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# Ringoes: An Eighteenth Century Pottery Site

Brenda Lockhart Springsted

## INTRODUCTION

In the 1930's Robert Sim, an amateur archaeologist, partially excavated the foundations of a pottery kiln and its adjacent dump which he called Ringoes. It was located in East Amwell Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Sim retained a sample of the wares from this pottery which included red earthenware and brown and grey salt glazed stoneware. He also collected samples from the dump sites of other New Jersey stoneware producers of the 18th and 19th centuries. These included the wares of the Morgans, Van Wickle, Warne and Letts, Applegate, Bissett, and Smith (Sim Coll.; Quimby 1973:319-338). The stonewares of Ringoes differed in a number of ways from these other specimens.

Just after Sim's death in 1956, his widow lent, and then sold his collection to the New Jersey State Museum for an exhibit of the wares of New Jersey potters. The exhibition catalog quotes Sim's theories on the Ringoes pottery:

No early references or records relating to this pottery have been found and we have no definite knowledge as to its owner or operation. It is known that John Ringo built a log cabin in the vicinity that became known as Amwell in about 1686 and soon after other settlers came. It appears that in the early 1700's Amwell became important as a local industrial center. Though no pertinent records have been found, it seems reasonable to suppose that the pot factory was in operation at or before 1724. There were undoubtedly cattle for dairy products which would require crocks, jars, and pans and the output for the local distillery would call for numerous jugs, tankards, mugs, etc., fragments of which are still very much in evidence in the pottery dump (New Jersey State Mus. 1956:16).

Although Sim places the site clearly in the 18th century, he was unable to find documents to support this theory.

If adequate documentation and a more statistically valid sample could be produced, the Ringoes pottery would provide a unique opportunity

to examine the relation of locally made ceramics to the material culture and lifeways of 18th century Hunterdon County. Therefore, location of the site temporally and spatially was of first priority, since this information was lost by Sim's death. There are two printed hints as to the whereabouts of the site. The first is an article originally printed in 1915 by a local historian, C. W. Larison. He describes the industrial development of Amwell in the 18th century and the location of the ruins:

Northeast of the old mill and less than half a mile away was a brass foundry, to which, to purchase brass mountings for harness etc., from Manhattan, Kingston, Albany, and Troy and elsewhere came those who needed such wares; a pottery, wherein were made the best of earthen pots, dishes, etc., a brickyard, which supplied bricks to the earliest settlers. (Larison 1955:11)

The other clue comes from a 1913 issue of the *Hunterdon County Democrat* (1913:3). A farmer, D. V. D. Hill, describes the unearthing of a pottery fifteen years before. He was leveling a mound, covered with berries and scrubwood, in his field, and found the remains of a pottery.

Through an interview with the late owner, J. Orion Drake, members of the East Amwell Bicentennial Commission learned that Sim excavated in the thirties and took extensive field notes, although their whereabouts is unknown (Bevis 1976, pers. comm.). With the permission of the Drake family, testing at the site was done in April, 1976. On the last day of fieldwork I learned that Drake had removed the kiln foundation and part of the pottery dump over twenty years ago. This eliminated the possibility of locating or describing the kiln structure; however, the archaeological tests provided a sample of almost 5,000 specimens, 57% of which are vessel fragments. All the fragments excavated from the area are unmarked as to date or maker.

In addition, it was learned that the Kemple family operated the pottery for three generations

from as early as 1746 and up to 1798 (New Jersey State Lib. D.C. G-G: 36 and Inventory 1845 J). They conducted their business as a sideline and were primarily farmers. They neither advertised their wares, nor made extensive efforts to market them. The products of the pottery generally followed the Germanic tradition (Sim Coll.).

This combination of a controlled archaeological sample and historical documentation at Ringoes pottery provides a significant addition to our knowledge of early American potters. Through an examination of the vessel shapes, the functions of these ceramic objects may be related to the needs of the settlers of Hunterdon County. Beyond internal considerations, the artifact sample is valuable for comparative purposes, as there are few American stoneware potters known from this period, and most of those are known only through a few museum pieces.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Ringoes, Amwell Township, was originally in Burlington County and the province of West Jersey. In the early 1700's, Hunterdon County was separated from Burlington and for most of the 18th century included present day Mercer, Morris, Warren, Sussex, and modern Hunterdon counties (Schmidt 1945:30).

The 17th and early 18th century in Hunterdon County was a period of settlement and frontier living. Land was slowly bought from the proprietors of the West Jersey society, and fields were slowly being cleared for plowing. The initial settlement was predominantly English under the

auspices of the Quakers. Germans came to this area from two directions, south from New York around Livingston Manor and New York City, and north from Philadelphia, the latter having immigrated with the encouragement of the Quakers who sought to populate their colonies (Faust 1909:111). Few Dutch were present during the early settlement, but throughout the 18th century they moved westward from New York and the provinces of East Jersey (Schmidt 1945:32).

From the 1720's onward, a period of self sufficiency and continuing growth existed. Since transportation was difficult, taverns, mills, tanneries and distilleries "sprang up" near Ringoes to process local produce. The economy was based on barter, and cash was only needed for larger items, such as the purchase of land (Levitt 1975). Artisans and craftsmen provided services in a very localized fashion. Small community churches were founded in the area of Ringoes, including German Reformed, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian (Schmidt 1945:34). Ringoes was located at the crossroads of two main roads, the York Road from Philadelphia to New York, and the Kings Road from Trenton to Flemington, and as such became a regional center (Beck 1956).

