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When—and if—a small **special** **circles** outline is uncovered, Catholics throughout the world will thrill to the announcement, for in all probability the outline will be that of the Chapel of St. Peter, a bark covered structure in which Kateri Tekakwitha, "The Lily of the Mohawks," was baptised by the Jesuit priest, Father James de Lamberville, on Easter Sunday, April 18, 1676.

The current activity at the Mohawk Indian village is not an easy one. Past activity has been even harder. Under direction of The Very Rev. Thomas Grassman O. F. M., of the Mohawk-Caugnawaga Museum, the initial step was taken May 30, 1950, when the village site was staked out. A search for fragile remains held by the earth for centuries, subject to the ravages of destruction that earthly acids and time can impose, poses tremendous difficulties. It is not a question of a shovelful of dirt, a quick look, and then selecting artifacts.

The Mohawk village area is 1.46 acres. First the outline of the double stockade had to be determined. A narrow, shallow trench was dug. As workers stretched it, the first post molds were found. To know what a post mold is, you should know the general characteristics of a Mohawk village. Constant warfare was an accepted thing in the life of a Mohawk, a tribe of the Iroquois Confederacy. These Indians protected themselves by erecting palisades of logs—logs which were driven into the ground some 30 inches, and which stood 15 feet or higher above it.

In 1693, the French in Canada, deathly sick of the raids pulled by the Mohawks of the Fonda area, came southward in force and burned Caughnawaga. Thus even in that year the only portions of the village that remained intact were those underground. The pass-

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HOW THEY LOOK — Post molds, blackened areas which denote locations of logs which once surrounded the Mohawk Indian "castle" of Caughnawaga near Fonda, are shown here as they appear to archeologists uncovering the village on a hill known as "Sand Flats."

OVERLOOKED IN FLIGHT—In 1693 angry French swooped down from Canada and fell upon the Mohawks at Caughnawaga with vengeful fury. Apparently one Indian brave was casting musket balls when the raid developed. The balls pictured have been molded, but are not yet separated from the joining lead "tissue."

HER BAPTISMAL PLACE SOUGHT—This is the artist's conception of Kateri Tekekwitha, the "Lily of the Mohawks," a Mohawk Indian girl who was baptized at Caughnawaga. Her cause is being advanced for sainthood in the Catholic Church. The mortal remains of Kateri rest in a vault at the Mohawk Indian reservation outside Montreal.

INDIAN STOCKADE REMAINS—This rotte d post, all that remains of a log once part of the palisade surrounding Caughnawaga, near Fonda, was found in archeological efforts to uncover a complete Mohawk Indian "castle."

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ing years rotted the wood, but in its rotting it left a blackened area in the yellow sands. These blackened areas, sometimes containing an organic core of a log, are the post molds.

Three thousand and forty-one such molds were uncovered by workers as they traced the outline of the village. Out of this number, 15 organic cores were found. So accurately and so carefully were excavations made that even small gates were detected. Once the outline of the village was mapped out, wooden stakes were driven into each post mold. Thus by standing at a distance the spectator can see before him the actual outlines of the ancient Mohawk village.

That was only the start. Mindful of the fact that a circular structure was sought, workers faced the difficult task of actually uncovering post molds of every "long house" in the village. A long house was the typical Indian habitation; several families lived, ate and slept in these structures. To do this shovels scraped carefully over the earth, inching their way down gradually. When post molds were found they were staked out. Thus today you can see the outlines of the long houses.

The outlines of the long houses. It is understandable that such activity on such a historic site should produce results as work progresses. This has been true in this case; a promising discovery of Indian arrowheads has been found, one of the common foods of the Mohawks, easily obtained from the Mohawk River only a few hundred yards away. In addition, bits of pottery, pieces of Indian-made clay pipes have been found. And a considerable amount of broken glassware, remains of whiskey jugs sold the Mohawks, were unearthed. Such evidence leads to the conclusion that the Mohawks, known for their fierce and warlike character and practices, probably drank a good deal of often and hard. Pieces of knives "trade knives" were dug up; pieces of old firearms have come to light. The Mohawks grew powerful because they

were among the first Indians able to buy weapons from the Dutch of Albany and Schenectady. Wampum beads, trade beads, bone, both burned and unburned, gun flints, copper and brass scrap, a stone muller, arrowheads, are among other artifacts found.

The Mohawks were no fools when it came to building protection. They constructed a double stockade, about three feet apart. The main gate was a "maze" gate; that is, you walked through the outer fortifications, turned to enter the secondary protection. Thus an enemy in force was limited to entering one at a time, which delighted the Mohawks, since they could tomahawk them in similar numbers. Firepits have been found outside of the long houses and inside. It is a point of interest that cooking went on inside the long houses, and smoke found its way out through one small hole in the top.

So the digging into history

continues and what is being found in the earth is bolstering the written word of history. Father Grassman is cautious in his statements; he makes no assertion unless he can prove it. He refused, for instance, to acknowledge the existence of a platform on the stockades (similar to early Western forts) simply because he has found no evidence of such. As one of the foremost authorities in the world on the Iroquois his words carry a lot of weight. He is completely "sold" on what he is doing, he is pursuing the project in absence of continued funds; it depends upon public support for his power, but is in possession of a powerful and amazing determination to continue at all costs.

Possibly Father Grassman's efforts may culminate in an announcement that will electrify all who read it; whatever does happen, this much is certain: The most important archaeological work in the state of New York is now going on 40 miles west of Albany.