

# A Historical Perspective on Prehistoric Archaeology in Vermont

by Scott A. McLaughlin and Peter A. Thomas

## Abstract

Relatively little information is known about Vermont prehistory. In neighboring states, long existing active archaeological programs and societies have amassed considerable amounts of data on the history of Native American occupation within their boundaries. In Vermont, by contrast, the few archaeological studies that have been conducted are incomplete, sporadic, superficial, and inadequately published; although the data can provide valuable information if used with an understanding of the history behind how it was collected. Current archaeologists are attempting to supplement their research with information from Vermont prehistoric artifact collections, 18th and 19th century writers' and historians' accounts, and the small group of amateur and even smaller group of professional archaeologists who have studied Vermont's prehistory. This history of Vermont prehistoric archaeology from 1800 to 1976 will hopefully aid in the understanding of why Vermont archaeology has taken the course it has and how much has been achieved in this growing field.

## Introduction

Prehistoric archaeology is not new to Vermont; however, the earliest recovery of archaeological data<sup>1</sup> was surely of an accidental nature. Artifacts were being collected throughout the state by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Initially, Native American artifacts were seen as curiosities to be found in agricultural fields and along rivers and lakes. Since 1868, there has been an inconsistent attempt to unravel the mysteries of Vermont's prehistoric past through systematic and scientific archaeological research. Historians and amateur archaeologists with the help of a small number of professional archaeologists carried out most of the archaeological research before 1976. The view toward archaeology in Vermont has changed dramatically over the past two hundred years.

1. For the purpose of this paper, archaeological data is any discovery, recovery, study or historical reference to Vermont prehistoric archaeological resources.

Archaeology in Vermont has gone from a hobby to an active professional field of study that has provided a better understanding of the history of Native American and Euro-American occupation within Vermont's boundaries. Unfortunately, Vermont archaeology has had very little affect on the development of American archaeology; but this may change in the future with Vermont's support for more archaeological research.

## Historians and Antiquarians

Just about every Vermont town, county, regional, and state history has references to the discovery of "Indian relics." Historical accounts of early discoveries are a valuable resource. At times, these brief references can be correlated with presently known prehistoric sites (see Plate 1). In several cases, sites mentioned in early literature have been lost to housing development, gravel quarrying, dam construction, or simply erosion; and here, the historians' accounts gain all the more importance as being the only record of these sites.



Plate 1. These petroglyphs at Bellows Falls have been since the early 19th century. They probably relate to the activities of shamans, or medicine men, who were responsible for the spiritual well-being of their people. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.

## A Historical Perspective on Prehistoric Archaeology

According to an early Vermont historian, just after the turn of the nineteenth century people were beginning to get an impression that "every part of Vermont [had], no doubt, been inhabited by the original natives" (Sanders 1812:152). Vestiges of Indian settlements of only a century before were still remembered in the lower Winooski Valley and elsewhere. Daniel C. Sanders wrote "Indian cornfields are plainly to be seen in various parts of Vermont" (Sanders 1812:156). He also noted that "in Kellyvale (present-day Lowell) is yet to be seen something like an attempt at painting. The bark of a large tree is stripped off as high as a man can reach. With the stain of a lively color, an Indian with a gun is painted, with his face towards the North. Beside him, is a representation of a skeleton sketched with a considerable degree of anatomical exactness..." (Sanders 1812:159). Information like this would be lost if it were not for the historians' accounts.

A folktale was created by historians during the mid-nineteenth century concerning the occupation of Native Americans in Vermont. This folktale has taken many different forms, all of which stem from the fact that few Native Americans were encountered when the first white settlers moved into the state. It was believed during the mid-nineteenth century that there had been no permanent Indian settlements within the central portion of the state; but only small settlements along Lake Champlain and the Connecticut River, contradicting what Sanders wrote in 1812. This changed, however, by the mid-twentieth century to a myth that Native Americans never lived in Vermont and were nomadic people just using the resources of the area as they were passing through, or that Vermont was a large hunting and burial ground. This myth still exists even today. This has made it difficult for archaeologists in the twentieth century to validate the necessity for archaeological studies when some people believe that there are no archaeological resources. However, this myth did not stop the work of collectors and researchers from continuing their explorations into Vermont's past.

