



# "American Engraved Powder Horns"

by James E. Routh, Jr.

The engraved words and designs found on American colonial powder horns are of increasing interest to me as I study them, talk to people who sense the forgotten stories they have to tell, walk the ground some of their owners knew, try to understand the history they helped make.

I always knew they existed. I walked past the place where J.H. Grenville Gilbert's horns are displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. I wandered between the glass cases of soldier-made horns and other artifacts of the French and Indian Wars and the Revolution in the Fort Ticonderoga Museum. I saw the several fine horns displayed in the museum of the New York Historical Society. Now and then a dealer in American antiques or antique arms brought one to my attention. But I never really saw more than shape and form, which were enough to make me realize that they were an ingenious way to carry gunpowder and to keep it dry.

Other than the powder horn collections mentioned, it is difficult for the public to see several fine horns at one time in one place. A relatively small number have survived use in wars and peace and the passage of more than 200 years. John duMont, in his beautiful book, *Engraved American Powder Horns*, estimates no more than 80 to 100 horns engraved with maps remain; 1,000 to 1,500 with other design or lettering.

Many are widely scattered, two or three here, one there, in museums and preservations throughout New England, New York, Pennsylvania and elsewhere.

In the past there have been several important private collections of American engraved powder horns. Their owners early recognized their unique interest: J.H. Grenville Gilbert, already mentioned, Charles Darwin Cook of Providence, Rhode Island; C. Stanley Jacob of Plainfield, New Jersey; Herman P. Dean of Huntington, West Virginia; and Joe Kindig, Jr. of York, Pennsylvania. Many of the horns in the Cook and Jacob collections were sold to Joe Kindig, Jr.

A few private collections of engraved horns exist today. They are comprised in large part of horns from collections of the past. Infrequently a fine unknown horn comes to light. Occasionally a horn is found in England, taken home by a British soldier at the close of the French and Indian or Revolutionary war. Private collections of arms and accouterments sometimes include a powder horn or two.

It is to Joe Kindig, Jr., that I owe the beginning of my interest in engraved colonial powder horns and most of my knowledge of them.

Powder horns were the companions of muzzle loading rifles and fowlers and muskets. My interest in them goes back to childhood. Like most boys, guns held a built-in fascination for me. My mother liked antiques. Together we scouted the one horse farms scattered through the rolling countryside from Atlanta toward the mountains of North Georgia. While she looked for furniture of the early settlers from Virginia and the



Carolinas, I looked for Kentucky rifles. Most of the rifles and horns I found were made during the percussion period, but a few of the rifles were earlier flintlocks. In the southern Appalachians these rifles were called Hog Rifles. They were unadorned, as plain as blacksmith-made farm implements. The powder horns used with them are equally plain and difficult to date.

The rifles I found in those days are long gone. Since then I have owned the products of some of the great gunsmiths. Guns with relief-carved buttstocks and finely engraved metal mounts, in the tradition of the best craftsmen of the American decorative arts. But I had never owned an equally fine powder horn.

Some years ago I decided to trade one of these rifles for two engraved powder horns. I remember the rifle was made during the Revolution or before by George Frederick Fainot in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. It came from Joe Kindig: student, teacher to those fortunate enough to know him, collector and dealer in great antiques.

Joe Kindig was always willing to buy or trade back at its original price anything he had sold. This was practical business because a good antique always has a greater value tomorrow than it has today. And it was an affirmation of his belief in his own sense of values. This unspoken understanding was good for his customers. They could change their collections as their tastes and interest changed.

I don't understand even now what suggested this course to me, but it was then that my interest and education in the subject of engraved American powder horns began. From that time until Joe Kindig's death in 1971 we spent many hours talking about them.

His friends all remember him as an enthusiastic trader. The wife of a dealer in great European arms once remarked that when she accompanied her husband to York to see Joe Kindig she came supplied with cheese crackers and paperback books. On a previous visit trading beginning in the morning lasted un-

til 2:00 a.m. the following morning with little time out to eat.

I always look forward to a visit to York. The town, rich in history, is not preoccupied with the past. It is a busy industrial town, the German heritage of its people evident in architecture and in names, in customs and in a general conservative outlook on life. There is great hustle and bustle about York, Pennsylvania.

I came in the morning to Joe Kindig's shop on West Market Street where in an earlier day Conestoga wagons rattled westward toward Fort Pitt. It is a three story brick town house like many other colonial houses in York. The front door opens onto a landing above steps descending to the sidewalk. In later years I would push past a young tree that had begun to grow from a crack in the doorstep. Each year it was larger and I wondered when it would finally bar passage through the doorway. I remember thinking uneasily that a sort of symbolism

recount with relish the intricacies involved in acquiring it. He would ask if I had brought something along and this time I said, "I have the Fainot in the car and I'd like to trade it for two powder horns." He said, "Bring it back in where it belongs," and he said, "Powder horns are not appreciated as an expression of their times, but some day they will be."

We sat down together on a Chippendale sofa in the large cluttered room on the second floor, behind the small one he used for an office. The sofa stood before a fireplace he used in cold weather. He sat there to read. He told me he had a new friend he had never seen, a mouse. When he left the room at the end of the day he put cheese on the hearth. When he returned in the morning, it was gone. American antique furniture filled the room, Kentucky rifles stood in stacks in corners. Examples of Pennsylvania Fraktur hung from the walls or were stacked against them.



GEORGE BUNCE, November 20, 1759

Ticonderoga. A typical soldier's horn of the period of the French and Indian War. Bunce's military record can be followed from his enlistment in Connecticut in 1755 to his death in 1762. To other horns by the same hand are preserved in the Fort Ticonderoga Museum: one is dated in September, the other in October, 1759.

might be attached to it, that the life of the tree and the life of Joe Kindig were interwoven—that if something happened to the tree, something might also happen to Joe Kindig.

The door opened heavily, ringing a bell. And then I came into a dimly lit hallway made small by Philadelphia clocks, Chippendale chairs, mirrors and portraits of early Pennsylvanians hanging from the walls. A delicious aroma of linseed oil and old wood filled the air.

I walked to the foot of a staircase at the back of the hall and looked up and there above me he stood waiting, the light from behind illuminating the edges of his long beard and hair that hung to his shoulders.

I always said, "Well, how are you?" and he replied, "I couldn't be better." A sort of opening ritual.

We wasted no time in preliminaries but talked as though we had seen each other only yesterday. He would show me a new rifle he was pleased with, tell me what he thought about it and

He turned and put his hand on an object, a wooden box on a table behind the sofa. He said, "This came from the attic of a house in York. It had probably been there since the end of the Revolution. Can you guess what it is?" I said lamely, "It looks like a rabbit trap, the kind I remember at the edges of plowed fields in Georgia." He slid open the top, exposing a compartment for filing papers. It was a field desk of an officer of the Continental Army, put away when the Revolution came to an end. Then he turned it over and the bottom came open, exposing another space. Inside, carefully folded lay a flag exactly as it had been put away almost two hundred years before.

We talked and then he got up and went into a back room and returned with a corrugated paper box, the kind wholesale goods are shipped in. He put it down between us and opened it. The box held layers of engraved powder horns, separated by sheets of newspaper. There were three or four horns in each layer. He told me what he thought of a horn as he held it, then



passed it to me as he reached into the box to take out the next one. When we were through with a box he returned it to the other room and brought out another. There were many boxes and we opened them and looked at engraved powder horns through most of the day. Among them were some of the greatest American powder horns known to exist. Other lesser horns possessed some characteristic, some uniqueness that made them important to him.

I began gradually to realize that these horns were engraved with highly personal recordings of the thoughts of the people who originally owned them, of important events in their lives, that they somehow expressed not only the character of their owners but the quality or spirit of their time.

We spent that day together and I traded for two fine horns. One of them was engraved with a map of Boston at the start of the Revolution, the harbor with warships, surrounding towns and fortifications; the other, a New York map horn, I traded back to him some years later for still another rifle I later traded with a third rifle for two other horns. The intricacies of some of these trades now escape me.

I learned of Joe Kindig's illness from Carl Pippert of Bladenburg, Maryland. Carl Pippert, great living Kentucky rifle maker, had been his friend for many years. When I talked by telephone with Joe Kindig, III, he called from the hall to his father's bedroom to tell him it was I, and I could hear Joe Kindig call back, "Ask him when he can come up. I have a new horn to show him."

I told Joe I couldn't come to York in February but then I thought of the urgency in his voice. Several days later I flew to Baltimore and drove through wintery farmland to York, Pennsylvania.

I sat by his bedside as he talked about the horn he wanted me to see, a horn a soldier of the French and Indian war engraved as he passed up the St. Lawrence River from Fortress Louisbourg to Quebec to fight on the Plains of Abraham.

I never saw Joe Kindig again.

What is an engraved American powder horn? What was its purpose? Who used it? When, where, how? What do the engraved legends and designs on powder horns mean and why are they there?

Answers to the first questions are simple answers to practical questions. Answers to the last are more complex. They lie in understanding the minds and manners of 18th century Americans who owned the horns.

Functionally, powder horns, made from the horns of cattle, were used for carrying gunpowder. They were suitable for this purpose because they were light in weight, watertight, easily obtainable, and the curvature of the horn fitted snugly against the body when worn slung by a thong from the shoulder or against a hunting bag. A cow horn held enough powder to last a reasonable length of time in the field. Early horns used on the frontier, away from a source of gunpowder, were large enough to hold a good supply; other horns used closer to civilization were smaller.

The surface of the spout end of most engraved horns was cut back slightly to an underlying strata of dark horn. This area comprised about a quarter to a third of the total length of a

powder horn. The dark color contrasted pleasingly with the lighter color of the main body of the horn.

The color of the horn is beautiful and this quality is enhanced with the passage of time; it ranges from bone white through ivory and amber to a dark brown. Some dark horns have a greenish cast. The origin of cattle that provided horns made into powder horns would be an interesting research project.

The surfaces of some horns seem to have been dyed a yellow color. Engraved lines were darkened or colored red or green.

The surfaces of horns, put away for years, deteriorate. I think powder horns, like pearls, need to be handled.

