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Cover Page Footnote

The Deer Street archaeological collections are housed at the Jones House Archaeological Center, Strawberry Banke, Inc., Portsmouth, New Hampshire. I would like to thank Diana Edwards Murnaghan and Mary Beaudry for their comments on earlier versions of this paper, and also the anonymous reviewers for their insights. I am grateful to the staff and volunteers of Strawberry Banke, Inc., especially Mary Dupre, Carolyn Parson, and Carol Clark. All photographs were taken with the courtesy of the Archaeology Department at Strawberry Banke, Inc.

CERAMICS AND THE SEA TRADE IN PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE: 1765–1785

Aileen Button Agnew

Portsmouth, New Hampshire, is a small seaport with a long history of maritime trade. The Deer Street archaeological projects in Portsmouth have provided extensive information on different stages of the city's past. The excavation of a small cellar, filled ca. 1785, yielded a wealth of artifacts dating to the period 1765–1785. More than 5000 ceramic artifacts were recovered, providing the basis for an examination of the connection between the sea trade and the personal possessions of the inhabitants.

Portsmouth (New Hampshire) est un petit port de mer marqué d'une longue histoire de commerce maritime. Les travaux archéologiques de la rue Deer à Portsmouth ont fourni beaucoup de renseignements sur différentes étapes du passé de la ville. L'excavation d'une petite cave, remplie vers 1785, a rapporté une mine d'artefacts datant de la période 1765–1785. Il a été recouvré plus de 5000 objets en céramique qui constituent la base d'un examen du lien entre le commerce maritime et les biens personnels des résidents.

Introduction

The history of 18th-century Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and the history of the 18th-century sea trade are closely intertwined. The fortunes of Portsmouth merchants, obtained through active maritime commerce, supported a town well known for its craftspeople. It is reasonable to assume that a busy trade with foreign ports would be reflected in the artifacts of the archaeological record. Artifacts from a variety of sources could be expected to be present while artifacts of unknown origin might be identified through an acquaintance with the trading patterns of Portsmouth inhabitants. The north end of Portsmouth was the site of intensive archaeological work between 1981 and 1986. More than 150 features from 15 house lots were excavated or sampled, with much of the work confined to five house lots on Deer Street (FIG. 1). One feature in particular contained a collection of ceramic artifacts that can best be explained or described in reference to the history of the Portsmouth sea trade. The feature

contained artifactual data especially pertinent to the study of the years between 1765 and 1785. This study attempts to place the ceramic artifacts of the feature in perspective, discussing them in regard to the archaeological deposits, the original ownership of the pieces, and the larger context of the trade networks in use during this time period.

The Site

The Richard Shortridge site is located in the North End of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on Deer Street (FIG. 1). First occupied during the mid-18th century, the lot measured approximately 14.5 m × 50 m (47 ft × 163 ft), extending from Deer Street to Russell Street. The property was occupied continuously from ca. 1760 until the main house was moved across Deer Street during the urban renewal of 1969–1971. The land subsequently remained vacant until construction of a hotel and condominium complex began in 1986.

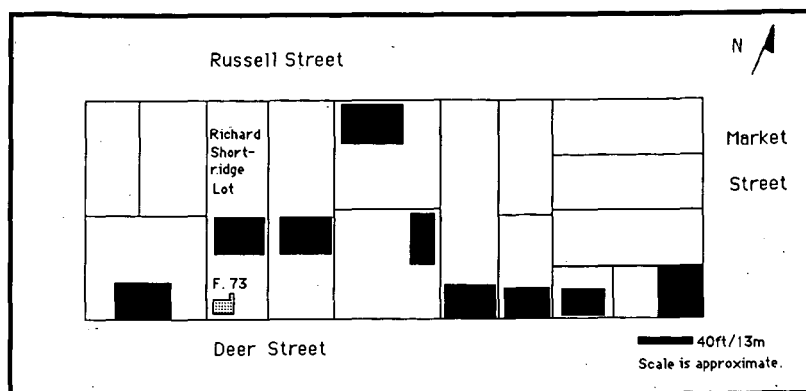


Figure 1. The Richard Shortridge lot in relation to other lots on Deer Street, ca. 1770.

The site was examined during three projects between 1982 and 1986, sponsored by Strawberry Banke, Inc., the New Hampshire State Historic Preservation Office, and the Shelter Group, Inc. A number of important features on the property were excavated or sampled, including a wood-lined privy filled ca. 1815, a stone boundary wall with deposits dating to the 1760s, an outbuilding cellar filled during the late 19th century, a wood-lined privy filled ca. 1830, a stone-lined well filled ca. 1750, and a stone cellar filled in ca. 1785 (Agnew 1989). Since the main house stood on the lot until urban renewal, and since the area around the house was seriously disturbed when the house was moved, the house remains were not investigated.

A preliminary assessment of the artifacts from the stone cellar indicated that, while a variety of ceramic types were present, they seemed to be largely confined to a 20-year span of time with

a mean manufacturing date of 1770. Since those 20 years included the years of the American Revolution, it seemed possible that such a major disruption in the lives of Portsmouth residents might well be reflected in the ceramic artifacts that were used and disposed of during this time.

Portsmouth Trade 1765–1785

Portsmouth was a major port and shipbuilding center in northern New England. Between 1765 and 1775, Portsmouth was steadily prosperous with a busy harbor. Its situation, as described by Jeremy Belknap in 1812, was conducive to a brisk maritime business. "The town of Portsmouth lies about two miles from the sea on the south shore of the [Piscataqua R]iver. The town has convenient wharves and the anchorage before it is good" (p.146). Its location likewise provided ready access to goods for export, namely wood and livestock,

and a fleet of fishing vessels provided a steady source of fish for trade as well. Writing in 1771, Wyndham Beaves (1771: 648–649), the English author of *Lex Mercatoria Rediviva or The Merchant's Directory*, said of New England's trade,

Its commerce is very considerable being spread all over America and to several parts in Europe: our Sugar Colonies are from hence supplied with Fish, Cattle, Corn, Apples, Butter, Cheese, Oil, Tallow, Boards, Hoops, Pipe-Staves, Skins, Bark, Turpentine &c. . . . they also deal with the other sugar colonies; sometimes with the French, more with the Spaniards; and their exportation of Fish for Portugal, Spain and Italy, is greater than from any Part except Newfoundland. . . . [T]hey build for us a prodigious Number of Ships, and supply us with Pitch, Tar, Turpentine, Skins, Furs, Oil, Whale fins, Logwood and other Commodities; besides a great Quantity of Masts, Yards and Plank for the Royal Navy.

