

Friends of Camp Security

2017, Edition 9



A Revolutionary War Era Prison Camp

(1781-1783)



Stockade at Fort Ligonier

What Was the Diet at Camp Security?

This is one question we hope to answer once the site of the stockade is discovered. Archaeologists often find food preparation areas close to structures and dietary refuse near camp perimeters. We do know that the treatment of prisoners-of-war was quite different in the 18th century.

"Nations provided for their own men in captivity. Each government funded the clothing and feeding of its own men held in captivity by the enemy. Either by directly delivering it, providing funds to their captives to purchase it, or reimbursing the opposing government for it, food and clothing of prisoners remained the responsibility of their own government rather than the one that captured them. That was the theory, anyway, but putting it into practice presented many challenges. In their struggle to build and maintain a military infrastructure, neither the Continental Congress nor the individual state governments had established systems to provide for prisoners in British hands. British authorities did not relish the idea of sending money to their prisoners to buy food and other necessities, knowing that it would end up in the hands of their adversaries."

"10 Facts About American Prisoner of War"

Gary Shattuck *Journal of the American Revolution* (April 27, 2015)

<https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/04/10-facts-about-prisoners-of-war/>

Archaeologists have techniques for determining the diets of site inhabitants. The assumption, of course, is that site conditions are favorable to the preservation of dietary evidence.

"One way archaeologists study diet is through the examination of food bones recovered from sites. Animal bones provide information regarding the species of animals present, how much meat the animal provided, and how old it was when it was slaughtered. Zooarchaeologists are the specialists who probe for answers to these questions. People of the past ate more than just meat. Paleobotanists study seeds and other plant remains recovered from archaeological sites to understand what part fruits, vegetables, and grains played in the eighteenth-century diet. Archaeologists also have access to this kind of information through pollen that has been preserved."

*Discovering the Past: An Introduction to Archaeology
Meredith Poole, Staff Archaeologist
Colonial Williamsburg Enewsletter May 2017*

<http://www.history.org/history/teaching/enewsletter/may03/archintro.cfm>

Remember that there were prisoners held within the stockade and prisoners held outside the stockade, who were given greater freedoms (Camp Indulgence). From the 1979 archaeological dig on the Camp Indulgence section of Camp Security, we do have some clues about the diet of those prisoners living outside the stockade. Mark Shaffer discusses the finds at Camp Security in the quote below.

"The most numerous objects recovered from the pit features are discarded animal bones representing food refuse. A preliminary analysis of this faunal material indicates that beef and lamb were important components of the diet at Camp Security, with smaller amounts of pork and domestic fowl also represented. Wild food sources included small amounts of turtle. It appears the livestock was slaughtered and butchered on site, and the meat was probably eaten as large roasts and stews. These faunal remains suggest the inmates at Camp Security were reasonably well provisioned with food. This is in stark contrast to the experience of thousands of American prisoners who were captured when the Continental Army evacuated New York City in 1776. Many of the Americans were incarcerated in the notorious British prison ships anchored near the Brooklyn shore, where they were deliberately starved by their captors."

Camp Security by Mark Shaffer, Historic Preservation Specialist in the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation
<https://pahistoricpreservation.com/camp-security/>

Did the British provision prisoners at Camps Security and Indulgence? Did the prisoners living inside the stockade live as well as those outside the stockade? Hopefully, those questions will be answered when the stockade is found and explored.



Portrait of George Washington by Charles Willson Peale

FOCS Trip to the Museum of the American Revolution

Friends of Camp Security is planning a coach trip on Thursday, October 26 to the new Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia. Please keep the date in mind and watch for information on departure time and cost in your email and on the Friends of Camp Security page on Facebook.

Link: <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/>



Membership Drive

At this point in 2017, we have 64 members of Friends of Camp Security. The membership drive adds dollars to our budget, and helps us reach our primary goal of funding the next archaeological dig. Please help us by donating at www.campsecurity.org or <https://www.gofundme.com/finding-camp-security>.

Fundraising

As we look for new ways to fund our next dig, we are open to any ideas or suggestions you may have. In the past we have had a Membership Drive, book sale, T-shirt sale, and a Go Fund Me Page. If you have any ideas for how we might raise additional funds, feel free to contact us.

**Please direct any comments or questions to:
campsecurity@campsecurity.org**