

Evaluating Sites with Late Nineteenth or Early Twentieth Century Components for Eligibility in  
the National Register of Historic Places: Using Turn-of-the-Century Whitewares as Economic  
Indicators in Assessing Collections and Developing Contexts

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The artifacts analyzed for this grant were made available through a number of museums and collections, and the authors acknowledge the generous support of these institutions In all cases, the artifacts were obtained with expressed written permission. Photographs of selected artifacts were taken by the authors with the expressed written permission of the institutions. The following list identifies the sources of sherds illustrated in this report (see Figures 1 through 4, following the References Cited section at the end of the report).

Figures 1b, 1e, 1h, 1j, 1l, 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3f, 3i, 3j and 4c are of sherds from the Queensgate II Project, housed in the collections of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and Science.

Figures 1a, 1d, 1g, 1i, 1k, 2a, 2b, 3e, 3h, 3k and 3l are of sherds loaned to the authors by the Ohio Department of Transportation, Columbus, Ohio

Figures 1c, 4a, 4b, 4e and 4f used sherds on loan from the Wright State University collections, Dayton, Ohio.

Figures 1f, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f, 2g, 2h, 2i, 2j, 2k, 2l and 4d are of sherds from the collections of the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio

Figure 3g is a sherd loaned to the authors by Applied Archaeological Services, Inc, Columbus, Ohio

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## Introduction

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century sites are commonly encountered during archaeological surveys in the United States. Sites with turn-of-the-century components are found throughout the country, in many environmental zones and across a wide variety of terrain. In the state of Ohio, of the slightly more than 20,000 sites listed in the Ohio Archaeological Inventory (OAI), approximately 1,000 have components dated between 1880 and 1929. Based on data from the past five years, it is expected that nearly one in ten newly identified sites in Ohio will have a turn-of-the-century component.

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century sites include large farmhouses with associated outbuildings; small, scattered farmsteads, rural, small town, and urban residences; public facilities; and industrial and commercial sites. The artifact assemblages from these sites can thus be composed of many kinds of items, representing a wide range of activities performed at a site. Since “many individuals, and whole classes of people may be left out of the historical record” (Moore 1994: 2), an artifact assemblage may provide the most important physical evidence about a site’s occupants and their activities.

A large portion of a household’s assemblage relates to activities associated with food. Large numbers of dinnerware sherds are often recovered from turn-of-the-century sites. These sherds can serve a number of useful analytical purposes. Their decoration and factory markings can be particularly helpful in dating a site. Many decorative styles have had limited periods of popularity and many factories used specific identifying marks at different periods of time. Pottery can also provide information on the character of a household. Ceramic analysis may give clues to a household’s activities, size, and composition (see South 1977, LeeDecker et al. 1987, Specula and Bowyer 1996).

Remains of ceramic dinnerware can also be used to estimate a household’s socioeconomic status. This process assumes that socioeconomic standing influences certain consumer behaviors. Consumer behavior is a “complex interaction of economic, cultural, social, and psychological factors involved in the process of consumer decisions to acquire one particular item rather than another” (Spencer-Wood 1987a: 10). For turn-of-the-century America, social class was largely based on economic status, which in turn was highly correlated with occupation (Ibid.: 11). Similar occupational categories tended to share similar “levels of income, social interaction, leisure time, shared knowledge, and values” (Spencer-Wood 1987b: 324). It may, therefore, be hypothesized that households which share similar socioeconomic backgrounds will also share similar patterns of consumption.

Most of the work now being done with ceramic index values follows Miller’s (1980; 1991) system of ranking ceramics based on the relationship between cost and decoration. Miller sorted through price-fixing agreements and potters’ price lists to develop index values for a number of specific years in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, the latest year for which he established an index was 1881. More recently, several attempts have been made to establish indices for later years by using reprints of Sears, Roebuck and/or Montgomery Ward catalogs (e.g., Henry 1987, Thomas 1988; Snyder and Manson 1991). Unfortunately, the reprint editions are usually only partial reproductions of the original catalogs, omitting many pages of similar items. The full depth

and range of dinnerware sets is often not available in the reprint editions. There has also been some concern that mail order catalogs may have served only a limited (mainly rural) segment of the population. Other groups undoubtedly purchased their dinnerware from general stores, specialty stores, or directly from the manufacturer. It has not been clear if the costs and types of dinnerware purchased from these different sources differed substantially from each other.

### The 1996 Whitewares Project

The present study grew out of a cultural resource management project conducted by the authors for the Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 1991 (see Snyder and Manson 1991). The 1996 Whitewares Project, funded by the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, has greatly expanded that work.

The research base used to derive our mean ceramic indices included mail order catalogs as well as newspaper advertisements. Whenever possible, original (rather than reprint) editions of the Sears, Roebuck and Montgomery Ward catalogs were used. Advertisements from the Chicago Daily Tribune supplemented the catalog data, giving information on a wide range of dinnerwares available at an equally wide range of stores. The Chicago Daily Tribune was selected for this purpose for several reasons. First, both the Sears, Roebuck stores and Montgomery Ward stores were founded in Chicago. Second, turn-of-the-century Chicago was a major transportation and transshipment hub. Third, the Chicago Tribune was well-established by the late nineteenth century and advertising played an important role in its success. And, finally, the Chicago Daily Tribune is readily available in microfilm form at many research libraries.

For our study, every January issue of the Tribune for 24 selected years between 1890 and 1929 was examined for dinnerware advertisements. A total of 744 newspapers, 16 Sears, Roebuck catalogs, and 6 Montgomery Ward catalogs were used to supply the data to create the ceramic indices (see Table 1). It should be noted that we found no real differences in the prices and general range of dinnerware products offered in the newspaper advertisements of a major urban area, as compared to those in the mail order catalogs which enjoyed great popularity in more rural settings.

The various advertisements provided us with descriptive information on the ware type, decoration, and price of many styles of dinnerware. Unlike Miller, however, we were not generally able to obtain specific prices for particular vessel forms. While dinnerwares were occasionally offered as "open stock" with prices listed for particular vessel forms, most dinnerwares of this period were advertised as "sets." It was therefore necessary to convert price information into an average price per vessel for each decorative ware type. This was accomplished by dividing the cost of a dinnerware set by the total number of pieces in the set. For "open stock" dinnerware, the average price per vessel was determined by averaging the price of cups, saucers, large and small plates, soup plates, and small bowls. Indices based on mean ceramic values rather than on specific vessel types will allow archaeologists to use the complete dinnerware sherd assemblage rather than just those sherds which can be assigned to a particular vessel form.

Table 1 Sources Of Information Consulted For Derivation Of Ceramic Price Indices.

YEAR	CT	SR	MW	YEAR	CT	SR	MW
1890	X			1910	X		
91	X			11		x	
92	X			12	X		
93	X			13		X	
94	X			14	X		
1895	X	X	X	1915	X		
96		X		16	X		
97		X		17		X	
98	X			18	X		
99	X			19			X
1900	X	X		1920	X		
01		X		21		X	
02		X		22			X
03	X			23	X		
04		X		24	X		
1905	X			1925	X		
06		X		26			X
07	X			27	X	X	X
08		X		28		X	X
09		X		29	X		

CT = Chicago Daily Tribune (includes every January edition for a given year)

SR = Sears, Roebuck Catalog

MW = Montgomery Ward Catalog

All of the information from the newspaper and catalog advertisements was sorted into categories based on date, ware, decoration, and price. It was determined that combining the data into decade-long periods would be most appropriate for creating the indices, as well as for using them on archaeological assemblages.

Plain whiteware (or white “semiporcelain” in the latter part of the study period) was the least expensive dinnerware available during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This type of dinnerware was assigned a fixed index value of 1 00, and formed the base against which all other dinnerwares were compared. The index value for each category was determined by dividing the average cost per vessel in each category by the average cost per vessel in the plain whiteware category for each decade. In this way, mean ceramic index values were generated for six categories for the 1890 to 1899, and 1900 to 1909 indices, and for five categories for the 1910 to 1919, and 1920 to 1929 indices (see Tables 2 through 5). Examples of sherds representing the various categories are illustrated in Figures 1 through 4. The framework of each index reflects the economic intensification of a market-driven economy. As the costs for labor and resources in a production sequence increase, the cost of the final product may also be expected to increase. Each successive category in an index corresponds to a higher degree of skill, better quality of material, or an increase in the time required to produce a set of dinnerware vessels.