The trading patterns of ships varied and served to support a substantial shipbuilding industry. According to Belknap (1812: 150),

ship-building has always been a considerable branch of business. European traders often came hither to build ships, which they could do much cheaper than at home, by the profit of the goods they brought with them. Our own merchants also built ships of two and three hundred tons; which were employed in voyages to the British Sugar Islands, with a lading of lumber, fish, oil and livestock.

The cargo would be sold, and the ship would return to England with sugar. Smaller vessels would return to New England. Some vessels would be laden with timbers and spars going directly to British ports and sold with their cargoes. "The coasting trade at the Southward was an exchange of West Indian commodities for corn, rice, flour, pork and naval stores"

(Belknap 1812: 151). In addition to trade with the British Sugar Islands, Belknap (1812: 151) further states that two to three vessels a year would go to the free French or Dutch West Indian ports and one per year to the Azores or Canaries; sometimes a ship that had been to England would go on to Lisbon or Cadiz.

Contemporary accounts in the *New Hampshire Gazette* for the years between 1765 and 1785 detailed the activity of the port. Issues for the months October through February of the years 1773–1774, 1778–1779, and 1783–1784 showed a marked contrast both between the number of ports visited and the total number of ships involved. The months of 1773–1774 showed a brisk business with ships visiting such diverse places as the Cape Verde Islands, Gibraltar, London, Africa, various North American colonies, the Canary Islands, Cadiz, and virtually every island of the Caribbean. English ports other than London were also represented. The West Indian trade comprised more than two-thirds of the destinations and points of origin.

The *New Hampshire Gazette* did not record any ships in port for the years 1778–1779. The American Revolution devastated the sea trade of the Piscataqua. The maritime interests of Portsmouth owned 12,000 tons of vessels for shipping before the war began. By 1779, only 500 tons remained (Saltonstall 1968: 95). A contemporary source wrote, "This being a Sea-Port Town, the Inhabitants depend Intirely on Trade and Navigation for their Support; – when this fails them, they must soon be reduced to Poverty and Want" (Saltonstall 1968: 95). As was the case

throughout New England (Upton 1971: 154; Paynter 1982: 78), the war years saw a shift in the way the inhabitants of the Piscataqua supported themselves. Prior to the war, they had relied on trade and industries that fed that trade; fishing, lumbering, and raising livestock for sale in the West Indies were all important economic pursuits. During the war, fishing was quite hazardous, and the lumber industry shrank. Whereas the Piscataqua region had formerly been able to import corn and rice from the Carolinas and elsewhere, its residents were now faced with the need to raise their own grains. By the end of the war, the Piscataqua was able to export corn for the first time (Belknap 1812: 152).

The eight years of the American Revolution completely disrupted the economy of the Piscataqua region and were an aberration in the 18th-century progression and expansion of maritime commerce. Residents of Portsmouth and the surrounding towns of New Hampshire were forced to change the patterns of their subsistence from an economy that depended heavily on imported goods to one that approached self-sufficiency. Such changes could have had both short-term and long-term effects. For the duration of the hostilities, a variety of consumer items would have been largely unavailable and unaffordable for most households. The Continental Congress had adopted a measure known as the Continental Association that "provided for a non-importation and non-consumption agreement against all English goods to begin December 1, 1774 and a non-exportation agreement to begin September 10, 1775" (Upton 1971: 37).

The agreement was enforced by local committees. In Portsmouth, the agreement appears to have been upheld rigorously (Upton 1971: 38). It is not known for how many years the zeal for strict enforcement remained, although George Washington complained about New Yorkers trading with loyalists as late as 1782 (Fisher 1987: 53). The restrictions on trade may have been more acute in northern New England, at least during the early years of the war. Areas occupied by British troops, such as Philadelphia and New York, would most likely have seen the continued availability of British goods. This is documented clearly in the records left by Frederick Rhinelander, a New York merchant during the years of the Revolution (Schwind 1984). Portsmouth and other coastal cities in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine seem likely to have suffered from more serious deprivation.

Throughout the war, although mercantile shipping slowed dramatically, shipbuilding continued. Ships were built both for the new American Navy and for use as privateers, which preyed on English vessels. Notices were placed regularly in newspapers regarding the sale of these "prizes" and their goods. The goods mentioned in the advertisements generally were naval stores and ship-related items and not goods such as fine cloth, glassware, or ceramics. It is possible, however, that both the privateers and the captured British vessels carried quantities of fashionable goods. Schmidt and Mrozowski document the shipping of material hidden in molasses hogsheads by smugglers during the 1760s (1988: 37), and it seems possible

that such smuggling could have continued. In describing the cargo of the *Machault*, a French military supply ship sunk in 1760, Sullivan discusses the presence of "private venture merchandise, mainly tablewares" (1986: 7). Considering that British officers traveled with extensive amounts of fashionable tablewares (Jones and Smith 1985: 113–116), it is possible that some of the captured "prizes" contained the latest in tablewares, belonging to either soldiers or ambitious merchants. Ships carrying goods to the New York ceramics and glass merchant, Frederick Rhinelander, were seized by American privateers in 1780 and 1782 (Schwind 1984: 35).

When peace came in 1783, the Portsmouth trading industry began at once to rebuild. While the city did not have a single square-rigged vessel remaining, other ships apparently were available for a small-scale operation (Saltonstall 1968: 118). By the new year, voyages to Surinam, St. Martin's, New York, Barbados, London, Shelburne, Guadaloupe, and other ports were recorded in the *New Hampshire Gazette*, while various Portsmouth merchants advertised "Teacups and saucers" (Nov. 22, 1783), "China, Queen's and Glass Ware" (Dec. 27, 1783), "Cream colored ware" (Jan. 8, 1784).

The questions that concern this study then, center around the issue of how accurately the possessions of a single household can reflect the historical events and economic changes of a particular time period. The availability of tablewares, in particular, could affect the dating and interpretation of archaeological features.