The large end of a horn was enclosed with a wooden plug fastened with wooden pegs or iron or brass pins or sometimes with tacks with large heads. They were often painted, usually an earth-red color. Infrequently plugs were carved. A few horns were provided with closures of metal, iron or brass or silver; the finer ones were occasionally engraved.

A stopper carved from wood closed the spout opening. A few 18th century horns were made with detachable spouts, threaded to screw to the body of the horn.

Horns were filled with powder through the spout opening, an easy procedure with a funnel.

Some uncommon variations:

An 18th century horn is divided into two sections, the part toward the spout for powder, the large end for shot. The shot compartment is fitted with a hinged door.

Another powder horn serves also as a turkey call; if stroked by a rigid object held in an expert hand, its ribbed body produces a sound like the call of a wild turkey.

A unique detail in powder horn design is referred to in a contemporary description of clothing, arms and gear used by Roger's Rangers during the French and Indian War. "... their officers usually carry a small compass fixed in the bottom of the powder horns by which to direct them when they happen to lose themselves in the woods." (Captain John Knot's *Historical Journal*, July 12 & 13, 1757.) I would like to see one of these horns today.

From earliest times men have ornamented the things they use in daily life. The surface of a powder horn, nearly always close-by, offered a place to exercise this primitive instinct. The word "Flowered" is used to describe this work on an early New England horn: "Flowered in Caneda River Pascue Up."

The engraving on an American powder horn is a form of folk art, and, as all art does, it reflects its time, it reflects history. Design motifs engraved on powder horns occur elsewhere on many dissimilar objects.

The designs and inscriptions represent things that were important to the owners of the horns. They are profound or trite, patriotic, humorous, happy, erotic, tragic.

Popular slogans or rhymes of the time are found engraved on powder horns. Or uncomplimentary comments about the enemy. Symbolic devices are used, sometimes subtle and unexplained. Research can often identify a source in pamphlets or engravings or newspapers of the day.

Some engraved design has a meaning for the owner alone. William Brown's horn, described in Stephen Grancsay's "Engraved American Powder Horns" depicts the figures of a



**NEW YORK, 1757**

**"Capt. James Abercrombie's horn made at Sandy Hook ye 16th June on board the ship Sheffield 1757"**

**Panels on the reverse side may illustrate facets of the life of the owner. One panel depicts an elegantly dressed gentleman beside a finely costumed lady. Another displays the same gentleman taking the scalp of a fallen enemy.**





**GRANT'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE CHEROKEES**

A cartouche bears the caption: "A New Map of Charles Town From the Water Likewise The Indian Settlements in The Province of South Carolina." Elaborately engraved with a view of Charleston and surrounding areas. Towns, forts, rivers and Indian villages in the mountains to the north. A route connects these places. Another horn by the same hand, recently discovered in Ireland, bears an inscription identifying the route as that of the Grant Expedition of 1762. Grant's course of march was previously unknown.

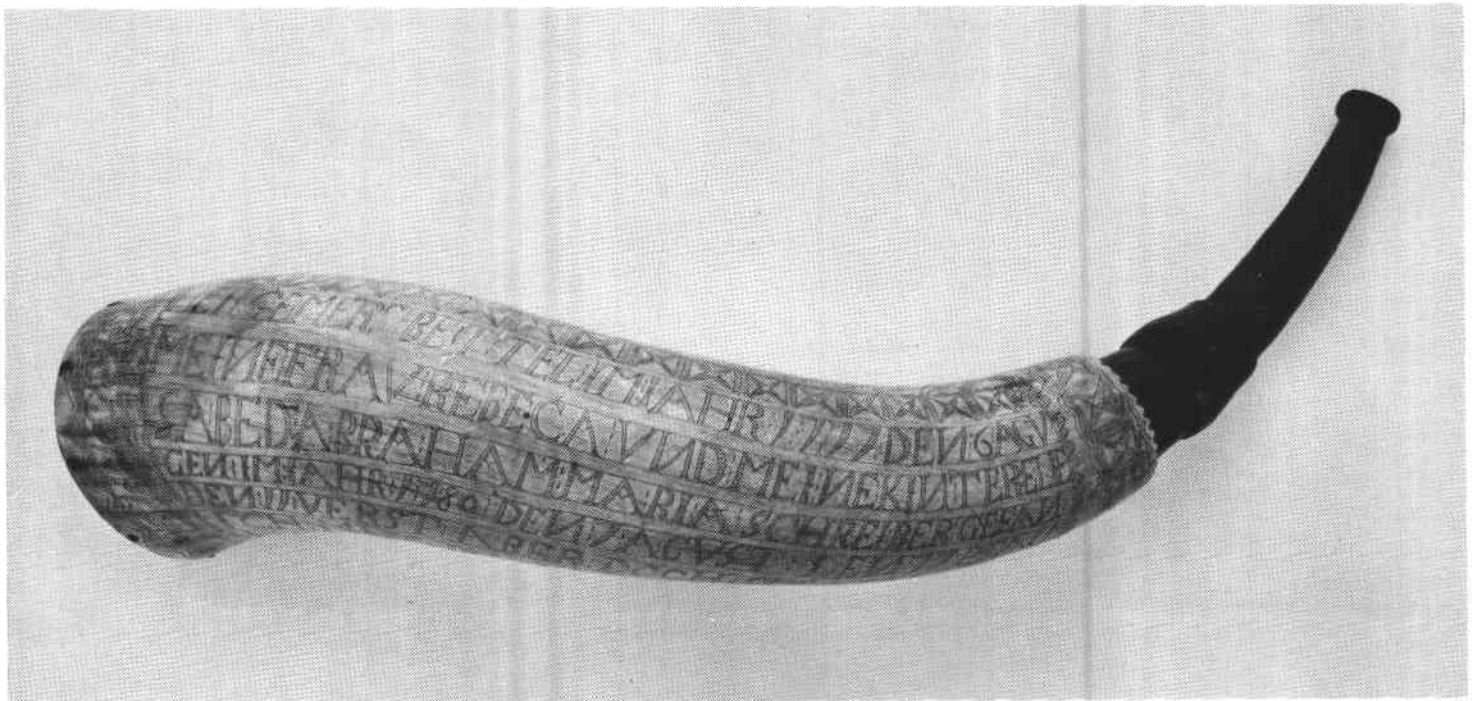


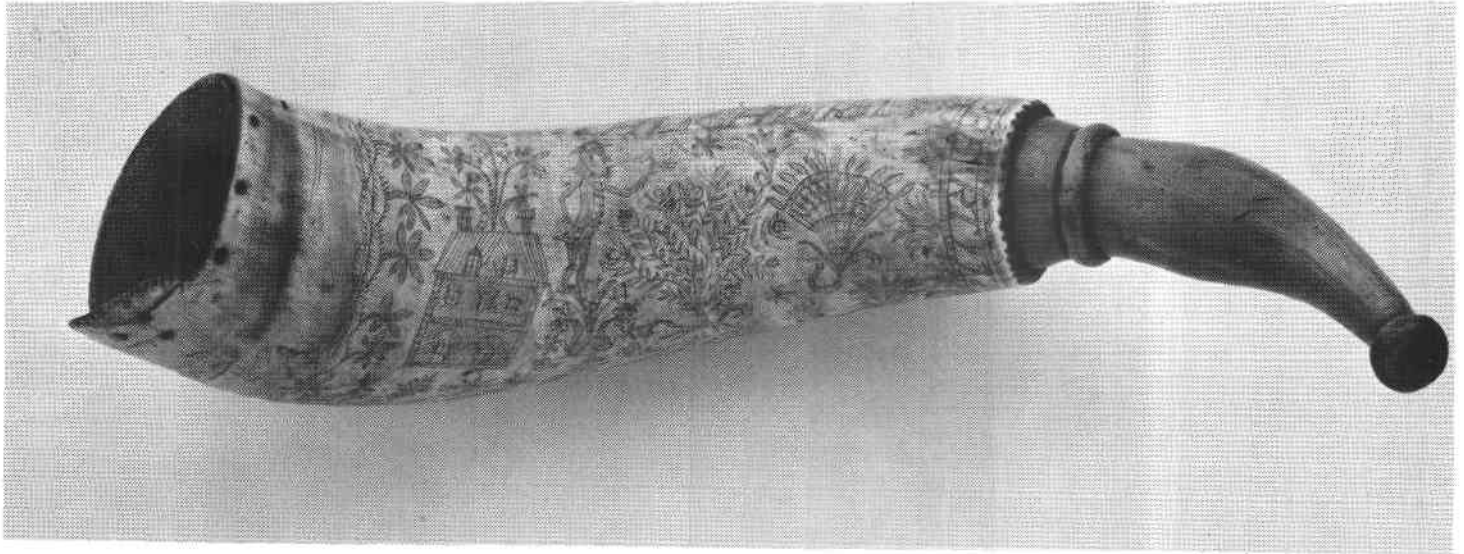




**JOHAN STEFFAHN SCHREIBBER, 1782**

This horn from the Mohawk Valley of New York is engraved in the German of its Palatine settlers, with an extraordinary account of hardship and danger. "Herkemer's battle in the year 1777, Aug. 6 (the Battle of Oriskany). My wife Rebecca and my children Elizabeth, Abraham, Maria Schreiber were captured in the year 1780, Aug. 7. The 77 Psalm, 11 Verse: But I said: I must endure this. The right hand of the Highest can change everything. Yohan Steffahn Schreiber in the year 1782, Oct. 28. FL"