In this study, we found that sorting by ware type (that is, common whiteware, ironstone, “semiporcelain,” or porcelain) served as a good first step in correlating dinnerwares and costs. The next clear correlation with cost was with the elaboration of the decoration used. Dinnerwares with simple designs in one or two colors clearly were priced lower than those with more elaborate patterns in a multitude of colors. Simple designs might consist of bands or floral sprays/sprigs. More elaborate decoration often consisted of several types of flowers and foliage, ribbons, scrolls, berries, or birds, in a variety of colors. The elaboration may also extend to the embossed patterns and the overall shape of a vessel.

We found no significant differences between the costs of transferprinted and decalcomania decorations other than what was related to the elaboration of the decoration. During the early years of the twentieth century, decal decoration quickly overtook transfer printing in popularity, but the two forms of decoration generally shared the same range of advertised prices.

The presence or absence of gold trim was found to be less important than the quality and quantity of gold used. A bright, or shiny, gold trim was usually a gold-colored paint. Gold trim or decoration of 14 k or 18 k gold was usually described as having a burnished, or matte, finish. Gold of 14 (or more) karats was typically used on porcelain (and some of the higher-priced semiporcelain), with the most costly porcelains having the most elaborate and heavy gold trim.

Table 2. Mean Ceramic Index, 1890 - 1899.

	<u>Category Description</u>	<u>Index #</u>
I.	Common whiteware. Plain white. May have scalloped edges	1.00
II.	Ironstone. Plain white. May be scalloped and /or embossed. Includes thick “hotel” style ironstones	2.00
III.	Common whiteware or ironstone. Very simple decoration, generally concentrated near the rim, although vessels may have a simple congruent design in center. Includes simple transferprint designs in one color (usually blue, brown, gray or pink), and handpainted designs in several colors (e.g., bands, simple sprigs of flowers or foliage, sponge/spatter, and mocha styles). May have scalloped edges and/or molding.	2.33
IV.	Common whiteware or ironstone. More elaborate decorative patterns, which may include more than one type of flower or foliage, ribbons, or scrolls. Designs are usually in two or more colors (pink, green, brown, blue, gray, or yellow), often with gold band(s) or trim. Also includes “flow blue” decoration and complex single-color landscape-style designs such as Blue Willow. Scalloped edges and/or embossing fairly common.	3.76
V.	Porcelain. Simple floral or band decoration. Only one or two colors. May have small amount 14 K gold trim. Edges may be scalloped. Includes plain white porcelain sherds.	3.83
VI.	Porcelain. More elaborate decoration in two or more colors. May include more than one type of flower or foliage, ribbons, scrolls, or bands. 14 K gold trim (sometimes elaborate and heavy) is common. Frequently scalloped and embossed.	7.78



Table 3 Mean Ceramic Index, 1900 - 1909.

	<u>Category Description</u>	<u>Index #</u>
I.	Common whiteware. Plain white. May be scalloped and/or embossed.	1.00
II.	Ironstone. Plain white. May be scalloped and /or embossed. Includes thick “hotel” style ironstones.	1.50
III.	Common whiteware or ironstone. Very simple decoration, generally limited to the rim and vessel center. Includes simple transferprint or decal designs in one color (usually blue, brown, pink, or green), and handpainted designs in several colors (e.g., bands, simple sprigs of flowers or foliage, sponge/spatter, and mocha styles). May have scalloped edges and/or molding.	2.33
IV.	Common whiteware or ironstone. More elaborate decorative patterns, which may include more than one type of flower or foliage, ribbons, scrolls, berries, birds, or landscape/seascapes. Designs are usually in two or more colors (blue, pink, green, brown, gray, or yellow, white, red, purple)), often with gold band(s) trim, or medallions. Decoration more commonly decal or transferprint than handpainting. Also includes “flow blue” decoration and complex single-color landscape-style designs such as Blue Willow. Frequently scalloped and/or embossed.	3.33
V.	Porcelain. Simple floral or band decoration. Only one or two colors. May have small amount 14 K gold trim. Edges may be scalloped. Includes plain white porcelain sherds.	4.00
VI.	Porcelain. More elaborate decoration in two or more colors. May include more than one type of flower or foliage, ribbons, scrolls, or multiple bands. 14 K gold trim (sometimes elaborate and heavy) is common. Frequently scalloped and embossed.	7.67

Table 4 Mean Ceramic Index, 1910 - 1919.

	<u>Category Description</u>	<u>Index #</u>
I.	Semiporcelain. Plain white. May be scalloped and/or embossed.	1.00
II.	Semiporcelain. Simple floral, band, or scroll-like designs, usually in one or two colors. May have small amount of gold trim or narrow gold bands. Includes “flow blue” decoration and “Blue Willow” type designs. May be scalloped and/or embossed.	1.43
III.	Semiporcelain. More elaborate floral patterns, arabesque designs, birds, and scrolls. Typically three or more colors, or elaborate 14 K gold, used in designs. Black and turquoise now popular additions to color palette. Often scalloped and embossed. May have a “panelled” shape (especially after 1915).	2.29
IV.	Porcelain. Simple floral or band decoration in one or two colors. May have small amount 14 K gold trim. May be scalloped and/or embossed. Includes plain white porcelain sherds.	2.57
V.	Porcelain. More elaborate decoration, often in three or more colors. Designs may include a variety of flowers and foliage, bands, ribbons, scrolls, orientalized scenes, or complex geometric patterns, such as a Greek Key design. May have very elaborate 14 K gold decoration. Frequently scalloped and embossed. May have “panelled” or octagon shape (especially after 1915).	5.00

Table 5. Mean Ceramic Index, 1920 - 1929

	<u>Category Description</u>	<u>Index #</u>
I.	Semiporcelain. Plain white. May be scalloped and/or embossed.	1.00
II.	Semiporcelain. Simple floral, band, or scroll-like designs, usually in one or two colors. May have small amount of gold trim or narrow gold bands. Includes “flow blue” decoration and “Blue Willow” type designs. May be scalloped and/or embossed.	1.43
III.	Semiporcelain. More elaborate floral patterns, arabesque designs, birds, and scrolls, ribbons, and fruit/flower baskets. Typically three or more colors, or elaborate 14 K gold, used in designs. Orange, amber, and chartreuse now added to color palette. Often scalloped and embossed. Octagon shape common. Twelve-sided shape occasionally found.	2.29
IV.	Porcelain. Simple floral or band decoration in one or two colors, usually with small amount 14 K gold trim. May be scalloped and/or embossed. Includes plain white porcelain sherds.	2.57
V.	Porcelain. More elaborate decoration, often in three or more colors. Designs may include a variety of flowers and foliage, bands, ribbons, scrolls, oriental scenes, or complex geometric patterns, such as a Greek Key design. Frequently includes very elaborate decoration or trim in 14 K, 18 K, or even 22 K gold. Usually scalloped and embossed. May have “panelled” or octagon shape.	5.00

## Testing the Mean Ceramic Price Index Model

Sherd assemblages from 30 sites in eleven Ohio counties were examined during this study. Original plans called for site selection to be based on data culled from the Ohio Archaeological Inventory files, housed at the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO). In point of fact, relatively few sites were chosen based on OAI data; most of the sites used in this study were ones suggested by various archaeologists and curators around the state who knew of our interest in turn-of-the-century sites.

A number of factors contributed to our decision to follow this procedure. The computerization of OAI files is incomplete, and sometimes was found to be inaccurate. In some cases, the data recorded on the original OAI forms were incorrect or insufficient for our purposes. On occasion, OAI forms had not been submitted to the OHPO five years after a project's completion. It is not uncommon for submission of a final report on a project to be delayed even longer. Also, archaeological work that is not done as a compliance project rarely gets written up and sent in for the OHPO files.

In a disturbingly high number of cases, we found that the curational facility listed on the OAT forms and in reports had no record of having received the collection, often because the contracted archaeologist had failed to acquire the necessary permission from the landowners. However, we also ran into the situation where the curational facility had decided to discard the artifacts because they were "too modern" (i.e., twentieth century), or simply refused to accept them in the first place for the same reason. We have been informed by some field archaeologists that they have been told not to collect artifacts from twentieth century sites. The bias against collecting and curating artifacts from twentieth century sites is clearly reflected in the temporal distribution of sites used in our study.

In some cases, our goal of using at least 50 sherds from each site was not attainable. At the beginning of the analysis, we determined that a minimal sherd size of 0.5 sq. cm was required for a sherd to be included in the study. Similarly, split sherds with one plain surface (but lacking the other surface) would not be included because we could not know if the other side of the sherd had been decorated. (On the other hand, split sherds with a decorated surface would be included since we could be certain that they had been decorated). Sherds which could clearly be placed outside of the time frame of the study (e.g., pearlware, "Fiesta"-like wares, sherds with maker's marks much earlier than 1890 or later than 1930) were also not included in the study. These basic rules frequently made our count of sherds differ markedly from the sherd count listed on OAT forms, in reports, or in accession catalogs.

