

FORT GEORGE ADVICE

The Newsletter of the Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) Alliance

PO BOX 26, LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK 12845

FALL 2005

President's Message

By Herman C. Brown, President

Summer 2005 is in the past. The vibrant fall colors are rapidly returning to the Lake George Battlefield Park and its majestic surroundings. Winter and its trappings will soon follow. Now is the time to reflect on the happenings of the past few months.

The event of greatest significance at the Park was the departure of its Conservation Operations Supervisor Richard "Dick" C. Wojcik. Dick's departure is greeted with mixed emotions. One is of great sorrow, for we, the Park and all others who have associated with him at the Park over the past few years will greatly miss his dedication and many talents. Before his departure, I had the pleasure of presenting Dick, on behalf of the Alliance, a Certificate of Appreciation for his Outstanding Service to the Lake George Battlefield Park over these past few years (see the accompanying photo). The other is a sense of joy, for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has recognized Dick's past achievements, many talents and tireless devotion to duty with a well deserved promotion. We wish Dick "God Speed" and "Fair Seas" as he assumes his new duties and responsibilities over in NYSDEC Region 7.

At the park, the projects planned for this past season (see my message in the Spring 2005 Newsletter) have been put on hold pending the availability of funding. One improvement, however, has been accomplished and is noteworthy of mentioning. A new, large and airy "rustic" main gate guard booth greets all who drive into the Park. At the Lake

Champlain Maritime Museum's Conservation Laboratory work continues on conserving the year 2000 artifacts and our Cultural Resources Consultant continues to work on preparing the National Register of Historic Places Nomination. Notification is still pending on whether or not "The Lakes to Locks Passage French & Indian War Trail" Grant will be forthcoming (see the Spring 2005 Newsletter for a description of that Grant proposal).

I had the honor to receive and the pleasure to accept an invitation from Williams College to attend their commemoration of the 250th Anniversary of the Battle of Lake George, The Bloody Morning Scout, and the death of their College's founder, Col. Ephraim Williams, Jr. The event, held on Thursday, September 8, 2005, included a wreath laying, obelisk re-dedication and remarks at the Ephraim Williams Memorial site (see in this Newsletter an article on the Williams College effort to improve that site) on NY State Route 9 and a wreath laying, remarks and salute at the Statue of King Hendrick and Sir William Johnson at the Lake George Battlefield Park.

The third annual Revolutionary War



Above: Fort George Alliance President Herman Brown (left) presents Richard Wojcik a Certificate of Appreciation for his Outstanding Service to the Lake George Battlefield Park on behalf of the Alliance.

Encampment and this years Reenactment to commemorate the 225th Anniversary of Carleton's October 11, 1780 Raid on Fort George will be held at the Park over Columbus Day Weekend (Oct. 8 & 9, 2005) If you are in the town of Lake George that weekend stop by the Alliance's Information Tent at the Park and join the fun in interacting within the reenactors and the visiting public. I hope to see you there. ■



FRENCH & INDIAN WAR COMMEMORATION

250 years

The Alliance supports the historic preservation, conservation, interpretation and associated maintenance, improvement and development of the Lake George Battlefield Park at Lake George, New York.

Archaeological Trivia From the Test Pit

By Andrew Farry, Archaeologist

During the 2001 archaeological field season at Fort George,

an 11-meter long trench was excavated near the two large barracks buildings at Sites 1 and 2 (labeled Buildings 1 and 2). These buildings lie along the northern portion of site, near the Warren County Bike Trail and Fort George Road overlooking Lake George. The buildings are easily seen as a parallel set of low mounds on the ground, and they correspond very well to structures shown on contemporary maps of the south end of Lake George (post 1757).

The 50-centimeter-wide trench was intended to bisect any remaining evidence of a palisade surrounding the two buildings. It was also intended as a relatively low-impact method of sampling artifacts, features, and soil profiles across this portion of the site. The restricted width of the trench did prevent a wide horizontal view of the soils, a situation confounded by the density of large, blocky limestone construction materials throughout the ground. Nevertheless, the vertical profile of soil layers and rock debris along the trench provides a useful record of the site, and when compared with the trench's artifact assemblage, allows for some preliminary observations.