The earliest detailed account of an archaeological excavation was written about an Early Woodland cemetery called the "Swanton Cemetery site" or the "Frink Farm site," named after the land owner and initial excavator. The account was published in 1868 by Reverend John B. Perry, who postulated that the individuals exhumed were "if not of Asiatic origin at least of a people closely allied in their sentiments and habits to the nations of the East" (Perry 1868:220). This hypothesis reflects the popular nine-



Plate 2. Dr. George Henry Perkins, the father of Vermont archaeology, was a University of Vermont professor and curator of the university museum. His research in the field of archaeology led to the formation of the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Archaeological Collection, which contains nearly 15,000 artifacts from around the world. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.

teenth century explanation among the theologically inclined that Indians were descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel. Perry also suggest that these people may have been giants based on supposedly abnormally large skeletal remains. What led to this hypothesis was the discovery of an artifact assemblage including blocked-end tubular pipes, boatstones, birdstones, beads, pendants, copper artifacts, and other exotic materials that resembled those found in the mounds seen throughout the middle and eastern United States. A widely accepted belief regarding the origin of the mounds was that they were built by mound builders, an extinct civilized race of giants. It was believed that the mounds could not have been built by the "savages" that lived in North America at the time of European discovery.

Reverend Perry's presentation of this material demonstrates his close following of the trends of archaeological

thinking and speculation and of Native American artifacts. Another nineteenth century author who apparently followed American archaeology was William W. Grout, who wrote the *Indian History of Northern Vermont* in 1870. It is unknown how many Vermonters took part in the armchair speculations of the origins of North American Indians and antiquities, but local newspapers may be able to provide information about this early historical period of Vermont archaeology.

### Academic Archaeology

A small group of amateur and an even smaller group of professional archaeologists have contributed to our knowledge of Vermont prehistory. One of the earliest researchers in scientific prehistoric archaeology in Vermont, sometimes referred to as the father of Vermont archaeology, was George Henry Perkins (1844-1933), a University of Vermont (UVM) professor and curator of the university's museum (see Plate 2). Perkins was a professional geologist, who was named Vermont State Geologist in 1898, a post that he held until his death. Between 1871 and 1913, he published nineteen papers based on infor-

mation gathered from private and public collections of Vermont Indian artifacts. Perkins, from the view of an antiquarian, discussed the range, variation, and function of each artifact type that had been found in Vermont.

Through the interest and efforts of Perkins, the State Cabinet Collection<sup>2</sup> and several large private prehistoric collections that he studied were donated to the University of Vermont, which became the basis of an extensive artifact collection (see Plate 3). The collection was used as visual aids in his anthropology courses and was part of a permanent exhibit on Vermont Indians until it was dismantled in 1950. Today this collection contains nearly 12,000 prehistoric artifacts, primarily from western Vermont. This collection has and still could provide archaeologists with additional information about Vermont's Native American past when analyzed.

Perkins' articles and the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Archaeological Collection provides us with the knowledge

2. The State Cabinet Collection was a collection of artifacts from around the world, including Vermont prehistoric artifacts, that were donated by Vermont politicians to the capital for exhibition.



Plate 3. *The Bolton Jar, found in a cave in Bolton, Vermont, is one of only a few complete vessels that have been found in Vermont. It is now part of the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Archaeological Collection. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.*



that, due to relic hunting, the majority of the archaeological sites throughout western Vermont are unlikely to be in a pristine condition. Thus, for those sites where artifacts were exposed by nineteenth century farming, but which might still be located today, the data classes that they are likely to currently contain may differ considerably from what was present one hundred fifty years ago. This information is crucial if adequate interpretations of archaeological sites are to be made. Writing in 1871, for example, Perkins commented, "Though more rarely found now, Indian relics were formerly very abundant in many parts of Vermont. Especially favored in this respect are the borders of streams emptying into Lake Champlain, and the higher lands near by, as well as the shores of the lake and its islands..." (Perkins 1871:11). "Pestles and mortars for pounding corn are not uncommon; the latter being usually mere shallow cavities in some hard rock... Gouges and chisels are rather common all over the state" (Perkins 1871:12). All of these artifacts are rarely encountered today, as are other artifacts he describes: whole ceramic vessels, bannerstones, birdstones, boatstones, and pipes. In brief, the mere fact that by about 1909 the University collection contained approximately 10,000 artifacts that were obtained from only some of the larger collections, provides a sense of the intensity with which prehistoric sites had been picked over for their "relics." Even Perkins notes that while "various objects of aboriginal manufacture [could] still be found time to time, they [were] becoming rare [by] the twentieth century" (Perkins 1909:607).

Professional archaeologists during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who were conducting regional research on Native Americans were aided in Vermont's prehistory by Perkins, his articles, and visits to the University Museum. The earliest of these researchers was Charles Conrad Abbott (1843-1919), of the Peabody Museum at Harvard. He conducted a study of prehistoric artifacts found in the Northeast, which he published in 1881 and entitled *Primitive Industry: or Illustrations of the Handiwork in Stone, Bone, and Clay of the Native Races of the North Atlantic Seaboard of America*. He attempted to show the variation in shape, material, and function of each artifact type found in the region. He incorporated drawings of Vermont artifacts housed at the University Museum and brief descriptions of each.