The land around Ringoes had been surveyed in 1711 by Revell and then sold in lots. By 1738 there were 165 voters out of a population of 800 in Amwell Township (Schmidt 1945:31). The settlement of Hunterdon County was culturally diverse and Table 1 shows the proportions of ethnic groups in 1790.

The 19th century, with the improvement of roads and other transportation facilities such as

Table 1

Estimated Percentages of Cultural and Racial Groups in New Jersey by County, 1790 (Wacker 1975:15)

County	Dutch	French	English & Welsh	Swedes & Finns	Blacks	Scots	German	Total Population
Bergen	32 (66)	12	12		20	8	16	12,601
Burlington			81	5	4	10		18,095
Cape May			47	47 (8)	6			2,571
Cumberland			66	12	3	10	10	8,248
Essex	14	5	55		7	19		17,785
Gloucester			77	10	4	5	5	13,363
Hunterdon	23		28		7	19	23	20,253
Middlesex	18	4	35		9	33	2	15,956
Monmouth	— (45)	3	66		12	18	2	16,918
Morris	10		53		4	14	19	16,216
Salem			79	7	5	9		10,437
Somerset	25 (67)	2	49		16	5		12,296
Sussex	15		54		3	10	19	19,500

canals and railroads, was a period of decline for regional centers such as Ringoes. Hunterdon County reverted to a predominantly agricultural economy, relying on the larger urban centers of New York and Philadelphia for processed goods (Larison 1955:13). It was no longer necessary to maintain the same level of self sufficiency which had supported local industrial growth.

### *The Kemple Family*

The various documents relating to the Kemple family further explicate the situation in the 18th century. There were three generations of potters working in Ringoes: John Peter Kemple, his son Phillip Kemple, and grandson Hanteel Kemple. Although they originally came from Germany, and the name might be more accurately spelled Kombell, the recorders tended to simplify or Anglicize the name variously as Kemple, Kempel, Kempell, Kumbel, Cambel, and Campbell. For the sake of convenience, Kemple will be used in this text and the original spelling when the various documents are quoted.

In 1746, John Peter Kemple bought 245 acres of land from Samuel Johnson for 161 pounds and 10 shillings (New Jersey State Library D.B. G-G: 36-39). This land was originally purchased in 1731 by William Johnson from one of the proprietors, Daniel Coxe. In this document, John Peter was referred to as a potter in the same way as Samuel Johnson was recorded as esquire. The men named in this deed, Johnson, Rockhill, and Chambers, were all English Quakers (Trenton Historical Society 1929; Schmidt 1945:33). There is no indication as to when Kemple came to America and only one reference as to where he resided before Hunterdon County. Kemple married his wife, Mary, in a Reformed Church in New York City, and his birthplace was recorded as Koblenz or Neuwied (Carkhuff 1976, pers. comm.).

John Peter Kemple died in 1761, and in his will he referred to his wife Mary, his oldest sons Phillip and William, and a number of younger children. The witnesses, Moses Baldwin, Samuel Hunt, Conrad Markhill, and Christian Lupp, all signed their names and Kemple wrote out his name in German script (New Jersey State Library 1761:541-J).

His inventory is almost indecipherable because of its poor state of preservation and the incredible spelling. There are no indications of potter's equipment in the inventory, but he is again referred to as a potter. In both the will and inventory, Kemple is recorded as being from Hopewell; perhaps he owned land there as well.

In 1750, Kemple's son, Phillip, bought a piece

of land adjacent to the 245 acres (New Jersey State Library D.B. H-H:189). It was a 42 acre plot owned by John and Hannah Server for which he paid £116. The Servers purchased the land from the Clucks in 1746, who, in turn, bought it from three families, the Willets, the Tredwells, and the Stevensons, in 1742 (New Jersey State Library D.B. H-H:186). Phillip Kemple was described as a yeoman, but it is on this combined property that John Peter and Phillip Kemple built a pottery.

There are some indications that Phillip married Elizabeth Lupp, the daughter of Christian Lupp. In Lupp's will, probated in 1763, he referred to Phillip as an heir and an executor (New Jersey Archives 1763). In Phillip's will, probated in 1777, he bequeathed to his wife, Elizabeth the use of the estate while his nine children received equal shares. There was a suggestion that Hanteel ('Ontel') was his favorite (New Jersey State Library 1777:1067J). The children in order of age were John, Elizabeth, Catherine, Margaret, Ontel, Peter, Sarah, Jacob, and Adam.

Phillip Kemple's inventory, taken in 1778, is very revealing and the surest indication of an active pottery (New Jersey State Library 1777: 1067J). A potter's mill and wheel and other potter's equipment are mentioned. There are also loads of clay, unbaked earthenware, and tubs of glaze. The mention of over 50 book accounts are another indication of an active business.

The rest of the inventory makes it apparent, however, that Phillip was primarily a farmer who maintained a pottery as a sideline. The crops specified are corn, buckwheat, oats, wheat, rye, and flax, and the livestock included hogs, sheep, cows, bulls, heifers, horses; beehives were likewise mentioned. The self sufficiency necessary in the 18th century shows with such items as shoe leather, a cider mill, and an anvil. The German ancestry is reaffirmed by the presence of "Dutch" books and 2 pipestoves (Faust 1909:133). Without a comparison of the inventories of that period, it is not possible to determine his standard of living.