Results of the ceramic analysis on the sites used in our study are presented in Tables 6 through 9. All documentary data was gathered from reports and forms curated with the artifactual materials or in the files of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office. It is apparent that different researchers place a different value on archival research for their reports, documentary data on sites ranged from almost nothing to detailed lists derived from early atlases, city directories, and deed or census records.

Table 6. Comparison of Site Data, 1890-1899.

Site (# of Sherds Used)	Mean Ceramic Index Value (C.I.V.)	Documentary Data and Interpretation
Queensgate II Feature 76 (39 sherds)	3.00	<p>Privy at 416 Clark Street, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio Red brick farmstead built by 1st occupant of area, William Betts. Betts family gained wealth and status from a brickyard and by subdividing lots within their landholdings. Subsequent occupants typically white-collar professionals. City Directories do not list individual occupants 1886-1896. From 1897-1922 members of Birney family lived here. James Birney, head of family, was listed as a clerk, with wife and 4 daughters. Three daughters had jobs listed as cashier, dressmaker, and telephone operator. Youngest listed as organist by 1904.</p> <p>C.I.V. is very high. Fits data suggesting white-collar, professional status. Better quality dinnerwares may also reflect status consciousness of relatively large number of unmarried, working females in household.</p>
33 UN 155 Rogers Site #2 (44 sherds)	2.61	<p>Turn-of-the-century farmstead in Union County, Ohio.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests a fairly high socioeconomic status for a rural farmstead</p>
33 CL 54 Lakeview Heights Farm Site (49 sherds)	2.32	<p>Late 19th century farmstead in Clark County, Ohio. The main focus of the excavation at this site was a prehistoric ossuary.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests a middle-class socioeconomic status for a rural farmstead</p>
Queensgate II Feature 85 (26 sherds)	2.30	<p>Levels 13I and 14I, privy at 427 Chestnut Street, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. Working class neighborhood. City Directories list members of the Porter family as owner/occupants of a farm residence. The Porter family occupations included paint maker and clerk/travelling salesman of a book company. Charles Dustin, possibly a border, was a night watchman or police officer.</p> <p>C.I.V. supports data suggesting a middle-class status.</p>
33 CT 424 (20 sherds)	2.25	<p>Existing farm house approximately 100 years old, Clermont County, Ohio. Located directly across driveway from 33-CT-419. Area used as a dump from about 1940s.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests a middle-class status.</p>

Table 6. Comparison of Site Data, 2890 - 1899 (continued).

Site (# of Sherds Used)	Mean Ceramic Index Value (C.I.V.)	Documentary Data and Interpretation
33 OT 91 Moskal Site (45 sherds)	2.19	Farmstead in Ottawa County, Ohio, dating back to mid-19th century. C.I.V. suggests middle-class status.
33 CT 418 (66 sherds)	2.10	Farmstead in Clermont County, Ohio, shown on 1891 map C.I.V. suggests a lower middle-class status.
33 CT 419 (ill sherds)	2.08	Farmstead (log cabin) in Clermont County, Ohio, mapped by 1891, may have existed as early as 1870. Structure destroyed shortly after 1928. C.I.V. suggests a lower middle-class status.
33 UN 150 Lincoln National Site #4 (26 sherds)	2.05	Late 19th/early 20th century farmstead in Union County, Ohio. C.I.V. suggests lower middle-class status.
33 UN 89 Ream Site #1 (25 sherds)	1.92	Late 19th century, Union County, Ohio Farm lane runs nearby Low density of artifacts, possibly just a dump site? C.I.V. suggests low to lower middle-class status.
33 GR 412 (24 sherds)	1.83	Possible outbuilding location on farmstead in Greene County, Ohio. C.I.V. suggests lower-class status Possible identification with outbuilding may make it unlikely that a representative sample of dinnerware would be found at this site.
33 GR 82 Oldtown Site (19 sherds)	1.79	Excavation emphasized prehistoric component at this Greene County, Ohio, site. C.I.V. suggests lower-class status.
33 OT 77 VanRensselle Site (32 sherds)	1.71	Farmhouse built mid to late 19th century and removed by 1919, Ottawa County, Ohio. C.I.V. suggests lower-class status.

Table 7 Comparison of Site Data, 1900-1909.

Site (# of Sherds Used)	Mean Ceramic Index Value (C.I.V.)	Documentary Data and Interpretation
33 GR 279 Fairborn Log House (29 sherds)	2.36	No data. (Greene County, Ohio)  C.I.V. suggests a high socioeconomic status.
33 UN 142 Turkey Run Site (61 sherds)	2.18	Nineteenth and 20th century farmstead, Union County, Ohio.  C.I.V. suggests an upper middle to high status
33 VI 212 Burt Store (30 sherds)	2.17	Small roadside general store from the late 1890s or early 1900s, defunct by early 1930s, Vinton County, Ohio.  C.I.V. suggests an upper middle to high status In this case, sherds indicate that the range of dinnerwares available for sale to the local community included some elaborate types, although only 1 porcelain sherd was recovered.
33 CT 417 Dunbar-Wood House (639 sherds)	1.97	Farmstead with a series of households from the 1820s to 1930s, Clermont County, Ohio. Nearly all features and postholes date late 19th/early 20th century. Early 1800s material indicated low to middle class status, using Miller's price index.
33 GR 407 Heller Site #1 (761 sherds)	1.96	C.I.V. suggests middle class status for early 20th century, as well. Probable area of workers' housing associated with the Harbine Industrial Complex, Greene County, Ohio. Wooden, single story frame houses removed in the 1920s. Houses had 4 rooms, no basement, no indoor plumbing. High number of whiskey flasks, alcoholic beverage bottles, and patent medicine bottles suggested a low income status to the excavators.  C.I.V. suggests a middle-class status, possibly higher than might be expected from documentary data.

Table 7 Comparison of Site Data, 1900 - 1909 (continued)

Site (# of Sherds Used)	Mean Ceramic Index Value (C.I.V.)	Documentary Data and Interpretation
33 BU 351 James Dick House (543 sherds)	1.94	<p>Rural farmstead, ca. 1853-1975, Butler County, Ohio. Built as main residence of J Dick, the owner of a commercial complex, 1840s and 1850s. Later owned by C Kirchling, a blacksmith. Between 1877 and 1890 or 1903, C. Kirchling, widow, owned the property and rented it out. Between 1903 and 1923, Pliny Shaw, farmer, owned the property. Majority of occupants between 1864 and 1965 were related by marriage, of mixed German (Prussian) and English ancestry, and of moderate economic means.</p> <p>C.I.V. supports middle-class status indicated by documentary data for the early 20th century.</p>
33 UN 93 Rockenbargh #2 (134 sherds)	1.93	<p>Settled by Irish immigrants after about 1877, Union County, Ohio.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests a middle-class status.</p>
33 LU 424 Cousino Site (38 sherds)	1.68	<p>Probably late 19th/early 20th century, Lucas County, Ohio. Possibly a secondary deposit.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests lower-class status.</p>
33 HA 654 Fernald East Field Site (245 sherds)	1.65	<p>Historic farmstead in Hamilton County, Ohio.</p> <p>C I V suggests lower-class status.</p>
33 HK 489 Tile House (32 sherds)	1.57	<p>Farmstead built ca 1903, Hancock County, Ohio.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests lower-class status May reflect difficult early years of rural farm life.</p>
33 VI 391 (39 sherds)	1.56	<p>Farmstead, Vinton County, Ohio Materials date to 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggest lower-class status.</p>
33 OT 219 Johnson's Island Tavern (57 sherds)	1.46	<p>Late 19th/early 20th century tavern, for a quarry on Johnson's Island, Ottawa County, Ohio.</p> <p>C.I.V. suggests lower-class status Predominant ceramic material is thick, heavy, plain, white ironstone, reflecting the public house nature of the site.</p>



Table 8. Comparison of Site Data, 1910-1919.

