

# Maine Archaeology

The Newsletter of The Maine Archaeological Society



University of New Brunswick/University of New England Field School students excavating at Sipp Bay in Perry, Washington County, Maine

Summer 2022

Happy Maine summer! Hope everyone is staying cool out there. This issue we have an update on some exciting collaborative research being performed by University of New Brunswick and University of New England in the Quoddy Head Region and the preliminary results of groundbreaking excavations at the seventeenth century fortified Preble homestead in York.

There is also some great stuff happening this summer including the return of MOFGA's Common Ground Fair in person, and new exhibits at the Abbe Museum and the Maine Historical Society. See the back for more information. Also of note, the second annual Maine Archaeological Society Field School is happening this September at Katahdin Iron Works.

## *University of New Brunswick/University of New England 2022 Field School* Gabe Hrynick, Arthur Anderson, and Matt Betts.

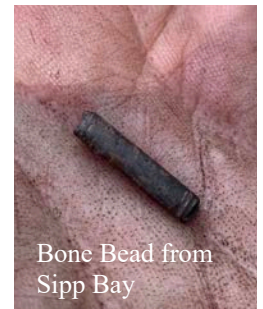
The 2022 University of New Brunswick/University of New England Field School continued work in the Quoddy Region. This work is part of the Northeastern Archaeological Survey, a collaborative project aiming to study eroding coastal Wabanaki archaeological sites to situate them in environmental and historical context. This year, we focused on two sites at Sipp Bay, where ceramic motifs suggest a Middle to Late Maritime Woodland period occupation. Interestingly, the sites we excavated were rich in ceramic sherds and animal bone but contained almost no stone tools or lithic debitage. The students also enjoyed visiting other local sites, such as Picture Rocks (the Machias Petroglyphs), N'tolonapemk, Devil's Head, Jasper Beach, and Reversing Falls. The project was funded by FutureReady NB and a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Grant to Gabe Hrynick, Arthur Anderson, and Matt Betts.



Large portion of a Middle Maritime Woodland ceramic vessel recovered from Sipp Bay.



Field school students working the screens



Bone Bead from Sipp Bay

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**Abraham Preble Homestead (ME 497-209)**  
**York (York County), Maine**  
Jessica Cofelice, MA, RPA

In January of 2022, Independent Archaeological Consulting, LLC (IAC) completed a Phase III Data Recovery at the seventeenth-century fortified homestead site of Abraham Preble (ME 497-209) located in York (York County), Maine. The Preble Homestead is situated within the footprint of the proposed York Village Woods Subdivision, and proposed impacts to the site include the construction of a permanent access road as well as the installation of a stormwater filter and retention basin.



**Plate 1. Feature 1 overview. Extant Caleb Preble home is visible in the background (Emerson Baker photo).**

Cursory background research revealed Abraham Preble<sup>1</sup> (unk. - 1663) and his wife Judith (Tilden) Preble both immigrated from their respective families from Kent, England to Scituate, Massachusetts in the 1630s. After their 1639 marriage, the pair relocated to "Gorgeanna," the small frontier community later incorporated as the Town of York. The Prebles settled with three other Scituate families along "Scituate Men's Row," now known as York Street. Abraham Preble<sup>1</sup> died in 1663 and his son, Abraham Preble<sup>2</sup> inherited his estate. Abraham Preble<sup>2</sup> and his wife Hannah (Sayward) Preble constructed a second home on the property between 1663 and 1692. It is unclear at this juncture if the early seventeenth-century Abraham Preble<sup>1</sup> house was dismantled or incorporated into the larger home of his son, Abraham Preble<sup>2</sup> (1642-1714), however, we suspect that the homestead was reorganized and fortified during King William's War (1688-1697). By 1690, Preble was garrisoning troops within his complex, which had been enlarged to accommodate up to "64 souls" and fortified to a degree that it survived the 1692 Candlemas Massacre. The third and final house built on the property was completed by Caleb Preble after 1713, and this is the house known as the "Green Dragon Inn and Tavern." The 2021-2022 excavations revealed no evidence

of this structure on the property, and we suspect the extant house at 142 York Street is the Caleb Preble house.