The tax list for the township of Amwell in 1778-1780, does provide some information about Kemple's position in relation to the rest of the community (Stryker-Rhodda 1972:65-84). Amwell Township included the villages of Lambertville, Mount Airy, Ringoes, Rocktown, Reaville, Linvale, Wertsville, Furman's Corner, and Rileyville. There were at this time approximately 800 people paying taxes of whom about 60% were householders. In addition, there were 148 single men who worked for hire. Since large families were advantageous in terms of farm labor and the mortality rate was correspondingly high, an aver-

age 5.5 members per family would indicate a population of 3000 to 4500. By 1790, the population of Amwell had increased to 5201, which incidentally was twice that of any other township in Hunterdon County (Mott 1878:48).

Among the various occupations explicitly mentioned are stills, fisheries, 9 merchants, 8 taverns, 8 sawmills, a ferry, 2 fulling mills, a turler, ministers, and doctors. Occupations such as blacksmith, carpenter, saddler, and potter are not specified. It is possible that these operations were too small to be taxed, were part-time, or simply were not listed. The Kemples listed in the tax lists are as follows (Stryker-Rhodda 1972:73, 82, 83):

Larrance Kemple—123 acres, 2 horses, 3 cows and 1 pig

Hontiel Kempel—230 acres, 4 horses, 9 cows, 7 pigs and 2 single men who work for hire.

John Kempel—house holder, 2 horses, 2 cows.

The single men are Peter Kemple and John Schaffer.

Larrance is most likely a cousin or uncle of Hanteel and John. The unusual element in these entries is that while John is the house holder, Hanteel owns the land and most of the stock. This situation may relate to the laws of primogeniture in Germany where the oldest son always becomes the head of the house (Mott 1878:52).

Of the 800 men named in the Amwell tax tables, only 129 had more than 200 acres. The Kemples were perhaps fairly well-to-do. Only 24 men had 300 or more acres, 9 men had 400 or more acres, and 3 men had more than 500 acres.

To return to the relationship between John and Hanteel Kemple, it is usual for the oldest son to receive the largest share of an estate and pass it down through his own family. Yet, there is no record of John Kemple's will or death in New Jersey, and he owned no land in New Jersey. On the other hand, there are tantalizing references to a John Campbell, a potter, in New York City from 1774 until his death (New York Historical Society 1938:84; Gottesman 1954:95). Campbell died in Orange Town in 1798, leaving everything to his wife Maria (New York Historical Society 1906:153). It is likely that John Kemple went to New York State and started his own pottery.

Hanteel Kemple died intestate in 1798. At the time of his death, most of his brothers and sisters had moved to Northumberland County, Pennsylvania (Carkhuff 1976, pers. comm.). The only heirs left in the area renounced their rights to the estate as they were about to follow the rest of the family to Pennsylvania (New Jersey State Library 1798:1845J). The renouncers were Cather-

ine Kemple Salter, her husband William, and Margaret Kemple Shapher and her husband John. With the renunciation by the heirs, the state took over the land and sold it.

In the inventory of Hanteel's estate, there are continuing references to potter's equipment, earthenware, and stoneware (New Jersey State Library 1798:1845J). There is also an ambiguous reference to a shop. Further, the large number of small open accounts enumerated is indicative of an ongoing business. Evidence that Hanteel was not married is demonstrated by the lack of goods normally associated with women, such as spinning wheels and sewing baskets. Nonetheless, he owned a certain number of luxury items. However, farming, on the basis of the inventory, continued to be a primary occupation.

The sole mention of the Kemples in New York or Philadelphia newspapers of the 18th century was totally unrelated to the pottery business (New Jersey State Archives 1780:355). After the death of Hanteel Kemple, there are few references to the Kemple family in the primary documents of New Jersey. The pottery was no longer in operation and the land no longer belonged to the Kemples. Most of the family had left New Jersey and moved westward.

## THE SITE

To the southeast of the confluence of Clearwater Rill and Back Brook there is a mound slightly more elevated than the upward (southward) slope of the field. The Drake farm house and outbuildings are across Back Brook almost directly to the north. The field is enclosed by the Clearwater Rill on the west and by a barbed wire fence a few feet from Back Brook on the north. The field had not been plowed in the summer of 1975, and there was a ground cover of short grasses, weeds, and mosses. The still visible plow marks ran in a generally east-west direction. The topsoil appeared to be a reddish-brown clayey loam and not very humic.

An east-west baseline was set up along the fence which separates the field from Back Brook, with stakes at 50 foot intervals (Figure 2). A 300 X 100 foot area was thus established with twelve 50 foot square units. Each square was walked in an east-west direction in straight-line paths approximately 8 feet apart. The primary purpose of this survey was to locate the area of concentration and to test the amount of plow spread radiating from the area of concentration.

The area of concentration was found to center in four squares 0-100S/0-100E. Outside of this area the number of specimens declines sharp-

Table 2

Ringoes Pottery, Surface Survey 1976  
Ratio of Artifacts to Total Survey Sample

0S/100W

0S/200E

1/ 0% (0)	2/ 1.69% (4)	3/ 30.81% (73)	4/ 23.21% (55)	5/ 1.69% (4)	6/ 0.42% (1)
7/ 0.84% (2)	8/ 2.95% (7)	9/ 19.41% (46)	10/ 14.35% (34)	11/ 0.42% (1)	12/ 0% (0)

