

NATIONAL HISTORIC PARKS AND SITES BRANCH

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EXCAVATIONS AT
FORT MEDUCTIC, NEW BRUNSWICK

by

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ABSTRACT

Salvage excavations took place in 1964 and 1967 at Fort Meductic, New Brunswick; the site of a fortified Malecite Indian village where a mission chapel had been constructed by the French in 1717. Conclusive remains of a palisade or other early structures had not survived on the extensively cultivated and eroded site although some tentative evidence was uncovered. Burials, numerous Indian firepits and artifacts of the French contact period were found. Other features excavated at the site included the basement of an Indian schoolhouse built in 1788. Numerous artifacts dating to the Loyalist settlement and later activity were recovered. Fort Meductic had a major role in the early history of the area and thorough archaeological investigations of the site were completed before flooding by Mactaquac Dam.

and the possible school house. None of this glass was modern and it could all date to the 18th or 19th centuries.

Glass Beads

Twenty glass beads were found in the various areas of the excavations. The beads were studied by Mr. Kenneth Kidd of Trent University, Ontario, who compiled the description of the specimens below:

- Me 21 Wire-wound. Heart-shaped. Semi-translucent pale blue. 10 x 9 mm.
- Me 105 Wire-wound. Heart-shaped. Semi-translucent deep blue. 9 x 11 mm.
- Me 336 Wire wound. Globular. Semi-translucent pale blue. 9 x 10 mm.
- Me 337 Wire-wound. Short globular. Densely opaque blue. 7 x 9 mm.
- Me 338 Wire-wound. Globular. Semi-translucent medium blue. 14 x 14 mm.
- Me 640 Wire-wound. Cylindrical, layered glass. Nearly opaque white core; semi-translucent rose-pink overlay. Shape somewhat irregular. 9 x 6 mm.
- Me 729 Wire-wound. Heart-shaped. Semi-translucent pale blue. 9 x 9 mm.

- Me 730 Wire-wound (?). Globular. Semi-translucent cinnamon. 11 x 12 mm.
- Me 808 Wire-wound (?). Ring-shaped. Densely opaque black with tiny flecks of gold. It is really impossible to determine if this is wire-wound, but it appears to be. 2 x 4 mm.
- Me 809 Wire-wound. Ring-shaped. Layered glass. Very pale green semi-translucent core with opaque white overlay. Apparently the core was drawn and the wire-wound surface applied later. 2 x 3 mm.
- Me 818 Drawn glass. Cylindrical. Layered glass. Semi-translucent green core, black overlay (opaque) and coral red opaque exterior. Highly glazed. 4 x 9 mm.
- Me 833 Wire-wound (?). Globular. Opaque white. 7 x 8 mm.
- Me 834 Bone button (?). Discoidal, elliptical in outline. 1.5 x 10.5 x 8.5 mm.
- Me 922 Wire-wound. Ring shaped. The glass in this bead is heavily patinated and at present appears opaque whitish. The colour of the

original metal cannot be determined without damage to the specimen. Shape somewhat irregular. 6 x 13 mm.

Me 1219 Wire-wound. Flattened heart shaped, like a kernal of Indian corn. Semi-translucent cinnamon. 13 x 15 mm.

Me 1245 Drawn glass. Globular. Semi-translucent medium blue. Somewhat irregular in shape. 8 x 7 mm.

Me 1246 Wire-wound and tumbled. Ring shaped. Semi-translucent sky blue. Somewhat irregular in shape. 2 x 3 mm.

Me 1456 Wire-wound. Large ring shaped, and somewhat irregular. Opaque white glass core with an overlay of a slightly less opaque white glass. It may be that the core is a drawn bead, and has been given a wire-wound surface.

Me 1257 Wire-wound. Ring shaped. Semi-translucent, very pale greenish white. 11 x 14 mm.

Me 1416 Wire-wound. Ring shaped. Semi-translucent amber. Somewhat irregular. 7 x 13.5 mm.

Me 1436 Wire-wound. Barrel-shaped. Semi-translucent green. Considerably weathered, hence the mode of manufacture difficult to ascertain. 4 x 5 mm.

Clay Pipes

Fragments of clay pipes were submitted to Iain Walker, then of the Fortress of Louisbourg, National Historic Park, for examination. Walker's study is given in the appendix. He identified examples dating from the middle of the 17th century to the middle of the 19th century.

Bricks

Bricks were found at the "Trading Post" and the school house areas. They probably were used in fireplace construction. Bricks at the "Trading Post" measured 2 in. by 3-3/4 in. by 7-7/8 in. The school house bricks at area J measured 2 in. by 4 in. by 8 in.

Stone

Four stone objects of Indian manufacture were recovered from the excavation. Three of these (Fig. 22) were circular flat grinding stones. The fourth objects was a sandstone pipe bowl in the process of manufacture.