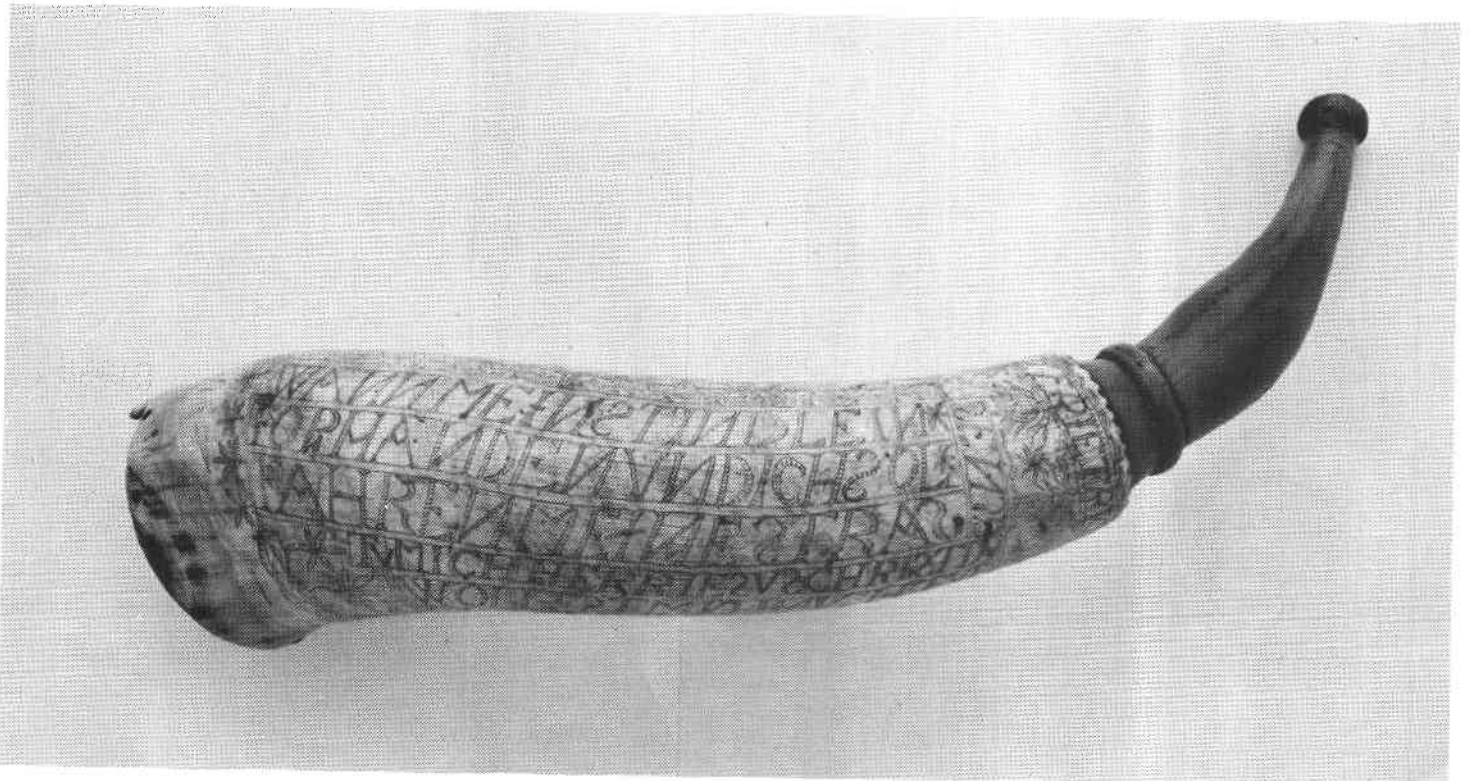




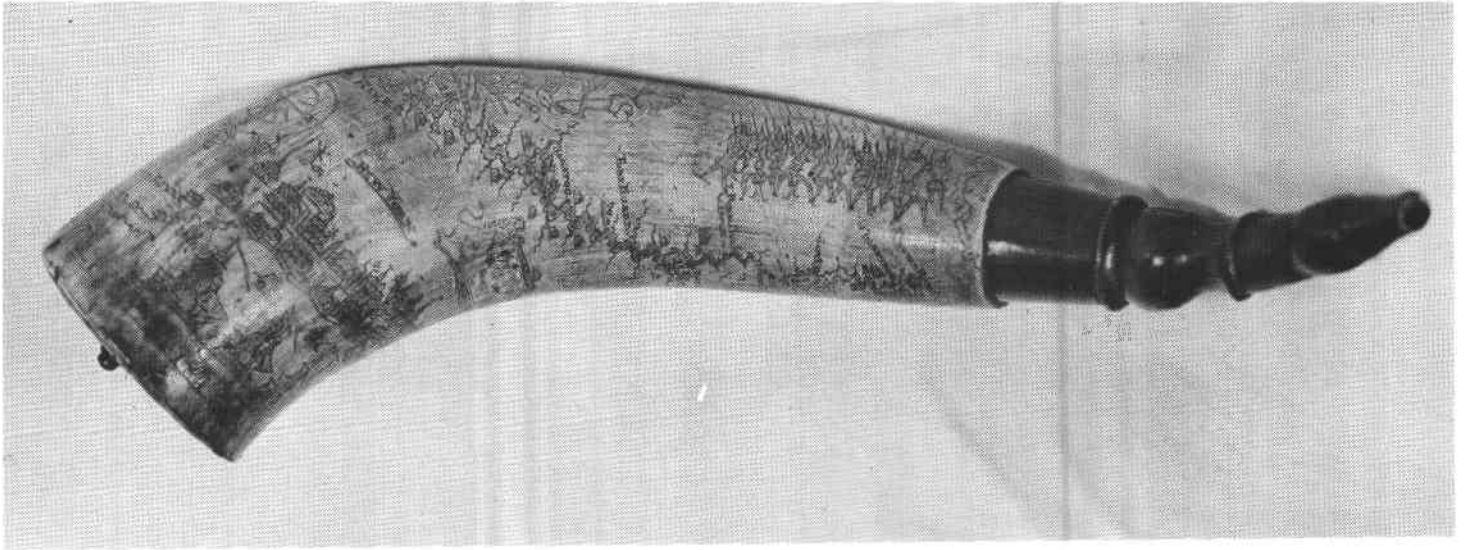
**FRIETRICH LEPPERT, 1782**

The engraving is like that on Johan Schreiber's horn. Similar wooden end plugs are painted with the same red paint. Leppert was a weaver in Johnstown, New York in the Mohawk Valley. The names Friedrich Leppert and Steffahn Schreiber both appear on the roster of the Tryon County Militia, frontier farmers who fought British and Indians at Oriskany Creek.

"When mine hour has come I shall go my way to Lord Jesus Christ. He will not allow my soul, which I intrust to His keeping, to go unaccompanied on my last journey."