Feature 73

Feature 73 represents the remains of a small house that fronted on Deer Street in Portsmouth (FIG. 2). The excavated cellar measured approximately 4.75 m × 3 m (15.5 ft × 10 ft) and was constructed of dry-laid stone. The lot was purchased in 1755 by Reuben Abbott, a mariner, and was subsequently deeded to his mother (Rockingham County Registry of Deeds [hereafter RCRD] 64: 404). She sold the property to her daughter and son-in-law, Mary and Richard Shortridge, in 1766 (RCRD 79: 320). In 1776 Captain Richard Shortridge, a cabinetmaker by trade, died at Crown Point. The property was left to his wife and was later used as a meeting place for young men interested in sailing on privateers (Saltonstall 1968: 95). In 1783, Mrs. Shortridge married John Donaldson, a mariner, and sold the property to the Rice brothers, themselves both mariners (RCRD 116: 94). The next mention of the lot occurs after the death of Samuel Rice in 1802 (Rockingham County Probate Records [hereafter RCPR]: 6947).

Feature 73 was one of two houses on the lot and is referred to in the inventory of Richard Shortridge's estate as "the small house front on Deer Street wherein Humphry Fernald now dwells" (RCPR: 4326). The second house was the mansion house whose contents were detailed in the inventory. By 1802, when the Samuel Rice estate was probated, the small house was gone.

The destruction of the small house could be related to the property sale in 1783. Historical research and the excavation of more than 100 features on Deer Street suggest that there is a high correlation between transfers in

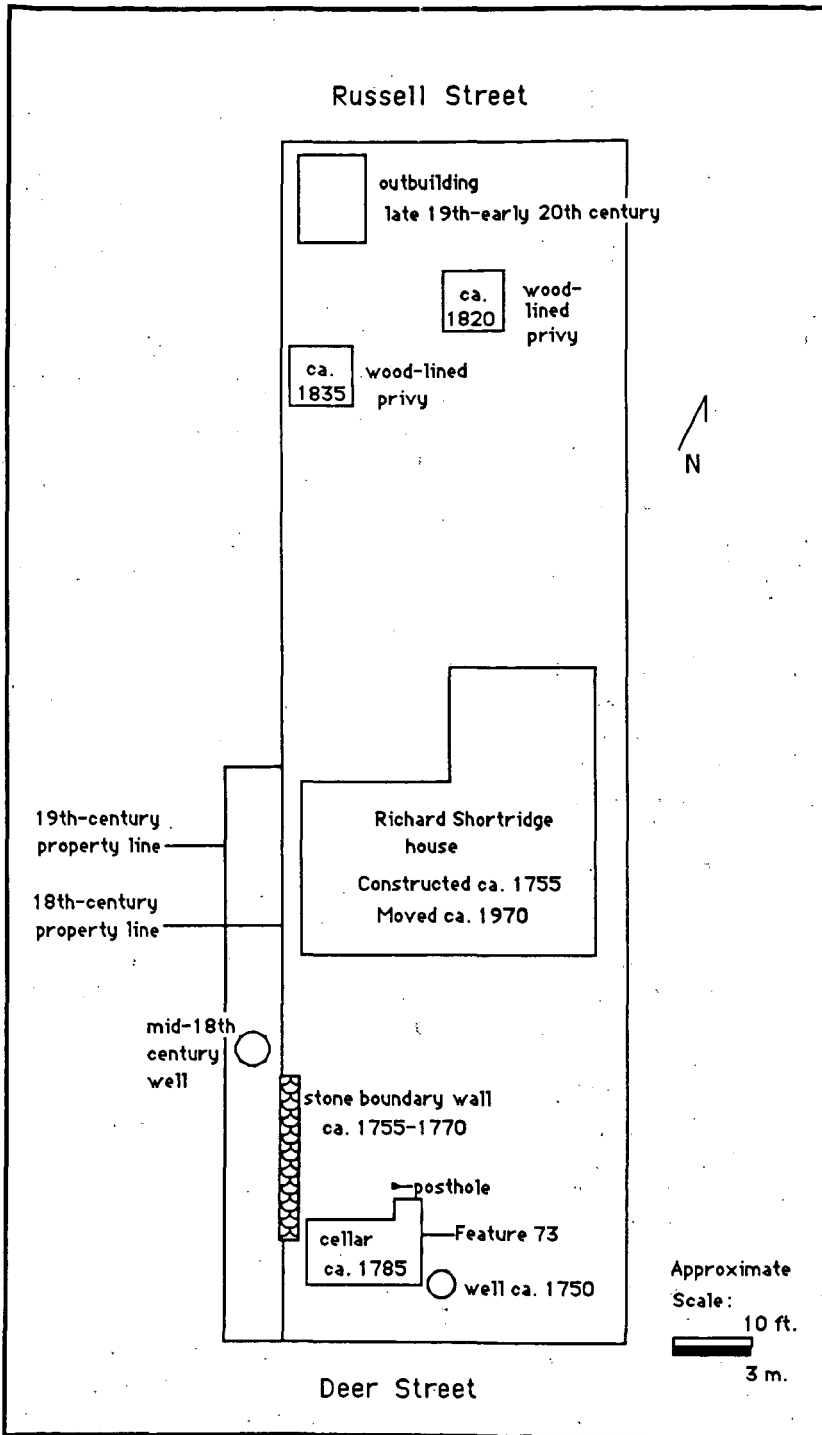


Figure 2. The Richard Shortridge site and the location of various features. The dates assigned to the various features are the dates of filling as opposed to the dates of construction.

property ownership and changes or improvements to a lot. The artifacts of Feature 73 suggest a date of filling of no later than the late 1780s, probably no later than 1785. The latest wares represented in the feature deposits were blue handpainted pearlwares (FIGS. 3, 4). These wares are often dated at ca. 1790–1800, and are indeed known to have been manufactured during these years (Noël Hume 1973: 235). Research by George Miller (1987) indicates, however, that blue handpainted pearlware was in production during the mid-1770s and sold under the name “China Glaze.” It is reasonable to assume that widescale distribution of the wares coincided with or closely followed 1779, by which time Josiah Wedgwood had named his version of a blue handpainted white-bodied ware, “Pearl White.” Frederick Rhinelander, a Loyalist merchant of New York, placed an order for “blue painted Ware . . . we believe it is pearl blue,” in July, 1780 (Schwind 1984: 32–33), so the ware certainly was known and available to some customers in North America early in the decade.

The blue and green shell-edged wares of the late 18th century are known to have been manufactured as early as 1784 (Noël Hume 1973: 235). A shipment of blue and green edged wares, almost certainly shell-edged wares, is documented as arriving in Portland, Maine, in 1789 (Sprague 1987: 58). No shell-edged wares were found in Feature 73, although they were in later years very popular among Portsmouth residents (Edwards, Pendery, and Agnew 1988: 43). If the date for the filling of Feature 73 was much after 1785, shell-edged wares should have been present.