Site (# of Sherds Used)	Mean Ceramic Index Value (C.I.V..)	Documentary Data and Interpretation
33 UN 158 Bright Site (84 sherds)	1.70	Nineteenth and 20th century farmstead, Union County, Ohio.  C.I.V. may suggest upper middle-class status Interpretation made more difficult by small number of sites in this time period.
Queensgate II Feature 85 (99 sherds)	1.44	Levels 3C, 4C, 4D, 5E, 5F, 6F, 6G, 7G, 8G, 8H, 9H, 10H, 11H and 12H, privy at 427 Chestnut Street, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. Working class neighborhood. Property owned and occupied by Charles Simmons, a travelling salesman, during this time.  C.I.V. supports a middle-class status. Note similar C.I.V. of site next door, below.
Queensgate II Feature 34 (20 sherds)	1.41	Privy at 425 Chestnut Street, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. Working class neighborhood. Property occupied (owned?) by Jessup family. Head of house was widow, son listed as machinist M. Kramig (border?) listed as gardener.  C.I.V. supports middle-class status. Note similar C.I.V. of site next door, above.
33 PE 504 Adams-Saffell Cabin (40 sherds)	1.14	Rural farmstead of lower economic status, Perry County, Ohio.  C.I.V. supports lower-class status.

Table 9. Comparison of Site Data, 1920-1929.

Site (# of Sherds Used)	Mean Ceramic Index Value (C.I.V.)	Documentary Data and Interpretation
33 GR 134 Achilles Hill Site (139 sherds)	2.77	<p>Some artifacts suggest dates in the 1920s. Maps and historic documents show area downhill from the Achilles Hill site was occupied by the Skyway Park Housing Development, Greene County, Ohio, built for the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, 1944 to 1958, when it was razed.</p> <p>C.I.V. is extremely high. Authors feel site more properly dates to 1940s and 1950s and represents dumping by Skyway Park residents. C.I.V. skewed by large number of porcelain sherds. Availability of Japanese porcelain may have been markedly higher for Air Force personnel in the late 1940s/early 1950s than for the general public.</p>
33 CL 93 John Paul Cabin Site (217 sherds)	1.57	<p>No data (Clark County, Ohio.)</p> <p>C.I.V. probably suggests middle-class status Interpretation is limited due to small number of sites in this period.</p>
Queensgate II Feature 85 (73 sherds)	1.37	<p>Levels 1A, 1B, 2A and 3A of privy at 427 Chestnut Street, Cincinnati, Hamilton County, Ohio. Working class neighborhood. Still occupied by Charles Simmons, a travelling salesman, until 1923. No data 1924-25. Late 1920s saw a series of apparently unrelated "laborers" living in the house.</p> <p>C.I.V. probably suggests lower middle-class status Interpretation limited due to small number of sites in this period.</p>

## Summary of Results

The period from about 1890 until sometime in the 1920s was one of fairly steady economic expansion in the United States. Increased production, brought about by new technologies, and the ability to transport goods rapidly and cheaply, made consumer goods available to more and more segments of the American population (see Walker 1996). “So, too, the abundance of mass-produced, mass-distributed material goods, largely products of the metropolis and its advertising media, altered ideas regarding status and wealth in a society that aspired to be a people of plenty” (Schlereth 1991: xiii). Costs of goods were declining, real wages were growing, and advertising was taking off. Between 1865 and 1919, spending on advertising in the United States increased nearly fiftyfold (Ibid: 157). Consumption became an increasingly important aspect of American life. Turn-of-the-century sites seem to be particularly well-suited for investigating consumer behavior as regards mass-produced, nationally distributed goods, such as dinnerwares (see, for example, Speulda and Bowyer 1996).

In the present study, for most of the cases where good documentary data is available, socioeconomic scaling based on the mean ceramic indices seems to support the historic record. Only one site (Queensgate II, Feature 85) offered the opportunity to examine change through time at a single location. The results from this site indicate that stratified privy deposits will provide a good means of examining changes in a household’s socioeconomic status over time. The two urban sites located next door to each other display very similar mean ceramic index values, lending support to the idea that “neighborhoods” may also share similar patterns of consumption (see Branstner and Martin 1987: 303).

Classification of socioeconomic status as high, middle, and low should be considered only a rough estimate; use of the ceramic indices on additional sites may make such classifications more clear. Inconsistent documentary data and the small number of assemblages in the latter two decades of the study period, make it difficult to make definitive statements about the effectiveness of the ceramic indices beyond saying that the results so far are promising. Additional usage should allow researchers to further refine their conclusions concerning socioeconomic status at turn-of-the-century archaeological sites.

## Recommendations for Collection and Curation of Historic Artifact Assemblages

All of the assemblages used in this study were parts of extant collections curated by various institutions in Ohio. No new field work or documentary research was conducted for this project. We believe these conditions allow us to address both the possibilities and problems of using existing historic collections as research collections and to offer some recommendations for the collection and curation of historic artifact assemblages.

Recently, the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) has promoted the idea that archaeologists spend less time on fieldwork and acquisition of additional artifact assemblages, and more time on using extant collections for research. The 1995 meeting of the SAA included a well-

attended panel discussion on the topic. According to survey data gathered for the meeting, the proportion of dissertations based on museum collections has nearly doubled since 1990, from about 16% to about 30% in 1995 (Nelson and Shears 1996 36).

The advantages of conducting research on previously collected material are primarily concerned with saving time and money by eliminating the expenses and time-consuming nature of fieldwork. But there is also the added advantage of being able to define certain criteria for site selection; every field archaeologist has encountered sites which, during excavation, fall short of expectations in some way. Using collections from previously excavated sites should allow a researcher to eliminate some of the uncertainty inherent in new fieldwork.

Unfortunately, extant collections also have their share of problems. Merely locating the desired artifact collections can prove to be a major obstacle. Researchers also need to be aware that all collections were not “created equal”; many variables (including project costs, time constraints, and the experience and research interests [if any] of personnel) combine to determine the make-up of any collection. The conditions under which collections are made may be so variable as to render intersite comparisons meaningless.

The results of this study provide an informed basis for a set of recommendations concerning the collection and curation of whiteware assemblages. The recommendations presented here are not exhaustive, but they all address one of the fundamental tenets of archaeology. There is a crucial need to provide for the curation of historic-era assemblages in suitable repositories because of the value of these assemblages in future studies of a wide range of research questions. We do not advocate the collection of every turn-of-the-century artifact and we do not advocate the curation of every artifact that is collected. However, given the number and severity of problems encountered in this study, it is clear to us that there is a critical need to rethink archaeological approaches to fieldwork, collection and curation of turn-of-the-century whitewares.

Scientific principles of fieldwork widely applied to investigations of prehistoric and early historic-era archaeological sites need to be applied to the collection strategies for turn-of-the-century components. Many of the assemblages which were considered in the course of this study had to be discarded because of glaring biases. At some sites only decorated sherds or sherds with maker’s marks were collected. Some reports noted the presence of a large number of pieces of pottery without differentiating wares or function and without indicating if any were collected, thus leaving no basis for scientific interpretations or comparisons to other assemblages. Not only are assemblages with these kinds of biases not useful for this investigation, and other similar kinds of investigations, but it is our finding that these fieldwork biases also often led to misinterpretations. We found that sites where sampling biases led to the collection of only decorated or marked sherds were frequently interpreted as representing an earlier and shorter duration occupation than was undoubtedly the case.

The collection of artifacts during fieldwork should be based on scientific principles of sampling and the fieldwork should be designed to recover a representative sample from the range of contexts, associations and areas throughout the site. In addition, the research design should include specific efforts to collect temporally and functionally diagnostic artifacts. It is not sufficient to note

that there is an historic-era component to a site, for future investigations it is essential that we have a representative sample of the artifacts of this component collected, analyzed and curated in a repository. Our study of patterns of consumer choice is based on comparisons of assemblages representative of many different sites, and the index value is sensitive to collection biases. The collection of only decorated sherds can provide a misleading calculation of the index value, and we were not able to use any assemblage where we suspected that there were serious biases in the fieldwork. In some cases, the information in the report or on the site inventory form suggested that only decorated or marked sherds were collected, though other sherds were present, and in other cases, examination of the artifact list or artifacts themselves made it clear that the collection of sherds could not be considered representative.

In addition to efforts to control field collection biases, there are other reasons for our recommendation to obtain a representative sample of pottery from a site. We found that too many archaeologists regard turn-of-the-century whitewares as generally undecorated and with little variability in design or form. This supposition apparently has led some archaeologists and collections managers to rationalize that only a few sherds are needed to represent a turn-of-the-century component. We have found, and this study clearly demonstrates, that turn-of-the-century whitewares exhibit a wide range of decorations and form. Many of the styles of decorations show a wide span of popularity - some were around from the 1830s through the 1930s - and by themselves are not regarded at this time as temporally diagnostic, but the range of decorative styles present at a site does provide important data for the interpretation of patterns of consumer choice and therefore it is important to obtain a representative sample during fieldwork. Also, we have found that a representative sample of turn-of-the-century artifacts, especially whitewares, is required for interpreting the dynamics of recent site occupation(s). Few sites are likely to have been occupied for exactly one decade or for one period of time, and at many sites we find evidence of curatorial behavior (for example, holding onto heirlooms), so that it is important to have a representative sample of artifacts to support interpretations of the length of an occupation and changes occurring during the span of occupation(s) at a site.

