

Preserving History Through Archaeology



February 2024
Volume XIII, Issue 2

GWINNETT ARCHAEOLOGY BULLETIN

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From the Vault: Green Shell-Edged Creamware

Every time it rains, I walk around the Fort Daniel site looking for any artifacts that might have surfaced. I do find items, and most of the time I find ceramics pieces. (Maybe cause they are easier to see with the light color!) A couple of years ago during the Frontier Faire one of the biggest intact ceramics ever found at Fort Daniel was discovered in an unit near the Southwest Blockhouse. Significantly, this ceramic piece (*pictured left*) still had its green shell-edged attached.

Ceramics provide an effective means of dating historical sites. Archaeological finds throughout North America have found ceramic pieces dating between 1790 and 1860. White ceramic pieces are often prevalent on American sites and can be categorized into



three types: creamware, pearlware, and whiteware. These three types have specific production date ranges and varying stylistic elements that can help to refine those dates.

to the lead oxide glaze. Creamware began to decline around 1800 when pearlware was introduced and was nonexistent after 1820.

Creamware is the earliest type and was introduced by Josiah Wedgwood in 1762. Cream-colored wares were being produced as early as 1740s, but Wedgwood created a more refined ware—calling it “Queens Ware” after completing a commission for Queen Charlotte in 1765.¹ The creamy color was achieved by adding copper

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EDITOR:

Delana M. Gilmore, MA, RPA
Email: gwinnettarchaeology@gmail.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR:

Jim D’Angelo, PhD RPA
Email: 4drdee@bellsouth.net

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Shell-edged creamware can usually be characterized by the molded rim motifs and painted in blue or green—which both types have been found at Fort Daniel. The term *shell-edge* was used by Staffordshire potters in the 18th century², and these types of wares were one of the most common deco types used on tables throughout the United States. Shell-edged pieces were inspired by 18th century rococo designs on continental porcelain and earthenware.³ The *rococo* decorative style emulated seashells and had asymmetrical or symmetrical, rolled borders.⁴ Wedgwood was the first documented Staffordshire potter to use shell-edge motifs. These earlier examples were generally painted with brush strokes being drawn from the edge creating a feathery appearance.



However, after 1805 it became commonplace to sweep the brush along the edge producing a stripe.⁴

To identify ceramics archaeologists examine both the color and molded decorations. It is almost always impossible to date excavated ceramics using manufacturers' marks. Not only were the great majority of ceramics unmarked, the rims and flat border area of a vessel were not the portion that would contain those impressed marks. Molded motifs display distinct variations through time, however, and archaeologists can date assemblages using these variations. Looking at the green edging of the piece that was found during the Frontier Faire (*closeup of the green edging pictured*

left), we can conclude that it probably dates between 1800-1830s because of the symmetrical scalloped rim with green impressed straight lines edges. ■ DMG

1. "Creamware, Pearlware, and Whiteware." C.A.R.T. Archaeology. February 2024. https://cartarchaeology.wordpress.com/2017/02/17/creamware_to_whiteware/
2. "Edged Earthenwares." Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland. February 2024. <https://apps.jefpat.maryland.gov/diagnostic/Post-Colonial%20Ceramics/Shell%20Edged%20Wares/index-shelledgedwares.html>.
3. Ibid.
4. "Glossary." Diagnostic Artifacts in Maryland. February 2024. <https://apps.jefpat.maryland.gov/diagnostic/Post-Colonial%20Ceramics/Post-Colonial-Glossary.htm#R>.
5. "Shell-edged Pearlware." Saint Mary's University. February 2024. <https://www.smu.ca/anthropology/anthropology-shell-edged-pearlware.html>.

MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE:

If you would like to join or renew your GARS membership, please contact Delana Gilmore; and for FDF membership please contact Cindy Horsley.