The January 2022 Phase III survey follows two previous archaeological studies conducted on the property - a Phase 0/I Reconnaissance Survey completed by NearView in 2017 that resulted in the identification of the seventeenth-century Preble site, followed by fieldwork for a Phase II/limited Phase III completed by Northeast Archaeology Research Center, Inc. (NE ARC) in 2021 (Plate 1). In the fall of 2021, for organization purposes, NE ARC divided the site into three "areas" designated as Areas 1-3. NE ARC conducted a Phase II Intensive Level Survey in Areas 1 and 2, and a Phase III mitigation in Area 1. NE ARC's Phase III Data Recovery resulted in the identification of 28 features, including two seventeenth-century cellarholes, numerous postholes, and a linear feature identified as a fortified fence. Based on that work, NE ARC recommended, with MHPC concurrence, that the Preble Homestead site be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and recommended further Phase III archaeological data recovery to mitigate the proposed adverse impacts to the site.



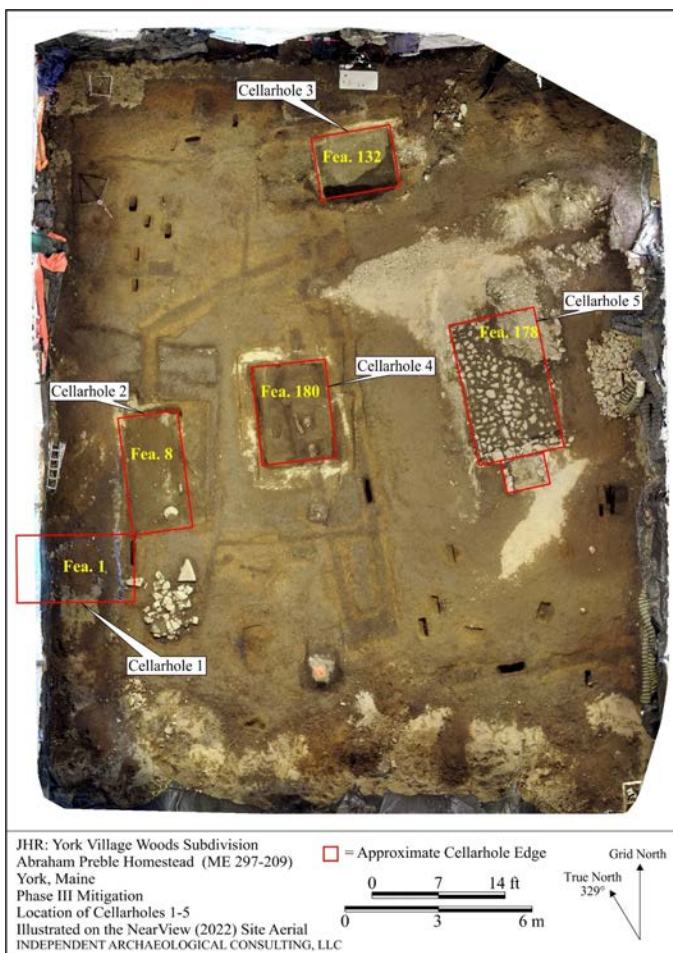
**Plate 2. Overview of the tent over IAC's Phase III survey area, view southeast.**

To meet the project schedule, IAC completed the Phase III work in the winter of 2021/22. Site preparation commenced on Monday, December 27th, 2021, with the removal of two large pine trees within the Phase III survey area footprint, followed the next week by the raising of a 20-m by 25-m (66-ft by 82-ft) tent that easily encompassed Areas 2 and 3 as defined by NE ARC (Plate 2). The following week, the contractor used a Komat'su PC 55MR excavator equipped with a flat "grading bucket" to mechanically remove approximately 20-30 cm (8 to 12 inches) of topsoil overlying the primary site deposits.



**Plate 3. Excavations within Cellarhole #3 yielded a dense concentration of faunal material and redware sherds associated with dairying.**





The mechanical soil removal was followed by hand excavations using shovels, hoes, and trowels to remove the final several centimeters of the surface plow zone/A horizon and expose the downcutting seventeenth-century features clearly visible against the natural subsoil. Once exposed, archaeologists excavated the full extent of each cellarhole. Smaller features, such as postholes or possible post holes, were bisected and recorded in cross-section. Soils from these hand-excavated features were passed through 1/8-inch hardware-cloth to separate artifacts for collection. For features with a potential for preserved organics, crewmembers collected samples of the feature fill for later laboratory processing and analysis.