We do not feel that it is appropriate to specify a particular number of turn-of-the-century whiteware sherds which should be collected, but the collection and the collection strategy should give a scientific basis for the calculation of the percent of the site area covered and the percent of observed whiteware sherds that were collected. We noted that many site inventory forms listed only a few turn-of-the-century whiteware sherds (perhaps a half-dozen) but it was not clear from the form if that number indicated all of the sherds observed, a representative sample, or a nonrepresentative selection of the available sherds.

For sites where a large number of whiteware sherds was noted, in our analysis we found that it usually took 30 to 50 sherds to provide well-rounded information on the range of variation of these sherds in the assemblage. That is, where we had fewer than 30 sherds, and where we had reason to believe that there was a much larger number that could have been collected, we often felt that there were biases which could result in misinterpretations. In some cases, we felt that decorated sherds were over-represented in smaller assemblages.

In the curation of assemblages in repositories, it is important to retain provenience information. Too often, we found that all of the historic-era artifacts were lumped into one bag, making it impossible to reconstruct the site and identify turn-of-the-century contexts and associations. A noteworthy exception to our general finding was the Queensgate II Project in Cincinnati, Ohio, where detailed provenience records allowed us to separate the few turn-of-the-century contexts from the prevalent mid-nineteenth century occupation and thus incorporate these investigations into our analysis. The use of the turn-of-the-century Queensgate material not only is informative for our comparisons, but our analysis adds a small bit of information to the overall analysis of this historic urban neighborhood. Keeping provenience information with turn-of-the-century artifacts is also important for future reinterpretations of the site. As new studies identify diagnostic attributes, it will be important to be able to go back and reexamine previous work at sites, and as shown by our study, this requires an ability to reconstruct the site through carefully retained provenience data.

Whenever sherd size is sufficient, the provenience data should be recorded on the individual (cleaned!) whiteware sherds using indelible ink with a basic, straightforward code. We found it difficult at some sites to determine which sherds were associated with which test unit. And, it is important to place the data on the sherd on the side that is not decorated. At times it may be difficult to label a sherd so that the sherd can be photographed without the label showing, but more often than not the intrusion of the label into the photograph could have been avoided with a little forethought. At the very least, specific provenience data should be written on the artifact bags, or on tags that are placed into bags with the artifacts.

Our recommendations for curation of turn-of-the-century artifacts in suitable repositories goes beyond the specific needs of this study and scientific studies of specific classes of artifacts. The overall interpretation of the archaeological record at a site depends on the recovery and curation of a representative sample of all classes of artifacts that are observed. Almost all prehistoric sites have been disturbed by historic-era events to some degree, and observations on the pattern of historic-era artifacts can directly inform us about the extent of disturbance at these sites. Furthermore, this information on the extent of disturbance can also help us identify places where the prehistoric component (or a specific historic-era context) may not have been severely disturbed and may offer a good location for future research.

In summary, it is important to accurately describe the nature of the historic-era occupation(s) at a site and to obtain a representative sample of artifacts, including turn-of-the-century whitewares, as a part of the collection from archaeological sites. This representative sample should enable future researchers to reconstruct the site and should be based on scientific principles of sampling that allow future researchers to determine the extent of the site examined and the percentage of observed whiteware sherds that were collected. Finally, it is crucial that historic-era assemblages be curated in suitable repositories and that the artifacts retain relevant provenience data.

We understand that repositories are facing a “climate of budget limitations, a downsized work force, restructuring, space limitations, and storage costs” (Sonderman 1996 29). We understand that repositories have become “understaffed, overstaffed, and inadequate to growing needs” (Childs 1996: 25). However, as professional archaeologists who have conducted both field research and collections

research, we also understand the need to collect and maintain assemblages that will be useful for future research. We believe that one of the most important contributions archaeologists and collections managers can make to professional archaeological research is to insist that all projects include adequate consideration of curation costs for artifact collections and associated documentation. Furthermore, a repository should not be treated simply as a storage building, but as an integral part of a research and education program (see Futato 1996).

It is impossible to predict the questions that will be asked by future generations of archaeologists, but curation of scientifically and statistically valid representative samples of the archaeological record will ensure that excavations done now will continue to provide useful data in the future. Reanalysis and reinterpretation of data are integral parts of science. As more and more archaeological sites are disturbed or destroyed, the condition of the collections available for research purposes will become increasingly important. Decisions made by archaeologists and curation facilities today will have repercussions on the quality of archaeology for many decades to come.

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Figures: Photographic Catalog Illustrating Descriptive Categories (see Photo Credits, above)

Figure 1. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1890 – 1899.

- a. Category I. Plain white whiteware. Molded 33 UN 89. ODOT.
- b. Category II. Heavy, plain white ironstone. Queensgate II, Feature 85 CMNHS.
- c. Category III. Four styles of blue-edged wares. 33 CL 54. WSU.
- d. Category III. Red and green banded. 33 UN 155. ODOT
- e. Category III. Stenciled or handpainted blue border design Queensgate II, Feature 76 CMNHS.
- f. Category III. Red transferprinted border 33 CT 419. OHS.

Figure 1 (continued).

- g. Category III. Brown floral transferprint. 33 UN 155. ODOT.
- h. Category IV. Landscape style blue transferprint Queensgate II, Feature 85. CMNHS.
- i. Category IV. Pink and green floral decal (faded). 33 UN 155. ODOT.
- j. Category V. Porcelain Simple gold band and center design. Queensgate II, Feature 76 CMNHS
- k. Category VI. Porcelain Multicolored floral decal, gold trim. 33 UN 155. ODOT.
- l. Category VI. Porcelain. Multicolored floral transferprint, yellow band, gold trim. Molded. Queensgate II, Feature 76. CMNHS.

Figure 2 Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1900 – 1909.

- a. Category I. Plain white whiteware. Scalloped and molded 33 LU 424. ODOT.
- b. Category II. Thick, heavy, plain white ironstone. 33 LU 424 ODOT
- c. Category III. Handpainted red and blue bands 33 GR 407 OHS.
- d. Category III. Handpainted pine sprig. 33 BU 351. OHS.
- e. Category III. Molded rim with green band, brown (band?) below. 33 CT 417. OHS.
- f. Category III. Light blue transferprint border. Panelled shape. 33 BU 351. OHS.

Figure 2 (continued).

- g. Category IV Handpainted floral design; flow blue, red, green, black. 33 GR 407. OHS.
- h. Category IV Landscape style red transferprint (Other side has green transferprint.) 33 CT 417 OHS.
- i. Category IV Multicolored floral decal. 33 GR 407. OHS.
- j. Category IV Multicolored medallion style decal. 33 CT 417. OHS.
- k. Category V Porcelain Handpainted purple lustre, black, and gray bands. 33 GR 407. OHS
- l. Category VI Porcelain Handpainted, multicolored flower and band design. 33 GR 407. OHS

Figure 3. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1910 - 1919

- a. Category I Plain white cup with square handles. Queensgate II, Feature 85. CMNHS.
- b. Category II Molded cup with flow blue band. Queensgate II, Feature 85. CMNHS.
- c. Category II Flow blue transferprint Queensgate II, Feature 85. CMNHS.
- d. Category II Simple, handpainted, multicolored floral sprig. Queensgate II, Feature 85. CMNHS.
- e. Category II. Pink and green floral decal. Molded and scalloped. 33 UN 158. ODOT.
- f. Category III. Elaborate gold flower and ribbon design. Scalloped and molded Queensgate II Feature 85 CMNHS

Figure 3 (continued).

- g. Category III. Multicolored decal, flower, ribbon, and band. 33 FE 504 AAS
- h. Category III. Multicolored decal, flower and calendar 33 UN 158 ODOT
- i. Category III. Multicolored floral decal. Queensgate II, Feature 85 CMNHS
- j. Category IV. Porcelain. Green transferprint border Queensgate II, Feature 85 CMNHS
- k. Category V. Porcelain Multicolored fruit and flower decal Purple lustre. edge. Scalloped and molded 33 UN 158. ODOT
- l. Category V. Porcelain. Blue transferprint Phoenix” design. 33 UN 158. ODOT.

Figure 4. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1920 - 1929.