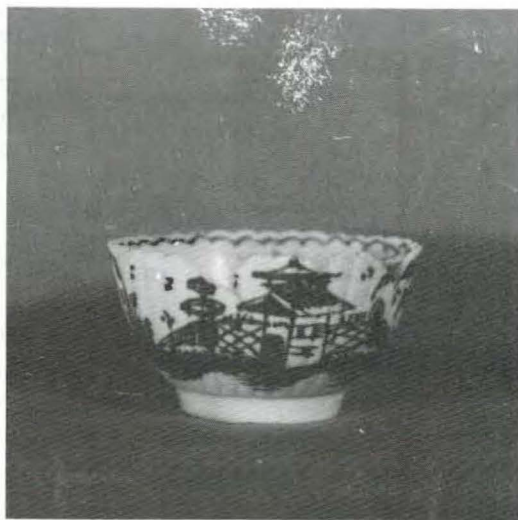


Figure 3. A reconstructed blue handpainted tea bowl with a scalloped edge, from Feature 73. The height of the artifact is 8.25 cm (3.25 in). This style may have been manufactured from ca. 1775–1795; this piece was deposited ca. 1783–1785.

One striking thing about both the ceramics listed in the Richard Shortridge inventory (RCPR: 4326) and those found in the fill of Feature 73 is the limited date range that can be assigned to the pieces. The inventory listed “1 large China bowl, 6 China coffee cups, Queen’s China viz. 1 Coffee pot, 1 Tea pot, 1 Sugar dish, Cream pot, 1 1/2 doz plates, 6 cups & saucers & 3 China cups and saucers, 3 Jugs, 2 large earthen dishes and 1 China punch bowl 1 gallon.” No pre-creamware ceramics such as delftware or white salt-glazed stoneware were mentioned in the inventory. Only unreconstructable fragments of white salt-glazed stoneware and delftware were found among the excavated artifacts, as opposed to the creamware, which included many largely reconstructable vessels.



Figure 4. This blue handpainted saucer is marked with a script underglaze blue "N," a mark as yet unidentified. The saucer measures 15.25 cm (6 in) in diameter. The style may have been manufactured from ca. 1775–1795; the piece was deposited ca. 1783–1785.

The excavated artifacts corroborated the evidence shown in the inventory, with no early or inherited component to the excavated and reconstructable artifacts. These ceramics could all have been manufactured and purchased after the date of 1765. It seems possible that the Shortridges, as a young couple, began with a new collection of ceramics that were in vogue and then accumulated more. In other households on Deer Street, different patterns of ceramic acquisition are apparent. These patterns relate directly to the nature of the household in question, that is, the social composition of the household. For instance, the lot known as the Richard Hart lot was occupied during the 18th century by three generations of one family. The excavation of

several features shows the continued use of ceramics that were purchased during the earliest period of occupation (Agnew 1985: 82). Pieces of matching white salt-glazed stoneware plates were excavated from three features dating to ca. 1755, 1775, and 1800. The unmarried women of the third generation must have preferred to continue to use their grandmother's dishes, as there is ample evidence that they continued to purchase quality ceramics. A second example is provided by the John Hart household. John Hart lived as a bachelor in a house constructed ca. 1760. Some of the ceramics associated with the occupancy of John Hart appear to date to ca. 1745 (Edwards, Pendery, and Agnew 1988: 37). Since John Hart died in 1790 at the age of 56, he would have been but a young boy when the ceramics were manufactured. It is possible that some of his ceramics were castoffs or inherited. At a site in Salem, Massachusetts, features related to a long occupation by a single owner reflect the range of wares available throughout the owner's adult life (Moran, Zimmer, and Yentsch 1982: 72–74, 178).

The tight date range of the ceramics and the documentary evidence suggest that the ceramics in question may have come from a single household. Assignment of ownership to collections of trash is never easy and rarely definitive, but it seems likely that the household represented by the fill of Feature 73 may have been that of Mary Shortridge and that the cellar hole may have been filled in shortly after the property was sold in 1783.

The fill of Feature 73 consisted of several strata of sandy soils with varying concentrations of sand, ash,

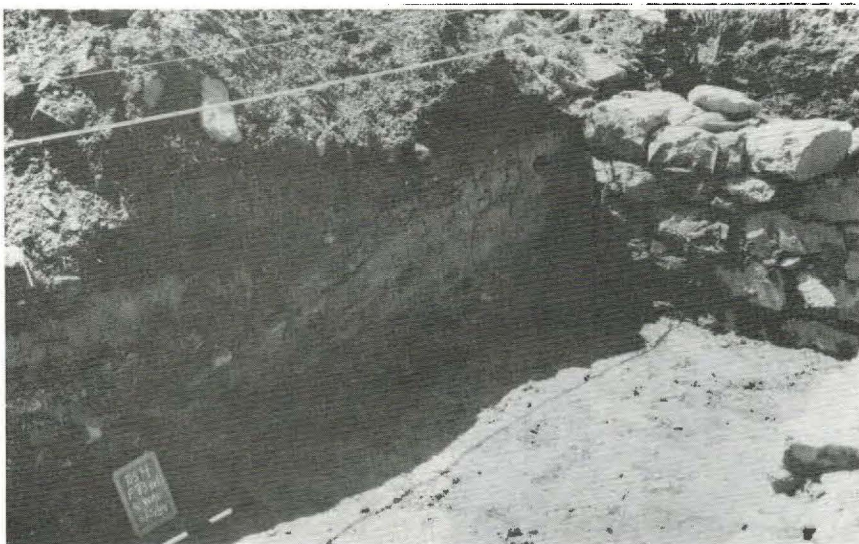


Figure 5. The profile of Feature 73, facing south, clearly shows the extensive sand deposits.

and soil (FIG. 5). The eastern section of the feature was disturbed at a later date by the laying and capping of a gas line. The excavation of the gas line trench destroyed all but one course of stone in the eastern wall of the cellar. The trench contained very few later artifacts to date the installation of the gas line. The fill of the trench included a substantial deposit of flint nodules.

The undisturbed fill of the feature was composed of soils containing varying amounts of ash and white sand. The white sand of the fill was distinctive and common in 18th-century deposits on Deer Street (FIGS. 5, 6). Mixed in with the white sand were large quantities of wood ash and animal bones. While many of the reconstructable artifacts came from the strata of sand and ash, others were deposited in a dark sandy clay on the floor of the feature. The sand and ash are thought to represent secondary deposits of kitchen debris. No difference in the variety of ceramic

types of different strata was detected, and cross-mends between strata were not uncommon.

