies and goals markedly changed in the second half of the 20th century as college and state-sponsored research programs and mitigation efforts came to dominate this field. It is hoped, however, that they will recognize that modern scholars have been just as passionate about understanding patterning on military

sites as Calver and Bolton were about finding buttons so many years ago. Nevertheless, a fundamental change over the past century has been that the first generation of military sites archaeologists was able to expose sufficiently large areas that they could actually see the horizontal patterning of huts and features at the sites they were exploring. Then, by mid-century, military sites archaeology was being used as a necessary prelude to site reconstruction. Today, archaeology is much more restrictive in comparison, the result of efforts to protect cultural resources for future generations. As the amount of digging has decreased, it has become necessary to interpret site layouts with far less tangible evidence. For this reason, it may prove difficult to increase our understanding of military sites very much beyond the knowledge that Calver and Bolton already possessed some 80 to 100 years ago.

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