- a. Category II. Flow blue floral design. 33 CL 93. WSU.
- b. Category III. Multicolored decal, village scene. Scalloped and molded. 33 GR 134. WSU
- c. Category III. Multicolored decal, flowers and foliage. Queensgate II, Feature 85. CMNHS
- d. Category III. Multicolored decal, “Flying Bluebird and Apple Blossom” design. 33 CT 417. OHS.
- e. Category IV. Porcelain. Handpainted floral design with gold trim 33 GR 134 WSU
- f. Category V. Porcelain Stylized “dragon” in green transferprint. 33 GR 134. WSU.

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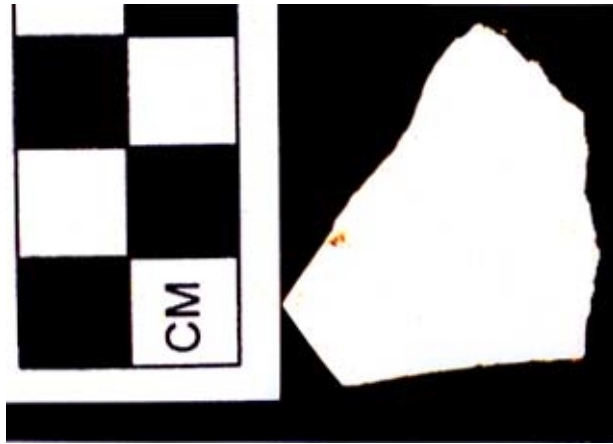
AAS = On loan from Applied Archaeological Services, Inc.

CMNHS = In the collections of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History and Science.

ODOT = In the collections housed at the Ohio Department of Transportation.

OHS = In the collections of the Ohio Historical Society.

Figure 1. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1890 – 1899.



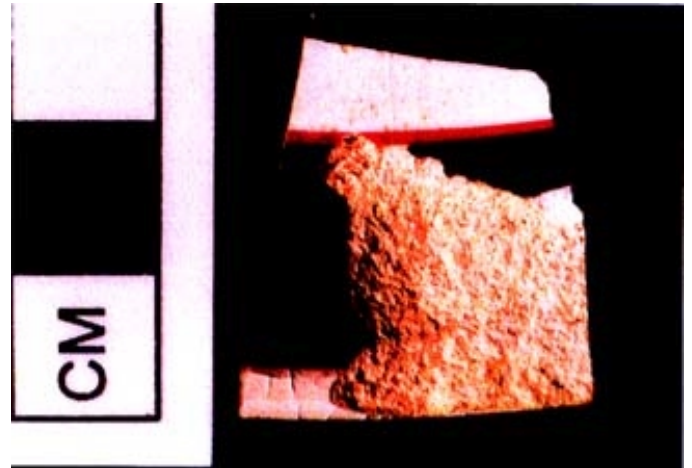
a.) Category I. Plain white whiteware  
Molded 33 UN 89.



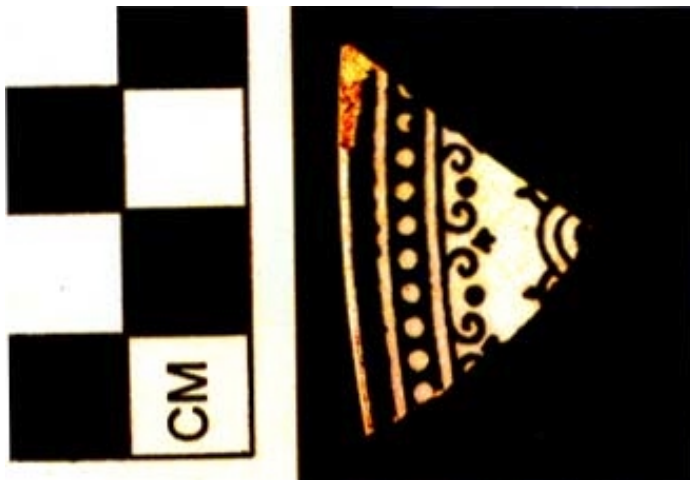
b.) Category II. Heavy, plain white  
ironstone. Queensgate 11,  
Feature 85.



c.) Category III Four styles of  
blue-edged wares 33 CL 54



d.) Category III. Red and green  
banded 33 UN 155



e.) Category III. Stenciled or handpainted  
blue border design. Queensgate II,  
Feature 76.

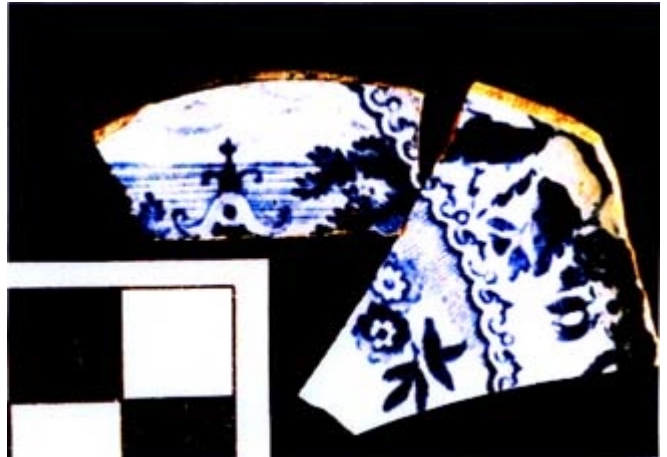


f.) Category III. Red transferprinted  
border. 33 CT 419.

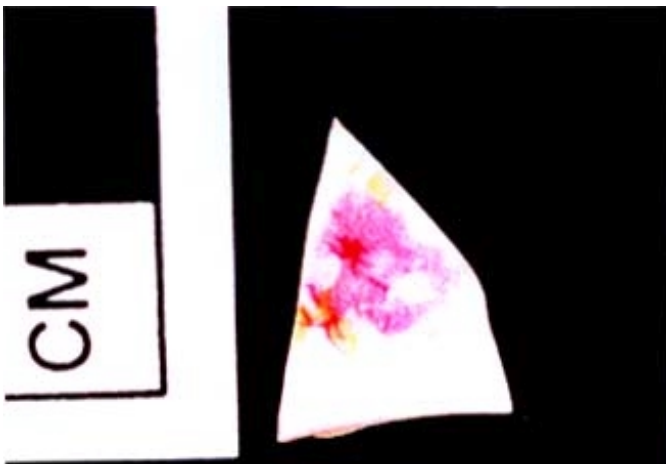
Figure 1. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1890 - 1899 (continued).



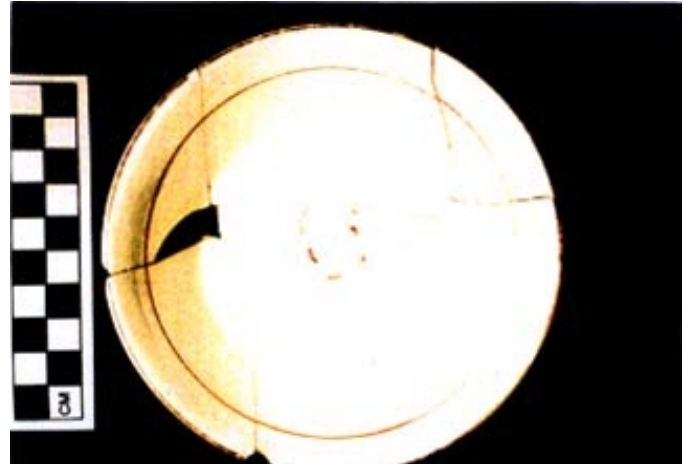
g.) Category III. Brown floral transferprint. 33 UN 155.



h.) Category IV. Landscape style blue transferprint. Queensgate II, Feature 85



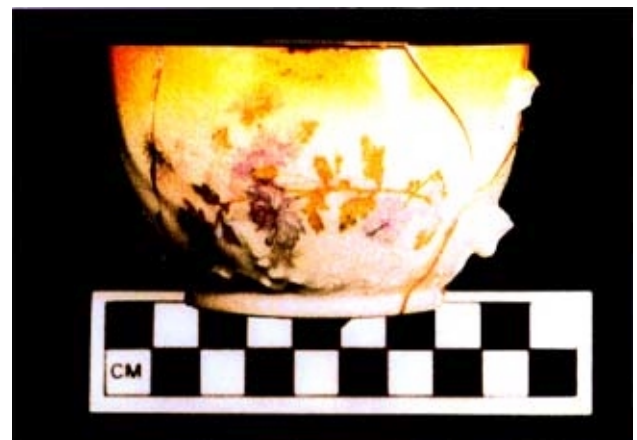
i.) Category IV. Pink and green floral decal (faded). 33 UN 155.



j.) Category V. Porcelain. Simple gold band and center design Queensgate II, Feature 76.