The most salient stratigraphic feature mapped along the trench's soil profile is an approximately 2-3 meter wide black organic stain. The stain extends 40 centimeters in depth, and brick and mortar fragments were observed within the dark soil matrix. The exact east-west limits of the feature were indistinct, but its closest apparent edge lies approximately 4.5 meters (15 feet) to the east of the northeast corner of Building 1. Its farthest edge in turn lies approximately 7 meters (23 feet) to the east from this same reference point.

The most salient artifactual feature noted in the trench's assemblage is the spike in the number of artifacts approximately 2 meters to the east of the dark organic stain. As the trench extends to the east and away from Building 1, artifact counts remain

relatively constant in number. Just beyond the soil feature, however, artifact counts jump from approximately 200 artifacts per excavation unit to over 800 artifacts per excavation unit.

Correlating these two features suggests that the dark stain may indeed represent the original palisade. It is expected that, just beyond the bounds of the palisade, soldiers would have disposed of domestic refuse and household trash. Immediately within the line of the palisade, however, soldiers would have likely maintained a relative degree of camp cleanliness. The material manifestation of these behaviors, of course, would include high artifact counts beyond the remains of the palisade and low counts within, as have been observed in the trench data.

Much remains to be done in terms of interpreting the Fort George archaeological data, and the patterns noted here are preliminary and suggestive rather than definitive. Other hypotheses might be forwarded to explain the presence of the dark organic stain approximately mid-way along the Site 1 excavation trench. The correlation of stratigraphic and artifactual evidence presented here, however, does at least suggest that the stain represents the original palisade line. As the Fort George data are studied more and more and as new and unique hypotheses are examined, much new information on this important settlement will no doubt come to light. ■

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The Importance of Documentation in Archaeological Conservation

By Christopher R. Sabick, Director of Conservation, Lake Champlain Maritime Museum

In previous articles I have discussed the methods employed in treating particular material types, in this installment we will look at steps that are taken before and after treatment for every artifact regardless of what material it is made from. When an artifact arrives in the conservation lab one of the first things that is done is to start an artifact card for that item. On this card the conservator will record all the treatment steps that are applied to an artifact. There are several valuable reasons that such detail should be recorded for each item. First, it allows the conservator to keep close track of which stages of treatment have been completed. This may seem obvious but when a large number of items are being processed simultaneously it is very easy to forget what stage each particular artifact is on. Secondly, this permanent record of the treatment applied to each

item will allow conservators in the future to contemplate any necessary re-treatment with a full understanding of the previous work.

In addition to documentation of the treatments applied to each item, all artifacts are also recorded with scale drawings and photographs before preservation. Many argue it is unnecessary to use both photographs and drawings but often a drawing will be able to illustrate minute details that are very hard to see in a photograph. On the other hand, photographs will provide a better overall feel for the condition of the artifact.

Visual documentation is important for a number of reasons. Drawings and photographs capture the size, shape and condition of the item before any work is carried out. These images may prove invaluable on the unlikely occurrence

that the artifact is damaged or destroyed during the preservation process. A visual record is also valuable in report preparation, public presentation, and display creation.

A second set of drawings and photographs is also captured after treatment is completed. In addition to the reasons listed above, the after-treatment documentation allows for a comparison of before and after dimensions and condition. It also allows detailed information about an artifact to be shared with other researchers without the need to handle an item personally.

Though time-consuming, the documentation of an artifact and its treatment is of primary importance. ■

Violation Reporting in the Adirondack State Park

General Public reporting of potential violations has been made easier within the Adirondack State Park. The Adirondack Park Agency (APA) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has formalized a new program for public reporting of alleged violations of the laws and regulations for the 2.4 million acre Adirondack Forest Preserve by users and state agencies responsible for its management. Archaeological sites and other cultural resources located on state lands within the Adirondack Park are protected under these statutes.

