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Andrew S. Veech

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Cover Page Footnote

Many individuals and organizations made this research possible, and to them I am grateful. Excavations and analysis of the Barnes Plantation materials were funded by both the Department of Defense's Legacy Management Program and the Fairfax County History Commission. The Archaeological Services of the Fairfax County Park Authority provided field equipment, laboratory supplies, and research space. Volunteers from the Northern Virginia Chapter, Archaeological Society of Virginia, and students from George Mason University and Brown University supplied countless hours of labor. Frank Kaye's diligent sorting of hundreds of Barnes site colonoware sherds greatly assisted me in this particular endeavor, while Landon Myer's thin-selection analysis of some of those sherds (1996) explored another exciting avenue in colonoware research not discussed here. My thanks to Larry Moore, Donald Sweig, Edith Sprouse, and Dina Gideon for reviewing earlier drafters of this work, and to Joel Langert for his photographic expertise. Thanks also to Patricia Rubertone and my other advisors at Brown University.

Considering Colonoware from the Barnes Plantation: A Proposed Colonoware Typology for Northern Virginia Colonial Sites

Andrew S. Veech

Colonoware vessels and vessel fragments have been recovered from numerous colonial and ante-bellum sites in Virginia, and the number of newly reported sites increases with each excavation season. What this growing corpus of Virginia colonoware presently requires, however, is an adequate, standardized typology for pottery classification, at both site-specific and regional scales. Here, the colonoware typology designed during analysis of collections from the Barnes Plantation (44FX1326), a mid-18th-century tobacco plantation in Fairfax County, Virginia, is explained and offered for use elsewhere. Colonoware sherds from contemporaneous northern Virginia plantation sites exhibit many of the same characteristics as those found at the Barnes site, and thus the typology holds promise for region-wide use.

On a recouvré des récipients et fragments de récipients de colonoware d'un nombre considérable de sites coloniaux et d'avant la guerre de Sécession en Virginie. Le nombre de sites nouveaux signalés augmente avec chaque campagne d'excavation. Ce qu'il faut actuellement, cependant, en ce qui concerne ce corpus de colonoware de Virginie, c'est une typologie standardisée et adéquate pour la classification de la poterie à l'échelle de chaque site et à l'échelle régionale. L'auteur explique et propose d'utiliser ailleurs la typologie établie durant l'analyse des collections provenant de la Barnes Plantation (44FX1326), une plantation de tabac du milieu du XVIII^e siècle du comté de Fairfax (Virginie). Les tessons de colonoware provenant de sites de plantations contemporaines du Nord de la Virginie présentent plusieurs des caractéristiques des tessons trouvés au site Barnes. La typologie pourrait donc valoir pour la région.

Introduction

A typology is needed for northern Virginia colonoware, one based on a naked-eye examination of the sherds. Such a descriptive typology was developed to facilitate classification of colonoware excavated at the mid-18th-century tobacco plantation of Abraham Barnes (44FX1326) in Fairfax County, Virginia (FIG. 1) (Veech 1994, 1996). The typology also was designed to identify characteristics common among northern Virginia colonoware assemblages that might not occur in assemblages from elsewhere in the Chesapeake. A review of extant literature indicates that the Barnes Plantation Site typology adequately encompasses all colonoware excavated in northern Virginia to date. Thus, the typology is offered both to encourage future comparisons of northern Virginia colonoware assemblages and to discern any additional characteristics unique to this region's colonoware.

The typology assumes a homogeneity of northern Virginia colonoware—a pattern

apparent when sherd examination is limited to the unaided human eye. This method is fine for most researchers, few of whom have resources for conducting more extensive examinations. Nevertheless, the typology should prove useful to all archaeologists working with colonoware from the upper Potomac drainage. It is a simple, straightforward, and readily applicable tool for use in the field, where more technically sophisticated analytical tools are not available.