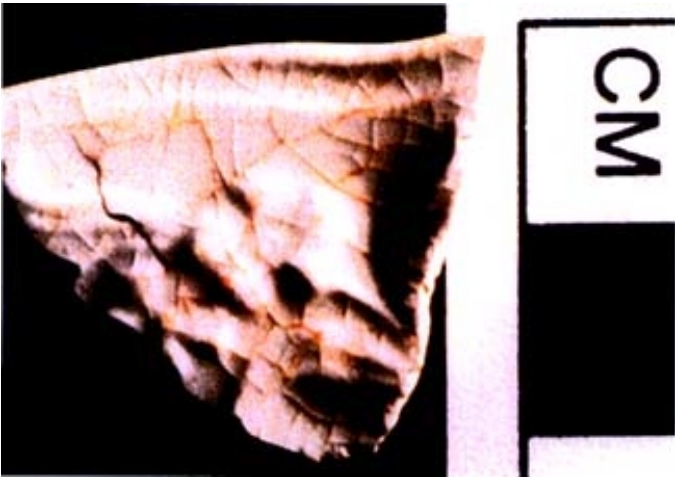
k.) Category VI. Porcelain. Multicolored floral decal, gold trim. 33 UN 155.



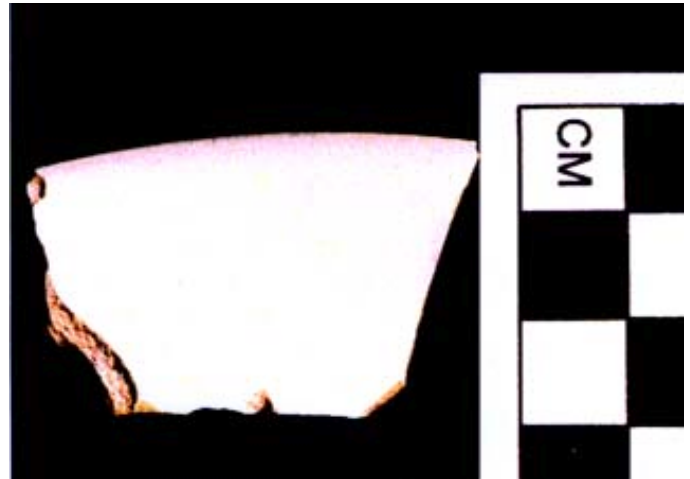
l.) Category VI. Porcelain Multicolored floral transferprint, yellow band, gold trim. Molded. Queensgate II, Feature 76.



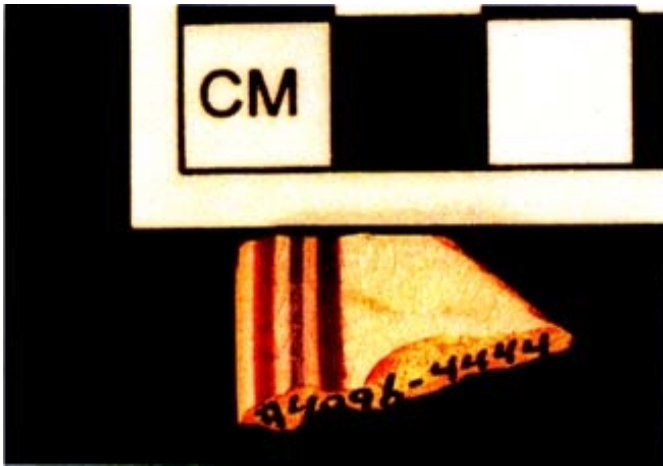
Figure 2. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1900 – 1909.



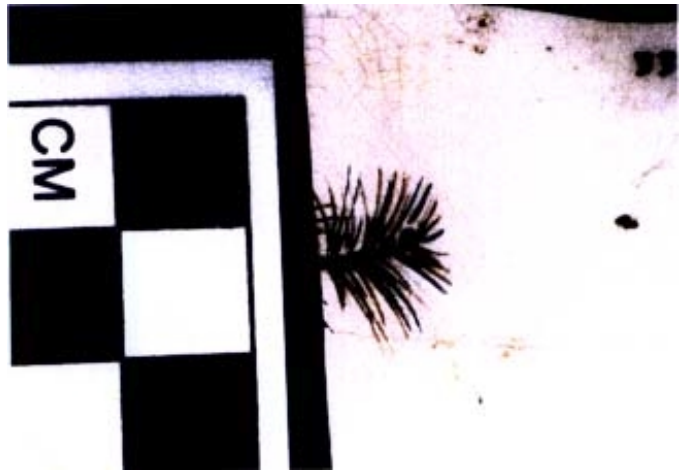
a.) Category I. Plain white whiteware  
Scalloped and molded. 33 LU 424.



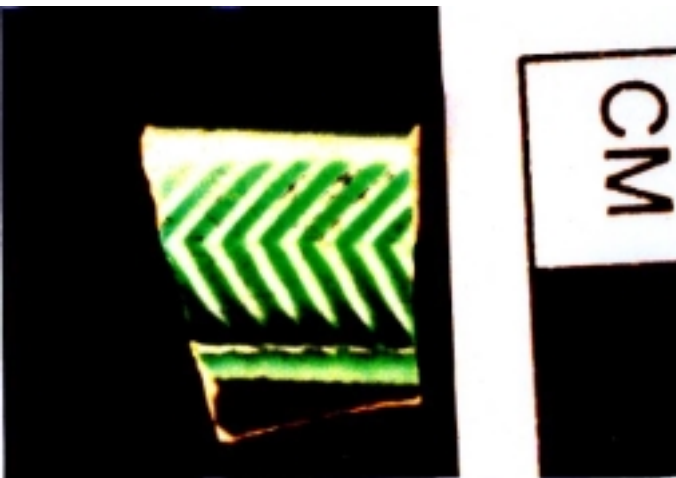
b.) Category II. Thick, heavy, plain  
white ironstone. 33 LU 424.



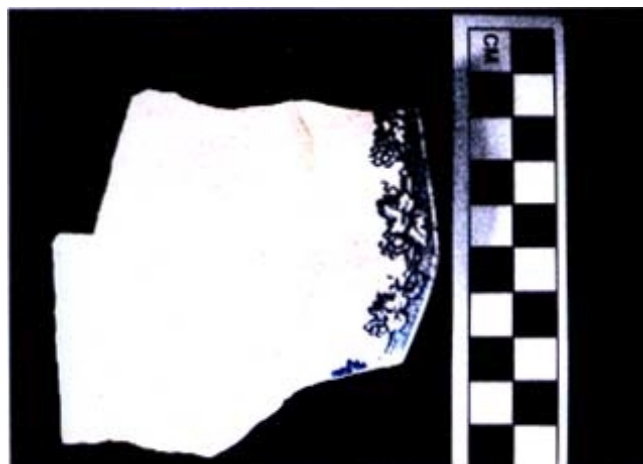
c.) Category III. Handpainted red  
and blue bands. 33 GR 407.



d.) Category III. Handpainted pine  
sprig.. 33 BU 351.

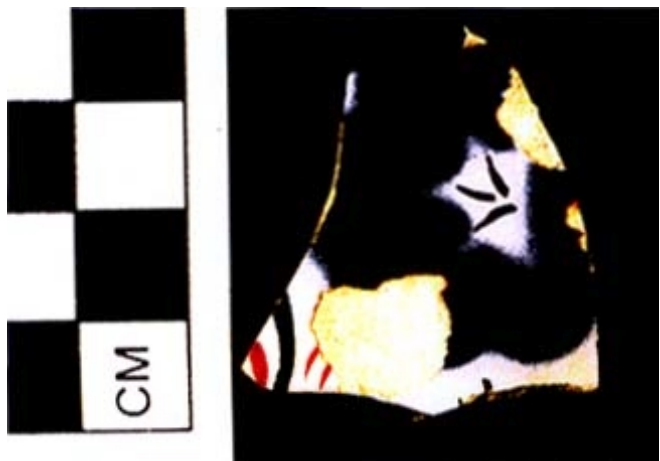


e.) Category III. Molded rim with green band,  
brown (band?) below. 33 CT 417.