This new system includes a standard "Potential Violation Report" that assigns a compliance tracking number, investigator, legal staff and ranks the priority of the matter. This new system was court-ordered from the settlement of a lawsuit by the Residents Committee to Protect the Adirondacks (RCPA) over violations of state management of the Forest Pre-

serve. The RCPA's goal was to see the creation of a system of public reporting, record keeping, and investigation for violations of the public Forest Preserve at the APA that was consistent with violations of private land development. The new program at the APA and NYSDEC standardizes a process for the public to report violations of Forest Preserve law and regulations that will provide a whole new level of protection for this public resource. Mr. Peter Bauer, RCPA Executive Director said "There is no better watchdog for the Forest Preserve than the public." "Now when people see violations they can do something about it."

In the past when the public saw a violation of the Forest Preserve, either by other users or state agencies, they would contact the APA or the NYSDEC, but there was nobody in charge and often people were either bounced from office to office or nothing was

ever done with their reports. They could call a Ranger, a state forester, a Conservation Officer, staff at the APA or the NYSDEC in Albany, but it was purely by chance that the issue would be investigated. "Now there is a process where violations will be resolved and the public will be notified about the results of the investigation" said Peter Bauer. "This is a new day for Forest Preserve protection and marks a fundamental reform of Forest Preserve management by the State of New York."

The Potential Violations Report form is available from the NYSDEC or APA and the RCPA website (www.rcpa.org). ■

Samuel Blodgett's Map of the Battle of Lake George

By Edward J. Dodge, Trustee

Blodgett's Prospective Plan of The Battle of Lake George, September 8, 1755, is probably one of the few first-hand accounts, if indeed not the only one, of a major battle in early North America.

What made it more unusual is that Blodgett, who was an amateur engineer, left detailed prints of what took place.

Colonel H. Avery Chenoweth, Sr., USMCR, Retired, in the Combat Art vs. Illustration section of his book "Art of War," the first paperback edition copyright by Barnes and Noble, 2003, wrote as follows: "For our purposes combat art is defined as art in or from actual observed or experienced battle, as opposed to historical battle art or illustration created from the imagination. The latter two are valid in their own right and the result of after the fact research and reconstruction, quite often from eyewitness accounts. Illustration, though, is always imaginary, often fanciful, and the spark of authenticity of the actual observer is absent."

Blodgett's own print (combat art) was executed as an engraving by a Thomas Johnson who gained notoriety as a japaner. Whether it was done on copper is not really known, but the likelihood is definitely there.

A year after it appeared in America in 1755 it was printed in London. The major differences between the two is that the American version shows a map of the Hudson River across the top of the page with phase one and phase two of the battle side-by-side from left to right and a dedication to His Excellency William Shirley, Esqr. in the print's lower left corner.

The American version shown in figure 1 comes from the holdings of the New York Public Library. The London version which is better known, as shown in figure 2, is from the papers of Sir William Johnson, The University of the State of New York, Division of Archives and History, Volume IX, page 232.

