

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Archaeology at the Fort Laramie Quartermaster Dump Area, 1994-1996 by Danny N. Walker

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belongs on the shelves of archaeologists interested in early ceramic sites *and* historians concerned with the industrial development of the Midwest. Impressively, it should also find an audience among lay readers since Mansberger's recounting of the rise and fall of the White and Company Stoneware Manufactory and Tiles Works in north central Illinois skillfully presents the details of historical and archaeological research within the context of local history. Having said all that, this reviewer has to ask if this monograph is one study or two uncomfortably joined between a single set of covers.

The volume's stated subjects are the spread of industrial pottery technology in Illinois *and* investigations at two archaeological sites. These topics are separated by more than the prominent colon in the title.

At its heart, this volume reports research undertaken in 1991 and 1992 to assess the National Register eligibility of sites associated with a pottery works and a tile factory on land that has become the Gooselake State Natural Area, owned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. As background for the archaeological work, Mansberger opens his monograph with accounts of the natural environment and historical context of the Gooselake area. He also presents a very good account of the development of the Illinois ceramic industry, starting with early redware operations ending with the advent of modern gas-fired industrial potteries. These sections are very good. They provide an excellent context for the archaeological testing and let the author move on to a consideration of the ample historical records available on the White Potteries themselves.

Between 1856 and 1866 these two closely linked operations were surrounded by a small unplatted community—called "Jugtown"—and mass produced terra cotta tiles and utilitarian containers. The factories were among the first in the region to use power-assisted production techniques and seem to have been operated by specialists. They can, therefore, legitimately be viewed as representative of the industrial ceramic operations that developed in the Midwest in the mid-19th century.

Archaeological investigations at the sites were extensive since they were aimed at assessing their potential significance. The site of the Pottery Works was studied with a controlled surface collection, but the distribution of the recovered material together with available archival information on the site and community lets Mansberger present a clear assessment of the structure and condition of the archaeological deposit. Excavations were undertaken at the nearby site of the tile factory. These were primarily aimed at identifying the characteristics of the large round kiln bases present at the site. Backhoe trenches were extended across a number of other features. By themselves the results of these excavation could have been fairly cryptic, but again Mansberger augments them with historical sources to present an assessment of the structure of the original factory. The full cultural inventory recovered from the sites is presented in a single table. Only the pottery and tiles apparently produced at the site are separately described. Even those descriptions are thin. Major categories are identified but not described in specific detail. Such brief descriptions might be appropriate for an ordinary assessment report, but with the special emphasis on industri-

alization, it would have been at least appropriate to indicate consistently what forming techniques were used to form the various types.

The final chapter presents some general trends of the process that brought pottery production in Illinois from a handcraft to mass production. It describes the locations, equipment, social relations, and work schedules that marked the process of industrialization. Again, this discussion is compelling and certainly shows that industrialization was interesting and important. In general, however, this entire discussion is based on historical sources and the author's strategy is to show that the history of the White operations is consistent with broader historical trends. Archaeological results contribute very little to the discussion. The problems are all phrased in historical terms, based on historical records, and supported with historical documentation. The possibility that archaeology might add to the study of a process like industrialization, that archaeological insights might expand historical sources, or that the material record might test historically derived expectations are not recognized.

The one page conclusion that ends the report makes two points. The first is that the White Potteries deserve preservation as a record of the early development of industrialization. Mansberger also asserts that the features and debris of the sites can yield information about the life and activities of 19th century potters. It is hard to argue with these conclusions since the report convincingly shows both the integrity of the Gooselake sites and the interesting human implications of industrialization. What the author does not show is a way past the inherent contradiction of preservation and investigation. Mansberger's report shows that archaeologists understand the importance of early pottery sites and know how to recover interesting material from them. His monograph is also clear evidence that archaeologists are interested in broad social process like industrialization. One can only wish that he had been able to show us how to integrate historical and material records and pointed out specific archaeological measures of industrialization.

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*Archaeology at the Fort Laramie  
Quartermaster Dump Area, 1994-1996.*

DANNY N. WALKER, editor

*Cultural Resource Selections*, Number 13,  
Intermountain Region, National  
Park Service (PO Box 25287), Denver,  
1998. 283 pp., 183 figs., 36 tables.

Free upon request, paper.

Fort Laramie is one of those legendary places in the history of the American West. The fort started out as a fur trade post in 1834. The United State purchased the facility, then called Fort William, in 1849. Fort Laramie, astride the Oregon and California trails at the time of its purchase was designed to help protect the corridors of migration. Later the

Mormon-Pioneer Trail, the Pony Express Trail, the Overland Trail, the Bozeman Trail, and the Union Pacific Railroad would all be woven into the Fort Laramie story. Its strategic position on the margins of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains saw it playing a role in many of the Indian wars of the 1860s and 1870s. The federal government invested heavily in the post, but abandoned it in 1890. The site remained in private hands until the State of Wyoming purchased it in the mid-1930s. In 1938, the post was returned to the federal government as a National Park Service unit.