100S/100W

ARTIFACT TOTAL: 237 = 100%

100S/200E

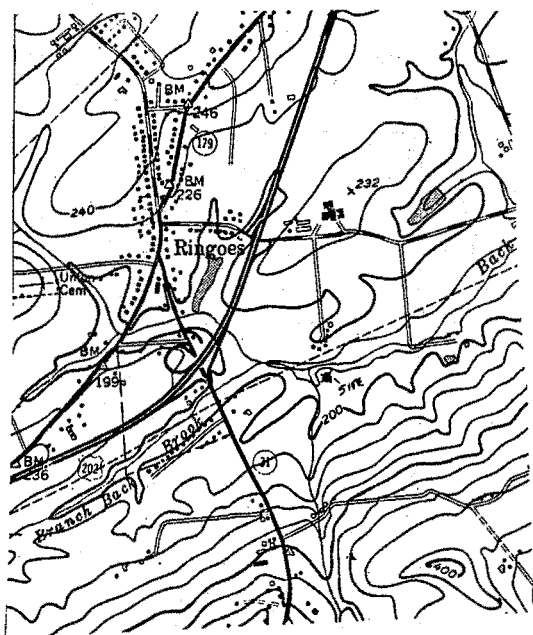


Figure 1. Site location U.S.G.S. Hopewell Quadrangle, 7½' series.

ly. Therefore, it appears that the spread created by the action of the plow is minimal (Table 2).

#### 47-50S/0-3E

The preliminary 3 X 3 foot test square was opened initially as a control square for stratigraphic information. It was also, stratigraphically, the most unusual of all the excavated squares. The plowzone was a medium brown clayey soil containing small rocks; it did not appear to have a high humic content. The plowzone was excavated in two 5-inch levels. Beneath the plowzone,

instead of a recognizable subsoil, there was a layer of yellow/brown clay. A stratum of grey/brown silty clay followed. This was taken out in two levels, the lower segment containing decomposing red shale inclusions. The next stratum was a grey/brown clay with yellow and brown inclusions, very wet, and increasingly rocky. After the first inch this stratum became sterile, and the square was closed at 22/25".

The plowzone and the layer beneath it were extremely productive of specimens (Figure 3). All the lower strata also produced artifacts, many of which were parts of the same vessels.

#### 95-100S/45-50E

The plowzone of this 5 X 5 foot unit was a medium brown clayey soil, not very humic; it was removed in two levels. This plowzone was somewhat shallower than that of 47-50S/0-3E. Beneath it the subsoil, an orange clay, became increasingly sterile and rocky with small specks of charcoal. Excavation ceased at about 10½ inches.

#### 50-55S/95-100E

This 5 X 5 foot square in appearance was so similar to the other squares that it was arbitrarily closed at 4½/5½ inches.

#### 95-100S/95-100E

The plowzone of this 5 X 5 foot unit was clearly distinguishable from the subsoil, with several plowmarks running approximately east-west. It was 9/10" deep, and the orange clay subsoil was basically sterile except near the plow furrows. The square was arbitrarily closed at 13/14".