The unusual aspect of the Prospective Plan of The Battle is that the Prospective

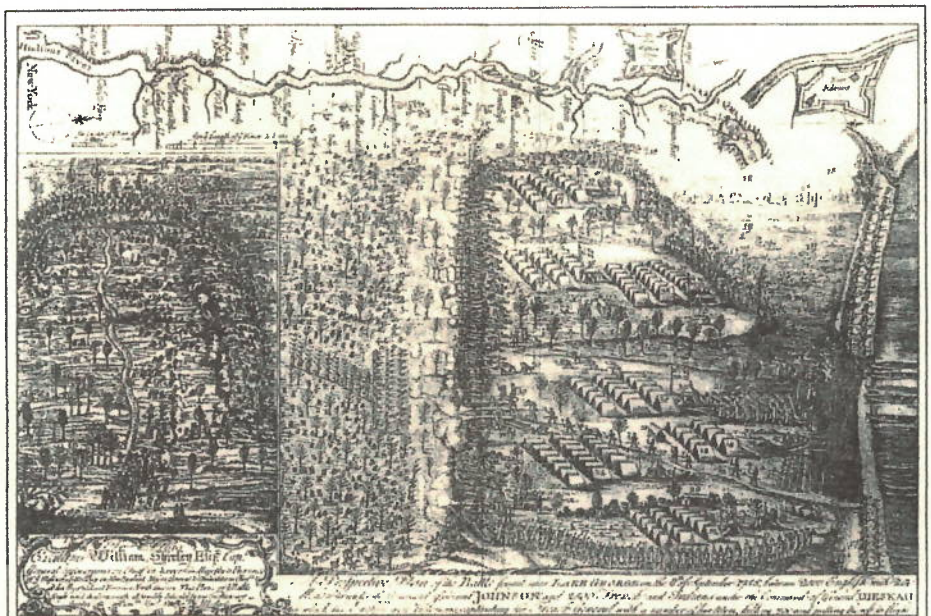


Figure 1: Blodgett's Map - Boston 1755

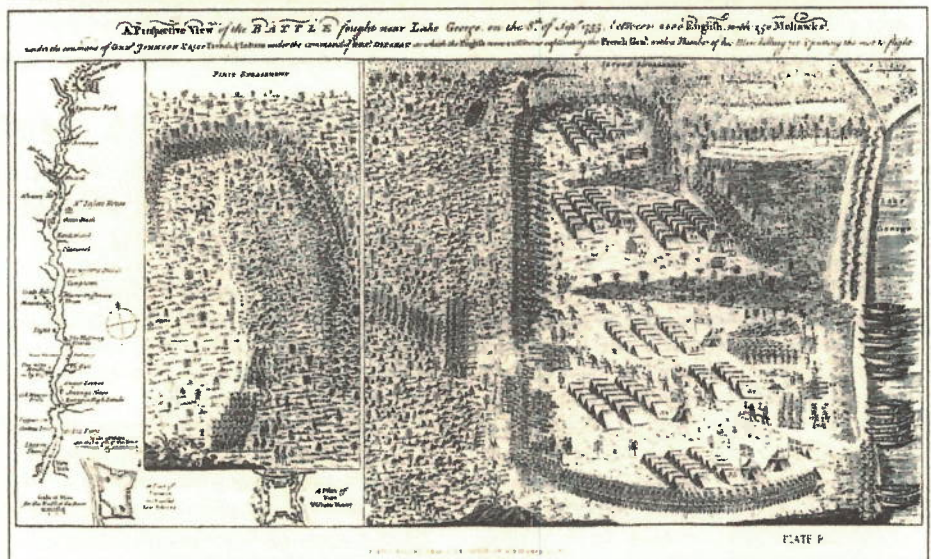


Figure 2: Blodgett's Map - London 1756

proper is a detailed explanation of number coded points on the maps. It is quite unusual to see a whole battle set forth in such fashion and definitely takes the reader right to that point of the action (see "The Battle of Lake George - 8 September 1755" in the Spring 2005 newsletter).

There are variations on both maps due to copies having been made by difference engravers of that time and later. These variations will be discussed at a later time. A map is discovery and can establish or skew history.

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The Colonel Ephraim Williams's Memorial Site & Burial Site

By William M. Herrlich, Treasurer

When Colonel Ephraim Williams (*Advice*, Fall 2004) of Hatfield, Massachusetts died while rallying his ambushed troops during the Bloody Morning Scout on September 8, 1755, he added a heroic note to his long military career on the colonial American frontier. Despite, however, his service in defense of his western Massachusetts neighbors, 1745-55, Williams, like the Bloody Morning Scout, the Battle of Lake George immediately thereafter, and, it seems at times, the entire French and Indian War, could have lapsed into being a historical footnote but for a previous fortuitous event. On July 22, 1755, Williams, while waiting in Albany to move north against the French, sensed the gravity of the imminent campaign and signed a will. He had never married and chose to distribute his estate to a number of relatives and friends. Twenty four individuals were named as direct beneficiaries in the twenty two items in the will, but it was the twenty first item that secured Williams's name for the future.