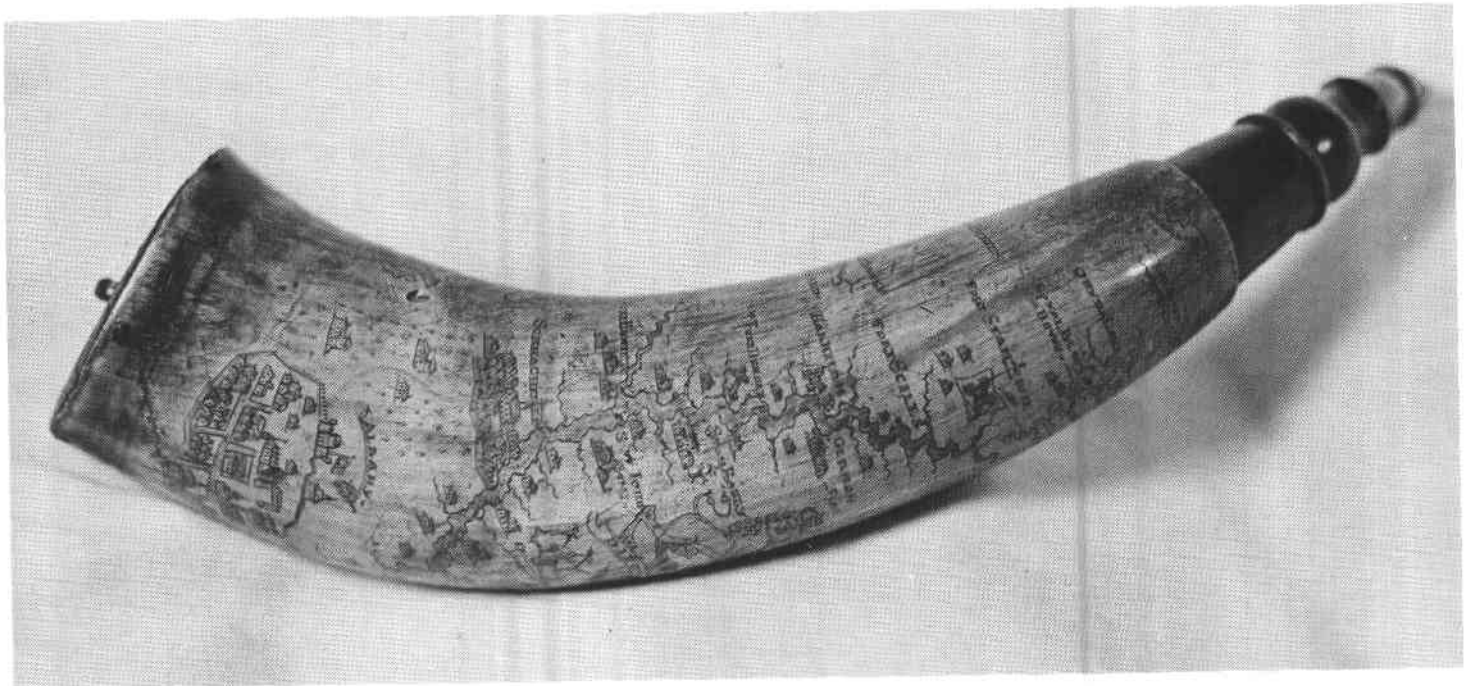


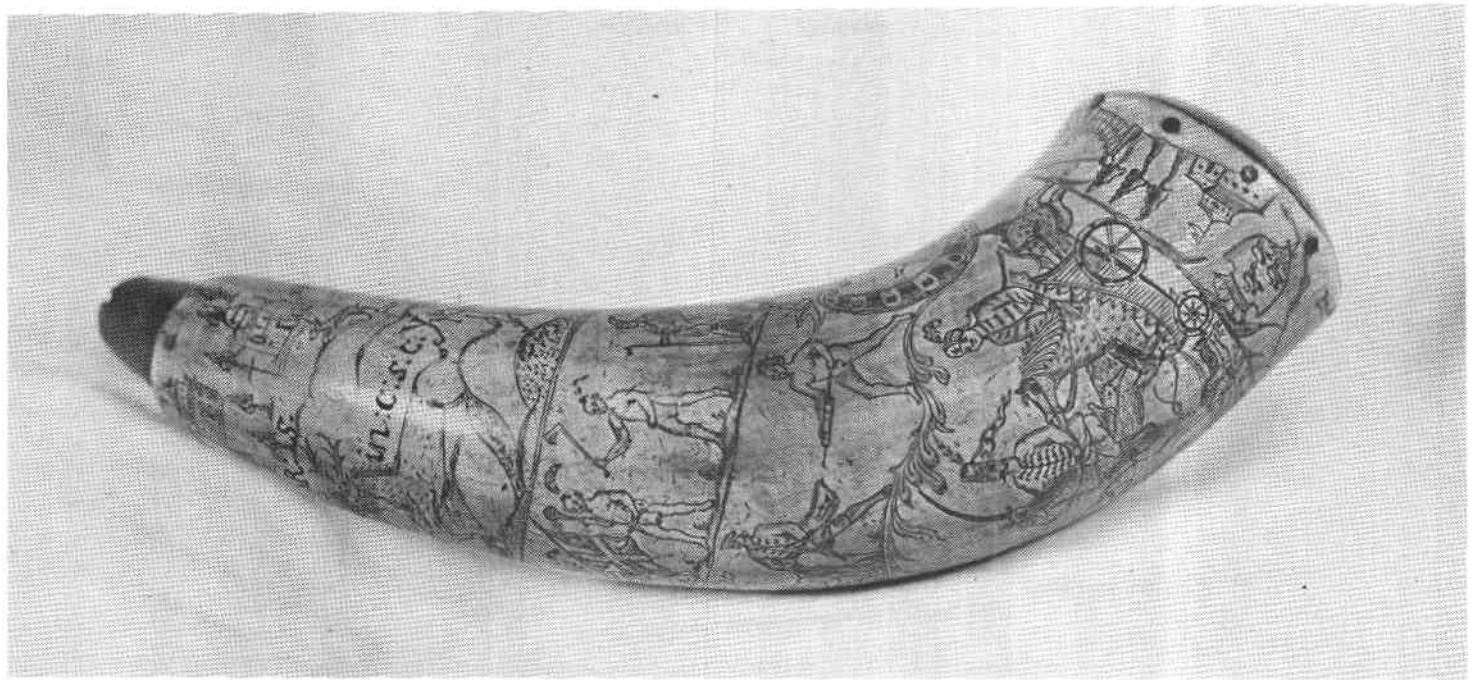




NEW YORK, circa 1758

This horn is engraved with a map of the Hudson and Mohawk river valleys, great routes of travel of colonial America. Depicted are towns and forts and fortified churches and houses. A fine example of this art form.





**NEW YORK, circa 1758**

This horn may have belonged to a member of Archibald Montgomery's Highland Regiment, active in New York during the French and Indian War. The engraved design is European in concept. Incongruous are figures of Indians sandwiched between Scots and Turks and European castles. Letters engraved on the horn are as yet undeciphered.



woman and a man shaking hands. Lettering above reads "How do you do Mrs. Saly?" Mrs. Saly was immortalized on a powder horn of the American Revolution: who was she?

The subjects depicted on powder horns are as different as people are different, but they express sentiments many people had in common. They express the deep religious faith of frontier Americans; religious symbols that were a part of their culture appear over and over again. Their names were often Biblical: Hezekiah King, Obediah Mede, Zacharias Flegler, Jeremiah Eames, Eliphelet Danford, Moses Pratt. They lived hard lives and religion sustained them.

A man who made and decorated his own horn often lived in a frontier wilderness. He depended on his flintlock gun for protection for himself and his family. He used it to hunt game. He needed other basic equipment: an ax or tomahawk, a knife, a hunting bag made of dressed buckskin. Hunting bags were used to carry small tools and patches and lead balls and extra flints. I once owned a hunting bag from the mountains of Tennessee: among the usual objects in it was a turkey call, made from the hollow wing bone of a wild turkey.

The man who used this equipment needed a small horn for carrying a fine grained priming powder used in the pan of his gun. He carried this horn in the bag or in a pocket.

When he left home for military service during the French and Indian Wars or the Revolution, he often took all of this along with him. It served him in peace time and in war.

Americans who fought in these wars enlisted or were conscripted for relatively short periods of time. They joined a campaign, then returned home to attend to crops or other farm chores, or to the affairs of townsmen. No more than 17,000 belonged to the Continental Army at one time though it is estimated that over 400,000 served in it during the eight years of the American Revolution.

Some horns were made by men who served several enlistments. Names inscribed on them can be found in military records of the time.

Service records contain interesting information about individual soldiers. They often include a physical description. This was helpful in looking for a man who deserted, a common occurrence.

George Bunce's horn, made at Fort Ticonderoga in 1759 illustrates the wealth of material sometimes to be found. He is recorded in the Connecticut Historical Society Collection and in the Collection of the New York Historical Society. George Bunce enlisted five times. He was a carpenter, 5 feet 6 inches tall. His complexion brown. He died in a hospital during his last enlistment, age 39.

George Bunce's horn and two others, obviously by the same hand, were engraved at Ticonderoga in succeeding months in 1759. A horn engraved in September, another in October are in the Fort Ticonderoga Museum. The Bunce horn engraved in November is in the collection.

Moses Pratt's horn is engraved, "Solger at Fort Edward in the year 1757, to Lake Gorg in the year 1759, to Fort Cumberland in the year —." The year of Moses Pratt's arrival at Cumberland is blank; did he engrave the last line in anticipation of a military assignment he never fulfilled? The reference to Fort Cumberland is interesting because it rarely occurs on

powder horns.

Horns made by soldiers were engraved during periods of inactivity in forts or military encampments, perhaps on board ship or during a seige or the occupation of a town.

Captain James Abercromby's horn is engraved ". . . made at Sandyhook ye 16th June on Board the Ship Sheffield, 1757." Engraved figures on this horn are displayed in panels; I believe they depict facets of Captain Abercromby's life. In one panel he stands elegantly dressed, beside an equally well dressed lady; in another he is a hunter in frontier clothing, in a third a horseman. In still another panel, Captain Abercromby takes a scalp from a fallen foe, his rifle and tomahawk lean against a nearby tree.

The engraving on soldier-made horns can afford details of historic interest.

A horn in the Museum of the Cherokee Indian in Cherokee, North Carolina, is engraved with a map of the route of march of the expedition of Lt. Colonel James Grant against the Cherokees in 1761. This horn descended from generation to generation in a family in Ireland. Until it recently became known, no map of the invasion route was believed to exist.

Another horn by the same hand with a similar map is in the collection of the speaker. The route engraved on this horn was not understood until examined with the Museum horn.

John Collins' horn, dated September 9th, 1758, bears this inscription: "At Ticonderoga July ye 8th / 7 hours we fought the French / while we were all in open field & they within a trench." This horn is in the collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum. Josua Potter's horn is engraved: "Marched on alarm to Ticonderoga July 8 1758 2nd Boston Regiment." Gid Stanley Kingston's horn is engraved: "Stony Point was taken July 16, 1779 / I know for I was there." These latter two horns are described in *Engraved American Powder Horns*.

The legend engraved on Yehon Steffahn Schreiber's horn is stark tragedy. Engraved during the Revolution in the Mohawk Valley of New York it records the Battle of Oriskany (Hegermer's Bettel) the capture of Schreiber's wife Rebeca, and his children Eliesabed, Abraham and Maria. And finally an affirmation of faith and submission to the will of God.

Another horn by the same hand is engraved with a legend affirming religious belief.

Horns nearly always carry the names of their owners. Sometimes an original name has been scraped off and another added. A few horns are engraved with the names of succeeding generations of families who used them in different wars.

Many horns are engraved with maps of parts of the country the owner knew.

The depict rivers and streams, a primary means of travel in colonial days. And houses and churches grown up along the banks. Towns and settlements, forts, and blockhouses are indicated, with connecting roads and trails. Portages (Carrying Places) are shown. Occasionally a distance in miles is indicated between points. They can be surprisingly accurate according to modern road maps. Today's super highways often follow the course of early trails.

The spelling of words engraved on powder horns is uninhibited. It reflects the level of literacy of the time; few people could read and write, and the spelling, even of the educated, was



often phonetic. If a man's spelling served to communicate, it was acceptable. General Washington had trouble finding men who could read and write orders.

The level of literacy is borne out by many legal documents of the time. Signatures are often a mark, and these documents are records of affluent members of society who owned property.

The struggle to use language is reflected in the engraved words on powder horns. They communicate in a warm and believable way over more than 200 years.

The spelling of some place names found on powder horns caused particular trouble. Schenectady and Ticonderoga bewildered even the most literate engravers; I have found twelve or more different spellings of each of these names on 18th century horns.

Powder horns were made by professional engravers: silversmiths, combmakers, engravers of copper plates used in printing, and a few of them are signed. A rum horn in the collection of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum is engraved: "Presented to Captain Philip Schuyler by Lieut. Paul Revere, Fort Edward 1759." Also: "Ye Prudent Foreseeth Evil. Ye Simple Pass On and are Punished."

Many professionally engraved horns are map horns. New York horns are perhaps the best known, but maps of all areas of combat of the French and Indian and Revolutionary wars are found engraved on powder horns.

New York horns bear maps of the Hudson River Valley from New York to Fort Edward and Fort George and northward to Forts Ticonderoga (called Carillon by the French) and Crown Point on Lake Champlain to Montreal and Quebec. A few of these maps extend along the St. Lawrence River to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and to Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island. Some horns engraved for British soldiers show a view of London.

To the west they show the 95 mile length of the valley of the Mohawk River from Schenectady to Fort Stanwix, and beyond, past the Carrying Place at the headwaters of the Mohawk to Lake Oneida, Lake Ontario and Fort Niagara.

These were great routes of travel of colonial America: The Hudson River, Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence eastward through French Canada to the Atlantic; and the Mohawk river and the Great Lakes to the west to the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf of Mexico. They were also the paths of innumerable armies of conquest through all of America's early history.

First the Indians, the Iroquois and the Algonquins, fought in the Champlain Valley, then during the French and Indian wars the French with their Indian allies fought the English for dominance of the North American continent.