**Plate 4. A decorated Dutch clay tobacco pipe bowl (the “Crusader & Huntress” pipe), dating ca. 1670-1700, found on the floor of Cellarhole #4 (visible in the background).**

IAC archaeologists identified 114 features during the Phase III survey, including three additional cellarholes (for a total of five cellarholes - designated as Cellarholes #1-5), a stone hearth base (associated with Cellarhole #1), and several ancillary features such as pits, postholes, and linear wood stains indicative of sill-on-grade construction (see aerial photo on the left). Archaeologists also identified four additional linear segments of fortified fence. One section of palisade fence crossed a previously filled seventeenth century cellar and was marked by partially preserved wooden posts. Notable finds include a dense concentration of faunal material within Cellarhole #3 and numerous seventeenth-century pipe bowls (Plates 3 and 4).



**Plate 5. Cellar #5 (Feature 178) overview, view north (from bulkhead entry).**

We are in the process of interpreting our results and have yet to determine the construction sequence and function of the five cellarholes/structures at the site. For ease of interpretation, IAC has numbered Cellars 1-5 based on the sequential order of discovery. We suspect Cellar #3 marks the site of the Abraham Preble Sr. home, and while the relationship between Cellars #1-2 and 4 is unclear, the Abraham Preble Jr. house likely stood in the vicinity of this cluster. Cellar #5 appears to be a later feature, dating to the early part of the eighteenth century. Cellar #5 is unique on the site, as the building sat on a quarried-stone foundation (Plate 5). The floor of the cellar was paved with the same kind of stones, very carefully set to create a nearly flat and level surface. Based on our initial findings, we’ve determined a number of structures stood within the “quasi-fortified” complex, and it appears the layout of the garrison was modified significantly in the early part of the eighteenth century as we have evidence of two fortification layouts.

IAC returned to the site in May and June of 2022 to monitor excavations for the access road and utility tie-ins. During the course of monitoring, IAC identified four additional shallow cellarholes and we have determined the northern fortified fence line extends west onto the adjacent property to suggest that the site is much larger than originally speculated. Our artifact processing and research is ongoing. Once completed, IAC will present the results of the Phase III Data Recovery at a public presentation in York, and the January SHA meeting in Lisbon, Portugal.

**The Maine Archaeological Society**

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## The Maine Archaeological Society

The Maine Archaeological Society (TMAS), a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was founded in 1956 and currently consist of professional and avocational archaeologists, as well as individuals of the general public who are interested in furthering the objectives of the society. The organization's mission is to promote archaeological awareness through education and publication, and encourage archaeological conservation.

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Jessica Cofelice, MA, RPA, Independent Archaeological Consulting, LLC.

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The second part of the Maine Historical Society's Exhibition, **Northern Threads** opens August 12 and runs through December 31. Focusing on dress from 1890-1980, the exhibit looks at how Maine people engaged with clothing and contemporary styles as a form of social and political expression and the stories and art forms behind dress.

Be sure to check out an upcoming talk with **Karin J. Bohleke - Black Fashion History in Maine: Examining the Clothing in Nineteenth-Century Photographs**, August 9<sup>th</sup> 7:00-8:00pm.

Register here for a zoom link or if you're reading this after August 9<sup>th</sup>, see the video of the talk available through the website.

[https://www.mainehistory.org/programs\\_events.shtml](https://www.mainehistory.org/programs_events.shtml)

### Stitching Ourselves Together: Mi'kmaq Porcupine Quillwork Open through January 2023

As posted by the Abbe Museum:

*This exhibit is the latest collaboration between Wabanaki community members and the Abbe Museum. It is presented from a first-person perspective, with Mi'kmaq artisans and culture keepers sharing their experiences working with quills. Community curator Jennifer Pictou (Mi'kmaq) explains, "When we, as Mi'kmaq people, are involved in the curation and narration of our own history we are able to correct the incomplete and often erroneous narratives assigned to our existence. Academics have often misidentified the motifs represented in our quill art or applied their own experiences and beliefs to our imagery. This Euro-centric interpretation negates our Indigenous use of symbols, styles, and patterns."*

*Stitching Ourselves Together challenges common misconceptions around this traditional art form. The displays include historical and contemporary pieces from skilled Mi'kmaq quillworkers and artist profiles from the "Quillers of the Dawn" group working to revive the art form.*