Much already has been written about Virginia colonoware (e.g., Binford 1965; Deetz 1993; Egloff and Potter 1982; Emerson 1988; Henry 1979, 1980; Hodges 1989; Jones 1983; Kelso 1984; MacCord 1965). These low-fired, hand-coiled earthenwares have been a topic of interest to Virginia historical archaeologists for many years, especially since the publication of Noël Hume's 1962 article on what he termed *Colono-Indian wares*. Another typology, developed by Henry (1980), already exists for colonoware from 17th- and 18th-century Virginia sites.

Figure 1. Approximate locations of the Barnes Plantation site (44FX1326) and other northern Virginia sites reporting colonoware.

As the first systematic classification of Virginia colonoware, Henry's typology stands as a pioneering work, to which all following works on the subject, including this one, refer. The typology presented here builds on Henry's work by specifically considering colonoware from northern Virginia sites, which had not been excavated at the time of her writing. The majority of Henry's

colonoware samples, or 89 percent, come from colonial-period sites lying between the James and York Rivers (Henry 1980: 140), and 2 percent come from Rappahannock and Potomac River sites (Henry 1980: 140). Understandably, colonoware samples from the upper Potomac region, almost all of which have been recovered since 1980, were not included in Henry's analysis. Thus, as a supplement to Henry's

Figure 2. View of dismantled, salvaged brick hearth of Barnes Plantation dwelling house (partially excavated).

earlier work, the typology offered here is specifically pertinent to northern Virginia's new, expanding colonoware database.

Site and Excavation Background

During 1994 and 1995, features and artifacts, dating between roughly 1740 and 1770, were uncovered at the Barnes Plantation, a Potomac River tobacco plantation located in a remote portion of the U.S. Army's Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County, Virginia (Veech 1994, 1996).

The Barnes Plantation is an undisturbed 18th-century site, having experienced little previous or subsequent human activity. A paucity of Native American artifacts at the site indicates only an ephemeral and sporadic Native American presence there prior to European arrival. Likewise, the handful of more recent artifacts (just a thin scatter of 20th-century rifle bullets in the upper 2 in. (5 cm) of the plowzone) denote only sparse activity at the site since the Barnes family's departure until its rediscovery during a 1987 archaeological survey (Johnson 1987; Schwermer 1994). Thus, the site is very tightly dated, spanning only a single generation (approximately 1740–1770), and a majority of its artifacts are associated specifically with its known 18th-century

inhabitants: tobacco planter Abraham Barnes, his family, and their 30 or more African slaves. Key diagnostic artifacts used to date this occupation consist of European ceramics from feature and sheet midden contexts, including white salt-glazed stonewares, tin-glazed earthenwares, Staffordshire slipwares, and Ralph Shaw, and a preponderance of pipe stems with bore diameters measuring 5/64" (Veech 1994). Such purely 18th-century sites are rare in northern Virginia, making the Barnes Plantation an excellent site for comparison with other colonial sites in the Chesapeake region.

The 1995 excavation season focused on exposing the dismantled and salvaged remnants of a probable dwelling house, indicated by large concentrations of 18th-century brick, mortar, wrought nails, window glass, and domestic refuse. Of the features uncovered, the most notable was a roughly rectilinear concentration of brick rubble measuring approximately 10 ft by 7 ft (3.5 m x 2 m) (FIG. 2). Immediately west of this brick concentration lay a circular pit filled with rubbish and ash (approximately 3 ft (1 m) in diameter), and an alignment of post holes. Taken as a composite, these features imply a frame structure set on either wooden posts or brick piers, with a root cellar and brick chimney at one end. While the

Figure 3. Laurel Branch House, National Colonial Farm, Accokeek, Maryland.

presence of a chimney denotes a certain degree of permanence, the overriding impermanent character of this building demonstrates its connections with the earthfast building tradition found throughout the Chesapeake beginning in the 17th century (Carson et al. 1981). One surviving mid-18th-century dwelling house, the Laurel Branch farmhouse at the National Colonial Farm in Accokeek, Maryland (FIG. 3), provides a likely analog for the appearance of the former Barnes Plantation dwelling house.

