

# Recent Contributions to Hudson Valley Prehistory

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ALBANY

*Bear Mtn. Region*

TYPE OR FORM	DEPTH							
	1"	2"	6"	7"	8"	12"	14"	18"
Levanna		1						1 ?
Narrow, thick, stemmed	1		1	2				
Jack's Reef Pentagonal?			1					
Untyped, thin, isosceles triangular			1		1			
Normanskill			1					
Broad, thin side-notched			2					
Side-notched, thick						2		
Beekman Triangle							1	
Vosburg							3	
Whetstone			1					

It is evident that Vosburg and Beekman Triangle points are the deepest Archaic artifacts, well below levels containing thick side-notched, narrow stemmed, Jack's Reef Pentagonal-like, isosceles triangular, broad, thin side-notched, and Levanna projectile points. One Lamoka-like point occurred at the top. One triangular point, found at a depth of 18 inches, was thought by the excavator to have fallen from higher levels during the removal of large rocks. No pottery was present on the site.

#### Tiorati Rockshelter (29-B) (Smk 7)

Excavated in 1941 by Burggraf, Kenney, and others, this site (plate 74), located at Lake Tiorati, was the most productive on the Bear Mountain reservation. The overhang is about 30 feet long and 8 feet deep. The floor was staked out in 5-foot squares prior to excavation. The maximum depth of deposits above bedrock was 30 inches. There were apparently two relic-bearing zones, the upper one black in color, the lower red. The black zone varied considerably in thickness from 3 inches to

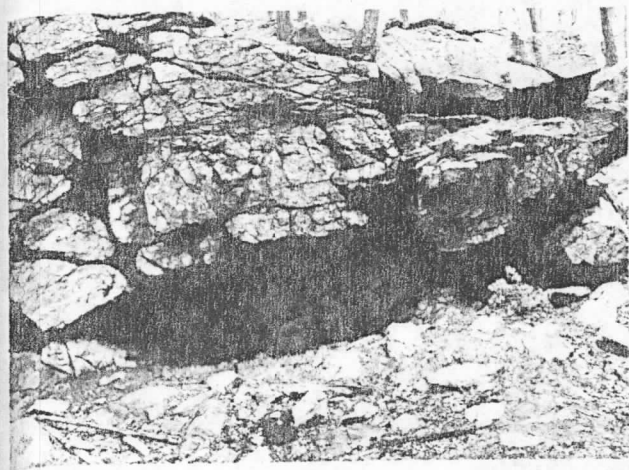


PLATE 74. View of Tiorati Rockshelter after excavation.

over a foot; it was made up largely of humus, charcoal, refuse bone, and rubble. The red stratum was mostly gravel, washed into the shelter from outside or fallen from the roof. This stratum also varied in thickness. The stratigraphy was complicated by many rock falls, both large and small.

There had been some previous disturbance of the shelter by pothunters, and much mixing had also been accomplished by Indians of the upper levels.

Artifacts were found as deep as 30 inches; only a few items occurred in the lower 6 inches.

"Iroquoian" pottery (displaying incised or linear punctate designs on collared rim sherds with or without basal notches) and historic goods (one amber-colored spherical glass bead,\* kaolin pipe fragments, pieces of old rum bottles, gunflints, musket balls, buttons, a worn English copper coin) were generally confined to the top 12 inches. Little pottery was recovered below 15 inches; none turned up below 18 inches, with the exception of a few sherds in a colonial pit intrusive into the lower levels. This pit also contained kaolin pipe and rum bottle fragments, beef bones, and a thick side-notched projectile point.

Projectile points (total number 174) are classified as Vosburg, nine; Brewerton Side-Notched, five; Brewerton Corner-Notched, one; Brewerton Eared-Notched, two; Beekman Triangle, nine; small, narrow stemmed, 51; Sylvan Side-Notched, 31; Normanskill, three; Poplar Island, one; Orient Fishtail, four; Levanna, 23; Madison, one; untyped side-notched, five; untyped triangular, 14; and untyped stemmed, 15. Ovate knives, 12; end scrapers, four; side-scrapers, one; pebble hammerstones, five; pitted pebble hammerstones, three; a dubious notched netsinker, one; pestle, one; muller, one; and shallow mortar, one constituted the remainder of the stone artifacts in the collection.

Analysis of depth distribution of projectile points yielded no information on the sequence of types, since styles of all periods were thoroughly mixed in the deposits.

The outstanding ceramic find was a restorable vessel, wide collared, with globular body (plate 75). It is 9 inches tall and the mouth is 8½ inches across. The principal design on the collar consists of about a dozen encircling horizontal incised lines broken on four sides, below castellations, by incised triangles filled by oblique lines. Centered in each triangle is a simple human face created by three short horizontal punctations. Just below the lip is a band of short oblique lines, and at the base of the collar is a band of crisscrossed lines. The lip

\* ca. 1680-1700

## XI. The Historic Period

Even less information exists for this period than for the immediately preceding centuries. None of the sites mentioned in the early European accounts has been located and identified by archeological investigations, except possibly for the palisaded fort of the Kitchiwaucs, a Wappinger group at Croton Point. Harrington (1925) traced an embankment and excavated a historic Indian cemetery on Croton Neck which he believed represented the Kitchiwauc settlement. The exact whereabouts of the village of friendly River Indians who fed and entertained Henry Hudson and his crew on September 18, 1609, at Latitude 42° 18' North near Castleton, N.Y., remains unknown. The same can be said of other villages and "castles" recorded in the documents.

