



Queen Anne's Revenge

Laboratory Excavation Report, October 2002

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Nineteen concretions were processed during the month of October. Several of these concretions were quite large and contained numerous artifacts, thus requiring considerable labor for reducing the concretions, photographing, and recording the recovered artifacts.



The largest concretion, QAR 418, is also quite famous, it being the so-called "BabyRuth" that was recovered and initially reduced during the filming of the 1999 BBC/Discovery Channel production. At that time the concretion was found to contain two small cannons. Since the initial reduction of the concretion, most of the material that was removed from those cannons has been in wet storage waiting further processing. During October, that processing was completed with a total of 140 individual artifacts recovered from that single concretion.

The reduction of a "lead shot concretion", QAR 325, began late in October. These concretions typically contain hundreds of lead shot, most being small "partridge shot" but varying in size up to large musket ball size. The larger of the lead shot were cast in two part molds and were poorly formed or unfinished, thus making them unsuitable for use in muskets. These concretions also contain bits of glass, nails, spikes, and the occasional cannon shot. It has been speculated that these artifact assortments were gathered as anti-personnel ammunition for use in the cannons. Great care has been taken to record the context of the materials within these complex concretions. The contents of this concretion will be reported in November.

Iron artifact molds, having been previously cleaned of corrosion product were cast with epoxy resin and polysulfide resin. Seventy-two concretions were cast. The extremely laborious task of cleaning the resulting casts was completed on nine concretions. Several of these concretions contained organic artifacts, primarily wood, rope, and canvas, all remarkably well preserved. It is a testament to the care taken by the laboratory personnel that these fragile artifacts were recovered during the mechanical cleaning of the casts.

Eight salvageable iron artifacts were recovered, including a 2-pounder and a 6-pounder cannon shot. The remaining iron artifacts consisted of wrought iron fastener fragments and one cask hoop fragment.

Six ceramic sherds were recovered. An Iberian oil jar body-sherd was the largest of these. The rest consisted of salt-glazed stoneware and lead/tin glazed earthenware.