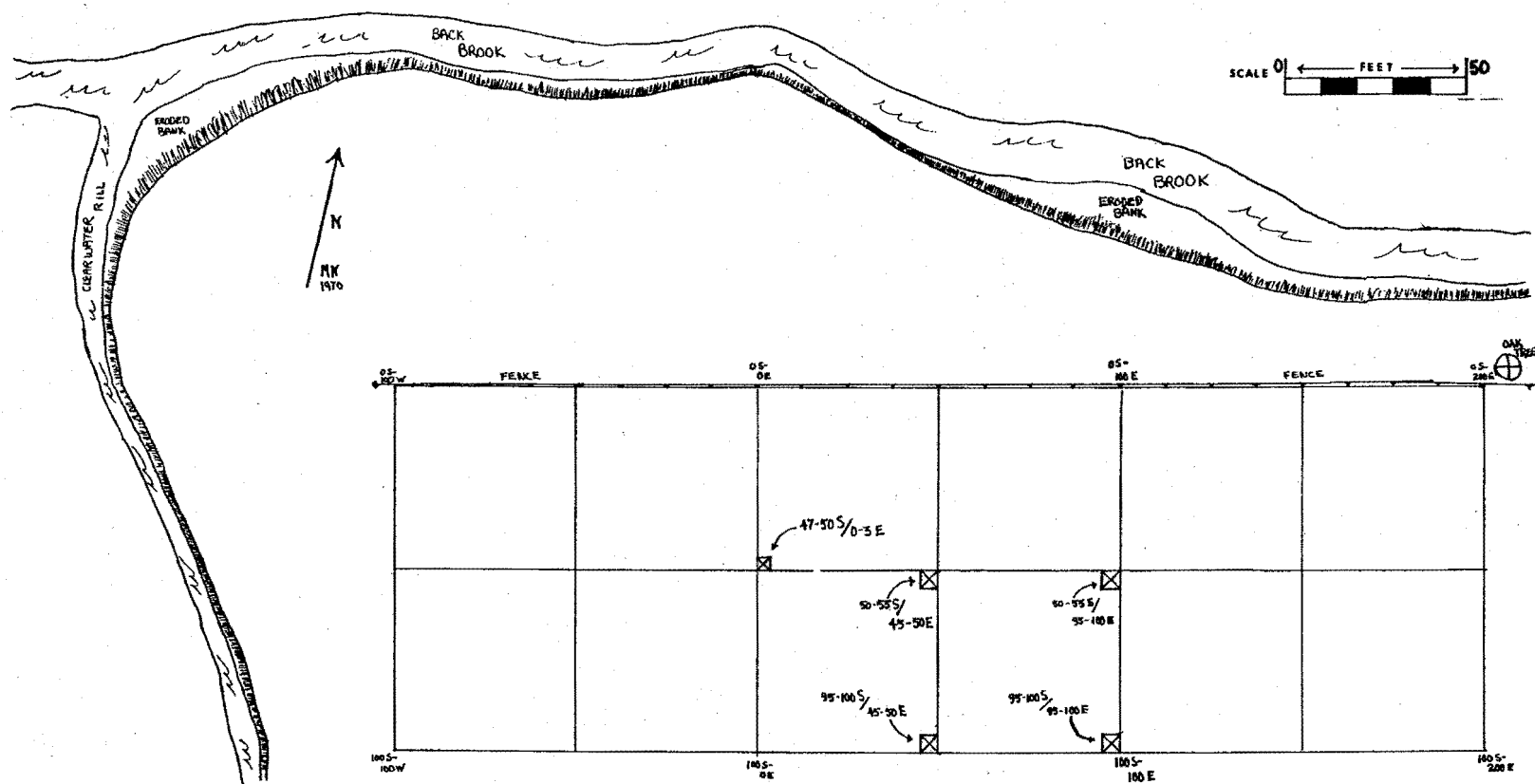


Figure 2. Ringoes Pottery grid map.

Table 3

Artifact Inventory: Ringoes Pottery, 1975

[illegible]



This 5 X 5 foot square was located in the center of the heaviest surface concentration of specimens. The plowzone was extremely shallow, attaining a depth of 5/7½". Below the plowzone, along the east wall, a reddened area appeared which yielded a higher concentration of specimens than did the surrounding orange clay subsoil. The feature extended into the east wall, the portion visible from above being a semicircle. Feature 1 bottomed out at 10" below the surface. The orange clay subsoil was taken out to a level of 10/11" where it was sterile and extremely rocky. The artifacts from this square alone represents 53% of the total sample.

Further tests, especially in the area between 47-50S/0-3E and 50-55S/45-50E, would have been desirable, but the tests that were opened yielded such a mass of material that our schedule was seriously slowed. Since there were no indications of structural remains, the sample seemed sufficient. Also, Drake was ready, by this time, to plow the field.

The majority of the specimens were found in the plowzone, and the heaviest concentrations occurred in test square 50-55S/45-50E and secondarily in 47-50/0-3E. The five foot square yielded 53.2% of the total sample and the three foot square 25.8%. This information confirms the distributional conclusions postulated in the surface survey.

Of the total archaeological sample, only 1.9% is nonceramic or non- kiln associated (Table 3). There are no domestic artifacts such as pipe fragments, buttons, or utensils of any kind. The only metal on the site consists of five wrought iron nails and one badly oxidized, unidentified object. The majority of the sample is directly related to the kiln and associated pottery dump area.

Of the kiln-associated artifacts other than vessel fragments (41%), there are kiln props and wedges in a variety of shapes, fused clay fragments, glazed rocks, and brick and tile (Figure 3). The extremely small proportion of identifiable red brick and tile fragments, about 1%, would im-



Figure 3. A Variety of Kiln-associated Artifacts: a) a circular 'stoneware' prop or separator, b) an elbow shaped 'stoneware' prop, c) heavily glazed rock with an irregular prop adhering to it, d) a redware wedge or peg with a dab of brown lead glaze, e) Y-shaped 'stoneware' prop, f) a boat shaped redware wedge.

ply that the Kemples were not in the business of making bricks or tiles. Some of the tiles have vessel fragments adhering to them and may have been used primarily as kiln furniture. The small sample of brick supports the present owner's statement that his father had removed the remains of the kiln structure.

Vessel fragments represent 57.1% of the sample from the Ringoes pottery site. Many of the fused clay fragments are vessel portions which were completely melted together during the firing process and as such are identified as slag. Of those artifacts identified as portions of containers, many are damaged by over-firing. It is important to keep in mind that the site is a pottery dump and that the vessel fragments are discards. Of the sample surprisingly few sherds cross-mend or are parts of the same vessels. Artifacts from test square 47-50S/0-3E are the exception, especially in the strata beneath the plowzone. There are two possible explanations for this relative absence of fits. Plow action may have spread the artifacts sufficiently to create this situation, or part of the dump may have been removed with the remains of the kiln, leaving behind only small proportions of the vessels.

Table 4 shows the relationship by percentages of the vessel fragments. It appears that the proportion of the two ceramic types is approximately equal. A closer inspection shows a slight edge towards red earthenware with the exception of unit 50-55S/45-50E where there is a lower percentage of redware to stoneware than the norm. This square is also unusual in that the percentage of total vessel fragments to the artifact total is well below 50%. In addition, the sheer quantity of specimens excavated from this square skew the percentages downward. Reversing the figures, this unit also indicates a much higher proportion of kiln-associated artifacts of which well over half is

fired clay slag. It is possible that this square is near the center of the actual pottery dump.

Since only a small proportion of each vessel was recovered, all discussion of the vessel forms is based on an examination of the diagnostic sherds, that is, rims, necks, bases, handles and handle attachments (Table 5). These diagnostic fragments are more informative as to size and function. With rim and base fragments of sufficient size, diameters could be estimated, but estimates of height are impossible with the present sample. The proportion of diagnostic sherds which could not be identified with any certainty as to type or shape are classified as "uncertain."

### *Red Earthenware Vessels*

The red earthenware vessels, including pie plates, were all made on potter's wheels. The rims are not rolled, but are thickened for extra strength. The bases are all flat with no feet. The handles, with one exception, are vertical and ribbed indicating usage as jugs, pitchers, or teacups. Most of the glazed vessels are glazed on the interior surfaces only, except teacups and some of the pots which are glazed on both surfaces. There are comparatively few clear lead glazed or slip trailed fragments. The mottled brown and brown-black glazes are common. Splashes of copper oxide (green) occur on the slip decorated wares.