The sand may reflect the 18th-century custom of decorating kitchen floors, and even parlour floors, with swirled patterns of sand (Von Rosenstiel 1978: 10). The sand would look attractive and absorb spills and grease. Sand was also used in the 18th century as a cleanser. In the mid-1740s, Boston had a sandman selling sand for scouring, "The Larger the Quantity the less the Price" (Von Rosenstiel 1978: 9). It is speculated that piles of sand mixed with domestic debris collected near the house and were available for use as fill when the small house was removed. Since the area had been bulldozed more than once in the 20th century, the condition of the Deer Street sites prevented the testing of undisturbed yard deposits. It is hypothesized, however, that some yards would have contained a large pile of clean sand for future use and a similarly large pile of used sand. It is

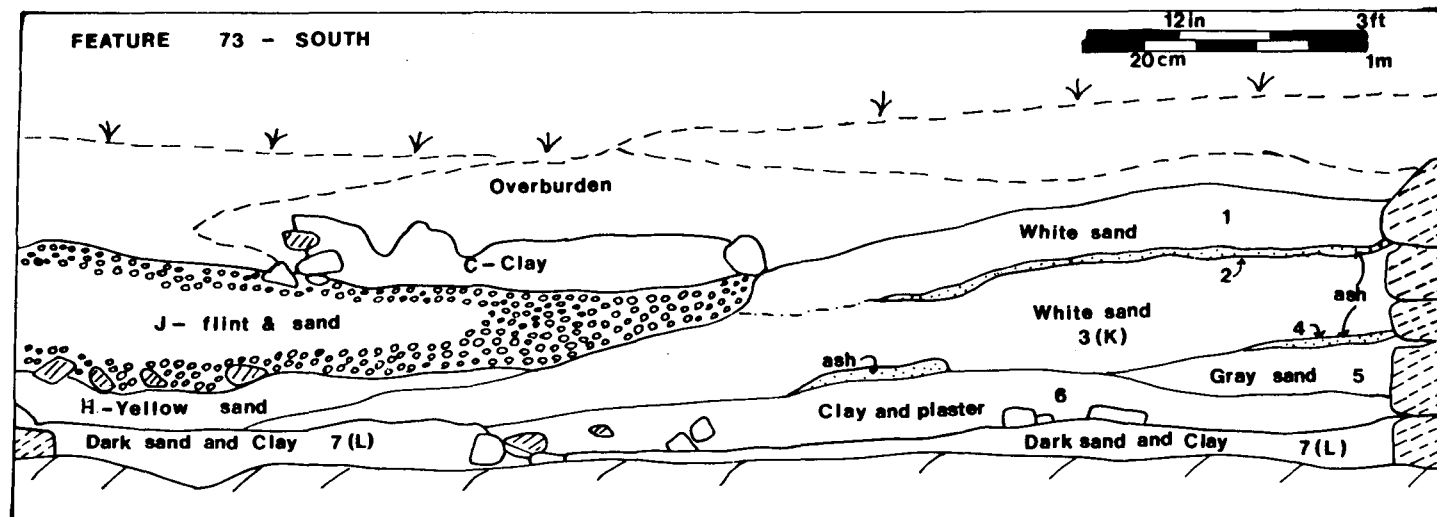


Figure 6. The stratigraphy of Feature 73 indicates the difference between the eastern section disturbed by a later trench and the western section with the original deposits.

not likely that this sand was associated with the house of Feature 73. At the time of the inventory of Richard Shortridge's estate, the house was described separately from the "mansion house" as including land "seven feet to the eastward of the small house to run from the street side seven feet the whole length of said small house and two feet beyond the Linty part" (RCPR: 4326). A post hole excavated just north of the ell of Feature 73 suggests the possibility of a fence separating the small house from the main house. If this was the case, there would have been little room for any sand to accumulate. The area behind "the mansion house where the widow now dwells" contained a barn and garden (RCPR: 4326) and could have contained piles of sand.

In a detailed study of another Portsmouth site, Harrington (1989) found no evidence of piles of sand during the 18th century. However, as Mrozowski (1987: 7) pointed out in his study of the evolution of the New England urban landscape, households in the same city or neighborhood may have had dramatically different uses for yard space.

The source of the sand in Feature 73 is not clear. Certainly there are numerous local sources for sand. At the Follett site in Portsmouth, location of an 18th-century wharf and warehouse, Harrington (1983: 6) found large quantities of a white marine sand containing tropical shells and corals, possibly originating in Florida or the West Indies. Various local industries, such as tanneries and mortar producers, could have made use of the lime content of the shells and coral. Fragments of coral were found in the sand of Feature 73, so it is possible that

some of the sand came from this non-local source.

There is no evidence that sand and garbage were regularly deposited in privies, except during the final filling of a feature. There is evidence that sand and kitchen debris accumulated along a stone boundary wall between the Richard Shortridge lot and the Hopley Yeaton lot to the west. That the sand accumulated in large quantities is indicated by the very large amounts used in the filling of Feature 73 and two other stone-lined cellar holes on Deer Street (Agnew 1989).

The Ceramic Evidence

The question of whether or not the mercantile history of Portsmouth is reflected in the archaeological remains of Feature 73 arises. Of the more than 20,000 artifacts recovered from Feature 73, more than 5400 were ceramic (TAB. 1). Many of these belonged to pots that could be at least partially reconstructed. More than one-third of the pieces were redware. Of the others, approximately 5.5%, or just over 300 fragments, belonged to vessels made in places other than England. Many of these were Chinese in origin: others came from less predictable sources.

Represented among the 3484 non-redware fragments were just over 280 pearlware fragments and 599 fragments of buff-bodied earthenware (TAB. 2). A number of vessels were reconstructed from these two groups (FIG. 7). Almost 420 white salt-glazed stoneware fragments were present. One castor was partially reconstructed, but the remainder of the fragments were small and not mendable. Vessels were reconstructed from the small sample of 90 or so Nottingham-type



Figure 7. Representative examples of reconstructed buff earthenware vessels from Feature 73. The height of the larger vessel is 15.25 cm (6 in), the smaller, 9.5 cm (3.75 in).

and English buff stoneware fragments. The remains of tin-glazed earthenwares consisted of 214 small unreconstructable fragments.