In 1758, when British fortunes began to turn around the world, French influence in North America drew a great sweeping line from the North Atlantic along the St. Lawrence to the Great Lakes, and southward through the Mississippi Valley to Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico. The English were settled along the coast and inland on the Piedmont Plateau. Between the French and the British stood the Appalachian barrier: here also were the Indians. They held an often delicate balance of power between the warring great nations, and used their bargaining position to procure necessities of modern life.

The British pressed westward and northward and were held in check by the system of great French forts: Louisbourg, con-

sidered stronger than Gibraltar, denying entrance to the St. Lawrence; Carillon protecting the Champlain approach to Montreal and Quebec; Fort Niagara at the mouth of the Niagara River, and Fort Duquesne at the Forks of the Ohio (today's Pittsburgh), guarding the way to the Ohio Valley and the west. There were many lesser fortified positions on the perimeter of New France.

In 1758 Louisbourg and Duquesne were lost to France; in 1759 Carillon, Niagara and Quebec. For two more years the French fought on. In 1762 an armistice was declared and the Peace of Paris was signed in 1763.

Almost unnoticed losers were the Indians. No longer needed by the British or the now defeated French, the supply of staples they had come to depend on stopped flowing. Some of them were brought to the point of starvation.

During the American Revolution the English attempted to split the colonies into two parts in a thrust from Canada down the valleys of the Hudson and Mohawk rivers.

Finally, during the War of 1812, another threat of invasion from Canada came to an end with the Battle of Lake Champlain. From that period onward only one skirmish has been fought on these battlegrounds: in 1864 a number of Confederate soldiers raided St. Albans, Vermont, from Canada. By then powder horns were rarely used to record the affairs of men.

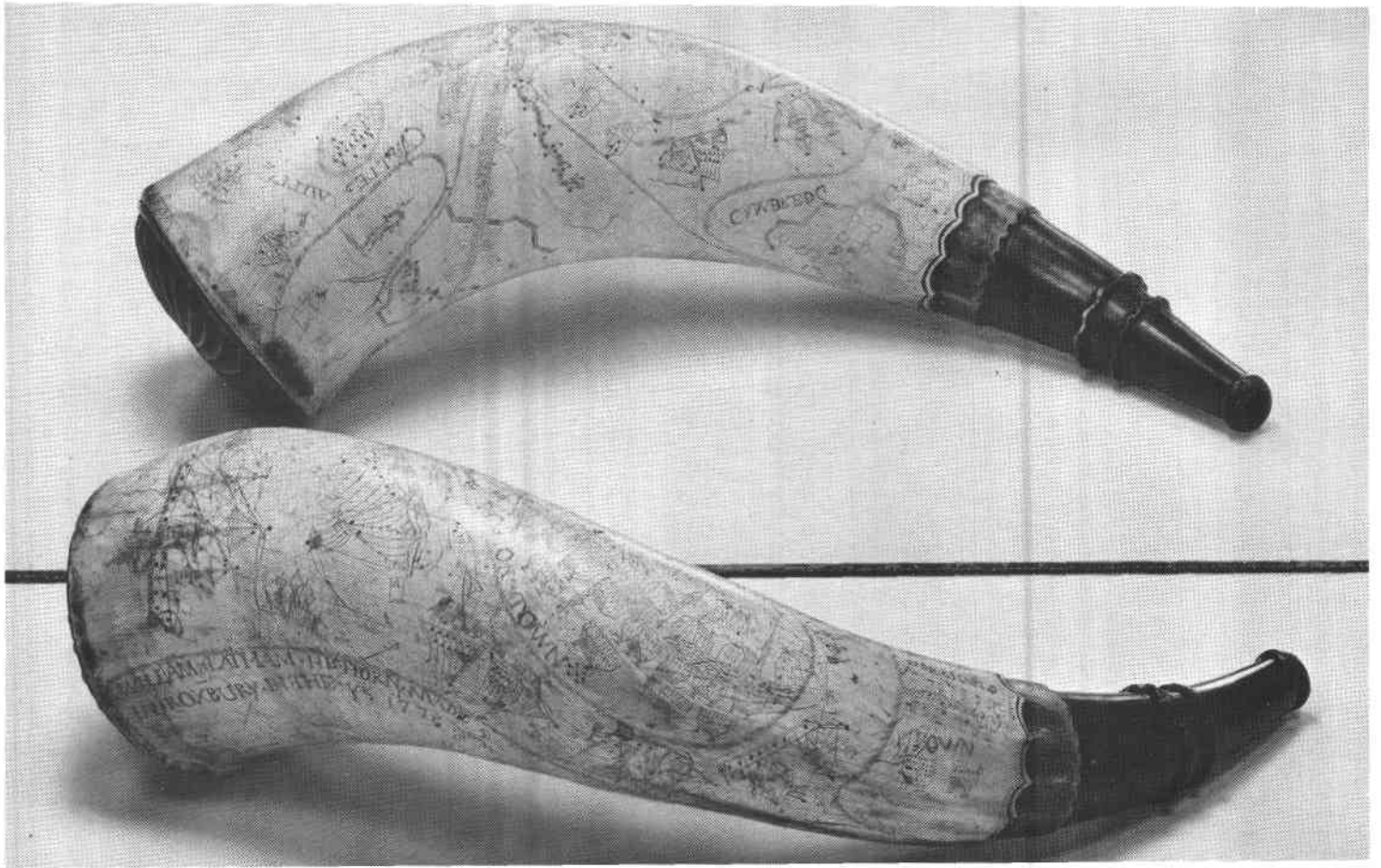
Interesting and rare professionally engraved horns were made as presents for Indians. Gifts were a prerequisite to a formal conference between Indians and colonial representatives. They helped gain and hold the allegiance of tribes or nations; without gifts the Indians were likely to desert their allies.

Circumstances surrounding the presentation of a powder horn are difficult to document. A horn, presented to the great Mohawk Chief Joseph Brant, is engraved on silver mountings around the spout: "Tayadenga" (Brant's Indian name) and around the base: "The gift of W. Harffy Esqu, Detroit Octr 19th 1789." A silver mounted presentation horn dated 1815 is engraved with the names of the presentee, Chief Sacoteriyota, and the presenter W.H. Wiggen. It was probably made in England. Names on the horn are unidentified.

A unique group of horns, made in the period of the French and Indian wars, are engraved with figures of Indians. Four of these horns, all by the same hand, are engraved with figures armed with tomahawks, war clubs, bows and arrows and knives. They are shown in ritualistic dances; they are shown taking scalps. Figures carry poles strung with scalps. On one horn a figure of a woman dances with a stick held above her head; atop the stick is a flaming heart. A hand holds up the front of her skirt, exposing the lower part of her body.

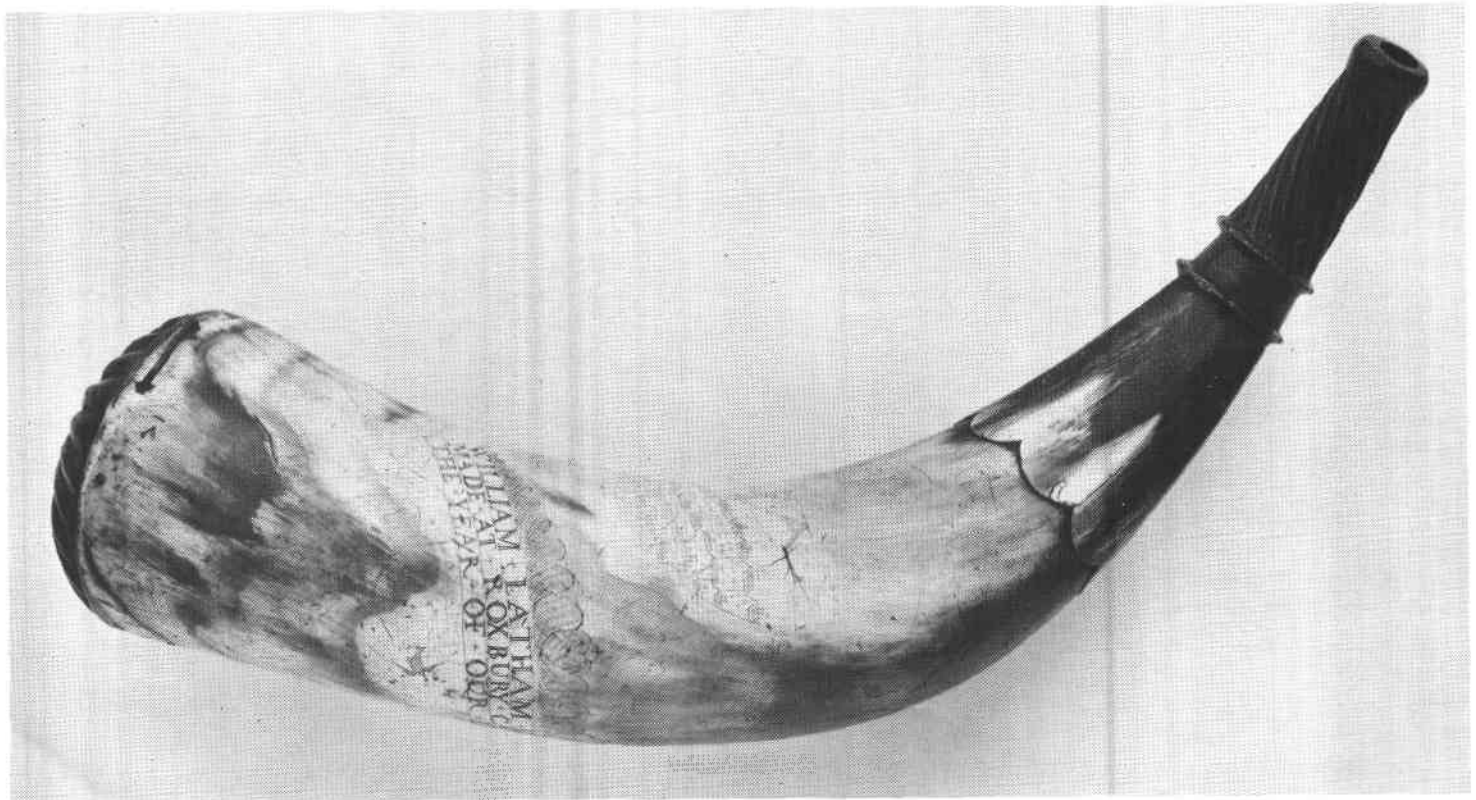
Another horn is engraved with the full figure of a Scotsman, and other mounted soldiers on high stepping horses. Castles are in the background. Amidst these medieval surroundings are the figures of four Indians: they carry a gunstock club, a ball-headed club and a belt ax; one Indian carries a British flag. Two groups of figures have erotic meaning, express a ribald humor.