### Crocks

All the vessels with greyish slips and some with grey-green glazes are crock-like in shape, nearly cylindrical with slightly flared sides. A few of these vessels have a hole or slit in the body which is characteristic of saggars (Figure 4). None of these vessels have handles. There are 35 rims, all squared at the top and twice the thickness of the body. The estimated diameter averages 7". Of the 16 bases the estimated diameter ranges from 6"-8-7/8".

### Jugs

The presence of jug forms is indicated by only 3 rims, 1 base, and 7 handles. The rims are covered with a dark glaze on both sides of the mouth. None are of sufficient size to permit the estimation of their diameter.

### Pots

The sample of identifiable pots is not large consisting of 5 rims and 8 bases. The only estimated rim diameter is 7½", while the bases in-

Table 4

Percentages of Redware, Stoneware, and Total Vessel Fragments to Total Sample, Ringoes Pottery-1976

Unit No.	Red ware	Stone ware	Total Vessel Frags.	Total No. of Artifacts
Surface	30.6%	29.9%	60.5%	251
47-50S/0-3E	35.0%	34.4%	69.4%	1208
95-100S/45-50E	45.6%	37.5%	83.1%	331
50-55S/95-100E	31.7%	29.9%	61.6%	224
95-100S/95-100E	39.9%	28.1%	68.0%	178
50-55S/45-50E	20.8%	26.8%	46.9%	2493
Total	27.6%	29.5%	57.1%	4685



Figure 4. Redware Crock, Jug, and Collander Fragments: a, d, f) portions of storage vessels or saggars with grey-green slip, b, c) different lip treatments on black glazed redware jugs, e) a collander ? fragment, lustrous black glazed, with close set holes.



Figure 5. Lustrous Black Glazed Redware: a) a tea cup handle, b) side of a tea cup with a thin red earthenware body and a lustrous black glaze. Note the horizontal ribbing and the flat base, c) damaged tea cup fragment with drops of white slip under black glaze.

Table 5  
Ringo's Pottery, Diagnostic Vessel Sherds

Cat. No.	Red Earthenware							'Stoneware'						
	Rim	Neck	Base	Handle	Attached	Body	Total	Rim	Neck	Base	Handle	Attached	Body	Total
1							0							0
2							0							0
3	2	1	6			10	19	1		4			17	22
4	2	1	3			14	20			1			10	11
5							0						2	2
6							0							0
7						1	1							0
8						1	1						5	5
9	1		2			8	11	2	3			1	11	17
10	2		3			11	16	1		1		1	2	5
11							0						1	1
12							0							0
31	2		2			5	9			1	1	1	9	12
13	24	5	16	2		114	161	12	9	7	2		118	148
14	20		9			105	134	10	15	16	3	1	84	129
23	10		10	1	1	78	100	4	10	6	3	3	62	88
24			1			4	5			1			1	2
25	3	1				4	8	2	1				31	34
27	2	1	1			7	11	1		1			3	5
30	2		1			1	4	2		1		2	5	10
15	9	1	13	2	1	96	122	7	6	8	5		71	97
18	3	1	2			22	28	2		1			23	26
20						1	1						1	1
16	7	5	5	1		53	71	5	1	7			54	67
17		2	8			36	46	3	5	1	1		16	26
19	4		4			15	23	1	5	1			16	23
21						2	2						1	1
22	40	25	50	4	1	297	417	37	17	62	10	6	385	517
26	8	2	5	1		59	75	7	6	6	2	4	74	99
28		2			1	6	9	2			1		14	17
29	1					1	2			1	1	1	12	15
Total	142	47	141	11	4	951	1296	99	78	126	29	20	1028	1380

clude diameters ranging from  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " to  $5\frac{1}{4}$ ". The pots have a squat rounded body, slightly constricted at the neck with a somewhat flared mouth. The sherds of this class are all dark brown glazed, somewhat mottled, and usually on the interior surface alone.

#### Pans

Those pans, still bearing traces of glaze, show interior mottled brown or brown-black glazing. The 10 rims, identified as pan fragments are thickened and slightly rounded. Fourteen bases are assigned to this class, though none are of sufficient size to permit diameter estimates. Pans of this shape were used as milkpans through the 19th century (Quimby 1973:26).

#### Bowls

The bowls are, for the most part, large and fairly shallow with an estimated diameter of 4" at the base. The rims are approximately 10" in diameter. Most of the 19 rims are slip-trailed in a zig-zag pattern or with concentric bands near the slightly flattened rims. The fragments of 15 bases are present, and the clear or brownish glaze occurs only on the interior surfaces.

#### Plates and Pie Plates

These thin-bodied wares are thrown with notching on 3 of the 4 rims; no evidence of cog-wheel decoration has been found at Ringoes. Most of the plate fragments have white or brown-



black slip-trailed designs. There are 9 base sherds, but no specimen is of sufficient size to permit an estimation of its diameter.

### Tea Cups

This vessel form is the most individual of all the Kemples' wares (Figure 5). The tea cups are thin-bodied with a thick lustrous black lead-manganese glaze. The handles are thin and ribbed vertically. Three or four grooves or ribs adorn the middle of the body. The bases are flat, with a rounded collar around the base. The side of each cup forms a modified 'S' with the lip flared out. There are 4 rims, 1 base, and 6 handles.

### Collanders

The two fragments of this category are not of sufficient size to determine the shape, but they are thickly black glazed with close set holes.

### Stoneware Vessels

The artifact inventory (Table 3) clearly indicates that the majority of the stoneware fragments represent the Kemples' failures. All those fragments in a biscuit state are listed as under-fired and porous. Some of the sherds appear finished but are porous and were also tabulated under this heading.

