

Speed Bump Editing Exercise

Story title: Army Garbage

Note in this column any editing problems you find with grammar; punctuation; AP style; spelling; accuracy; concision; fuzziness in language; issues of law; ethics; taste; sensitivity; gender or diversity; other.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) – Archeologists, looking for a glimpse of 19th Century U.S. army life, are digging around in the earth at San Franciscos Presidio -- in what was once the sight used to dump the garbage. “Were actually looking at the remnants of every day life -- the worn-out shoe shine equipment such as shoe brushes they used to polish their shoes and the empty show polish bottles,” said Archeologist Richard Ambro..

First of all, I think this story needs a better lede. The word “garbage” or “dump” should be closer to the beginning in order to catch the reader’s attention.
 Suggestion: Archaeologists are excavating a site at San Francisco’s Presidio that was formerly used for dumping garbage, and it is providing them with a glimpse into 19th century U.S. Army life. Or the writer could make more of a feature story lede, with something clever. For example: One man’s trash is another man’s treasure.

Other problems:
 archaeologists
 century?? is not capitalized
 U.S. Army life
 San Francisco’s Presidio
 site, not sight

“digging around in the earth” sounds confusing- “excavating” is a better term for what archaeologists do!

The quote that follows should begin a new paragraph.

“Were actually looking at the remnants of every day life -- the worn-out shoe shine equipment such as shoe brushes they used to polish their shoes and the empty show polish bottles,” said Archeologist Richard Ambro..

We’re
 everyday
 shoeshine
 shoe
 archaeologist not capitalized
 one period at end of sentence

This should be paraphrased and shortened:
 Archaeologist Richard Ambro said items found at the site are the remnants of everyday life, such as shoeshine equipment.

<p>Indeed, this largest-ever excavation of a historical dump on a military base has uncovered everything from bottles to buttons -- even the bones from the meat eaten by the soldiers.</p>	<p>Indeed is unnecessary here Who said it is the largest ever? Cite This sentence is wordy. This would be better: According to ____, the digging at the Presidio is the largest excavation of a military base dump in history. It has uncovered everything from bottles to buttons—even the bones from meat eaten by the soldiers. (The word “the” before meat is unnecessary. The dash works here, because it makes the reader pause before they read something pretty strange.)</p>
<p>Shattered plates including ceramics from both Japan and China indicate who was who at the base. While some folks used low brow Army issue material, Ambro said other households used, “the fancy stuff that you would expect on the table of the wives of the officers.</p>	<p>low-brow Army-issued ...used “the... A transition is needed here, and the sentence needs a little restructuring. Furthermore, shattered plates, including some Chinese and Japanese ceramics, indicate not everyone used Army-issued material. Ambro said some households used “the fancy stuff that you would expect on the table of the wives of the officers.”</p>
<p>Back in the 19th Century, military life was very different than military life is today, according to Leo Barker, an archeologist with the National Park Service. “Its not as regimented,” he said, “people had to forage on their own, and get the things they needed for their life ... that weren’t provided by the Quartermaster.”</p>	<p>century not capitalized military life is repeated—use “it” it’s said Leo Barker, not according to regimented,” he said. “People had to forage on their own and get... what is a Quartermaster?</p>
<p>During the excavation, artifacts from the Ohlone Indians, dating back in history hundreds of years, were also unearthed.</p>	<p>Take out “in history”</p>
<p>Once evacuation has been accomplished at the site, it will be re-stored to its pre-historic state -- as a wet lands marsh.</p>	<p>Excavation has been completed – completed is a better word here restored prehistoric wetlands -I think a colon would do well instead of a dash, because you are clarifying what its prehistoric state was. You don’t really need a long pause.</p>

19th-century military dump provides peek into past

Archaeologists are excavating a site at San Francisco's Presidio that was formerly used for dumping garbage, and it is giving them a glimpse into 19th-century U.S. Army life.

Archaeologist Richard Ambro said items found at the site are the remnants of everyday life, such as worn-out shoeshine equipment, including shoe brushes and empty shoe polish bottles.

The digging at the Presidio is the largest excavation of a historical military base dump ever. It has uncovered everything from bottles to buttons—even the bones from meat eaten by the soldiers.

Leo Barker, an archeologist with the National Park Service, said in the 19th century, military life was very different than it is today.

"It's not as regimented," he said. "People had to forage on their own and get the things they needed for their life... that weren't provided by the quartermaster."

The Quartermaster Corps is a division of the Army that provides soldiers with general supplies.

Shattered plates found at the site, including some Chinese and Japanese ceramics, indicate that while some folks used lowbrow Army-issued materials, Ambro said some households used "the fancy stuff that you would expect on the table of the wives of the officers."

During the excavation, artifacts from the Ohlone Indians, dating back hundreds of years, were also unearthed.

Once excavation has been completed at the site, it will be restored to its prehistoric state: a wetlands marsh.