

Fort Dobbs Gazette

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New Weapons for Display



Thanks to the generosity of site volunteer Tom Nicastro, Fort Dobbs has two more historic weapons to display in our exhibits!

In May, staff members installed a 1750's English halberd. Halberds are weapons that originated in medieval times and which feature a spear, axe, and hook all mounted on one pole arm. By the time of the French and Indian War, they were primarily carried by sergeants as a symbol of rank. North Carolina split a shipment of more than 100 such weapons with Virginia at the beginning of the war.

May also saw the acquisition of an original Dutch musket. The firearm

is of a style produced in Holland and the Netherlands in the 1730's. Thousands of these weapons were purchased by the British and were stored in the Tower of London. With the outbreak of war in North America, many Dutch muskets were shipped across the Atlantic to bolster colonial defenses. North

Carolina received 1,000 "muskets of Dutch Fabrick" to arm her provincial soldiers with. This musket will be displayed as soon as an appropriate case can be procured and will be the first original Dutch arm to be on the site of Fort Dobbs in over 250 years!



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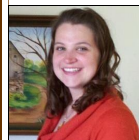
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Dispatch from the Fort by Gennifer Reiter, Site



When I sat down to write my small portion for the Gazette, I was struck by just how lucky we are! It is clear that Fort Dobbs has a strong base of community support. This support allowed us to put new items on exhibit, produce high quality programming, explore the site archaeologically and provide meaningful experiences for guests, staff, volunteers, Friends and general supporters. Our latest show of community support was provided

by the Rotary Club of Statesville. On Tuesday May 22, the Rotary Club of Statesville awarded the Friends of Fort Dobbs a substantial grant for the reconstruction of the fort. I would like to personally thank the all the members of Rotary for helping us to be one step closer to achieving a long recognized dream. Your kindness and generosity is greatly appreciated and we look forward to not-to-distant the day when construction will begin.

Summer Camp Day

On Friday, July 27, Fort Dobbs State Historic Site will host our first Summer Camp Education Day. This program will allow summer camp students and home-schoolers the same opportunity for a varied, fun, hands-on educational experience that has heretofore only been available during the traditional school year.

The event will run from 9:30am until 2:00 pm and will feature several activity stations for groups to rotate through around the outdoor historic site. Demonstrations include musket firing, military drill, 18th Century games, open fire cooking, wood working, and more!

Advance reservations are required and can be arranged by calling 704-873-5882 or contacting info@fortdobbs.org. There is a cost of \$2.00 per student.



Living History Update

May was a heavy month for off-site events. Garrison members and interpreter Greg Jones represented Fort Dobbs at both the Daniel Boone Heritage Festival in Mocksville, as well as the Race City Festival in Mooresville. The fort's provincials also made an appearance at Bennett Place State Historic Site's Memorial Day timeline of American soldiers.

On June 9-10, the site will hold a living history weekend portraying the everyday lives of the provincial garrison of Fort Dobbs, including cooking and musket firing demonstrations. Interpreters will also be working to split shingles to re-cover the roof of the winter hut.



The summer brings with it a third year of *Second Saturday* programs at Fort Dobbs! On July 14, period Wood working techniques will be demonstrated and visitors will have the opportunity to learn how to use some common tools of the 18th Century at 10am and 2pm. The young at heart will want to come out to the site on August 11 to try their hands at some typical games of the period, also at 10am and 2pm.

In August, North Carolina provincials will travel to New York for the first time in 256 years as our garrison assists with an event depicting the British occupation of Fort Ticonderoga.

When it Was News, 1762

**Commission to appoint Richard Spaight as Secretary of North Carolina
April 24, 1762**

To the Honble Richard Spaight Esquire Greeting. By Virtue of His Majestys Royal Commission under the Great Seal of Great Britain constituting me Captain General and Governor in Chief in and Over this Province with full power and authority to appoint all Officers both Civil and Military within the same, I being well assured of the Loyalty Integrity and Ability of you the said Richard Spaight Do by these presents Constitute and Appoint you Secretary and Clerk of the Crown for the aforesaid Province To Have Hold Exercise and Enjoy the said Offices According to the Laws Statutes and Acts of Assembly In the said Province together with all and Singular the Powers and Authorities Salaries Rights Profits, Privileges, Fees Perquisites and Emoluments Whatsoever which to the said Offices doth belong or in any wise appertain, And Whereas Letters under the Seal of the said province were issued heretofore that is to say on or about the Twenty Seventh day of November In the year of our Lord 1755 During the Reign of his late Majesty of glorious Memory whereby you the said Richard Spaight was Appointed Secretary and Clerk of the Crown of the said province Know ye that the said Letters be and they are Hereby declared from hence fourth to be Revoked & Determined. In Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and Caused the Seal of the Province to be hereunto Affixed at Wilmington the Twenty fourth day April In the Second year of His Majestys Reign Anno Domini 1762.