All stoneware was wheel-made and salt-glazed except those pieces still in a biscuit state. The finished color is a clear grey or, when iron oxide was added, a mottled brown. Cobalt blue was brushed on for a decorative effect, and the motifs are simple and repetitive (Figure 6). Horizontal grooves or ribs were cut into the body near the rims and bases and were often filled with cobalt blue. Only two sherds have incised decoration. One fragment, burnt with a blue painted and incised floral decoration, is part of the same vessel as a fragment in Sim's collection (Figure 7). The other, probably a mug fragment, bears a diamond check pattern with alternating blue and grey diamonds. There are no indications of coggle-wheel decoration, stamps, impressed designs, or raised-relief applied decoration. The technique of using a brown (Albany) slip on the interior surfaces of vessels did not become popular until after 1800 so it is not present at this site (New Jersey State Museum 1972:2). The bases are all flat with the exception of one footed sherd (Figure 8). The handles are primarily vertical with a ribbed pattern. The three horizontal handles present are suitable for jars or pots and all would stand out away from the vessel body.

### Jugs

The jugs are bulbous and round-bodied with two different mouth forms. The predominant rim form is thickened at the lip and grooved like a bottle mouth (Figure 9). The estimated diameters for this type are: int. 1-1/8" and ext. 1-7/8" or



Figure 6. Some Decorative Motifs on Ringoes Stoneware: a) grey salt-glazed stoneware with cobalt blue casually brushed on in a stylized floral-butterfly motif, b) mottled brown salt-glaze with similar blue brushwork, c) grey salt-glaze with traces of the brushed on blue design.



Figure 7. Incised and Ribbed Grey Salt-Glazed Stoneware: a) incised diamond pattern in alternating grey and blue, b) over fired incised stoneware with floral motif picked out in blue.



Figure 8. Rims and Handles on Grey Salt-glazed Stoneware: a) crock rim with a vertical handle attachment, b) underfired (note the dull finish) crock rim with a horizontally set handle attachment, c,d) different treatments of rim and ribbing.



Figure 9. Grey Salt-glazed Jug, base missing.

int.  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " and ext. 2". The second form is thin-bodied with a wide flat collar. The interior diameter of this form measures  $\frac{7}{8}$ " while the outside diameter measures  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ". There are 24 jug rims, 1 handle, and 5 bases.

#### Flasks

There are only 2 identifiable flask or small ovoid jug fragments, both bases. The flasks are undecorated and the bases measure 3" and  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " across.

#### Jars or Cocks

A large percentage of the diagnostic stoneware sherds are parts of grey salt-glazed crocks, most with cobalt blue decoration. These vessels are represented by 21 rims and 13 bases. They have rounded sides, slightly constricted necks with grooves and flared out thickened rims. The rim diameters average 6" and the bases range from 5" to  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter.



## Small Pots

These small pots have thin, tapered rims and are slightly constricted at the necks. The bodies are rounded, and all are plain grey. The average diameter for the 9 rims is 5" and the 3 bases range from 3½ to 7" in diameter.

## Bowls

The large basins are grey salt-glazed with blue decoration around slightly flattened rims; they are similar in shape to the redware bowls (Figure 10). The 5 rims and 2 bases provide only an estimated diameter of 11" at the rim.

## Mugs

This category includes 7 vessels represented by 10 rim fragments. They appear to be straight-sided cylinders with grooved necks, bearing blue designs. One vessel has a possible 'S' brushed on its side. The bodies are thin-walled. The estimated base diameters from 3 sherds range from 3½" to 4¼".

## Lids

There are 7 flat lid rims with blue brushed on, but none are of a sufficient size to estimate the diameters.

## *Sim's Collection from Ringoes*

The Ringoes portion of the Sim Collection includes a variety of kiln furniture and several samples of clay, but the majority of pieces are vessel fragments. Of the 105 sherds, just over one half are red earthenware. Of the 28 redware sherds are slip-decorated and 12 are black lead-manganese glazed. The vessel forms are similar to those described above, but a few are noteworthy. One, a shallow pie or tart plate (5 fragments) has a hand crimped rim (Figure 11). It is white slip-trailed in a sunburst effect with irregular lines radiating out from the center of the plate. The diameter is approximately 6". There is also a large plate or bowl with a white slip-trailed decoration consisting of the letters "... i n i n ..." under a greenish glaze. Another large platter or bowl rim (7 sherds) is decorated with a black and white slip-



Figure 10. Some Grey Salt-glazed Stoneware Vessel Fragments: a) fragment of large grey salt-glazed bowl with cobalt blue decoration near rim, a series of 'CC's, b) an over fired dark grey-green small pot, c) lip of a tan salt-glazed jug, d) mug rim.



Figure 11. Slip Decoration on Redware: a) a shallow platter with white slip and a greenish lead glaze, b) a shallow bowl or platter using both a dark brown slip and white under a dark brown lead glaze, c) small pie or tart plate slip decorated in a sunburst effect.

trailed design and a dark brown glaze. The design consists of an abstract pattern, repeated in series. Sim's specimens of black glazed collanders are similar to fragments from the 1976 excavation and show cylindrical, straight-sided bodies (Figure 4). Among several tea cup fragments, there is one with a black glaze over white slip tear drop motifs near the rim. The middle of the tea cup is grooved horizontally as are all of the tea cup fragments in the excavated collection (Figure 5).