The conditions and events leading to rapid decimation and dispersal of the Hudson River groups, and the losses to archeology occasioned by European settlement and subsequent American exploitation and industrialization, have been described by Ritchie (1958, pp. 7-8, 108), who has also abstracted much descriptive detail from the old accounts (Ritchie, 1944, pp. 1-25; 1956b). The early history of Indian-white contact in the valley was chronicled by Ruttenber (1872). An up-to-date study was written by Brasser (1974).

This chapter summarizes the currently available archeological data.

Small components with typologically late pottery in apparent association with such white trade items as triangular sheet brass arrowpoints, kaolin pipes, and steel-carved bone implements have already been listed for top levels of such stratified stations as South Cruger Island (Ritchie, 1958, pp. 71-82), the Bronck House Rockshelter (pages 98-105), and the Sylvan Lake Rockshelter (pages 148-172). Similar finds have been made on several sites, usually with mixed deposits, in the Bear Mountain region (pages 173-183). Aboriginal pits containing trade items, intrusive through a Middle and Late Woodland shell midden, were found at the Little Nutten Hook site (pages 113-115).

Very few other aboriginal sites of the contact period have come to the writer's attention. James Burggraf and George Van Sickle showed the writer a very small, isolated campsite in the Rondout drainage south and west of Kingston which has produced a handful of surface items, including

rolled sheet brass beads, tiny delicately flaked triangular flint arrowpoints, and some colored glass "seed" beads.

One of the most informative sites of this period which has yet come to light was discovered by Thomas P. Weinman, of the Auringer-Seelye Chapter, New York State Archeological Association, on the Hudson River just north of Catskill. It was excavated by Thomas and Paul Weinman with some assistance by the writer and David R. Wilcox, then also of the New York State Museum and Science Service staff (Weinman and Weinman, 1971).

The Rip Van Winkle site (named after the nearby bridge across the Hudson) is situated on a low semicircular bench of land adjacent to the Hudson River at its confluence with a small unnamed brook. The bench is adjoined on the north by a low rise. The aboriginal refuse covers several hundred square feet of the bench, thinly overlying the shale bedrock in most places and mantled by an overburden of forest litter, humus, and wash several inches thick. However, the thickest and richest deposits occurred along the base of the adjacent slope. Two strata could be discerned in the material which overlay the midden: stratum 1, sterile, light brown earth, and stratum 2, a compact, darker colored zone. In some areas near the slope, stratum 2 seemed divisible into two subzones, the lower of which, stratum 2B, displayed a dark brown to grey brown color and contained occasional artifacts of Indian and white origin.

The midden itself was composed of gray to black earth, pulverized mussel shell, ashes, refuse bones, chips, rock fragments, and artifacts. In its thickest portions, stratigraphic subdivisions seemed feasible on the basis of shell lenses. Two features, one a large basin-shaped depression, were found at the base of the midden.

Interpretation of the nature and origin of the deposits presented some difficulties. Nevertheless, it seems likely that stratum 1 represents soil washed or blown from the adjoining rise following removal of timber in historic times. Stratum 2A can probably also be accounted for in this fashion, but a more complex situation may be involved with stratum 2B, which seems partly derived from slope wash and/or soil creep, partly from Indian

occupation, and partly from humus formation. Stratum 3, the midden, was entirely in place. The area of most intensive occupation was clearly located at the foot of the rise. The rise itself yielded little evidence of occupation when tested.

A moderately large collection of artifacts was recovered in the excavation of 375 square feet (fifteen 5-foot squares). The method of excavation was systematic, involving the successive stripping of strata, the leaving of balks, the drawing of profiles, and the recording of provenience of all artifacts.

The major component seems to have been of historic age, but traces of earlier groups were present. Two Archaic projectile points were found near the base of the midden, as were several sherds of a Jack's Reef Corded pot and several other items probably of relatively early origin. Rim sherds of such types as Oak Hill Corded, Owasco Corded Collar, Goodyear Lipped, Chance Incised, and Deowongo Incised occurred in lower and middle levels. The numerically preponderant ceramics were incised styles with basal-notched collars distributed through all levels but clustered in top levels. Some of these sherds can be typed as Cayadutta Incised and Kingston Incised. Associated were pipe fragments, Levanna points, a few Madison points, strike-a-lights, ovate knives, chipped sandstone disks, netsinkers, hammerstones, ground chisels, other stone tools, and bone awls.

✓ In middle and upper levels of the midden were recovered small fragments of reworked sheet brass and a small tubular blue glass bead; at the base of

stratum 2B and its contact with the midden occurred several sherds of historic "salt glaze" pottery, crockery fragments, kaolin pipe fragments, and some rusted square-sectioned iron nails.

None of the European artifacts can be surely dated after the 17th century, but all of them could pertain to the last half of that century. The associations and stratigraphic contexts of these items argue for their use and disposal by Indians, rather than by colonials. Thus on the evidence of two pipes marked by the fleur-de-lis, the brass objects, and the cane bead, dates of about 1630-1660 should bracket the upper-level occupation of the midden. The Rip Van Winkle site was apparently the spring-summer fishing camp of a small band of River Indians, who were in contact with the Dutch settlements in the general area.

A number of "refugee" sites have been cited in the literature, and pinpointed in location. Such sites were only briefly occupied by groups of Indians, usually of diverse tribal origins, who constituted the pitiful remnants of once populous and powerful tribes, defeated and displaced from their lands. These settlements were merely short-term abodes, where the Indians awaited their ultimate disposition at the hands of their new white masters.

An example is the village of Potic, or Potuck, near Leeds on the Catskill (Parker, 1922, p. 567). The writer has unsuccessfully tried to locate the site. Such villages would probably be survived by relatively little refuse, and that little containing a high percentage of European articles.