Photos From the Frontier



War for Empire



Patrick Morton, Scott Douglas, and Greg Jones of Fort Dobbs at he Bennett Place Memorial Day event.

Raffle Winner Steve Pender with his new musket!

Greg Jones at Race City Festival in Mooresville



Bethabara-Native Relations 1752-1774 (Part One)

By Jason Melius

Throughout the course of its relatively short life, Bethabara, the first Moravian settlement in Wachovia, North Carolina, shared an experience with Native Americans which ran from warm and friendly to fear and hatred. Wachovia was established not with an eye on missionary work, but as a plantation. As such, it was not prepared for large scale interaction with the Indian nations of the American southeast. Regardless of its preparations and intentions, the settlers of Bethabara would be forced to deal with Cherokee, Catawba and Tuscarora Indians almost from the beginning through its end as the central town of Wachovia.

There is a long held belief that Wachovia was established with an eye on missionary work among the Native Americans of the southeast. This thought stems in part from a rewriting of the Moravian records which occurred in 1794. This is most clearly seen in a comparison of the 1772 *“Historischer Bericht vom Anfang und Fortganze der Bruder Etablissement in der Wachau 1753-1772”* and the 1794 translation, *“An Account of the Rise and Progress of the United Brethren’s Settlement in North Carolina”*.

The 1772 version states very simply, “that it should become an entire land in which people who belonged to the Brethren lived.” The re-written 1794 English version added the statement, “in hopes to come nigh the Indian nations, to preach the Gospel to them.” This added statement, not found in the earlier work, is a clear attempt to back date the Moravian intent of the Wachovia settlements to include missionary work.

When Bishop Spangenberg was exploring North Carolina in 1752 for the perfect location of the new Wachovia settlement, he had been directed by Zinzendorf to find land far enough removed that the settlers would be free of the influence of strangers and distant enough from Native nations that they would not be in danger of their proximity. In short, they wanted a buffer zone around their new plantation. In 1755, a conference was held in Bethlehem, PA regarding the conduct of relations in Bethabara. The proceedings, translated by Daniel Crews, clearly lay out that mission work was not to be undertaken in the Carolinas:

“Do not seek, however, [personal] acquaintance with the Catabes or with the Tuscarores, nor with the Schirikihen [Cherokee] L[eague?].* This maxim must be brought home among our Brethren in Wachovia, and become general, that where they see Indians, they deal in a friendly manner and manifest good to them. They are not to act fearful, but receive them and treat them confidently and with friendliness.”*

The Moravians are well known for their mission work. By the time Bethabara was established in 1753, they had missions in Surinam, Jamaica, Paachtgatoch, and Greenland. Reverend Zeistberger, Christian Fredrick Post and others were actively and effectively working with the Lenape Nation in

Pennsylvania and Onondaga Nation in New York. With all of their successes in mission work elsewhere in America, it is important to note there were no plans for similar interactions in the south east.

There were, however, those who clearly did have mission work on their minds. While in the vicinity of Rich Mountain in Virginia on December 5, 1752, Bishop Spangenberg recorded in his diary;

“Probably this would make an admirable place for an Indian Settlement, like Gnadenhutten in PA, for it has wood, mast game, fish and is open in all directions for hunting. The soil is suitable for the raising of corn, potatoes, etc.”

But Spangenberg knew this was not within the scope of the plan for Bethabara. The Moravian church was experiencing legal and financial problems in the early 1750’s. These troubles forced a shift in focus away from missionary work. The Moravian church needed to create a prosperous community able to support itself and contribute to the economy of Bethlehem, PA.

It was not long after the news of the start of hostilities in what became known as the French and Indian War reached Bethabara that the Moravians recognized the exposed position Wachovia was in. While the frontier was guarded by Fort Dobbs 40 miles to the west after 1756, Bethabara and the surrounding settlements were still quite exposed to attack.

In January of 1756, a man named Captain Guest told of a number of attacks on the Moravian settlements in Pennsylvania by French allied Indians. More dreadful news of attacks by Indians arrived throughout the month of February. Then, on March 10, a man came from the New River settlements bringing news that two people had been killed by Indians in that area. The danger was creeping closer. Finally, July 2 brought word to Bethabara of the June 25th attack on Ft Vass (near present day Blacksburg, VA). A large party of Shawnee and French attacked and destroyed the frontier fort, killing or capturing all inside.