Another researcher, William Henry Holmes (1846-1933), of the United States National Museum and Bureau of American Ethnology, incorporated information about Vermont Indians and their technologies into three of his

Plate 4. Dr. William Henry Holmes (1846-1933) worked in the United States National Museum and the Bureau of American Ethnology for much of his career. He became one of America's great classifiers in North American archaeological research. From the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.



regional studies (see Plate 4). The first was titled *Aboriginal Pottery of Eastern United States* (1903) in which he had a brief description and photograph of the famous Colchester Jar, a nearly complete ceramic vessel found in Colchester in 1825 (see Figure 5), and illustrations of decorated rim sherds from Vermont. The other studies were titled *Areas of American Culture Characterization Tentatively Outlined as an Aid in the Study of the Antiquities* (1914) and *Handbook of Aboriginal American Antiquities; Part I: Introductory the Lithic Industries* (1919). All three of Holmes' studies were syntheses of the current knowledge of prehistoric cultures in America, and so only briefly mentioned Vermont Indians and artifacts. In his second work, he attempted to map North America into cultural areas based on similarities of archaeological data. Holmes worked with the available literature and hundreds of archaeological collections, laying the groundwork for the classifications and typologies of Native American pottery and lithic artifacts based on minor stylistic differences, form, material, and methods of manufacture. Although Holmes' work played an important role in American archaeology, it did not spark interest in Vermont archaeology by the academic community or directly provide any new information about Vermont prehistory.

In 1900 Warren King Moorehead (1866-1939), Director of the Department of American Archaeology of the Phillips Academy in Massachusetts, edited a volume entitled *Prehistoric Implements* in which Perkins wrote a chapter on the archaeology of New England. The information concerning Vermont came directly from his earlier published articles. Moorehead also published in two volumes a general text about North American prehistory entitled *Stone Age in North America* (1910), which included descriptions of Vermont Indian artifacts.

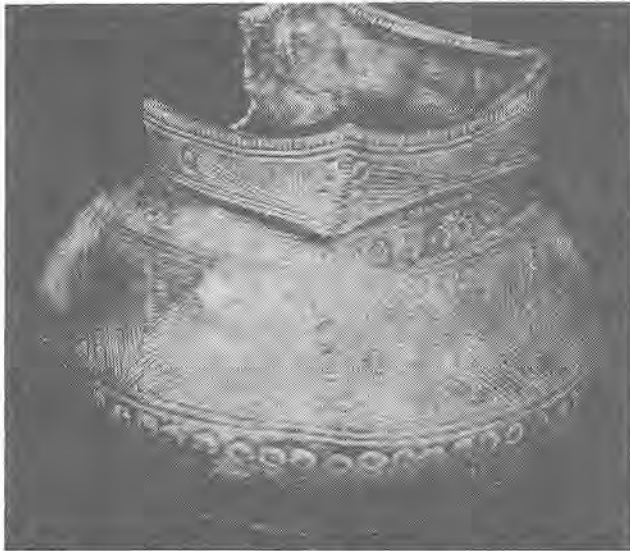


Plate 5. *The Colchester Jar was found in 1825 by Captain Johnson, a Burlington surveyor. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.*

Moorehead became interested in the Champlain Valley after realizing the strong similarities of archaeological material found in his excavations of cemetery sites of the "Red Paint Culture" in Maine and the Woodland burial ground at the Swanton Cemetery site. Moorehead and other leading archaeologists conducted an archaeological site survey of the Champlain Valley in 1917 under the guidance of Perkins and Leslie B. Truax, an extensive collector who took part in the original excavation of the Swanton Cemetery site. The archaeological team investigated the Swanton Cemetery site and explored along the shores of Lake Champlain for an undisturbed burial site. Upon further investigation of the Swanton material, Moorehead determined that the burials were unrelated to those of the "Red Paint Culture." Moorehead devoted an entire chapter to this survey in a book that he published in 1922 entitled *A Report on the Archaeology of Maine: Being a Narrative of Explorations in that State 1912-1920, Together with Work at Lake Champlain 1917*.

In 1926, Eric Pearson Jackson, a member of the faculty at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont, completed a Ph.D. dissertation in geography at the University of Chicago entitled *Early Geography of the Champlain Lowland*. While Perkins and others had taken considerable pains to describe the broad range of prehistoric artifacts that had been recovered in Vermont, Jackson's dissertation was the first significant attempt to draw infer-

ences about prehistoric settlement patterns by looking at the distribution of recorded prehistoric sites. Jackson realized that prehistoric groups were not sedentary, but moved annually within a broad territory, maintaining communication links with more distant regions. He was particularly interested in reconstructing past transportation-communication networks within both the New York and Vermont areas near Lake Champlain. The importance of Jackson's work lies partially in the fact that he makes a fairly convincing case that prehistoric populations made frequent use of tributary stream valleys, which acted as natural corridors between high resource areas. Unfortunately, no one attempted to continue this type of problem-oriented research; most archaeologists working in Vermont during this period were preoccupied with determining the function and variability of artifact types.

