

SEEK WAR RELICS ON BANKS OF HUDSON

other type of this button with the corn motor; a Continental officer's button discovered at Constitution Island; the only such button found in a camp; several specimens of intaglio gems in the form of rings or fobs bearing family crests. These stones bear the insignia of British families such as the Grays, Egertons, Stewarts, and Talbots.

Historical Society Explores Old Army Camps on Highlands Opposite West Point.

FIND MANY RARE BUTTONS

Among Sites Rediscovered and Identified Is That of Farm Occupied by Benedict Arnold.

The Field Exploration Committee of the New York Historical Society, which in recent years has discovered and brought to light valuable Revolutionary War relics on Manhattan, is now engaged in exploring the great but little known camps of the Continental Army on the Hudson Highlands. These camps, whose sites were for a long time lost and were then rediscovered, stood opposite West Point on the east side of the Hudson River. The five principal camps were: The camp on Robinson's farm, Connecticut Village, New Boston, Hempstead Huts, and Soldier's Fortune. The committee, after making studies and surveys, believes it has identified all of these camps with the exception of Soldier's Fortune.

Although the committee from time to time has explored the regions of these camps and has taken from them valuable relics, their surface has been only scratched, and Reginald Pelham Bolton and others believe that if the camps are tapped extensively they will yield a wealth of rare military material of Washington's army. Fort Washington and the adjacent heights, Mr. Bolton said, had been pretty well exploited for British and Hessian war relics, and as soon as the committee completed some work it now has in hand on Staten Island it will devote more attention to these five interesting American camps.

One of these camps has already been identified as that on Robinson's farm. It is situated opposite Buttermilk Falls, one and a half miles from the Hudson, on Cat Rock Road, leading from Garrison's landing to the old Albany Post Road, and was located by William L. Calver, Chairman of the committee. This farm was owned by Beverly Robinson, and Benedict Arnold had his headquarters at the farm at the time his treason was discovered. The old Robinson house was standing until a few years ago, when it was destroyed by fire. Of the site of the camp, however, the committee had no trace or knowledge except references in history that it was located on Beverly Robinson's farm. The boundaries of the old farm were obtained with some difficulty. Mr. Calver visited it several years ago, and, after making a study of neighboring water courses and the topography of the land, he finally located the camp. During his visit he discovered, in making a study of the land, several odd and irregular stones. The camp was visited later by Mr. Bolton, who did some excavating. He found that these stones were fireplaces. There were thirty of them, and they stood in rows about twenty-five feet apart. They belonged to huts occupied by officers and privates, which also were brought to light. A search was made of these fireplaces and nails, bricks, broken kettles, and coins were unearthed.

"Everything discarded in the camps," Mr. Bolton said, "was thrown in the camp rubbish pits. Such things as worn out or infested clothing, broken pots, pans and kettles and articles of all kinds were taken to these pits. It has been our experience that camp rubbish pits and old cesspools are good places in which to look for relics. We have taken many military buttons from such places. At the camp on Robinson's farm we found a generous supply of military buttons of Connecticut and Massachusetts troops, and broken weapons. As yet we have not developed the camp enough to determine definitely its arrangement."

Camp Hempstead Huts has been definitely located in Canopus Hollow, Putnam County. There is good reason to believe that the site of New Boston has been discovered on the hillside of a farm several miles east of Garrison. The committee has museum data bearing upon its location. The site of Connecticut Village, it is believed, was at Cedar Flats, back of Coldspring. The ground thereabout on the property of a Mrs. Porter has always been known as the Hut Field. Surrounding this field the remains of numerous huts have been discovered. This leaves the site of Soldier's Fortune yet to be located. The committee recently obtained information that the camp was situated on the old Albany Post Road about six miles from Peekskill, and this supposed site will be investigated.

A member of the committee discovered recently on the camp at Robinson's farm an original die for marking gilt buttons of officers' uniforms. This die was used for the buttons of the 21st Royal Scots Fusiliers Regiment, which was captured at Saratoga. The finding of these buttons has helped to identify the various British regiments which participated in the War of the Revolution here. A private's button of the 55th British Regiment was discovered at Staten Island a few weeks ago, and its discovery was regarded as a matter of great historic significance. The button of every regiment identified with the operations of the British in New York had been found with the exception of this particular button.

These camps on the Hudson Highlands were used by General Washington as training camps and depots for his troops. At the time he was vigorously defending the passage of the Hudson against the British, and his troops were busily engaged in building forts and in throwing up earthworks and defenses. These camps were commanded by Washington's aides. From all accounts it was not always smooth sailing. The soldiers did not always have as much to eat as they wished, and suffered from cold and privation. They bore their sufferings, however, with true American fortitude, and in the end routed their enemy.

When plans were being made for defenses of the Hudson, Constitution Island was selected as the point of greatest strategic importance, and in August, 1775, the first of the fortifications in the Highlands was begun at this point. To this island was attached a chain to prevent British warships from sailing up the Hudson. The British captured and occupied the island for a short time, but almost immediately relinquished it. A short time ago Mr. Calver and other members of the committee visited the island, and accompanied by an officer of the West Point Military Academy they succeeded in definitely locating the site of Fort Constitution. Like the lost camp sites of Putnam County its site had been lost. Now that it has been found again it is to be marked with a permanent memorial. It was on a house on Constitution Island that Susan Warner wrote the "Wide, Wide World," "Queechy," and other books, and after her death her sister, Anna B. Warner, conducted a Bible class for cadets which endeared their names to the graduates of the Military Academy and made them share with the faculty the credit of establishing the high standard of conduct which distinguishes this institution.

The committee has from time to time explored Constitution Island, and has discovered there valuable relics and reminders of the Revolution. Of American regimental buttons, the Continental button, marked U. S. A., and those of three Massachusetts regiments, the 1st, 4th, and 9th, bearing evidence of the presence of those New England corps as the garrison have been found. British regimental buttons of the 16th, 22d, 40th and 59th have been dug up. Among other objects a fine intaglio seal was discovered having the head of Mars on one side and the Dove of Peace. Many hut sites and fireplaces have been located there. When the committee can find time it plans to make more extensive surveys and examinations of the island, which is undoubtedly rich in buried Revolutionary treasures.

Recent relics discovered by the committee are: A twenty-five pound bar-shot found at 181st Street and Broadway, on the site of the barracks of Fort Washington; a brass pipe point, belonging to an officer's pike, found at the same place; several buttons of the Continental artillery, bearing in addition to the imprint of a cannon the Cambridge flag of early 1776, which was used when Washington took command of the American forces at Cambridge; an-