Of the 3484 non-redware ceramic artifacts, 1521 were cream-colored earthenware. Numerous reconstructable vessels were represented among these fragments. They form a key part of the collection and are important in gaining a good understanding of the feature in relation to historical events and the owners of the artifacts. The cream-colored wares include a tortoise-shell plate, the remains of numerous creamware plates, a spill holder, a castor, and various other forms. No fragments of cream-colored chamberpots were found. Just under one-third of the creamwares are a deep cream in color, suggesting that they were pieces of earlier creamwares generally dating to before 1775. Other English wares in the collection include basalt, represented by two teapot lids

and one teapot, and soft-paste porcelain, including a blue hand-painted saucer marked with an open crescent, plus additional fragments of cups and bowls. The basalt teapot remains included much of an impressed manufacturer's mark, probably that of Barker, perhaps Richard Barker, a potter operating by 1784 in Lane End. Many potters of that name operated during the late 18th century, however (Godden 1985: 19). The simplicity of the teapot is consistent with basalts of the ca. 1780 period and is distinctly different from later styles (Hillier 1968: 218) such as that found at the Narbonne House in Salem, Massachusetts (Moran, Zimmer, and Yentsch 1982: fig. 4-52).

The vast majority of the more than 1800 redware fragments appear to be of New England manufacture. Those produced outside of the immediate Portsmouth area, like the imported ceramics, would have reached Portsmouth through a variety of sea trading routes.

The mean ceramic manufacturing date for the artifacts was figured using South's formula and median dates of manufacture (1978: 72, 75). The date for the feature overall was determined to be ca. 1770. The trench disturbance of the eastern section shows a slightly later range of dates, in the mid-1780s. The dates for the strata of the main deposit range from 1750 to 1772. One explanation for the low range of dates of the fill is that the date used for the buff-bodied earthenware (1733) is too early, giving a falsely low date to the deposits of stratum 6. The quality of the slip decoration on the reconstructable vessels is quite poor, indicating a relatively late date of manufacture. Another explanation

Table 1. Summary of artifacts from Feature 73.

Bottle & Table Glass	Window Glass	Metal (inc. nails)	Small Finds	Mammal & Bird Bones	Fish Bones	Shell	Ceramics	
							RW	Other
2533	1853	2039	523	5632	1579	284	1938	3484
Total number of artifacts: 19865								

may be found in the possible use of soils that had been collecting around the yard for the cellar fill. This might account for the many small and unreconstructable fragments of white salt-glazed stoneware and delft. In her discussion of the Sherburne house lot, Harrington (1989: 9) notes that highly fragmented ceramics characterized the yard and garden deposits of the site.

Non-English Ceramics

Of the vessels represented by the 301 non-English fragments, most are Chinese porcelain. Since the American China Trade did not begin until 1784, Chinese porcelains were probably obtained through the pre-Revolutionary trade with the English. Most of the vessels were teabowls and saucers, represented by small fragments. One flawed teapot, not a prime example of Chinese workmanship, is an exception and was reconstructed (FIG. 8, left). More interesting are the remains of Japanese porcelain. According to William Sargent of the Essex Institute in Salem, Massachusetts (personal communication, 1989), the octopus design of three vessels, one a largely reconstructed bowl, is a Japanese motif

and was not used by the Chinese (FIG. 8, center). The Dutch were the only European trading partners of Japan during this period. Portsmouth traders might have encountered the Dutch at a number of Caribbean ports, such as Surinam, a Dutch colony that Portsmouth merchants visited regularly.

Another interesting vessel is a small redware round-bottomed pot (FIG. 8, right). In its form this artifact bears a close resemblance to French vessels of a type excavated at the Fortress Louisbourg and described by Kenneth Barton (1981: 28). The glaze does not match his description but does match that described on other French wares (Barton 1981: 35). The pot could have arrived in Portsmouth by a variety of routes, either through the Caribbean or possibly through the Canadian Maritimes. It also could have entered during the years of the Revolution when there was contact with the French. At least one Portsmouth merchant traded regularly with the French during the Revolution through the port of Bordeaux (Upton 1971: 150). The pot shows no sign of having been used as a cooking vessel but does show signs of having been repaired.

Table 2. Number and types of ceramic artifacts by stratum

Stratum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I	J	UN*	Totals
			K				L											
<i>Porcelain</i>																		
Fine Chinese	6	1	32	1		15	77	2		1		3	1	7	6		19	178
"Canton"	1		6		3		21			2					4			37
Japanese	1		2				2				1			8	1		4	19
English			11				12										7	30
<i>Stoneware</i>																		
Westerwald	1					7	2										4	14
Other Rhen.							3										1	4
Eng. Br. Nott.			4	2	1	6	45		1		3						12	74
Other Eng. Br.			15				1			2								18
WSGSW plain	8		56		16	47	122	1	1	2	5	3	1	15	7	1	51	336
molded					5	3	34				1		1	3	2	5	13	67
slip dipped				1		2	3											6
scr. blue							7										1	8
OG Enamel							1											1
<i>Earthenware</i>																		
TGEW		1	15		6	36	70			1	1			8	13	2	61	214
Rouen							3											3
Iberian	3	1	10				14			2					11		5	46
Buff e'ware	3		308	2	21	29	123			1				7	4		101	599
Grn-glazed							6							1				7
Tortoiseshell	1				1		12					1		1	2			16
Deep Cream	4		155	1	11	3	184	2	1	1				7	25		61	455
Pale Cream	53	5	227	2	46	5	346		3	30	27	5		100	87	5	91	1032
OGE CC							8									1		9
Trans pr. CC			1														1	2
Pearlware, pl			9				5								19		5	38
PW ug blue	13		124	3	2	1	48		3	9	5	3		3		1	16	231
PW, Tr. pr.			1									1						2
PW, polychr.							1							5				6
PW, slip dec.																1	2	3
Redware	56	14	304	8	35	126	904	8	3	56	19	14		40	136	4	196	1923
<i>Other</i>																		
Basalt	2		2				1		1					2	4		1	13
Refined red	1		2			2												5
Jackfield		1				9											1	11
Aboriginal	4						3								7		1	15
Total																		5422

*UN = unstratified deposits from cleaning and those artifacts salvaged prior to the demolition of the cellar.

Fragments of two or three Iberian vessels were recovered. Considering the great variety of goods believed to have been shipped in these containers and the close contacts of trade with

Spain and Portugal, it is a wonder that so few have turned up in the 18th-century features on Deer Street.