The last of the descriptive archaeological syntheses that included Vermont was written in 1935 by Charles C. Willoughby, entitled *Antiquities of the New England Indians with Notes on the Ancient Cultures of the Adjacent Territories*. He included numerous illustrations and descriptions of artifact types, but like most volumes written in this form, he did not address the fact that descriptive types could be possible indicators of chronology.

Godfrey J. Olsen of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, in New York City conducted an excavation on the north side of the mouth of East Creek in Orwell, Vermont, from 1933 to 1935. Only photographs, a now incomplete artifact collection, and a few brief descriptions of the excavation document this first intensive archaeological excavation in the state. Olsen wrote two accounts of the work conducted at the site; the first was published in *New York History Journal* (Olsen 1934), while the second is an unpublished manuscript entitled *Certain Archaeological Investigations in the Lake Champlain Valley, Including the Orwell, (Vermont) Burial Site* (Olsen n.d.). Two other brief descriptions were written by Ivan B. Ross (1935) and Willoughby (1935). A summary of the three years of excavation at the site was published by Stanley M. Gifford in 1948. This site continues to be important as it is one of three major Woodland burial grounds that has been excavated within the state, although it still remains largely unanalyzed.

#### Organized Amateur Archaeology

As a direct result of the excavations in Orwell, Vermont, the Champlain Valley Archaeological Society (CVAS)

was organized in the spring of 1936 by Henry Jermain Slocum, who "discovered that while there had been a great deal of amateur digging and "pot hunting" in the Champlain Valley, curiously enough there had been no scientific archaeological work [excavations] done at all" (Pell 1937:3), except for the excavations in Orwell. The privately funded CVAS, with its headquarters at Fort Ticonderoga Museum in Ticonderoga, New York, drew its members from both eastern New York and western Vermont. This organization of amateur enthusiasts selected John H. Bailey, an archaeologist formerly associated with the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences in Rochester, New York, to direct their excavations (Pell 1937:3). Bailey was eventually based at the Robert Hull Fleming Museum in Burlington, Vermont. Before it was disbanded in 1939, the CVAS sponsored several excavations of which only details of the following were published: a rock shelter at Fort Ticonderoga, New York; preliminary reports on a site at Chipmans Point in Orwell, Vermont (see Plate 6); and their first field season's work at the Rivers site and Donovan site, both located at the junction of the Dead Creek and Otter Creek in Ferrisburg, Vermont (see Plate 7). These are the first professionally guided private excavations in the state which were documented and published.

Bailey, who attempted to apply New York state chronologies to the Champlain Valley, identified the Donovan site as an occupation by people of the Laurentian Tradition. However, the tool assemblages varied from those of New York, and so he proposed to define a third foci or regional manifestation of the Laurentian Archaic Tradition based on the artifacts found at the Donovan site,

called the Vergennes Phase. Unfortunately, this tradition still remains unclear due to the lack of well excavated undisturbed sites of this period and accurate radiocarbon dates.

In 1939 the Vermont Historical Society formed an Archaeological Committee. This committee with the aid of the CVAS planned in September of 1940 a statewide survey of all Native American sites to begin in the summer of 1941. In June 1941, the site survey was initiated by Slocum, the Chairman of the Archaeological Committee, "to find a site which would warrant careful excavation" (Hatch 1943:1). After conducting a month long survey of fourteen towns in Addison and Chittenden County, a site along the shore of Cedar Pond in Monkton was chosen, but after preliminary testing and interviews with some of the local people, it was discovered the site had been previously excavated by collectors from St. Albans, Burlington, and Vergennes. After the Monkton project was completed, the research team located two sites along the shore of Shelburne Pond, and from preliminary testing it appears they discovered a Late Archaic and Late Woodland period site.

In 1942 Payson E. Hatch, of Willsboro, New York, and a key member in the 1941 VHS fieldwork, and George Colett excavated a portion of an Early Woodland Cemetery site in Orwell called the Bennett site. A brief description of the finds was presented by William A. Ritchie, former New York State Archaeologist, in his 1944 publication *The Pre-Iroquoian Occupation of New York State* (Ritchie 1944:199-200).