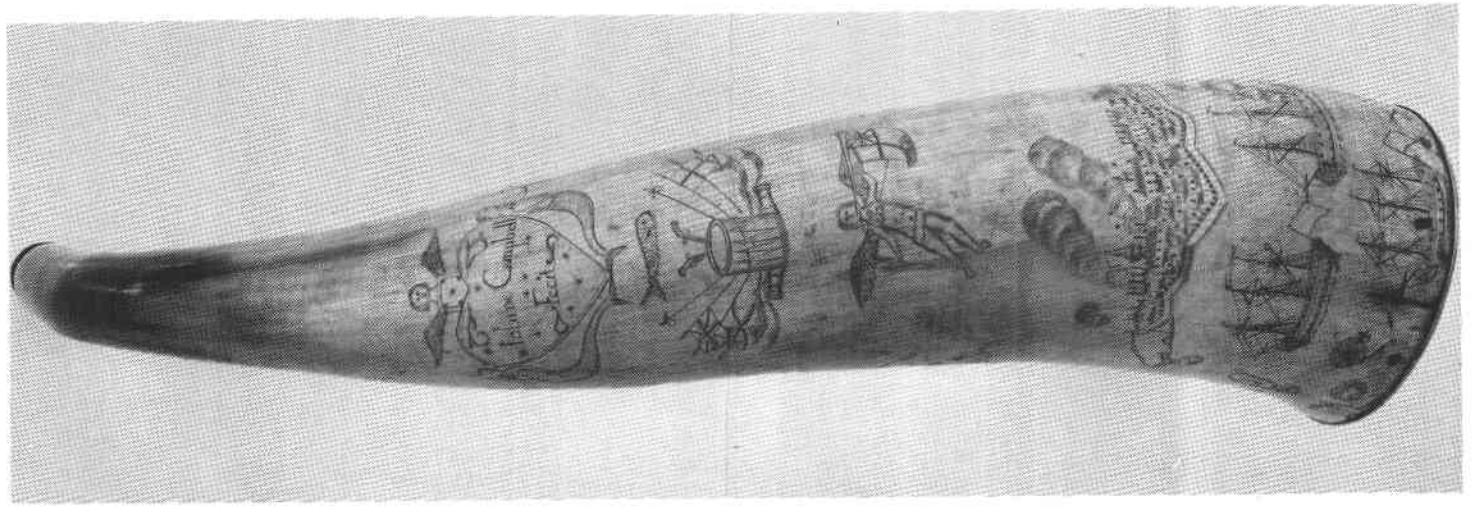
A horn is engraved with the word ADHEMAR and the date 1759. On this horn an Indian holds a banner emblazoned with a Fleur-de-lis. A few other horns are engraved with figures of Indians. A horn with the full figure of an Indian is preserved in



**WILLIAM LATHAM, 1775**

Made at Roxbury Camp. These two horns belonged to a 20 year old farmer who enlisted as a private in Captain James Allen's Company at Roxbury on October 6, 1775. Latham became a Sergeant in 1779, served at Valley Forge, was wounded, was mustered out in 1783. His two horns have never been separated.

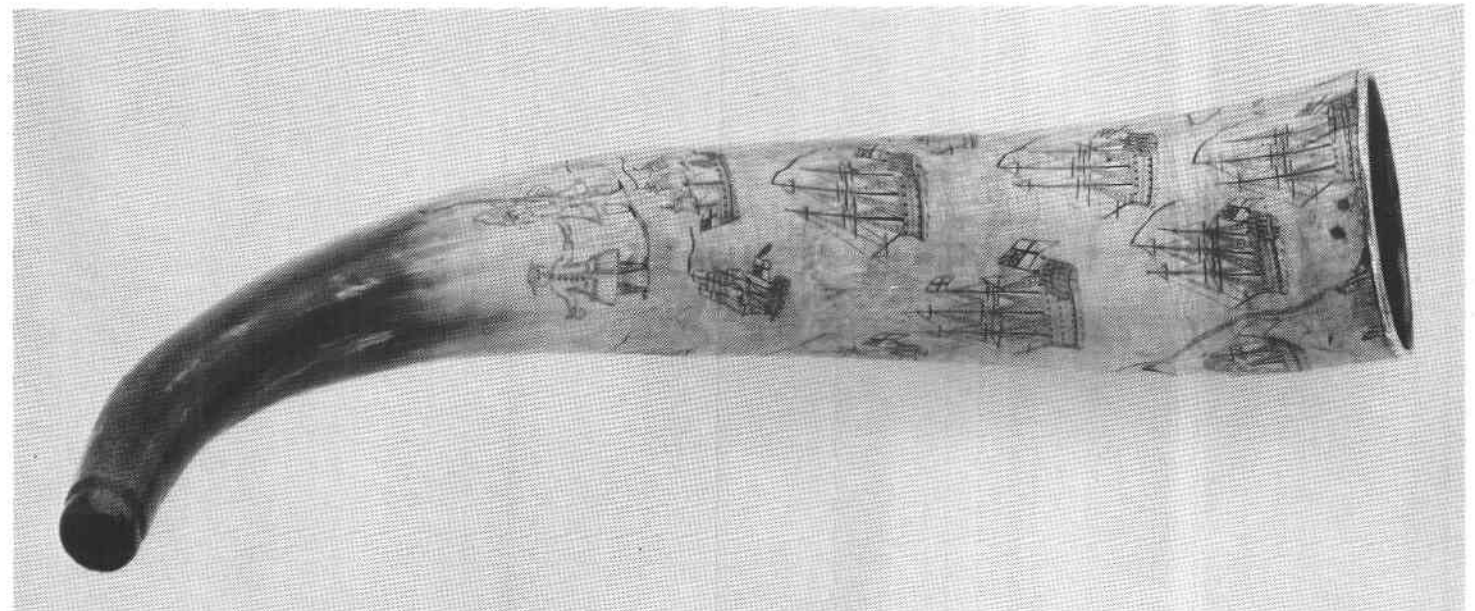




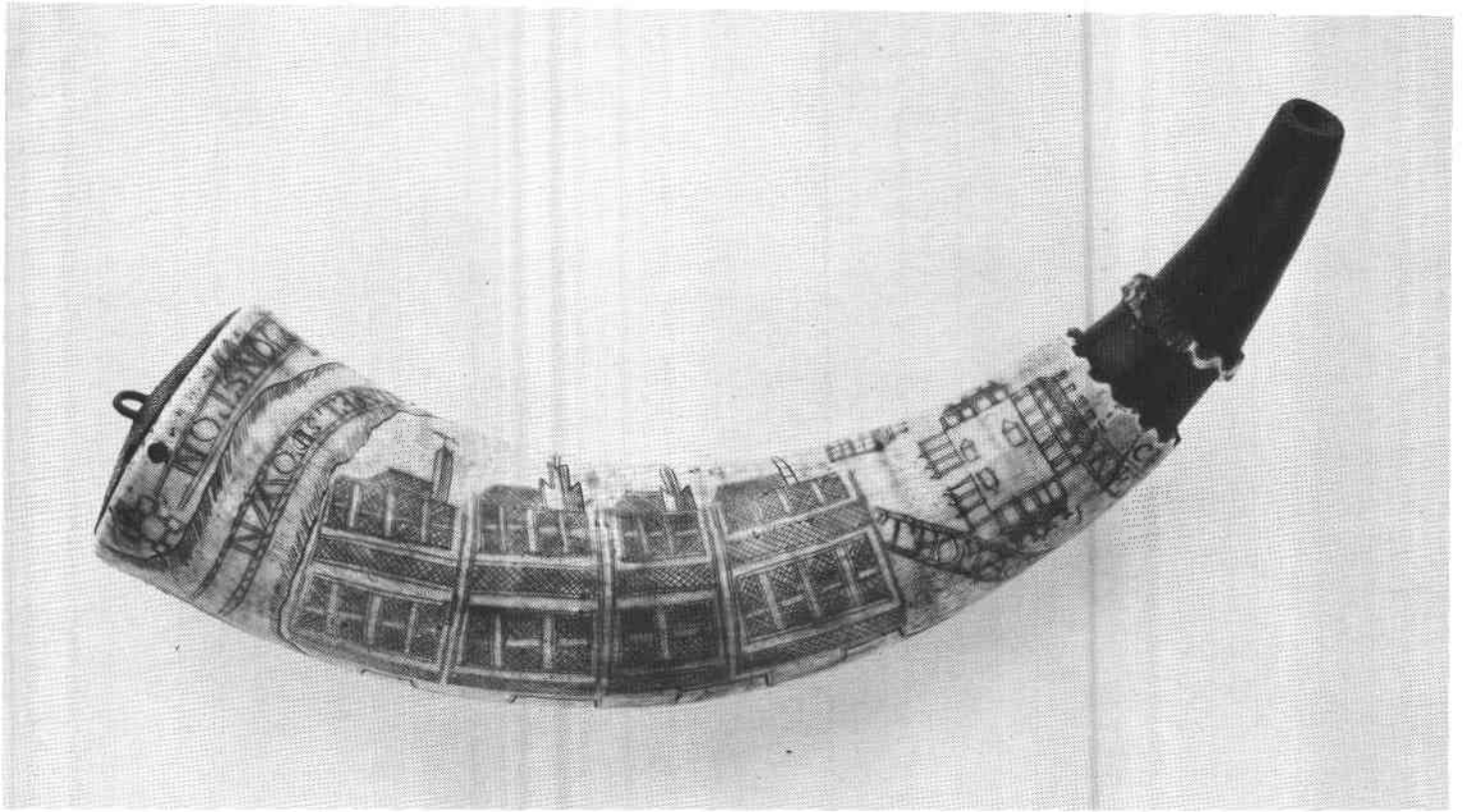
**JOHN CAMPBELL, circa 1758**

Engraved with a map of Louisbourg under bombardment by a British fleet of ten ships in the siege of 1758. Admiral Boscawen's flagship is recognised by the Admiral's flag at the mizzen topmast head. Five French ships are in the harbor. American Colonials participated in the action under Lord Jeffrey Amherst. Louisbourg, on Cape Breton Island, threatened the shipping lanes to New England and protected the entrance to the St. Lawrence River and all of French North America. In 1758 Louisbourg was probably the strongest fortified place on earth.