Thousands of sherds of colonoware were recovered across the domestic compound during the excavations, both in the general sheet refuse scatter and within the dismantled dwelling house. All of this colonoware is associated with the site's 18th-century occupation. While 49 pieces of Potomac Creek pottery, a Late Woodland pottery type manufactured between the 12th and 16th centuries A.D.

(Dent 1995: 246), were also recovered from the general sheet refuse, they are unmistakably distinguishable from the more recently-made colonoware, since they are coarser, sand-tempered, and typically cord marked.

Barnes Plantation Colonoware and Other Regional Assemblages

The Barnes Plantation collection is used as the basis for the proposed northern Virginia colonoware typology because of the sheer abundance of the ware found at the site, which, at the sherd level, amounts to the largest colonoware assemblage yet reported in the region (TAB. 1). In total, 20,031 historic-period sherds were recovered from the Barnes site during the 1994 and 1995 field seasons; of these, 10,594 sherds, or 52.89 percent, are colonoware. Even when one discounts the 10,054 colonoware body sherds in the assem-

Table 1. Barnes Plantation Site Colonoware proportions, by sherd count and percentages.

Type	Count	Percentage
Late Woodland	49	0.24
European	9,437	47.00
Colonoware	10,594	52.76
Total	20,080	100%

Figure 4. The basic classificatory divisions comprising the Barnes Plantation colonoware typology.

blage, the count still totals 540 sherds. Either of these counts is remarkable when compared to other reported colonoware assemblages from the region.

Statistics on five northern Virginia colonoware assemblages, two from Prince William County and three from Fairfax County, are included in White and Heath's *Colonoware Inventory* (1995), compiled for a ceramics workshop held at the 1995 Society for Historical Archaeology meetings in Washington, D.C. The Pohoke (44PW335) and Portici (44PW348) assemblages, from Prince William County, amount to 253 sherds and 34 sherds of colonoware, respectively (White and Heath 1995: 21–24). The Belvoir Manor (44FX4), Mount Vernon South Grove Trash Midden (44FX762/17), and Mount Vernon House for Families (44FX762/40 and 47) assemblages, from Fairfax County, total 58, 926, and 38 sherds, respectively (White and Heath 1995: 15–19, 27–30).

When the 10,594 sherds from the Barnes Plantation are placed next to these counts, it becomes clear that this site must factor crucially into a consideration of colonoware from northern Virginia. It should be noted, however, that no minimum vessel count has yet

been calculated for the Barnes site colonoware. Sherd counts can be deceiving, insofar as many sherds do not necessarily constitute many vessels. Nevertheless, the typology developed for cataloging this large number of sherds proved adequate and thus warrants further discussion.

The Typology

The methodological approach adapted for the Barnes Plantation colonoware typology largely draws from the *type-variety system*, a means of pottery classification long employed by archaeologists in the American Southeast (e.g., Phillips 1958, 1970; Williams and Brain 1983). The type-variety system is a ranked classificatory scheme that subdivides potsherd collections into progressively smaller groupings.

Frequently, the first and most basic division made within a pottery collection is based on temper. Grit, crushed shell, and plant fiber are examples of tempering agents regularly noted in prehistoric Native American ceramics. Next, these temper groupings are further subdivided according to various sherd surface treatments. Surface treatments include consciously-applied decorations, such as painting or incising. They also include unintended blemishes like fireclouding or spalling, that probably arose during the vessel's initial firing or later use. Finally, these surface treatment groupings are subsequently clustered into various vessel parts, the most basic of which are rims, bodies, and bases.

This method of analysis was applied to the Barnes site collection, progressing downwards from temper, to surface treatment, to vessel portion (FIG. 4). In this manner, the sizable pottery collection was subdivided into manageable subgroups for cataloging and additional study.

Temper distinctions comprise the first, most fundamental division of the typology,

Table 2. Barnes Plantation Colonoware by temper.