Those familiar with the National Park Service's training sessions most likely have noticed that many of these sessions have occurred at Fort Laramie. This volume brings together a variety of methods including remote sensing, geographic positioning systems, and aerial photography and weaves them together with the archaeologists' more standard fare of probing, testing, and excavation. The result is a marvelous combination of melding the new with the old. The main contribution of the report lies in its methodological rigor. The authors are to be commended for being able to advance several fairly sophisticated techniques in the context of a salvage archaeology project. The reader will find candid and useful discussions of the methods employed. This report is an important work and will serve as a model for future archaeological projects within military posts.

The report title is a bit of a misnomer. As the report details, the kinds of refuse discovered appear to be related more to "household" trash associated with the barracks, sutler, and officers' quarters. Apparently the misnomer developed because of the proximity of the refuse concentrations to the Quartermaster's compound depicted historically within Fort Laramie. There were no documents labeling this area as a Quartermaster's Dump, but somehow the name attached itself. The specifics of how one would determine a true Quartermaster's trash area versus the remainder of the post are not clear. Obviously much of the material culture that is found at any given post would be issued through the Quartermaster Department.

The report details the results of archaeological investigations at Fort Laramie from 1994 to 1996. The work was accomplished as a salvage program for areas slated to be affected by a proposed water control project. As such, the report has many features of a "CRM" report combined with a more scholarly manuscript. Those who do not work within Wyoming probably will have difficulty interpreting the information fields in the Wyoming Cultural Records Office file check.

The report is well written and edited. The reader may be frustrated, however, by the copy quality of the halftones. These often are washed out or too dark to depict clearly what is intended. The maps could have been improved by depicting the study area in relation to the subject matter at hand. Some maps one would expect, such as one detailing the locations of all previous archaeological work, are not present.

The chapter by Armstrong, Niven, and Walker on previous work is extremely useful. Fort Laramie has been the subject of professional archaeological investigation since 1937. The general complexities of the long occupation, sporadic building programs, post abandonment, years in private hands (including plowing the site for artifacts), and the periodic flooding of portions of the site have made for a very complex archaeological record. The authors do an excellent job of summarizing these data.

Lewis Somers presents an excellent chapter on remote sensing as applied to this project. The study conducted by Somers included both magnetic field gradient surveys and twin electrode resistance surveys. The focus of this particular work was to define an adobe corral that appears in historical images and maps. The study predicted that the remains of the corral were intact. Subsequent fieldwork at the site, however, indicated that the electronic patterns observed could not be from the adobe corral. The remote sensing worked better for finding refuse concentrations than for predicting the location of an earthen structure.

William Woods presents a chapter that attempts to tackle a problem that often plagues investigators working on long occupation military posts. Posts that are occupied over a long period tend to have multiple survey records available, most of which have discrepancies. When subsequent construction has leveled or removed many of the features that could serve as datum markers it often is a nightmare trying to resolve the maps to one another. Woods employs electronic distance measure (EDM) combined with a geographic information system (GIS) database. Even with the electronic help the task was daunting. Woods essentially was forced to divide the sites into sections for control purposes. Overall the results of the exercise might have been improved by including use of aerial images and actually testing some of the archaeological features.

McFaul, Traugh, and Smith provide necessary information on the geology of the site. Despite extensive backhoe trenching in areas predicted to contain the remains of that pesky adobe corral they were unable to locate any "adobe melt." Their investigations did reveal extensive flood damage in the area. This leads them to speculate that, if the right place were chosen for trenching, that perhaps the walls had been washed away completely. There is also speculation that the bricks might have been removed during salvage (a common pattern at abandoned forts) or that the corrals were not made from adobe. It is interesting that the 1882 list of buildings for Fort Laramie lists 13 structures (including the corral in question) made completely or in part from adobe (L. R. Hafen and F. M. Young, 1938, *Fort Laramie and the Pageant of the West, 1834-1890*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, pp. 405-406). It would seem that testing of some of these areas could provide information as to what was being called adobe and whether it was scavenged heavily for materials.

Jason Labelle provides a solid description of the use of a soil augering program. This program apparently was used in conjunction with the remote sensing program to define the data-recovery efforts. Those interested in determining the applicability of power-auger data for designing where to place block excavations are likely to find much useful information here.