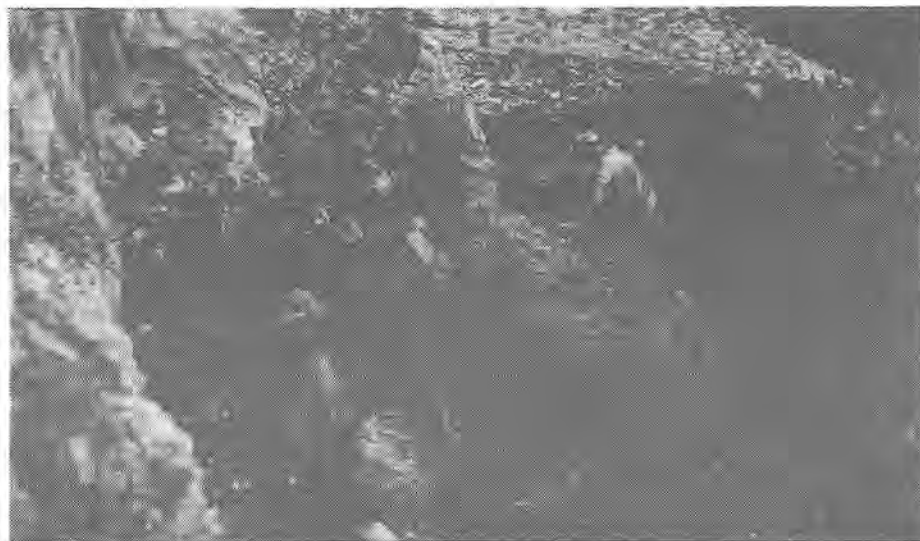


Plate 6. This is a photograph of the excavations conducted by the Champlain Valley Archaeological Society (CVAS) at Chipmans Point in Orwell, Vermont. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.



From June 15 to October 15, 1951, the Vermont Historical Society (VHS) sponsored an excavation under the direction of Edward Brooks at the Rivers site to augment the work conducted by the Champlain Valley Archaeological Society. The VHS's efforts to continue the excavation concluded after one field season's work, as a result of insufficient funds and their inability to locate John Bailey's field notes from the excavations conducted by the CVAS in 1938 and 1939. In 1972 a brief report about the excavations at the site between 1938 and 1951 was published; however, the site remains largely unanalyzed and uninterpreted (Brooks 1972).

The VHS has attempted numerous times to establish a long term commitment to Vermont archaeological research, but has failed time and again because of the lack of central organization that could provide leadership, funds, and contacts with the professional archaeological community to help direct their research. The VHS has published numerous papers by collectors over the past century, providing a non-scientific and accessible place for them to publish their work (Lilley 1930; Ross 1932; Ross 1935; Copeland 1939; Strickland 1943; Waters 1943; Bostock 1955; Mills 1972).

#### Amateur Archaeology and Private Collectors

The extent of private collecting of Vermont Indian arti-

facts is unknown. Most collectors have published nothing of their finds, and so their collections have gone unrecorded. Many are probably sitting in peoples' attics and barns; others have been thrown out as junk. A number of the collectors are known by name and their collection area: Leslie B. Truax, known as the "father figure of Vermont amateur archaeologists" (see Plate 8), William A. Ross, Reginald Pelham Bolton, and Benjamin Fisher collected mainly in Franklin County; Ira Manley and Halbert collected in the Winooski and Lamoille watersheds; B.O. Wales of Weybridge collected along the Otter Creek; and John Bruley of North Hero collected in the Champlain Islands. A number of collectors made attempts to educate the public about Vermont prehistory. Reginald Bolton published two articles in 1930, which discussed his work in northern Vermont. Arnold Ross wrote an account of a field trip which he took with Truax to the Brooks Quarry Site in St. Albans, Vermont, a site which was heavily excavated by Truax (Ross 1932). Theodore H. Sherman of Fair Haven wrote a brief summary of his excavations at two rock shelter sites in West Haven along the Poultney River (Sherman 1941). Thomas Edward Daniels (1898-1962) wrote a small book entitled *Vermont Indians*, which was the first book written about the history of Native American occupation in Vermont (see Plate 9). The information was based on Perkins' articles, observations of the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Archaeological Collection, and correspondence with William Ritchie (New York State

Plate 7. The arrow in this photograph points to the excavations on the Rivers Farm in Vergennes, Vermont. The CVAS conducted excavations at the Rivers Site, a Native American village, during the late 1930s. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.



Archaeologist), Godfrey J. Olsen (Museum of the American Indian), and other professional and amateur archaeologists. Daniels also drew from his own personal research in Addison and Rutland counties. The book was edited and published by Kathleen Rowlands, a friend of Daniels, the year following his death. Daniels also had a small museum in which he displayed and interpreted his archaeological finds in an attempt to destroy the prevailing myth that Indians did not live in Vermont. Thousands of people, including numerous school groups, visited his small museum. At the time, his museum was the largest collection of Vermont material on exhibit and the only exhibit with current interpretations of Vermont prehistory.