	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Sherds with no visible temper	7,660	72.30
Quartz-tempered sherds	2,918	27.54
Shell-tempered sherds	16	0.15
Total	10,594	100%

and three basic temper groupings were noted. These three groupings, in order of prevalence, are: 1) no visible temper; 2) quartz-tempered; and 3) shell-tempered (TAB. 2). Those with no visible temper constituted the greatest number of sherds: 7,660, or 72.30 percent of the assemblage. Such sherds consist of a naturally-occurring micaceous clay with a fine to slightly grainy texture. In fact, this micaceous clay is typical of all colonoware sherds at the site, including those with evident temper. The quartz-tempered grouping is the next most common, encompassing 2,918, or 27.54 percent of the sherds. In this grouping, small quartz pebbles of less than a millimeter to several millimeters in diameter are evident in the micaceous clay paste. Sherds of the shell-tempered grouping are the least common, numbering only 16, or 0.15 percent of the assemblage.

It is worth mentioning that Henry also used temper as a preliminary classificatory division (1980: 108), but her divisions differed somewhat from those described above. Using a binocular microscope, she observed five, rather than three, distinct temper types, only two of which were also noted among the Barnes sherds. Her "no visible temper" and "shell flake tempered" types correspond with the Barnes collection's "no visible temper" and "shell-tempered" groups, while her "fossil shell tempered," "untempered," and "sand tempered" types were not noted at all. Furthermore, Henry did not form a separate "quartz-tempered" grouping, as was necessary to do for the Barnes collection. These discrepancies probably stem from actual differences between southeastern Virginia and northern Virginia colonoware assemblages. It is reasonable to assume that colonoware tempers varied spatially, depending upon the tempering agents locally available to colonoware potters. For example, the proliferation of naturally occurring quartz deposits near the

northern edge of Virginia's coastal plain, where the Barnes site lies, likely explains the commonness of quartz-tempered pottery there.

Variable surface treatments make up the second tier of the Barnes colonoware typology, with seven individual attributes of surface treatment considered. Five of the seven surface treatments are deliberate kinds of decoration: 1) plain or undecorated; 2) burnished; 3) incised; 4) punctated; and 5) slipped. The remaining two surface treatments are use-wear blemishes that presumably were unintentional: 1) sooted; and 2) spalled. All Barnes site colonoware sherds exhibit at least one of these intentional surface treatments or use-wear blemishes. A portion of the sherds, though, feature some combination of decorations and blemishes (TAB. 3). There appears to be no clear-cut correlation between sherds of various temper display the same kinds of decorations and blemishes.

Most of the Barnes site colonoware sherds were plain or undecorated, (i.e., 9,052, or 85.44 percent of the total sherds). This prevalence is consistent with reports of other northern Virginia colonoware assemblages (White and Heath 1995: 19, 22, 24, 28, 30). White and Heath note that decorated sherds are rare. This observation supports speculations that colonoware functioned predominantly in utilitarian capacities, as crude cooking, serving, or storage vessels (e.g., Ferguson 1992: 103).

Further evidence that supports colonoware's importance in cooking activities is the frequency of sooted sherds at the Barnes Plantation, which number 859, or 8.11 percent of the assemblage (FIG. 5). When a vessel is suspended over an open fire, traces of soot often will be deposited over its exterior (Orton, Tyers, and Vince 1993: 222). This probably accounts for much of the sooted colonoware from the Barnes site, since sooting is noted fre-

Table 3. Barnes Plantation Colonoware by surface treatment

<i>Individual Surface Treatments</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Undecorated	9,052	85.44
Sooted	859	8.11
Burnished	416	3.94
Incised	64	0.60
Spalled	64	0.60
Punctated	6	0.06
Slipped	1	0.01
Subtotal	10,462	98.76
<i>Multiple Surface Treatments</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Burnished and Sooted	66	0.62
Sooted and Spalled	25	0.23
Burnished and Spalled	20	0.19
Incised and Sooted	9	0.08
Incised and Punctated	4	0.04
Incised and Burnished	3	0.03
Burnished and Slipped	1	0.01
Incised and Spalled	1	0.01
Incised, Punctated, and Sooted	1	0.01
Subtotal	130	1.22
Total Sherds	10,592	99.98%

Figure 5. Sooted colonoware body sherds.

quently on sherd exteriors. On the other hand, soot may have been applied intentionally by colonoware potters. "Smudging," or the application of wood carbon or manure to pots after their initial firing, is a decorative technique used by potters in some societies (Orton, Tyers, and Vince 1993: 133; Rice 1987: 158).