An initial planner of the assault was John Campbell, the Fourth Earl of Loudoun. Could this have been his horn?

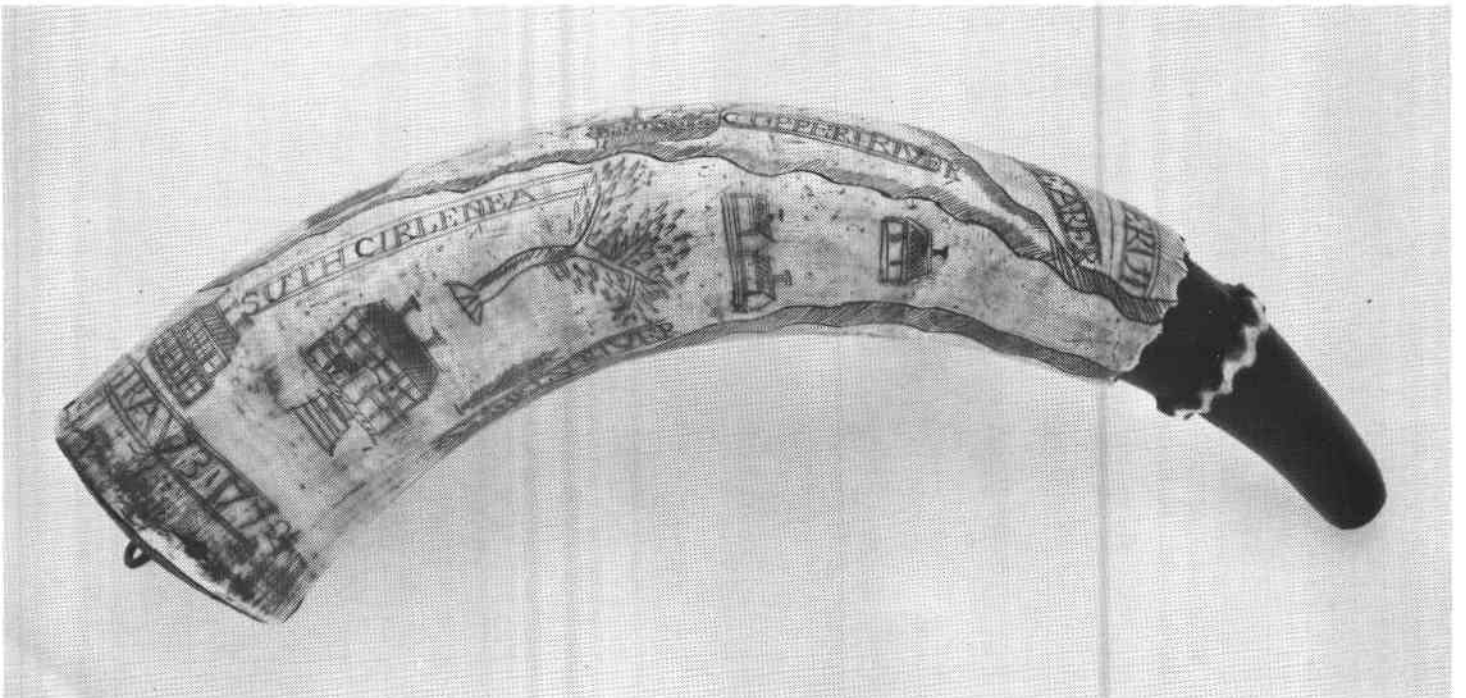


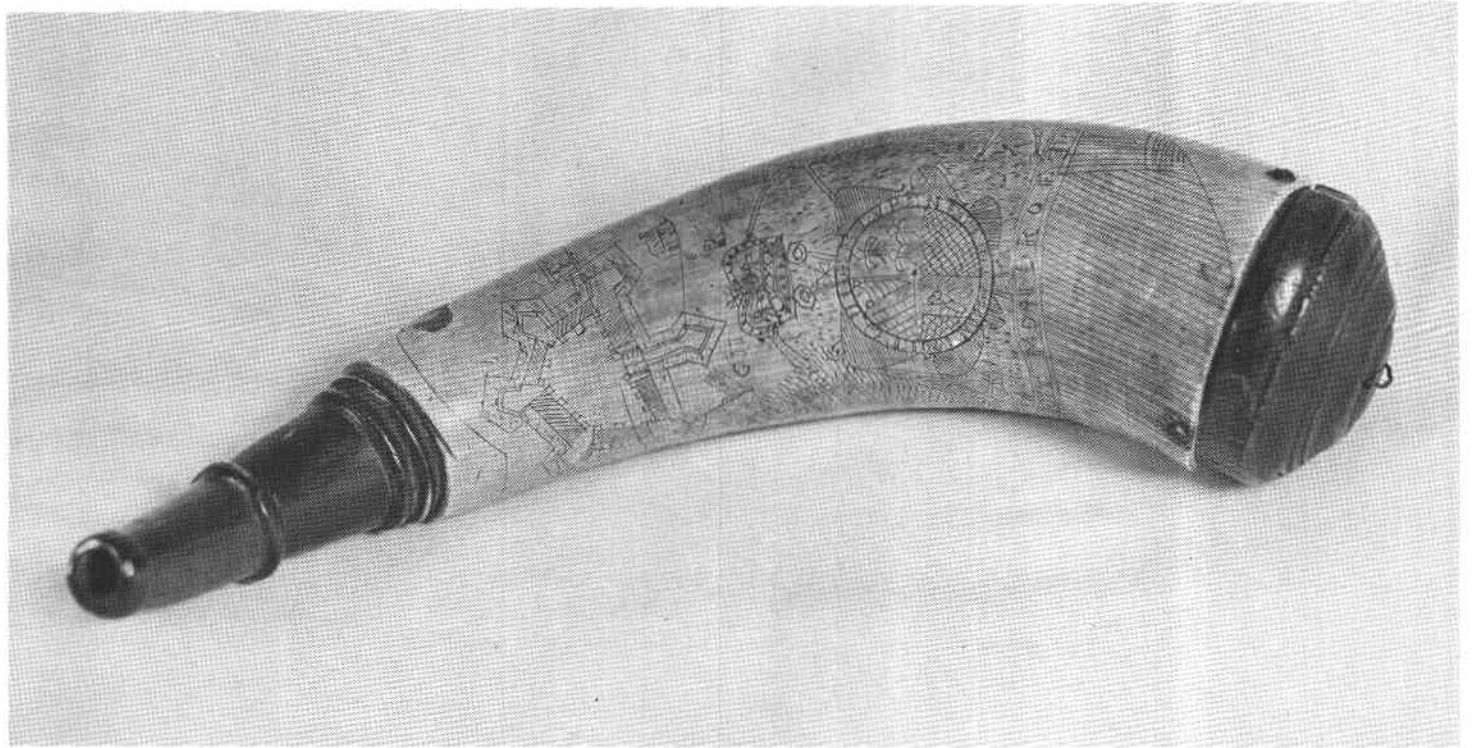




THOMAS SHEARER, February 3, 1772

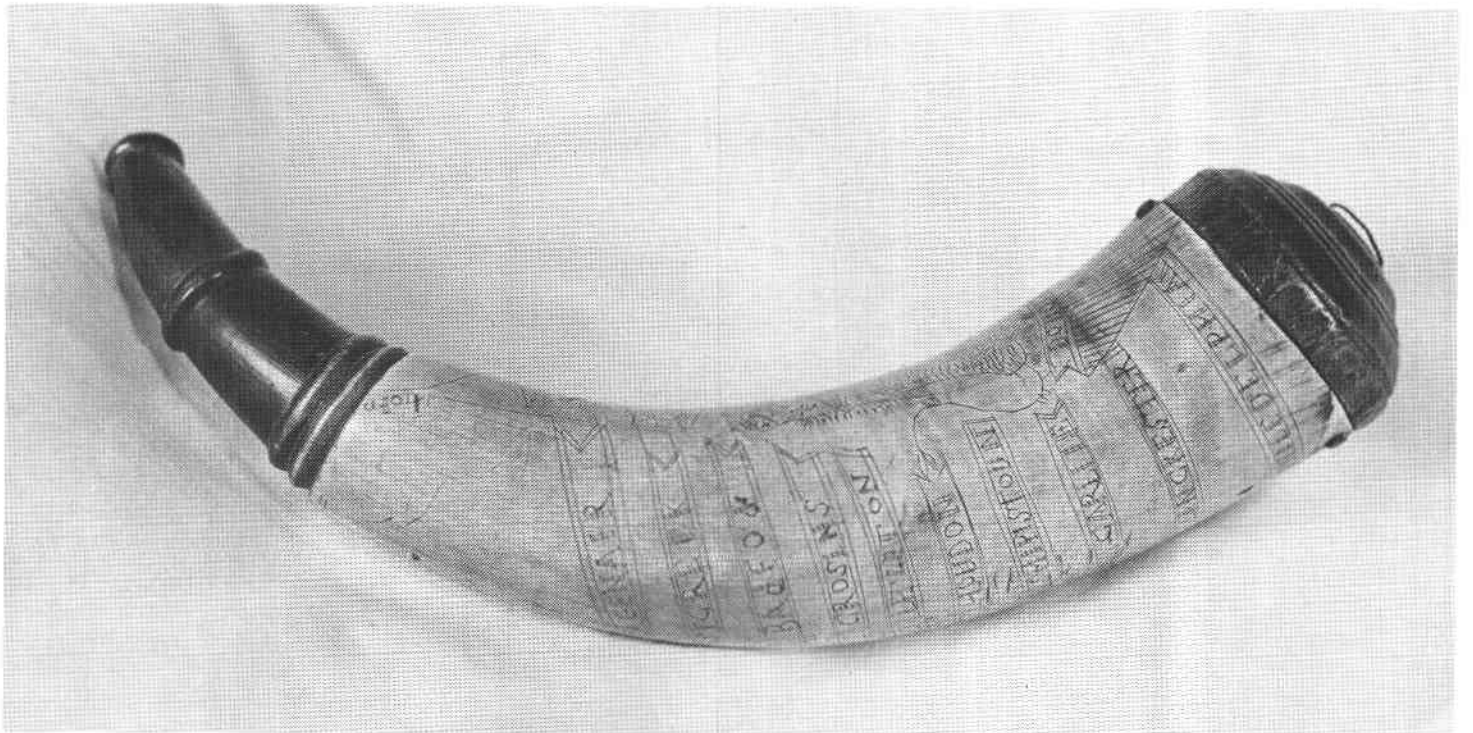
Charles Town, South Carolina. Engraved with a map of Charleston between the Cooper and Ashley Rivers. Also plantation houses and barracks, and a reference to Newberry. A similar horn is in the J.H. Gilbert collection of the Metropolitan Museum. Robert Mackintosh recently found the will of Thomas Shearer in the South Carolina Department of Archives.