In collecting Ringoes stoneware, Sim was again selective, with 38 of the 49 sherds decorated with cobalt blue. The fragments he assembled are predominantly portions of crocks, and a few are decoratively unusual. Two motifs appear frequently, a combination stylized floral-butterfly design and a series of connected "C"-like marks. There are two incised fragments, a burnt grey-brown sherd with an incised floral design with blue highlights and a diamond check sherd, in blue and grey. There is also a reference in the notes for the 1956 exhibition, describing a beer stein made at Ringoes in the incised diamond pattern, but I was unable to locate the specimen at the New Jersey State Museum. Sim also collected an almost complete small jug in 4 pieces. There is no

decoration on it, and the handle was applied vertically.

Sim's collection provides some confirmatory evidence to the 1976 excavations. Since his specimens are larger on average, they provide more details about the decorative techniques used by the Kemples. Over all, the red earthenware produced at Ringoes is fairly simple with a predominance of the dark brown-black glazes. No sgraffito has been found, but casual slip-trailed designs were applied on the rims of bowls and platters. Pie plates were decorated over the whole interior surface. There is no evidence of coggle-wheel decoration on either the red wares or the stonewares. The stoneware has simple repetitive motifs brushed on with blue. Incising is extremely rare, and impressed marks are not used. Handles stand away from the body in all cases, rather than forming an earlike attachment.

The vessel forms include utilitarian wares in a variety of shapes, but apparently, the Kemples produced a fair amount of goods for food preparation and consumption. Table 6 shows an experimental tabulation of the products of the Kemple pottery by functionally associated forms. Since many of the sherds (over 60%) were unclassifica-



Table 6

Vessel Forms Correlated by Function from the Diagnostic Sherds from Ringoes Pottery 1976

FOOD CONSUMPTION		STORAGE AND DAIRY	
Tea cups:	11	Crocks:	85
Mugs:	13	Flasks + Jugs:	43
Plates:	13	Pots:	25
	<u>37</u>	Milk pans:	<u>24</u>
FOOD PREPARATION			177
Platters + Bowls:	41	UNCERTAIN: 440	
Collanders:	<u>2</u>		
	43		

ble in terms of function, this tabulation may only have limited validity. Nonetheless, this sample agrees in many ways with James Deetz's model of the second period (1660-1760) at Plymouth, Massachusetts (Quimby 1973:15-40). If we operate on the assumption that the Kemples were producing wares suited to the needs of the surrounding region, it appears that storage and dairy vessels were in greatest demand. Some of the categories in Table 6 may be too rigid, for the pots may equally have been used as chamber pots or cooking vessels.

## RINGOES IN PERSPECTIVE

The development of industries in the United States during the 18th century was subject to the pressures and tariffs of the English government. To protect the English producers, the growth of colonial industries was frowned upon. Nonetheless, small potteries "sprang up" in the colonies to supply the local needs. Primarily, red bodied and utilitarian wares were produced by the colonial potters.

In the last quarter of the 18th century, two factors to spur growth of the pottery industry occurred simultaneously. The first was the growing awareness of the poisonous nature of lead glazes (Guilland 1971:47). Stonewares began to be produced as an alternative. The second spur was the outcome of the American Revolution. Trade with England was increasingly restricted and home industries were encouraged to supply the demands of the American peoples. These two factors led eventually to an industrial revolution in pottery making in the first half of the 19th century.

However, the American production of stoneware was still minimal in the 17th and 18th centuries and limited to the areas of locally workable clays. Archaeological work has been done on only

a handful of these 18th century potteries (Noël Hume 1963; Quimby 1973:291-318, 255-290), and consequently, our knowledge of the stoneware producers is confined, for the most part, to museum specimens representing a limited and selective sample of their work.

Many pot makers operated in the region of South Amboy, New Jersey, since there are massive deposits of suitable clays, but the one closest in time and style to the Ringoes pottery is James Morgan, Senior (Quimby 1973:319-338; New Jersey State Mus. 1956 and 1972). His work is known through the collections of Sims and other amateur archaeologists. Morgan produced stonewares at Cheesequake from the 1750's until his death in 1784 when his son took over for an unknown length of time. This potter made brownish-grey salt-glazed wares, decorated with cobalt blue. He is known to have made mugs, jugs, jars, and chamber pots. Morgan used a characteristic brushed-on blue spiral or watchspring motif. The lower end of handles at the point of attachment are almost always painted blue; this is one of Morgan's trademarks. Morgan's pottery dump included a larger proportion of incised sherds than did Ringoes. The vessel shapes are similar to those excavated at Ringoes, including straight-sided mugs, jugs, and jars with rounded bodies, and crocks with outstanding horizontally placed handles.

There is a salt-glazed barrel with blue brushwork and horizontal ribbing at the Newark Museum which is attributed to Morgan's son (New Jersey State Mus. 1972: fig. 75). The barrel has the initials "A.K." and the date 1788 brushed on in blue around the center of the container. It is possible that the piece is, instead, the work of the Kemple pottery.

A comparison of the Morgan and Kemple potteries makes apparent the uniqueness of the Kemple family as potters. Although both potteries produced wares of the same type, the Kemples chose to work in a region where there are no known deposits of suitable clay available (Ries and Kuemmel 1904:226). They were part-time potters and we have no way of knowing whether the region could support a full-time pottery or whether the Kemples chose not to realize the full potential of the pot making industry. Their uniqueness may also be illusory and only due to a lack of records about small local potteries, operating part-time, neither advertising their wares nor marketing them extensively. Whether the Kemple pottery at Ringoes is, in reality, unique is unimportant on one level; we now have both documentary and archaeological records for a type of pottery about which very little is known at this time.

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