

Bricks from the Lawrence Cement Company and the F.O. Norton Cement Works

by David Moyer

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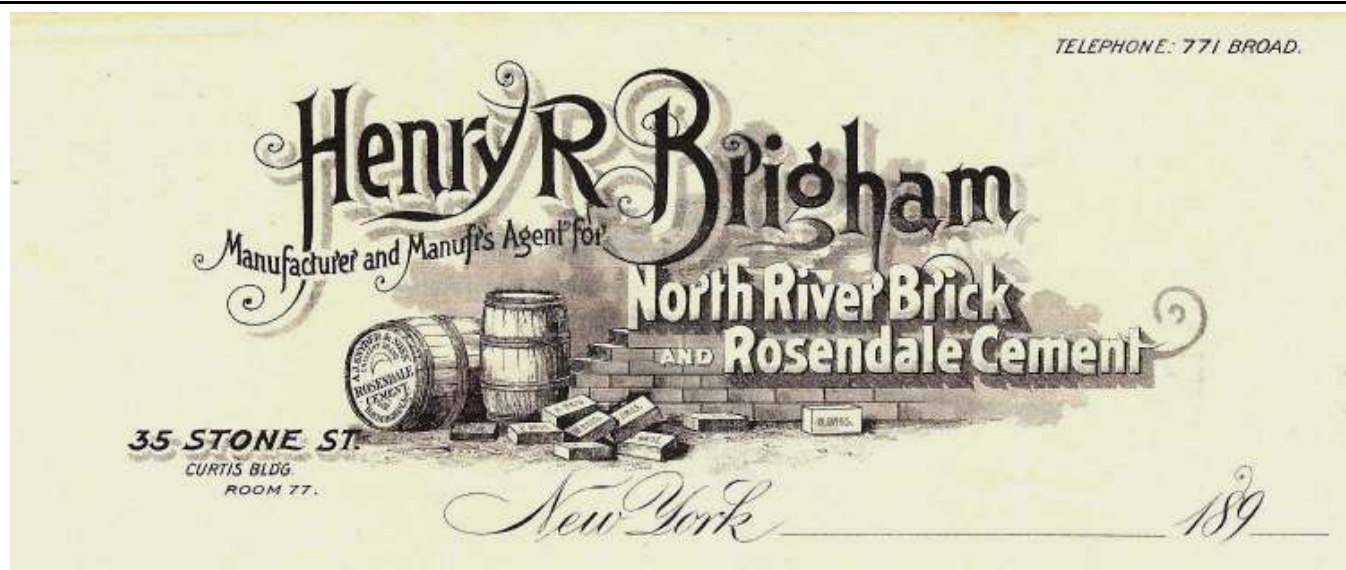
As part of the proposed renovation of the Williams Lake Resort, archaeologists documented the kilns and foundation remains of the Lawrence Cement Company and the F.O. Norton cement works. This documentation included photographing the kilns and landscape features and mapping the foundation remains. The investigations of these two historic industrial sites provide a valuable opportunity to study the Rosendale cement industry using archaeological methods and techniques.

Bricks can be a valuable research tool in investigating change at early industrial sites. A total of ten different marked bricks were encountered at various locations throughout the kiln complexes. Research conducted on specific brick manufacturers suggests that much of the common brick was manufactured nearby, most notably in Kingston and Haverstraw, while fire brick was imported from other states. A total of six marked "common" bricks were identified. One brick, marked "1976", does not appear in the literature, and was likely made as part of a bicentennial celebration by the Hutton Brick Company. They were found stacked in a barrel shed at the Lawrence Cement Company works, and were probably used by the Williams Lake resort in the 1970s rather than by the cement industry. A comparison of marked bricks occurring at the sites indicated a strong correlation between ownership of specific kilns and the brands of common brick used at the various buildings and kiln arches.

Some of the local brick manufacturers had ties to the Rosendale cement industry. Bricks marked "Brigham" were made by Henry R. Brigham, who was an Agent for A.J.