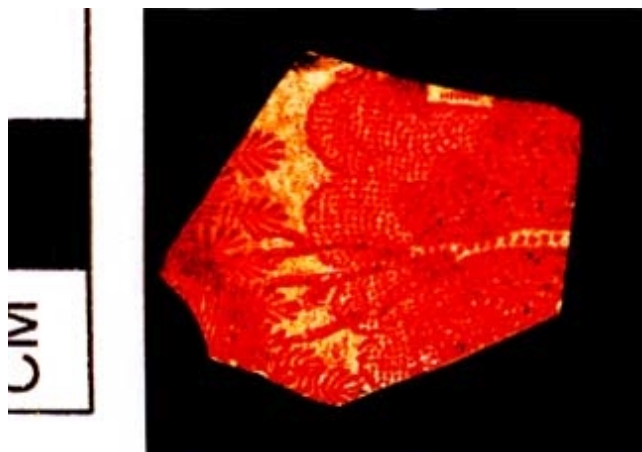


f.) Category III. Light blue transferprint  
border Panelled shape. 33 BU 351.

Figure 2 Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1900 - 1909 (continued)



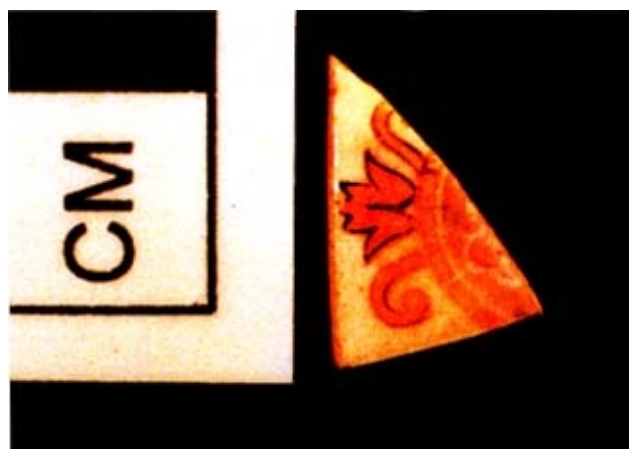
g.) Category IV. Handpainted floral design; flow blue, red, green, black. 33 GR 407.



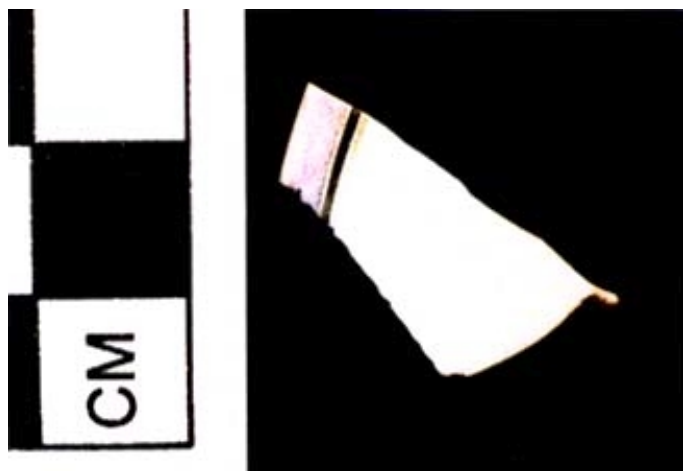
h.) Category IV. Landscape style red transferprint. (Other side has green transferprint.) 33 CT 417.



i.) Category IV. Multicolored floral decal. 33 GR 407.



j.) Category IV. Multicolored medallion style decal. 33 CT 417.



k.) Category V. Porcelain. Handpainted purple lustre, black, and gray bands. 33 GR 407.



l.) Category VI. Porcelain. Handpainted, multicolored flower and band design. 33 GR 407.

Figure 3 Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1910 – 1919.



a.) Category I. Plain white cup with square handles. Queensgate II, Feature 85.



b.) Category II. Molded cup with flow blue band. Queensgate II, Feature 85.



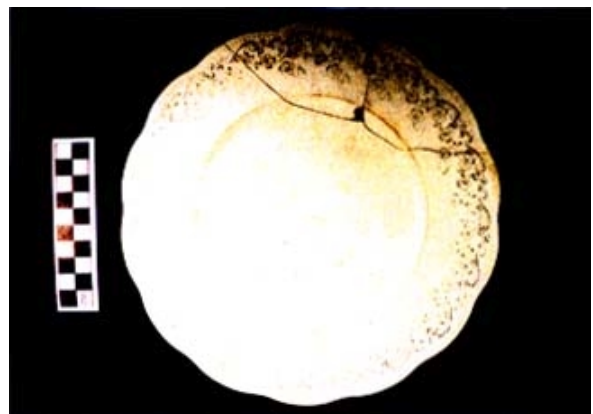
c.) Category II. Flow blue transferprint. . Queensgate II, Feature 85.



d.) Category II. Simple, handpainted, multicolored floral sprig. Queensgate II, Feature 85.



e.) Category II. Pink and green floral decal Molded and scalloped. 33 UN 158



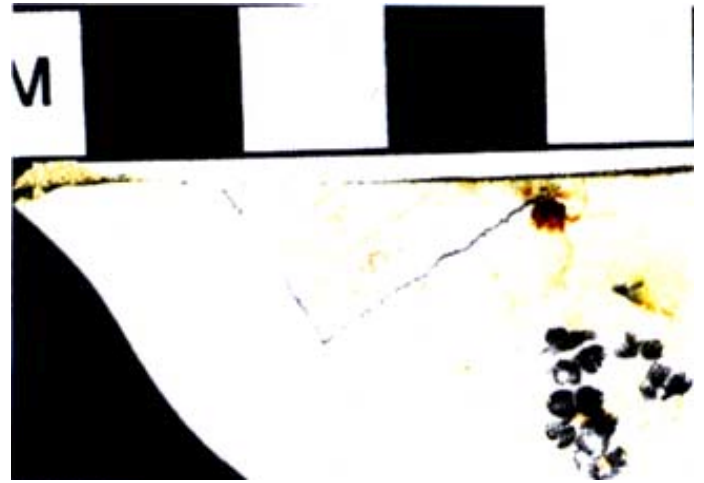
f.) Category III Elaborate gold flower and ribbon design Scalloped and molded



Figure 3 Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1910 - 1919 (continued)



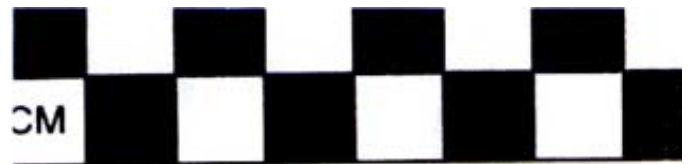
g.) Category III. Multicolored decal, flower, ribbon, and band. 33 PE 504.



h.) Category III. Multicolored decal, flower and calendar. 33 UN 158.



i.) Category III. Multicolored floral decal. Queensgate II, Feature 85.



j.) Category IV. Porcelain. Green transferprint border. Queensgate II, Feature 85..



k.) Category V. Porcelain Multicolored fruit and flower decal Purple lustre edge Scalloped and molded. 33 UN 158.



l.) Category V. Porcelain. Blue transferprint "Phoenix" design. 33 UN 158.

Figure 4. Sherds Illustrating Ceramic Categories, 1920 – 1929.



a.) Category II. Flow blue floral design. 33 CL 93.



b.) Category III. Multicolored decal, village scene Scalloped and molded. 33 GR 134.



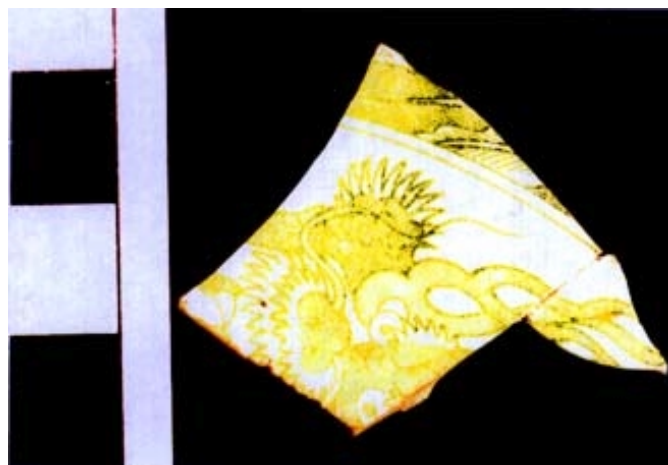
c.) Category III. Multicolored decal, flowers and foliage. Queensgate II, Feature 85.



d.) Category III. Multicolored decal, "Flying Bluebird and Apple Blossom" design 33 CT 417.



e.) Category IV. Porcelain. Handpainted floral design with gold trim. 33 GR 134.



f.) Category V. Porcelain Stylized "dragon" in green transferprint. 33 GR 134.