#### Professional Archaeology and Historical/Ethnographic Studies

In 1950 William A. Ritchie began to conduct his own archaeological research in Vermont. It was brought to his attention that there was a Paleoindian site located on the Missisquoi River in East Highgate. The Reagan site had been discovered in 1922 by two amateur archaeologists, William A. Ross and Benjamin W. Fisher. Unfortunately, Ross and Fisher did not keep adequate records of how artifacts and other materials were distributed over the site, so Ritchie attempted to locate an intact cultural stratum but could not. Ritchie's publications on the Reagan site represents the first modern scientific critical analysis of Vermont prehistoric material (Ritchie 1953; 1957).

Ritchie continued to conduct research in Vermont prehistory over the following twenty years. In 1959 and 1960, he was invited to work with two collectors, Thomas Edward Daniels of Orwell and Kathleen Rowlands of Rutland. Daniels, a Vermont State Game Warden, discovered a Late Archaic site on Ketchams Island along the Otter Creek in Brandon. Ritchie first published their discoveries in 1968, using this site to redefine the definition of the Vergennes Phase of the Laurentian Archaic Tradition. Ritchie also investigated a Glacial Kame Burial that was accidentally found during gravel removal on Isle La Motte in 1962 (Ritchie 1969:132). This site was noted to be the most eastern site of the Glacial Kame Culture. Ritchie and Robert E. Funk of the New York Museum and Science Service paid close attention to Vermont archaeology and have incorporated information about Vermont in many of their publications. They have published nine works that discussed Vermont archaeological sites, and in 1970 they conducted an archaeological survey of western Vermont and northeastern New York as part of a regional study.

Plate 8. *Leslie B. Truax, the father of Vermont amateur archaeologists, collected Native American artifacts throughout northeastern Vermont. He influenced a vast number of Vermont collectors throughout the late 19th and early 20th century. Most of his collection has been incorporated into the Robert Hull Fleming*



*Museum Archaeological Collection. From the Robert Hull Fleming Museum, University of Vermont.*

Plate 9. *Thomas Edward Daniels (1898-1962) was a Vermont game warden with a keen interest in Native American studies. He learned much of his information about Indian lore from reading, contact with amateur and professional archaeologists, and his Penobscot Indian friends in Maine. From Daniels 1963:61.*



The first cultural resource management study completed in Vermont was in 1959 by Douglas F. Jordan of the Peabody Museum at Harvard University. He wrote a detailed report. He also published a paper about the evidence of Adena culture in the Northeast, using the East Creek site and Frink Farm site as Vermont examples (Jordan 1959a).

Two papers that discuss the Paleo history of the Champlain Valley were written by Ronald J. Mason, entitled *Early Man and the Age of the Champlain Sea* (1960) and *The Paleo Indian Tradition in Eastern North America* (1962). These papers were part of a huge collection of works written about early paleohistory in North America between 1950 and 1970.



Two other people who showed a keen interest in Vermont Indians were John Charles Huden, a UVM history professor, and the late Gordon M. Day of the Canadian Museum of Man (now called the Canadian Museum of Civilization) in Ottawa, Ontario. Huden published seven works between 1955 and 1972 on Indian place-names in Vermont and on Vermont Indians past and present. He provided the first readily available text on Vermont archaeology in 1960, which was revised in 1972. The book, entitled *Archaeology in Vermont*, contained reprints of articles written by Perkins, Bailey, and Truax, a description of the petroglyph sites at Brattleboro and Bellows Falls reprinted from Benjamin Hall's *History of Eastern Vermont*, and original articles. This book was the first widely printed and accessible source of information about Vermont prehistory for both researchers and interested readers. Huden's publications helped the public to realize that Vermont did in fact have a Native American history and community that still existed.

Day has provided information about the culture of the Abenakis over the past almost 400 years through historical and ethnographic research. His work along with that of other historians such as Charland and Laurent was ignored before 1965 as potential sources of information to help interpret the archaeological record. A lot of information is still available for more historical and ethnographic research with the present Abenaki communities.

In 1965 Dr. William A. Haviland came to the UVM Department of Sociology and Anthropology as Vermont's first professionally trained archaeologist since John H. Bailey (see Plate 10). He sparked a new statewide interest in the field of archaeology. Haviland was the first archaeologist working in Vermont to examine the historical and ethnographic data on Vermont Indians and use this information to help interpret the archaeological data. He was able to bring Louise A. Basa to the University of Vermont. In 1971 Basa and Pamela Currence were able to acquire for the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Bailey's field notes and photographs of the Rivers and Donovan sites from the Davenport Public Museum in Davenport, Iowa. Basa was planning to use this material with site surveys which she had conducted at the site to analyze the two sites, but unfortunately the project was abandoned. She has played an important role in Vermont archaeology by excavating the Boucher site, an Early Woodland cemetery. She also attempted to reanalyze the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Archaeological Collection with the help of UVM students, but this project was short lived.