Snyder and Son's Crescent Brand Rosendale Cement. In 1858 his father founded the Rosendale and Kingston Cement Company, which was later known as the Hudson River Cement Company. Henry worked for his father's cement company and later formed the Brigham Brother Brick Company with his brother William. Together, they manufactured bricks from works next to the Hudson River Cement Company in East Kingston. Later, around 1891, H.R. Brigham became general agent for A.J. Snyder and Sons. After the death of A.J. Snyder in 1902 he also became the superintendent of the Snyder Cement Works in Lawrenceville.

It is interesting that bricks from a competitor's company would be found at the factory remains along Williams Lake. We know that competition between cement companies was sometimes fierce as they would often vie for the same large construction contracts. The reason for the use of these bricks is likely economic, as they were probably cheaper than bricks that would have to be transported from Kingston. An examination of brick production figures for 1893 show that the Brigham Brothers' brickmaking operation was considerably smaller than most of the brick companies represented at the kiln sites. The Brigham Brothers manufactured approximately 5 million bricks that year, compared with 14.8 million produced by Staples, 13.75 million by Hutton, and 13 million by Terry Brothers (these production figures were obtained from the *Natural News* Vol. 11 No. 1, p.5). It seems likely that Brigham kept a quantity of brick on hand in Rosendale, and that it was more cost effective to buy locally from a competitor.



Marked Bricks Recovered from the Lawrence Cement Company and the F.O. Norton Company

Brand	Manufacturer	Location	Date	Source
B. BROS.	ORIG-Bennet Bros. NOW-Brigham Brothers	Haverstraw, NY	no date	De Noyelles p. 223
BRIGHAM	Brigham Brick Co.	Kingston, NY	1904	De Noyelles p. 225
BRIGHAM	Brigham Bros.	East Kingston, NY	1899	De Noyelles p. 225
RIDGE	General Factories Co.	PA	1930-1942	Gurcke p. 288
MUNRO	Harbison-Walker Refractories Co.	PA	1921-1942	Gurcke p. 270
STAPLES	Alva S. Staples	East Kingston, NY	1899	De Noyelles p. 262
HUTTON	Hutton Brick Co.	East Kingston, NY	1899	De Noyelles p. 242
HUTTON	W. Hutton	East Kingston, NY	1891	De Noyelles p. 243
PHOENIX # 1	Harbison-Walker Refractories Co.	PA	1921	Gurcke p. 280
TERRY BROS.	Terry Bros.	Steep Rock, NY	1910	De Noyelles p. 263
TERRY BROS. 1976	Terry Bros. Albert, Jay and David Terry Unknown	Kingston, NY Unknown	1902 Unknown	De Noyelles p. 263 Unknown
C - TYRONE	Harbison-Walker Refractories Co.	PA	1930-1931	Gurcke p. 222

The table above was made using information obtained from brick directories, which were created by examining news clippings, city directories and trade publications. These directories are often in need of refinement as new information about manufacturers is obtained. As shown by the table, bricks marked "B. Bros" were thought to have only been manufactured by the Bennet Brothers of Haverstraw. We were curious why bricks from Haverstraw were used when the brickyards in Kingston were comparatively close. A closer examination of the trade card for Henry Brigham revealed that they also used the "B. Bros" stamp on their bricks, probably before or at the same time that they were using the "Brigham" brand. Thus, while the brick manufacturing directories can be used to help better understand historic industrial sites, the study of historic industries can also be used help refine our understanding of bricks and brickmaking in the Hudson Valley.

Results further indicated what while marked common bricks show a strong correlation with regard to the individual kiln walls, fire brick was comparatively homogeneous. Also, little variation was noted within the kiln walls, specifically with respect to the breaks in the stonework that probably indicate later construction episodes. However, this lack of variation between kilns thought to have been constructed at different times is not too surprising, since the fire brick lining of the interior kiln walls had to be replaced every few years after near continuous use. Thus, while the kilns themselves might have been constructed at different times between the 1860s and when plants ceased operations in 1926, the fire bricks lining the kilns themselves all date to just before the closure, when all the kilns were operated by the Consolidated Rosendale Cement Company..

References

De Noyelles, Daniel, 1982 *Within These Gates*. Privately Published, Theills, NY.
 Gurke, Karl, 1987 *Bricks and Brickmaking: A Guide for Historical Archaeology*. University of Idaho Press, Moscow



Common Brick





TELEPHONE: 771 BROAD.