A very strange pot of buff-bodied earthenware was also recovered from

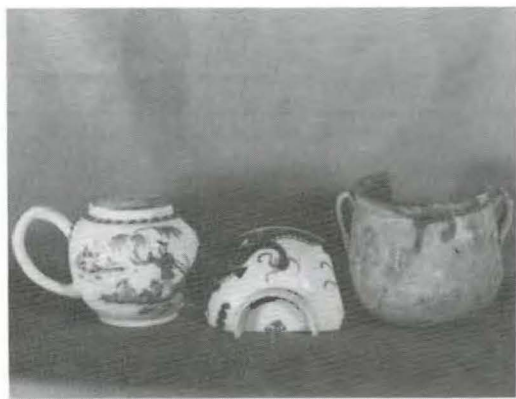


Figure 8. Pictured from left are a Chinese export porcelain teapot, a Japanese porcelain bowl with an octopus motif, and a French redware cooking pot with a round bottom. The height of the redware vessel is 11.75 cm (4.6 in).

Feature 73 (FIG. 9). This vessel, a jug, is probably Mediterranean in origin. The rouletted decoration appears to have been made with a compass-like tool, while the unusual punctate design appears to have been made using a rectangularly pointed stick. The fineness of the ware and its decorative handle are distinctive. Since Portsmouth vessels did visit both the Cape Verde islands off of Africa and the port of Gibraltar, these locales may eventually provide the answer.

While the peculiar wares of Feature 73 may provide an exotic flavor to the collection, a detailed examination of the rest of the collection can provide a different view of the relationship between the ceramics and the sea trade.

Creamwares

It seemed possible that a detailed study of the English ceramics present in Feature 73 could provide an

indication of whether the abrupt end to the Portsmouth maritime trade in 1775 would actually be reflected in the archaeological record. The cream-colored earthenwares of the period did undergo great changes during the 20 years between 1765 and 1785. One changing attribute was the color of the ware. The earlier wares tended to be a deep cream, noticeably darker than many of the later wares. The production of the dark cream wares varied from factory to factory. Although by 1768 Wedgwood chose to produce only pale creamware, the factory at Leeds did not do so until 1775 (Towner 1978: 44; Towner 1965: 33). There are only a few pieces from the Feature 73 collection that can be ascribed to the pre-1775 period of the site with any degree of certainty. One of these is a Leeds sauceboat (FIG. 10). With handle terminals of a form that Towner states are known to have been produced only at Leeds (Towner 1965: fig. 10 no. 5; Towner 1978: fig. 9 no. 5), the very dark cream color of the vessel would surely date it to before 1775. A second and larger sauceboat, unidentified by factory, is paler yellow than the Leeds piece, but still significantly darker than many other pieces. Richard Shortridge's estate inventory listed one and a half dozen Queensware plates. A variety of reconstructable plates were uncovered, including five varieties of feather-edged plates. All of the feather edges could be called deep cream, in contrast to a number of Royal-edged plates, all of which are pale cream. One of the deep cream feather-edged plates has a sequence of fronds ascribed to Wedgwood. If the plate was made at Wedgwood's factory then it must have been made before 1768. These

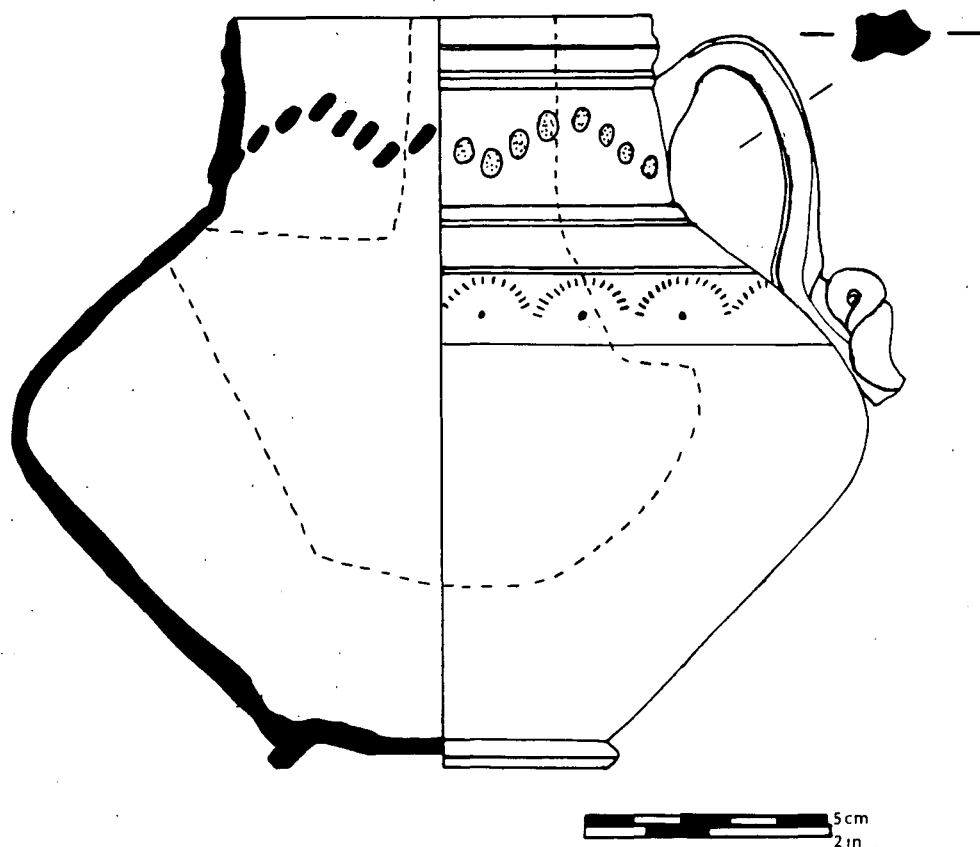


Figure 9. This unglazed buff earthenware jug is unusual. The drawing is of a fully reconstructed vessel. The Feature 73 example provided a profile of the pot as well as a complete base and portions of the rest of the vessel, but was not complete. It is possible that the jug was two-handled, but no evidence of a second handle was found. The height of the vessel is 15.5 cm (6.1 in).



Figure 10. Two reconstructed creamware sauceboats from Feature 73. Both are deep cream in color. The height of the spout of the smaller vessel is 7.75 cm (3+ in), the taller, 9.5 cm (3.75 in). They were manufactured ca. 1765–1775.

attributions must be taken with a grain of salt, however, since although Wedgwood may have used this particular pattern, other factories may have done so as well. The same sort of caution must be used when approaching the Royal-edged wares. Although they may be pale, they may also have been made before 1775 by Wedgwood and others.