**FORBES ROAD, circa 1759**

One of the rarest of all Colonial map horns. This horn bears a map of the route across Pennsylvania of the expedition of General Forbes to take the French outpost Ft. Duquesne. Ft. Duquesne, at the Forks of the Ohio, was renamed Ft. Pitt by the British. A similar horn is preserved in the Hermitage in Leningrad.



the house of Sir William Johnson, near Amsterdam, New York.

All of these horns project the savagery of frontier life. Some day another horn by this hand may turn up. It could add something to the little now known about an interesting engraver.

Probably no location north of Louisbourg, on Cape Breton Island, appears engraved on an American powder horn. Two horns are engraved with views of Louisbourg under siege in 1758. John Campbell's horn bears a view of the city and harbor closely resembling the "Prospect of the City of Lewisbourg" published in London in 1745. The Citadel and the Hospital are recognizable, as are the Island Battery and Lighthouse. Five French ships are in the harbor, three aflame. Ten English ships blockade and bombard the city. Plumes of smoke arise from ships and city. John Campbell, Earl of Loudon, was once commander of British forces in North America, and an early planner of the attack on Louisbourg. Could this have been his horn?

Arthur Coodey's horn, dated 1787, is engraved with a reference to Canada. A cartouche above a view of a large city bears the lettering CAN-NE-DAY.

Well to the south, two fine horns are engraved with views of Providence, Rhode Island. Charles Hewit's horn is inscribed with his name and "made in Providence Febry YE 19, 1777." Many buildings are identifiable, including one still standing on the campus of Brown University.

Several horns are engraved with views of Boston and surrounding areas during the siege at the start of the Revolution. William Latham's horn, made after the British bombardment of Charlestown bears the caption "POOR CHARLESTOWN." Another horn is engraved with William Latham's name. The two horns have never been separated. Charles Hewit's horn and William Latham's horns are closed with finely carved plugs, reminiscent of the work of furniture makers.

Soldier-made horns come from many areas of new England; the earliest I am aware of were made in Massachusetts.

New York horns have already been mentioned, but one rare group deserves special comment. These horns, engraved with characteristic maps of the Hudson and Mohawk river valleys, are also decorated with views of the city of Havana. They belonged to soldiers identified with New York, who participated in the siege of Morro Castle and the fall of Havana in 1762. Some New Englanders under Connecticut lawyer, Phinias Lyman, took part in the expedition.

Many horns were made in Pennsylvania. They are often interesting examples of Pennsylvania German design. Pennsylvania map horns are rare. An early horn, dated 1750, is engraved with a view of Philadelphia. Of particular interest are horns engraved with a map of Forbes Road. The route westward across Pennsylvania, built by Brigadier General John Forbes, as the army he commanded moved toward its objective, Fort Duquesne at the Forks of the Ohio. They built the road to assure supplies, and forts along the way to protect it. As they approached the French abandoned the fort, which the British renamed Fort Pitt.

I believe three of these horns were engraved by the same hand. One is in the Hermitage, another in a private collection near Washington, and the third is in my collection.

Several Charles Town, South Carolina, horns exist (the name

Charles Town was changed to Charleston in 1783). Thomas Shearer's horn, dated February 3, 1772, is engraved with a map of Charles Town between the Cooper and Ashley rivers, and plantation houses and barracks and a view of Fort Johnston on the harbor. There is a reference to the town of Newberry. Another horn much like Shearer's is in the Metropolitan Museum. Robert Mackintosh recently found the will of Thomas Shearer in the South Carolina Department of Archives.

Several horns, in addition to the Grant Expedition horns referred to earlier, are engraved with forts and Indian towns in North Carolina. A particularly fine example, with a sash of Cherokee Indian Bead work, is engraved with a plan of Fort Prince George. Another horn engraved with a map of the Middle Settlement of the Cherokees in North Carolina is in the Metropolitan Museum.

A few horns are engraved with views of St. Augustine. A great St. Augustine horn depicts a meeting between British officials and Indians. The chief Englishman, perhaps Governor Grant, first British Governor of Florida, sits at a table, an aide at one side. Indian leaders stand before the table, a large group of Indians behind them. The reverse of the horn is engraved with a view of St. Augustine.

St. Augustine horns were probably made by men who engraved horns in Havana. Havana horns were made by British or American colonial soldiers during the British occupation of that city. In the year following the occupation, Spain ceded Florida to England in exchange for the return of Havana. Some troops who garrisoned the city moved over to St. Augustine. The Spanish, who had lived in Florida for nearly two hundred years, moved to Havana, refusing to live under British rule.

Havana horns were engraved with maps and views of the city, with fortifications, ships, horses and exotic birds, and there are fine cartouches and floral designs. Places engraved on these horns are well identified in captions. Owners names usually appear, and often their military units.

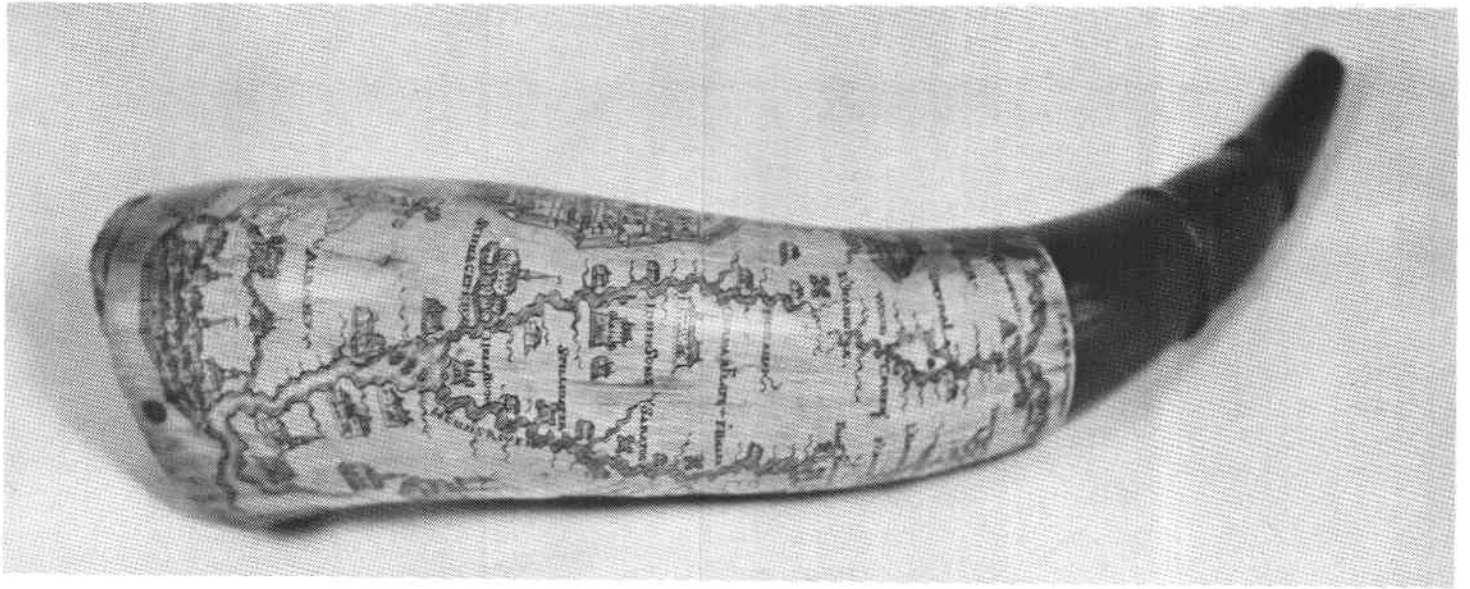
A relationship exists between horns made in Havana, St. Augustine, and Charles Town, and those depicting forts and Indian towns in the interior of the Carolinas: there are artistic and architectural similarities.

Non-professionally engraved powder horns and those produced by professionals are dissimilar forms of artistic expression. The frontiersman or farmer or Indian Trader who made his own powder horn, also made and decorated other things he used. Some of his decoration was an attempt to copy the fashionable established design of the cities but much of it was his own.

Horns made and engraved by professionals in the cities were executed with technical skill in a predictable form. Lettering was carefully aligned. Designs and maps were repeated and cartouches were very much alike. Professionally engraved powder horns can be magnificent works of art, but they don't produce the unexpected surprises, the sudden insights into the minds and hearts of their owners that the non-professionally engraved horns, the "flowered" horns, sometimes do.

Through the years a horn may have many owners. But if it first belonged to George Bunce who was at Ticonderoga in 1759, it will always be his horn. His spirit lives in it.





**HAVANNAH/NEW YORK, circa 1762**

This horn belonged to a soldier with an interest in the Hudson and Mohawk River valleys of New York. Also the seige of Havannah. A British fleet under Admiral Sir George Pocock and a land force under Lord Albermale laid seige to Morro Castle. On July 30, 1762, the fort fell and Havannah surrendered on Aug. 14. Some 2,300 New Englanders took part in the battle, the last time American Colonials fought under British command.