Henry R. Brigham

Manufacturer and Manufacturer's Agent for

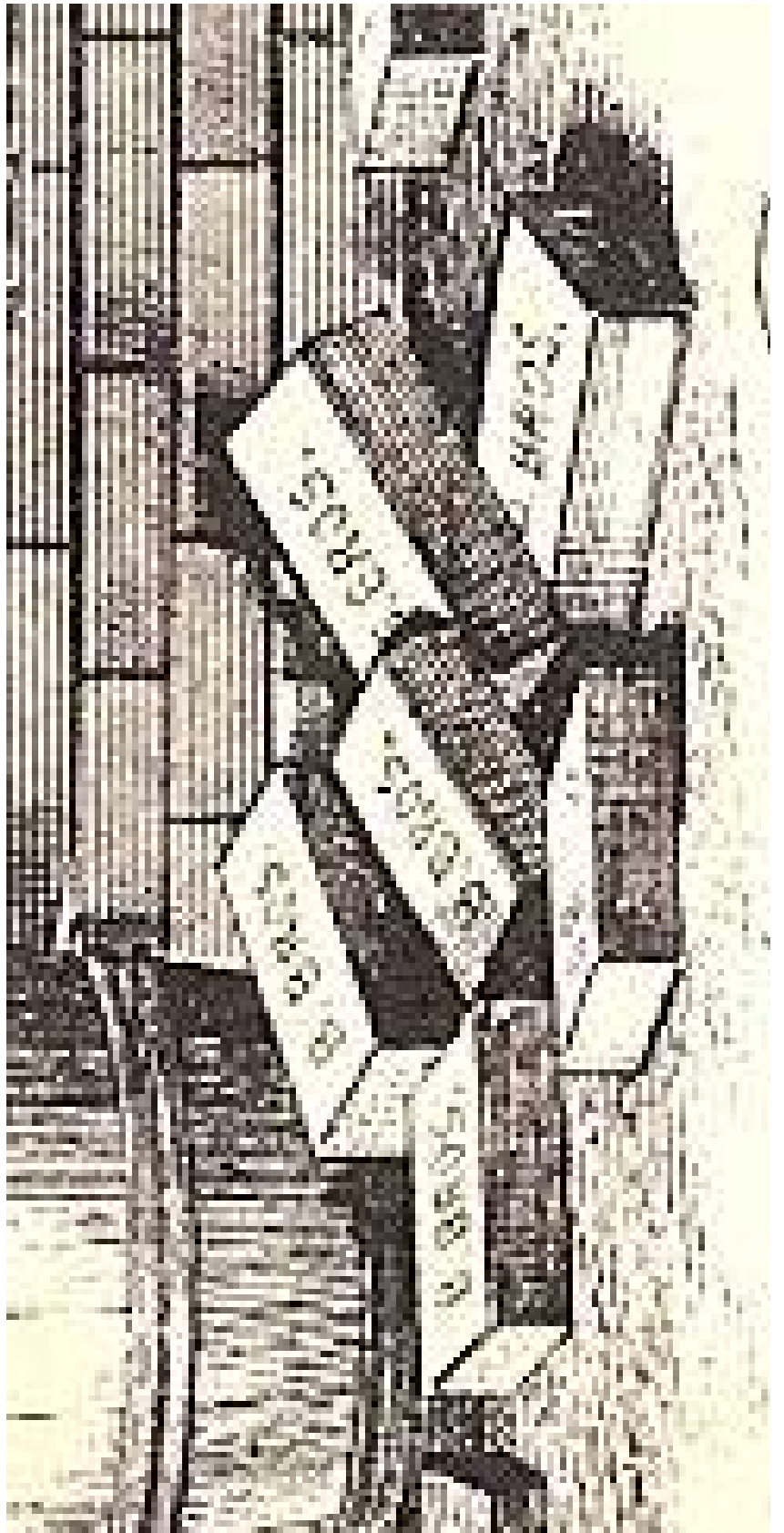
North River Brick AND Rosendale Cement



35 STONE ST.
CURTIS BLDG.
ROOM 77.

New York

189



FIRE BRICK



C-TYRONE



PHOENIX No. 1



MUNRO

**Harbison-Walker
Refractories Co. PA**



**RIDGE
General Refractories
Company PA**