Spalling, which probably occurred during the primary firing of vessels, was noted on 64, or 0.60 percent of the sherds. Spalls typically result when unbaked pots are fired in open bonfires, instead of in true kilns. Such open firing exposes newly-formed pots directly to flames and causes them to heat up and cool

Figure 6. Boldly incised colonoware sherds.

Figure 7. Subtly incised colonoware sherds.

down rapidly, prompting a high degree of production loss (Rice 1987: 154–156). The presence of spalled colonoware on a site indicates that it was made at that location, and not brought from elsewhere (Ferguson 1992: 27–31). By that logic, one may conclude that colonoware was being produced both on the Barnes Plantation and at Belvoir Manor, where spalled colonoware is described as common (White and Heath 1995: 17).

Burnishing is the most widespread of the decorative treatments observed among the Barnes site colonoware, noted on 416, or 3.94 percent of the sherds. This kind of lustrous

gloss is achieved by vigorously rubbing semi-moist clay with a pebble or similarly smooth object prior to firing (Rice 1987: 473). Such decoration also occurs on sherds from the two Mount Vernon colonoware assemblages, the South Grove Trash Midden and the House for Families collections (White and Heath 1995: 28, 30).

Less prevalent but more impressive are incised sherds, making up 64, or 0.60 percent of the Barnes potsherds. The Barnes typology uses the term “incising” rather broadly to include both boldly incised sherds (FIG. 6) and more subtly incised ones (FIG. 7). Parallel lines

Figure 8. Punctated colonoware sherds.

Figure 9. Punctated and incised colonoware sherds.

and nested chevrons are reoccurring motifs among the incised sherds from the Barnes Plantation, with boldly incised examples exhibiting significant burrs or raised margins of displaced clay. Only one other northern Virginia colonoware assemblage, that from Mount Vernon's South Grove trash midden, also reports incising (White and Heath 1995: 28).

Punctating occurs as well, though less frequently, appearing in isolation on only six of

the Barnes sherds (FIG. 8). Five other sherds from the collection also exhibit punctating in combination with incising (FIG. 9). Together, these apparently represent the first examples of punctated colonoware yet found in northern Virginia, since none of the previously reported collections mention punctating (White and Heath 1995).

Vessel portion constitutes the third and final partition of the Barnes colonoware

Table 4. Barnes Plantation Colonoware, by vessel portion.

Sherd Type	Count	Percentage
Body	10,054	94.90
Rim	481	4.54
Basal	49	0.46
Handle	8	0.008
Shoulder	1	0.01
Foot	1	0.01
Total sherds	10,594	100%

typology, in which sherd groups are further subdivided into groupings of bodies, rims, bases, etc. (TAB. 4). Body sherds, although the most prolific sort, require little further discussion, aside from mentioning that those of both flatware and hollowware vessels are certainly represented. Other vessel parts are more crucial, particularly for their usefulness in generating minimum vessel counts and in extrapolating vessel forms and dimensions.

Rims number 481, comprising 4.54 percent of the entire assemblage. Both straight and slightly everted rims are present, with both sorts exhibiting rounded and flat lips. Most of these rims probably come from hollowware vessels, like small bowls, although flatware

rims, probably those of plates, also can be distinguished. Several of the everted rims (FIG. 10) resemble those of European chamberpots, suggesting that some of the Barnes site colonoware mimicked European, wheel-thrown forms, as has been noted elsewhere (e.g., Egloff and Potter 1982: 114; Noël Hume 1962: 2, 8; Stern 1951). Whether other rims in the collection bear similarities to 18th-century West African forms has yet to be determined, however. Overall, though, rim forms from the Barnes site closely resemble those found at other northern Virginia sites (White and Heath 1995: 19, 22, 24, 28, 30).