More Diggin's

- **New GARS Officers:** During the January Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) meeting new officers were voted in. The new officers are Katie Ahern (Archaeologist at New South Associates) as the President; Josh Herrin (Project Manager/Archaeologist at Brockington and Associates) as Vice President; and Delana Gilmore (Project Manager/Archaeologist at Environmental Corporation of America) as Secretary/Treasurer.
- **Archaeological Dig Opportunity:** GARS members have been given an opportunity to investigate on private property located in Snellville on Saturday, February 24. If you are interested in participating, please email Delana Gilmore by Wednesday, February 22. More in-depth details will be emailed to those who are interested. (Since this is on private property, GARS would like to maintain the privacy of the property owner and the site.)
- **GARS Meeting:** The next in-person Gwinnett Archaeological Research Society (GARS) meeting will be soon at the Fort Daniel Archaeological Park. More details are to follow!
- **Mark Your Calendar:** Upcoming events at Fort Daniel Archaeological Park would be:
 - ⇒ Celebrate Archaeology Month during the *Exploring Archaeology at Fort Daniel* event on Saturday, May 18 from 10AM to 2PM.
 - ⇒ *Fort Daniel Open House* on Sunday, June 23 and Sunday, July 21. More details to come.
 - ⇒ *16th Annual Frontier Faire* See details below.

Defending the Frontier

16th Annual Frontier Faire

Saturday, October 19

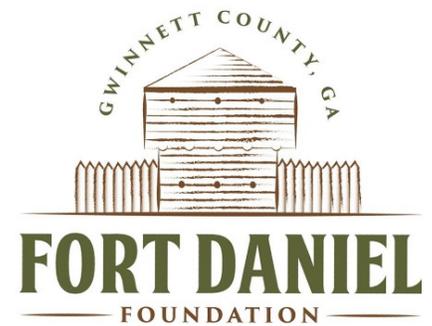
10AM-4PM

Fort Daniel Historic
Site

(2505 Braselton Highway/GA 124, Buford)



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Excavation at New Orleans' St. Louis Cathedral

Excerpt from an article written on the [University of New Orleans Web Site](#) on January 22, 2024

While a brass band played to the delight of tourists who clapped and swayed to the spirited beats that filled the air in Jackson Square one breezy January afternoon, a short distance away, University of New Orleans (UNO) students stood sifting—literally—through the soils of time at St. Louis Cathedral.

The famed cathedral, located in the French Quarter, sits on one of the oldest church sites in North America. The first church constructed on the site dates to the 18th century. University of New Orleans anthropology professor Ryan Gray, who specializes in urban historical archaeology in the city of New Orleans, and his team were examining a portion of the 300-year-old foundation. According to a welcome plaque placed in the vestibule of the main sanctuary, the current cathedral was completed in 1851 and is built over the foundations of a colonial 1727 church. It is the oldest active cathedral in the United States, according to church officials.

As part of a planned restoration project, contractors excavated



two pits to examine the condition of the cathedral's foundation, which was laid in 1849. The Archdiocese of New Orleans requested UNO's archaeological team after contractors came across evidence of much older foundations, Gray said.

The excavated site measures about six feet deep and is located in an interior side foyer. An unusual amount of tiny straight pins was found among the layers, Gray said. He believes these

brass straight pins were used to fashion curtains in the earliest church. In addition, when the team cleaned up the excavations and examined the stratigraphy, they found that the various layers contained a record of the entire 18th century history of the site, Gray said.

“Including renovations to that first church, evidence of the 1788 fire, the reconstruction of the cathedral in 1794, and its expansion into the present version in 1849,” Gray said. “We hope that, by working closely with the contractors on the next excavation, planned to span the front right doorway of the cathedral, we can help refine the chronology of the site in the 18th century and use the layers to think about the social history of this area at the center of the city.” ■ UNO

GARS OFFICERS

www.thegars.org

President: Vice President:
Katie Ahern Josh Herrin
Secretary/Treasurer:
Delana Gilmore

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