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Graves of Prussian soldiers from the Seven Years' War in the light of archaeological research of sites 31 and 33 in Budzistowo, Kołobrzeg Commune, Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship

Abstract

The article presents the results of archaeological research carried out at two sites in Budzistowo. The works were carried out in connection with the construction of the S6 road.

As a result of the surveys, two graves of Prussian soldiers who were killed in 1761 during the siege of Kołobrzeg as part of the Seven Years' War were found.

Keywords: battlefield archaeology, mass grave, Seven Years' War, siege of Kołobrzeg 1761

Summary

The archaeological research was carried out at sites 31 and 33 in Budzistowo, Kołobrzeg Commune, Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship, in connection with the construction of the S6 expressway. The works were carried out in July and August 2017.

The survey covered the area of 147.75 ares at site 31 and 135 ares at site 33, which gives a total of 282.75 ares. The total of 923 features were discovered (383 - Budzistowo 31 and 540 - Budzistowo 33). Those were the relics of settlements from the Roman influence period, late Middle Ages and contemporary times (20th century). Relics of human military activity were also discovered at the sites, which can be linked to the siege of Kołobrzeg by the Russian troops in 1761, as part of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). It is these remains that are the topic of this article.

2 mass graves were discovered at site 33 in Budzistowo. They were situated in the southern part of the site. The distance between them amounted to approx. 5 m. The dimensions of the first grave (feature 396) were 306 x 276 cm. In the grave, three skeletons laid side by side were unearthed. They were marked by large letters from A to C, positioned along the north-east - south-west axis and their heads were pointing to the north-east.

The fallen soldiers were men aged 30-35 (A), 35-40 (B) and 40-50 (C). It was established that the soldier C died as a result of a shot in his left arm. Only two buttons from the Prussian army uniform were found in the grave.

In the second grave (feature 397), the size of 382 x 242 cm, six fallen soldiers were buried (marked by letters A-F).

The fallen soldiers were men aged 17-20 (A), 25-35 (B), 19-33 (C), 16-18 (D), 18-20 (E) and 25-30 (F). Two skeletons bore marks that could indicate the cause of death. Those were the wounds resulting from hand-to-hand combat.

The fallen soldiers, except for person C, were robbed of personal belongings and larger parts of their uniforms and equipment before burial, which is indicated by scarce buttons as well as lack of leather (e.g. fragments of belts, boots) and metal objects (e.g. buckles). Shreds of a uniform together with buttons as well as an iron flint and two rifle flints were found only with person C.

In total, 62 buttons, 3 hooks and eyes, 24 fragments of material, 2 gunflints and an iron flint were found in the two graves.

Within the area of both sites, apart from the graves, 24 buttons, 40 lead bullets, 5 cannonballs, 2 coins, 2 lead fillings, 6 buckles as well as infantry bayonet and sabre sheaths were found.