While the Cherokee were not involved in the destruction of Ft Vass, a series of events had occurred a couple months prior which caused the Moravians to be suspicious. The first, on May 18th, appears to be the Moravians first direct contact with members of the Cherokee nation. Jacob Loesch was stopped by eleven Cherokee warriors and one white woman on a road near Bethabara. The Cherokee demanded Loesch’s horse from him. Loesch managed to keep his horse by telling the Indians where he lived and promising to feed them. The un-named white woman with the Cherokee berated him, calling him a fool and yelling that they would rob him of everything he owned. While they did not bother Loesch at his home, later it was learned that they stopped at several homes around Wachovia taking horses, saddles, money, clothing and food. Fifteen men gathered to give chase but could not find the offending party. However, two days later, they came to Justice Hughes’ house and evidently acted very politely. They explained to him that they had been serving at the Haw River Fort. Their food ran out, so they left. Hughes sent them to another fort 70 miles away, possibly Fort Dobbs.

On May 25th, 1756, another party of Cherokee came to the Bethabara Mill. This visit was much more amiable. The eight Cherokee stated they were “from the Fort”. The Bethabara Diary states they were very polite, stopping to shake everyone’s hands. The Brethren gave them a few clay pipes, which they were very grateful for. The Cherokee were fed and elected to camp near the mill. Despite their friendly nature, the Moravians kept twelve men on watch all night long in case the Cherokee’s intentions were not honest. The next morning, however, the Cherokee were fed breakfast, exchanged pleasantries and left.

Just four days later, a messenger arrived from Salisbury stating that the Cherokee who had plundered the local communities had been apprehended. The stolen property was sent to Salisbury to be retrieved by its owners.

Armed with the news of the attacks in Virginia and the recent negative experiences with the Cherokee, the Brethren came to the conclusion during a meeting on July 4th, 1756 that the Cherokee must be allied to the French. It was clear that the community was isolated and vulnerable to attack. If a strong fortification could be destroyed, what would keep Bethabara safe? In light of this, it was decided half of the community would be dedicated to the harvest and the other half would complete the fortification of the town.

The rest of 1756 proved to be quiet. The only other interaction with Native Americans recorded in the Bethabara Diary came on October 6. “Col Lowis” passed through the town on his way to Virginia with a body of Cherokee warriors. “Col Lowis” was actually Major Andrew Lewis of the Virginia Regiment. The group was returning from building a fort in the Cherokee Overhill towns for the defense of that nation. The year 1757 saw an increase in both alarms and interactions. In the month of April, 40 refugees arrived, primarily from the Town Fork settlement, seeking shelter because rumors of Indian attacks spread like wild fire through the piedmont region.

July brought proof that the Moravians were wrong about the political leanings of the Cherokee. On July 3rd, the first of a large number of groups of Cherokee stopped in Bethabara. Hundreds of Cherokee warriors and their families stopped in Bethabara throughout the rest of 1757 to rest and eat while traveling north. The Cherokee had been courted by the colonial government of Virginia to assist with guarding the western frontier against attack by French and French allied Indians such as the Shawnee, Mingo and Wyandot.

With the successful cooperation on the frontier, the Colonial governments and British military leaders enticed more Cherokee, Catawba and Creeks to come to Pennsylvania for a planned expedition against the French Fort Duquesne. The year 1758 saw a total of 538 Cherokee warriors pass through Bethabara bound for northwestern Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. They were fed and camped at the Bethabara Tavern and Mill during these stop overs.

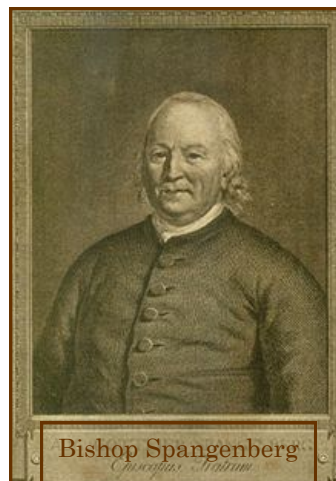
The Cherokee began to return home in small groups in the middle of June, 1758. The Bethabara Diary records 234 Cherokee, often carrying enemy scalps, who stopped in the town for food and rest between June 12 and October 27th. On one occasion, Brother Ettwein asked the Cherokee if they would accept two Brethren to learn their language and customs. The Cherokee replied, “they should be proud of it” and that Bethabara was known to them as “dutch fort” where there are good people and plenty of bread.

There is no record found in the Moravian archives which tells if any of the Brethren actually went to the Cherokee towns.