It is my will & pleasure & desire that the remaining part of lands not yet disposed of shall be sold at the discretion of my executors, within five years after an established peace, and the interest of the money, and also the interest of my money arising by my bonds and notes, shall be appropriated towards the support and maintenance of a free school ... for ever....

Because of a number of qualifiers attached to Williams's wish and a variety of intervening events, the bequest did not reach the hands of the proposed school's trustees until 1785, and the school did not open until 1791. Soon thereafter, in 1793, it was chartered by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as Williams College.

Today, Williams College, Williams-town, MA, enrolls about 2,000 students and has long been among the nation's elite liberal arts colleges. It has ranked first or tied for first in its size class in the



Above: The Colonel Ephraim Williams Monument with replica obelisk - July 2005.

U. S. News and World Report's annual survey of U. S. colleges and universities in each of the years 1991-2005 and has produced 37 Rhodes Scholars. Moreover, its athletic programs have won the Sears Directors Cup for excellence in NCAA Division 3 athletics seven years in a row. It is a substantial legacy, and Williams graduates have traditionally recognized the role the school has played in their subsequent and frequently successful careers.

An early example of that recognition centered on the school's founder as the 100th anniversary of his death approached. To memorialize the circumstances of that death, Williams alumni in 1854 had an obelisk placed atop the large boulder around which Williams fought during the Scout. Additionally, they placed a marker at the nearby site where he was buried two days after the Battle of Lake George.

Time altered the condition, appearance and accessibility of those memorials. Petty vandalism, road construction (including Interstate 87), and climate

were among the factors affecting the markers, and by 2003 it was clear that some restoration was necessary if the memory of Colonel Williams was to be properly honored. As in 1854 and with the 250th anniversary of the Scout soon to occur, Williams alumni responded. The old obelisk, chipped, marred, and obscured by moss-like vegetation was replaced with a replica. The fence surrounding the boulder has been restored, formal landscaping improvements installed, and a walkway leading to the monument from U. S. Rte. 9 has been built. Interpretive signs have been placed at both the monument and burial site. Most important, perhaps, was the construction of roadside access to both areas. Route 9 as it passes by is a two lane road with very little shoulder available for

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Donors To The Annual Fund 2005

The Lake George Battlefield Park (Fort George) extends sincere thanks to its members and friends for their generous gifts during the period from April 1, 2005 to August 15, 2005. We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the lists of donors that follow. Please notify us immediately of any errors or omissions, so that we may revise our records.

New & Renewed Members as of 8/15/2005

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- ◆ William M. Herrlich, Orleans, MA

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THANK YOU!

The Colonel Ephraim

William's Memorial Site & Burial Site

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stopping. The alumni, working with permits from the New York State Department of Transportation and using a local contractor, built a small parking area on the east side of Rte. 9 at the monument. Greater room on the western side of the road allowed a more accommodating parking space at the burial site, less than 100 yards to the south.

The Williams Society of Alumni arranged for the financing of these improvements through the acquisition of grants in excess of \$300,000, a testimony to the reach of the school's graduates. The work is impressive, especially given the constraints created by terrain and Rte. 9. Only two years ago, it was hard to know the monument and burial marker were there. Now, through improved visibility in the approach, suitable signage, and better accessibility, the memorials to Ephraim Williams early role in securing America's frontier have deserved prominence.