Plate 10. Dr. William A. Haviland, a professor at the University of Vermont, brought Vermont into the realm of public archaeology. He was the first to combine the historical, ethnographic, and archaeological data on Vermont Indians in an attempt to better understand their culture. From *Anthropology at the University of Vermont* [a department pamphlet].

Students have shown a keen interest in Vermont archaeology since Perkins began teaching at the University of Vermont. Perkins even sparked an interest in students in area colleges with his articles, such as a Dartmouth student, who in about 1890 wrote a paper entitled *Aboriginal Vermonters*. Students' fascination with the topic of Vermont prehistory did not blossom until Haviland, Basa, and Power began teaching at UVM. Numerous students dedicated to Vermont archaeology, both at UVM and other area colleges, pioneered a number of archaeological studies, of which most are unpublished.

Thomas C. Vogelmann wrote two research papers about the Paleo history of Vermont. One was entitled *Prehistoric Levels of the Champlain Sea*, and the other, written in 1972, was entitled *Post Glacial Lake History and Paleolithic Man in the Champlain Valley*. This paper explores "the relationship of locations of Paleo artifacts to the early post glacial history of the Champlain Valley" (Vogelmann 1972:1) and provides a concise overview of the reconstructed sequence of early postglacial events in the Champlain Valley. In 1973 Vogelmann prepared a video under the direction of Haviland showing a reconstructed model of the lives of Native Americans living in the Champlain Valley. This film was based on Day's ethnographic studies of the Western Abenakis living in Vermont and Quebec and the archaeological data collected in Vermont over the previous 150 years. This video has proven to be a valuable teaching aid in the classroom as

well as to the general public. In 1973 Vogelmann also submitted to the UVM Department of Anthropology for his B.A. thesis a cultural resource management study prepared for the State of Vermont. This study looked at a proposed route for Interstate 91 from Ryegate to Lyndonville and St. Johnsbury to Waterford.

Two other students who completed research papers in 1972 were Russell J. Barber, who wrote a paper entitled *Analysis of Manufacture and Use Reconstruction for Lithic Artifacts*, and Lynne Marie Perrotte, *Ethnobotany of the Northeast with Special Reference to the Indians of Vermont*.

Stephen Loring of Goddard College and Clark Hinsdale III of Middlebury College were two students who were very active in Vermont archaeological research. Loring in 1972 completed an unpublished manuscript that was for its time the most comprehensive study of Vermont archaeological research written. In an effort to create a source volume, he reviewed nearly every source of information about Vermont prehistory and the surrounding region. He not only discussed the chronology of Vermont prehistory, but the history and development of scientific archaeology in Vermont. From his research, he published a bibliography of sources in 1973 with the Vermont Archaeological Society.

Hinsdale wrote a research paper that discussed the importance of settlement pattern studies in archaeological research and proposed a model for Addison county based on the tentative relationship between settlement patterns and prehistoric agriculture. A large number of students, like Loring and Hinsdale, have played a role in the development of archaeology in Vermont, but by volunteering hundreds of hours to all the little-credited and recognized jobs and tasks.

The Vermont Archaeological Society (VAS) was founded in June of 1968 by Haviland and a group of concerned individuals (see Plate 11). The goals of the VAS were defined in their bylaws as the following: "The objects of the Society shall be to stimulate the study of archaeology, particularly in Vermont; to promote research; to conserve archaeological sites, data, and artifacts; to disseminate archaeological information; to seek through education the promotion of intelligent archaeological activity; to prevent the commercial exploitation of archaeological sites and specimens; and to foster a public understanding of archaeological research" (VAS 1969:1). The VAS has conducted a number of salvage operations of prehistoric

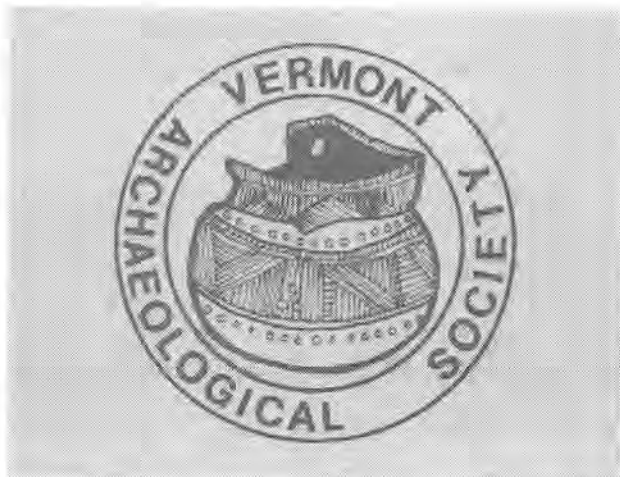


Plate 11. The Vermont Archaeological Society (VAS) has provided a forum for both amateur and professional archaeologists to share information about Native American studies and Vermont archaeology since 1968. From Vermont Archaeological Society Newsletter.

sites, aided in research projects, conducted a Vermont site survey, and has devoted much time to contradicting the earlier myth that no Indians lived in Vermont. Their contribution to Vermont archaeology has been overwhelming for such a small organization.