The Moravians clearly understood the good fortune of their positive interactions with the Cherokee. Bishop Spangenberg, writing to the Select Conference in Wachovia made it a point to state that the Indians acted more politely and fairly in their visits to Bethabara than the soldiers of the French and Austrian empires had in the Moravian towns in Europe. He still cautioned the Brethren not to get into altercations with their Native guests over food or any other goods. In spite of these positive interactions, it must be recognized that the Cherokee chose not to pass through Bethabara after October 27th.

Unfortunately the 1758 campaign against Ft Duquesne, while ultimately successful for Great Britain, led directly to the outbreak of the Cherokee War in early 1759. Supply problems plagued the British Army so badly during the campaign that they were unable to fully equip their provincial soldiers, much less deliver on all that was promised to the Cherokee and other Natives who had joined the campaign. Adding to the supply problems, the Cherokee came in such large numbers and much earlier than General Forbes or anyone else anticipated. They were unable to supply the estimated 700 warriors much less find missions for them. To add insult, Little Carpenter, an important Cherokee leader, was arrested by Forbes as a deserter when he tried to leave the campaign. This was an incredibly horrible mistake with long reaching effects. The Cherokee believed they were now seen as subordinates rather than as the allies they truly were.

September of 1758 saw the first groups of warriors leaving for home in complete disgust. The Cherokee had traveled over 700 miles to help their British allies, leaving their families shorthanded to hunt, tend the fields and protect the towns. Further, General Forbes demanded back the clothing, weapons and supplies that had been given out in exchange for their services. On their return trip, because they were provided with no food, they ended up killing several cattle belonging to civilians in Virginia. In turn, the Virginians murdered a number of Cherokee. By the time news of these murders spread throughout the Cherokee nation, it was too late. The Cherokee declared a war of revenge and began to attack settlements from Georgia to Virginia. Wachovia and the surrounding settlements became a prime target.



The preceding excerpt is from an article that was originally published in the WSSU Social Science Journal Spring 2012, Number 10, 2nd Series, pages 1 - 17.

Relics of the Past

Plans are currently underway to construct a new bathroom facility at Fort Dobbs State Historic Site, which will serve the reconstructed fort on that project's completion. In order to clear the site for the proposed bathrooms, an archaeological survey was required.

On March 15th and 16th, a small team made up of archaeologists working with the Office of State Archaeology, historic site staff, and local volunteers cleared the impacted site. Metal detectors were first used to locate anomalies in the study area, and then a total of twelve test pits were sunk below the level of the plowed soil. During the course of the survey, no architectural features were located, which is good news for the bathroom construction!

Several artifacts from various periods were recovered. These included 20th Century coinage and trash, a fragment of a 19th Century cut nail, and even a modern reproduction of an 18th Century button! The only item possibly associated with the period of Fort Dobbs' occupation is a key.

The iron key pictured at right measures just over 1.25 inches long. This makes it a common size for small locks, such as padlocks, or those found on some storage trunks of the period. The front two-thirds of the key are intact, but only part of a ring that had once formed the back portion remains. Further study is needed, but if it does indeed date from the period of the French and Indian War, this key sheds some light onto the possessions of the fort's garrison.

While currently in the possession of the Office of State Archaeology, the key will hopefully be on display in a new visitor center in the future.



Recruits Wanted



*All aspiring Heroes bold, who have Spirits above
Slavery and Trade, and inclinations to become a GENTLEMAN,
by bearing arms in the service of Our Royal Colony may repair
here to the drumhead-*

While Fort Dobbs welcomes re-enactors from a wide region for the site's large events, several smaller living history programs are presented throughout the year with the help of the site's primary volunteer corps; "The Garrison."

The Garrison is composed of men and women predominately within a two-hour drive of the fort. These individuals are dedicated to specifically portraying the provincial garrison of Fort Dobbs, the settlers who made up the Fourth Creek Settlement in the surrounding countryside, and also the American Indians who inhabited western North Carolina. Garrison members are held to a high standard of authenticity and are encouraged to interact with and educate the public during events.

Persons interested in helping Fort Dobbs' hands-on approach to history as a garrison member are encouraged to contact the site's lead interpreter at scott.douglas@ncdcr.gov or 704-873-5882.

GET INVOLVED AND SUPPORT THE FORT!

FRIENDS OF FORT DOBBS ROLL CALL

The Friends of Fort Dobbs supports the mission of Fort Dobbs State Historic Site:

"To preserve and interpret North Carolina's only French and Indian War fort."

THANK YOU NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS!

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Statesville, NC

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ON THE
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