Contemporary reports of the Bloody Morning Scout frequently placed the ambush three miles south of the camp at Lake George. Just so, for the monument and marker are 2 ½ miles by the odometer south of Fort George Road in Lake George Village on U. S. Rte. 9, just past the Colonel Williams Resort and by the King Hendrick Motel. Going north, they are 2 miles north of the intersection of NY 149 and U. S. 9. ■



FRENCH & INDIAN WAR
COMMEMORATION

250 years

Treasurer's Report

By William M. Herrlich, Treasurer

Alliance Treasurer's reports are quite simple, for it is a small organization. It is a matter of detailing what comes in, what goes out, and where we stand as a result of the changes. What comes in does so unevenly over the space of the year, and in varying amounts, but the Alliance is grateful for every bit of it, for it accumulates into sums that allow us to pursue programs that benefit the Park and Fort George. Seventy separate amounts were deposited in fiscal 2005. In contrast, very few checks are drawn in a year. In F '05 there were 9, and since the Alliance's start, there have been only 37. Most checks are for the commonplace – postage, printing and the like – but those few remaining are for the large amounts some of our objectives require. In F '05 the Alliance took the first step in financing a significant project and took another in funding artifact conservation. In terms of the latter, we paid the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum \$2,530 to preserve another group of items from the archaeological dig in the Battlefield Park in 2000. We have now funded 71% of the project, and the remaining 29% amounts to \$4,335. In terms of the first step referred to, the Alliance made the initial payment for the preparation of its application to the National Park Service for the inclusion of the Battlefield Park in the National Register of Historic Places.

It is expected that the application will be submitted later this year, and when it is accepted, the balance due, \$4,000, will be paid. A measurable portion of the funds expended for this application came from local corporate sponsors who were approached with this specific purpose in mind. The Alliance thanks C. R. Bard and Glens Falls National Bank. Since the start of F '05 we have also had support from the Adirondack Regional Chambers of Commerce, the Town of Lake George, Fort William Henry Corporation, Lake George Days Inn, John Thurman Historical Society, Lake George Rotary, Fort Ticonderoga, Stelfer Steel and Pipe, Lake George Mirror, Stafford Carr & McNally P.C., and The Sagamore. These corporate and institutional donations are a significant addition to our income, and they build upon our very important base of individual and family memberships.

To summarize F '05's numbers:

The Alliance started with \$718, took in \$8,329, expended \$4,100, and ended the year with \$4,947. The Alliance's 990 EZ was filed in a timely fashion with the IRS. So, too, will be the annual report to the State of New York. ■

Welcome New Members!

By Nadine Battaglia,
Alliance Membership Chair

Ever facing northward, Fort George is again ablaze in autumnal reds and golds, soon to be blanketed beneath our Adirondack snows.

Now tranquil in her beauty overlooking the headwaters of Lake George, these hallowed grounds were once the site of colonial dispute and battles whose outcome helped form the history of our nation. The membership of the Fort George Alliance is not only privileged to pay tribute to those individuals who so long ago saw action in this place, but as well, to keep the memory of this history alive and accessible for present and future generations. To that worthy outcome, we warmly recognize and welcome the following new members to the Alliance:

- The Sagamore Resort and Conference Center, Bolton Landing, New York
- Leonard E. Day, Westhampton, Massachusetts
- Richard and Susan Dressner, Alexandria, Virginia
- Bill Holt, Scotia, New York
- Stephen J. McCarthy, Lincoln Massachusetts
- Gus Myhrberg, Queensbury, New York
- Brian and Tammy Thompson, Lake George, New York

Thank you, and as ever, please tell your friends both near and far about our beautiful Fort George.

Samuel Blodgett's Map of the Battle of Lake George

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How discrete differences from one engraving to another serves to affect the interpretation of a historical event will also be addressed at a later time.

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- Antiques Magazine, Vol. LXXX #5, November 1961
- Art of War, Col. II. Avery Chenoweth, Sr., USMCR, Ret., Barnes & Noble, 1st Paperback Edition, 2003.
- The Papers of Sir William Johnson, University of the State of New York, Division of Archives & History, Vol. IX.