Two other professors were also conducting research in Vermont archaeology, Howard R. Sargent of Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, New Hampshire, who published in 1960 a brief account of his excavations at Sumner Falls in Hartland, and Darell Castell of Lyndon State College, who directed a field school excavation in Danville in 1971. No account of Castell's work has been published. Sargent also published two summaries of the prehistory of the Upper Connecticut Valley (1969; 1971). There also have been an unknown number of other excavations conducted by organizations and school groups within the state, of which there are no published accounts. The

#### Development of Public Archaeology in Vermont

Until recently, federal and state legislation of cultural resources has had little effect on archaeology in Vermont. The first step toward protecting cultural resources by the federal government was with the Antiquities Act of 1906, which stated the responsibilities of the federal government for "antiquities" found on government controlled or owned land. This act had no effect in Vermont because of the very small amount of

federally owned property within the state. The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (amended in 1976 and 1980) established a National Register of Historic Places, and provided for grants to state preservation programs. This act provided the incentive for many states to establish their own preservation programs. The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 established a firm policy regarding government land use, requiring federal agencies to consider the impact on environmental, historical, and cultural resources when any federally owned land was to be modified or modifications of private land aided by federal funds. It was not until 1975 that the Vermont Legislature passed a bill protecting archaeological resources and establishing the position of State Archaeologist within the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Giovanna Peebles was chosen for the position and began work in July of 1976. Since that time she has reorganized and expanded the state site survey files (formerly maintained by the VAS), reviewed hundreds of federally funded projects that have affected archaeological resources, and has instituted a sound basis for archaeological research.

Haviland was able to bring to the University of Vermont another archaeologist, Marjory W. Power, in 1974. Power attempted to reanalyze the Vermont artifacts from the Robert Hull Fleming Museum Archaeological Collection, but like Basa's attempt, it was also abandoned before completion. Power played a major role along with Haviland in establishing cultural resource management studies in Vermont. In 1978, she excavated the Winooski Site, an important Woodland site that has presented information about possible settlement patterns in the lower Winooski River drainage and about stylistic changes in pottery design from 60 to 1000 A.D.

### **The Significance of Vermont Archaeology**

Vermont archaeologists have not played a prominent role in the development of American archaeology; however, the results of some of the better known archaeological sites have been mentioned in general North American archaeology texts. Unfortunately, Vermont still remains a blank spot or unknown in most broad regional studies of American prehistory. This is due to the lack of available information about Vermont archaeology to researchers and the general public. Most of the information that has been written about Vermont prehistory is now outdated or in the form of unpublished reports. In recent years, Vermont archaeology has been preoccupied with conducting cultural resource management studies and has not

had the time to devote to writing widely available publications on Vermont prehistory.

Vermont archaeology has played a very small role in the field of North American archaeology. Archaeological research in Vermont before the 1950s is lacking a critical element, that being an adequate time perspective. Before 1950, the Northeast lacked a detailed chronology based on artifact styles like those developed for other areas of North America. While most writers were convinced that some artifacts had considerable antiquity, estimates that exceeded 4,000 years would probably have met with much skepticism. Only since the 1950s, with the advent of radiocarbon dating, have archaeologists been secure in the knowledge that the greater New England region was inhabited by at least 10,500 years ago. Thus, while these early archaeological studies provide important information about the range and variation of prehistoric artifact classes that can be expected in Vermont, as well as a sense of site size and density within different portions of the state, the data does not produce an accurate pattern of the lifestyle of prehistoric groups in Vermont.

Most of the earlier developed resources have not been reanalyzed by the present archaeological community. About 1976, the whole pace and direction of Vermont archaeology were transformed with the development of public archaeology—archaeology funded primarily from federal and state resources. Public archaeology has greatly expanded our understanding of the prehistoric period and native cultures in Vermont through the excavations of previously unrecorded sites. Instead of using the outdated data of the earlier archaeological studies, Vermont archaeologists have borrowed most of their chronologies, typologies, and understanding of prehistoric lifestyles from neighboring states, principally New York.

This paper is not a complete history, but a starting point that will hopefully be of some help to those who are interested in understanding the development of Vermont archaeology and what is available for Vermont archaeological resources prior to 1976. Unfortunately, no one has attempted to write a complete history of Vermont archaeology or to collect all the historical and archaeological data about Vermont Indians recovered since 1609. There have been three other attempts at writing the history of Vermont archaeology. The first was a brief history written by Basa in 1971, the other two were written by Loring in 1972 and Peterson in 1978, two distinguished Vermont college graduates. All three of these histories are unpublished.



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