The 49 basal sherds from the site, representing 0.46 percent of the assemblage, also

Figure 10. Everted colonoware rims.

Figure 11. Colonoware bases with footings.

Figure 12. Colonoware handles.

conform to previously reported examples from the region (White and Heath 1995). Bases generally are flat, thick, and heavy. Several have molded footings (FIG. 11), strengthening speculations that some of the Barnes site vessels mimicked European, wheel-thrown forms. Eight handles also have been identified in the

collection, the first colonoware handles yet reported from northern Virginia (FIG. 12). The large, impressive loop handle probably is that of either a chamberpot or storage jar. The straight examples—basically simple coils of clay—perhaps are pipkin handles, though some of them may be pipkin feet, instead.

Figure 13. Partial schematic breakdown of northern Virginia colonoware, using the typology developed for the Barnes Plantation assemblage.

Conclusion

Use of a tiered topology for the Barnes site colonoware (FIG. 13), one based first on temper, then surface treatment, and finally vessel portion, has facilitated the study of this large pottery collection. Given the similarities between this colonoware assemblage and others from northern Virginia (i.e., their use of quartz tempering; their frequency of plain, burnished, and spalled sherds; and their similar rim forms) and their shared dissimilarities to assemblages from southeastern Virginia (i.e., their lack of fossil shell tempered, sand-tempered, and untempered sherds), it is reasonable to predict that this modified typology should find widespread application in northern Virginia. Thus, use of this typology will assist both analysis and understanding of colonoware in the upper Potomac drainage.

The Barnes Plantation Site typology may be regarded as a point of departure for future studies of northern Virginia colonoware; the typology does not address all the questions to be asked of northern Virginia colonoware. It is a classificatory scheme focused principally on sherds; it does not offer insights about entire vessels. Future work on northern Virginia colonoware will need to address this matter of vessels, as the Potomac Typological System (Beaudry et al. 1983) does for 17th-century European-made ceramics in the Chesapeake. The Barnes Plantation Site Typology does min-

imize subjectivity and promote consistency and comparability in analysis for the growing body of northern Virginia colonoware. As such it is a useful tool for research in this area.

Acknowledgments

Many individuals and organizations made this research possible, and to them I am grateful. Excavations and analysis of the Barnes Plantation materials were funded by both the Department of Defense's Legacy Management Program and the Fairfax County History Commission. The Archaeological Services of the Fairfax County Park Authority provided field equipment, laboratory supplies, and research space. Volunteers from the Northern Virginia Chapter, Archeological Society of Virginia, and students from George Mason University and Brown University supplied countless hours of labor. Frank Kaye's diligent sorting of hundreds of Barnes site colonoware sherds greatly assisted me in this particular endeavor, while Landon Myer's thin-section analysis of some of those sherds (1996) explored another exciting avenue in colonoware research not discussed here. My thanks to Larry Moore, Donald Sweig, Edith Sprouse, and Dina Gideon for reviewing earlier drafts of this work, and to Joel Langert for his photographic expertise. Thanks also to Patricia Rubertone and my other advisors at Brown University.

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Andrew Veech recently received his doctoral degree in Anthropology at Brown University, where he studied historical archaeology. His dissertation research, which largely concerned excavations and comparative analysis of Barnes Plantation portable domestic artifacts, attempted to define archaeological distinctions between material wealth and social status in 18th-century Fairfax County, Virginia. Veech now assumes duties as staff archaeologist of Gunston Hall Plantation, the 18th-century manor home of Virginia planter and patriot George Mason.

Andrew S. Veech

Department of Anthropology
Brown University
P.O. Box 1921
Providence, RI 02912