The basic problem with this type of study is that wares cannot be confined neatly to particular decades. Some designs, such as beading, were used during the early period but continued to be popular throughout the 1770s and into the early 1780s. Two decorative styles seem to have reached their height of popularity during the years of the Revolution, and these are very poorly represented in all the Deer Street features. They are overglaze enameled creamware and overglaze

transfer-printed creamware, with the exception of jugs. Only a few fragments have been found of either form of decoration. Whether this is a result of the restrictions on trade or is attributable to other factors is impossible to say. Reconstructable vessels of overglaze enameled creamware were found at the Narbonne house in Salem, Massachusetts (Moran, Zimmer, and Yentsch 1982: fig. 4–29), but these may have been purchased either before or after the Revolution.

Redwares

While redwares are notoriously difficult to date, the redwares of Feature 73 may eventually prove of great value in the development of more precise dating techniques. Their association with a tightly dated deposit provides a substantial body of wares for comparison with those from other features. The vessel types represented include cups and mugs of several sizes, bowls, milkpans, storage pots, pitchers, a jar resembling a snuff jar, tea bowls, and a footed vessel, possibly a salt. The decorative techniques include tooling and the use of a mottled glaze. A small number of fragments were slip-decorated. A variety of glaze colors were represented. In Pendery's study of two pottery sites in Portsmouth (1985: 101), he found that there was a far greater variety of wares produced at the earlier operation. The Marshall pottery, operating between 1736 and 1749, produced "decorated table wares which imitated fashionable English ceramic types" (Pendery 1985: 107–109). The Bennett-Dodge pottery, 1789–1864,

produced a smaller number of vessel types and no decorated table wares (Pendery 1985: 109). While Feature 73 falls between the dates for the operation of the two potteries, the redwares of Feature 73 are more similar to those of the Marshall pottery than they are to those from the later site.

Redwares from the New England Glassworks site, occupied from 1780–1782, are notable for the presence of redware plates (Starbuck 1986: pl. 40; Gorman, Jones, and Staneko 1985: 129). No plate fragments were identified from Feature 73. In addition, redwares from the Glassworks comprise almost 80% of the fragments (Starbuck 1986: 59) while the Feature 73 redwares make up approximately 35% of the total fragments. The New England Glassworks site may illustrate the problems in obtaining ceramics during the years of the Revolution, with fewer imported wares available for purchase.

Pearlware

Perhaps the critical ceramic type in discussing this feature is blue handpainted pearlware. Many of the 280 fragments were parts of reconstructable cups and saucers. Two cup styles were present, one of which had a scalloped edge. Other vessel types represented include a mug and a teapot. All of the reconstructable vessels were decorated with variations of the Chinese house pattern. It is notable that with the exception of two fragments, all of the pearlware from the main deposits of Feature 73 were from blue handpainted pieces, or they were plain and thus very possibly fragments of the blue handpainted

pieces. This ware provides the latest datable artifact and may give us a clue as to the true nature of Portsmouth Revolutionary trading habits. While it is probably safe to say that Mary Shortridge, the widow of an officer in the Revolutionary forces, would have obeyed the covenants of the Continental Association, it is difficult to explain the presence of several pearlware cups and saucers in the fill of Feature 73. Mary and her second husband sold the property in August of 1783, finalizing the sale in November, a few months after Portsmouth harbor was opened to British ships (Upton 1971: 201). The acquisition and disposal of two sets of tea wares during that time seems unlikely. It seems possible that access to those wares actually began sometime earlier. Trade with England may have resumed prior to the signing of the Treaty in 1783 and perhaps prior to the end of the fighting in 1781. The last years of the war were fought exclusively in the southern colonies, easing some of the pressure on New England. Recent work by Charles Fisher (1987) indicates that American officers stationed at New Windsor, New York, between 1782 and 1783 owned blue handpainted pearlware. It seems likely that the restrictions against purchasing British goods had eased considerably by this time. Given that the artifacts of Feature 73 appear to date to the occupation of the lot by Mary Shortridge, and since pearlware is not mentioned in the 1775 inventory of Richard Shortridge's estate using any of the various names for that ware, the pearlware of Feature 73 may have been purchased after an unofficial resumption of trade with England. It

should be remembered that Mrs. Shortridge had contact with men sailing on privateers and that her second husband was a mariner. Given the extensive activities of the privateers, British goods may have found their way into Portsmouth households without the benefit of open trade. New Englanders could have indulged in the purchase of tablewares without paying into the pockets of the British, thus obeying the spirit of the Continental Association, if not the letter of the law.

At the site of the New England Glassworks in Temple, New Hampshire, 21 of 8556 fragments of ceramics recovered were pearlware (Starbuck 1986: 59). Because the site was occupied briefly between 1780 and 1782, the presence of small quantities of pearlware is intriguing. While the pearlware is not described, it seems possible that the ware may not be intrusive and may illustrate that pearlware was making its way to the New Hampshire interior in limited quantities during the early years of the 1780s.

Conclusions

The ceramic artifacts of Feature 73 indeed reflect the extent of the Portsmouth trade, both in the scope and frequency of certain artifacts. Trade with England and its colonies formed the backbone of maritime commerce, and English-made ceramics form the major part of the collection. A trade network that relied on importing largely from England while exporting to many places (Paynter 1982: 74) is seen clearly in the overwhelming proportion of English-made ceramics. Evidence of restricted

contact with other countries is seen in the limited number of non-English ceramics from this feature, such as the French redware, the Japanese porcelain, and the Iberian vessels.

What the ceramic artifacts cannot demonstrate clearly is the nature of trade during the years of the American Revolution. While it seems that English tablewares were making their way to Portsmouth households during the war, the exact route they took is not clear. Mary Shortridge continued to acquire ceramics throughout her tenure at the property. Some ceramics, such as creamwares, were purchased during the early years of occupation, probably soon after the original purchase of the house but certainly prior to the death of her first husband in 1776. The blue handpainted tea wares could have been acquired before the sale of the property in 1783, since not only were the wares being manufactured before this date but also were very likely being shipped to the New World. While the presence of the pearlwares makes it difficult to detect the major disruption of trade occasioned by the Revolutionary War, it suggests another significant social circumstance. The residents of Portsmouth may have attempted to return to their accustomed habits as soon as possible, a tendency that may have allowed them a fairly rapid economic recovery at the end of the war.

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