Walker provides excellent chapters on the block excavations, feature descriptions, and the artifact distributions. It is in these chapters where many of the disparate methodological threads come together. For example, the remote sensing predicted a refuse cluster in one area for which there was no surface expression. We find that the fort inhabitants, and possibly later inhabitants, constructed a series of ditches throughout the area. The purposes of the ditches are not known. It is in these sections that we learn the adobe corral has largely been lost to erosion. We find that the refuse clusters appear to be somewhat intact and hold together well as individual dumping episodes. Most of the refuse is thought to date to the 1880s and 1890s.

Rogers, Bartholomew, and Armstrong present a discussion of the animal remains from the fort. The authors present a thought-provoking discussion of rank/status and the cuts of meat available. Some of the comparison with far-flung places and times seemed a bit forced. For example, the comparison tables include places such as Manhattan, Fort Ligonier, and Monticello. It should not be a surprise that Manhattan Island evidences a lot more fish than Fort Laramie. In the comparisons with sites that are closer to environment/function/temporal period with Fort Laramie; however, there is much good information to be found in this chapter.

Danny Walker brings it all together in his summary chapter. Most of the original questions posed for the project were mapping questions. For example, a major focus of the work was finding the extent of occupation, locating the adobe corral, locating the 1851 sawmill, etc. These were ably handled in this chapter. It is the questions regarding the reconstruction of 19th-century lifeways and the nature of the refuse accumulations where additional discussion seems in order. Walker concludes that some of the dumping episodes appear to contain higher status trash than others (French perfume, officer's buttons, etc.). Perhaps much of the refuse pattern "status" differences also relates to the gender, age, and ethnic differences between the occupants of officers' row and the barracks. There also is an issue of explaining the change in the disposal pattern at the fort. Post Surgeons Schell and O'Reilly writing in 1875 indicate that all refuse was removed from the fort on a daily basis and dumped in the river (Hafen and Young, 1938, p. 404). The observed refuse clusters seem to be operating outside that mode of disposal.

Walker also concludes that the refuse accumulations appear to be more from cleaning up living quarters and the sutler's store than from a Quartermaster's Dump. The question of what a "Quartermaster's Dump" should look like remains unanswered. This is an important question for those dealing with military sites.

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*The Japanese Airbase on Taroa Island,  
Republic of the Marshall Islands, 1937-45:  
An Evaluation of the World War II Remains.*  
WILLIAM H. ADAMS, RICHARD E. ROSS,  
ELIZABETH L. KRAUSE, and DIRK H. R.  
SPENNEMAN

Micronesian Endowment for Historic  
Preservation, Republic of Marshall Islands,  
and U.S. Department of Interior, National  
Park Service, Pacific West Region, San  
Francisco, CA, 11997. ix + 141 pp., 91  
figs., 7 tables, 5 apps. Free upon request,  
paper.

This volume in the Micronesian Resources Study series focuses on the remains of a large Japanese airbase covering much of Taroa, the main island in the Maloelap Atoll. The Japanese took over Taroa, along with other former German possessions, on the outbreak of World War I in 1914, later obtaining a League of Nations Mandate over the Marshall Islands. From 1914 on, the Japanese discouraged foreign travel in the area, and in the 1930s they began to develop military facilities in the Marshall Islands. Although the Japanese later claimed that they did not begin to fortify Taroa until 1941, evidence—and local informants—indicate that serious construction of sophisticated and permanent airbase facilities began as early as 1937.

The Japanese construction destroyed most, if not all, of the earlier remains on the island. In time, the Japanese also removed the Marshallese inhabitants, keeping only male workers and later supplementing the work force with imported Korean laborers. Only about one-quarter of these civilian laborers survived the war. But then, only about one-third of the Japanese garrison survived until the surrender, as Taroa was cut off from supplies for the last year of the war, and over one thousand Japanese died of starvation.

Both the construction on the island and the native vegetation were severely damaged by wartime bombing, and the island was not reoccupied until the 1970s. As a result, the remains of the airbase, now protected to some extent by the extensive regrowth of the jungle, are rather well preserved.

The archaeological survey was performed in 1989, based on thorough research in military records. Many sites, ranging from the three-story communications building (in use as a church) to individual trucks, were located, mapped and photographed.

The report is well and clearly organized. "Taroa in Maloelap Atoll" gives a general overview of the background, goals, and methodology of the project. "Taroa's Place in Military History" covers the strategic importance of the Marshall Islands as well as the Japanese fortification of Taroa. "The Pre-War Historic and Cultural Resources of Taroa" discusses the relatively few sites, some not physically identified, related to the indigenous history of the island and its inhabitants. "Base Facilities" discusses the remains of the airbase in detail.