

## *‘Like to perish from want of succor or reliefe’: the provisioning of 17th-century Virginia during times of change*

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*SUMMARY:* During the early years of the settlement of Virginia the colonists relied heavily on provisions shipped from England; any breakdown in these supplies could result in hardship. Events which influenced Virginia history, such as the colonial transition from proprietary to royal control (1624), the tobacco depression of the 1630s, the English Civil War (1642–52), the introduction of the Commonwealth system and the passing of the Navigation Acts (1651), undoubtedly caused disconnections, forcing the colonists to rely either on trade with other European countries or on local products.

*This paper explores the possibility of a correlation between these events and changes in the composition of 17th-century artefact assemblages in Virginia. Comparisons of the relative proportions of European and local ceramics and clay pipes on sites dating between the first and the third quarters of the 17th century illustrate how the settlers adapted to meet their need for household goods.*

### INTRODUCTION

During the spring of 1623 Richard Frethorne, an indentured servant in Virginia, penned the letter to his parents in England that provides the quotation in the title of this paper. In the same letter he described the impoverished state of the colony, the loss of his winter clothes which he could not replace, and his desire for ‘some beefe and some Cheese and butter’.<sup>1</sup> He also recorded his fear that the colonists’ few provisions would soon be gone, stressing the importance of the expected arrival of the supply ship *Seaflower*.<sup>2</sup> Unbeknown to Frethorne, the *Seaflower* had been sunk in an accident two weeks earlier, and lay at the bottom of Southampton Harbor, Bermuda.

Letters like Frethorne’s, when combined with other historical sources, are useful for site interpretation in historical archaeology, but sometimes the artefact assemblages tell a different story, raising

new questions about the ways in which the colonists were supplied with goods. The present paper has arisen from a study of the composition of artefact assemblages from recent excavations at James Fort and from previously excavated 17th-century sites in Virginia, and considers whether the changing patterns which are evident when they are compared may be correlated with socio-economic change. It is argued that the changes between the assemblages illustrate the emerging Atlantic trade networks that supported the fledgling colonial enterprise.

In practice, finding usable comparative data on Virginia sites from earlier literature has proved a difficult task. Though reports on past archaeological excavations of 17th-century sites provided much detailed information on past lifeways, they were very specific, creating an environment in which ‘it seemed that every site was different. Every pit and feature yielded artefacts not previously seen. For a time it seemed that no

patterns in the plans of homelots, floor plan, or artefact use would ever emerge'.<sup>3</sup> Despite several decades of archaeological work on Jamestown Island, few attempts have been made to compare assemblages from the collections held by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) with those of the National Park Service; the varied methods of excavation, recording and artefact cataloguing used by the two organizations make comparative studies difficult if not impossible. In order to examine the changing pattern of supply to Virginia in the 17th century, the present paper attempts to re-evaluate some of these old collections.

### METHODOLOGY

In assembling the data for this study, artefact counts and distributions were recorded using a new tool, now in the developmental stage, named *James Cittie and Beyond* (JCAB). This is intended to make easier the comparative study of past archaeological projects by replacing earlier researchers' reliance on site reports, artefact data and maps with a digitally based programme. This will eventually include 24 sites, spanning the 17th century, in a dataset that can be interrogated for specific attributes. JCAB will be presented using a geographic information system (GIS) capable of displaying layers of information such as features, ploughzone distributions, site drawings and photographs. Elements of JCAB include interactive datasets which will form a powerful research tool. By linking the artefact data and metadata to spatial attributes, patterning is shifted from the realm of the static to a dynamic process.

In recording the ceramics, each sherd was attributed to a region of origin, using the broadest possible terms. The types of pottery whose origins were likely to be problematic, such as tin-glazed earthenwares, were classified simply as 'European Unknown'. The principal categories were: Virginia Indian (Contact Period); American (Local colonial); Asian; English; European (Continental); European (Unknown); and Virginia Indian Unknown (Prehistoric). Ceramic pipe data was recorded simply as 'European' (white ball clay) or 'American' (terracotta); clay pipes manufactured in the British Isles were not distinguished from those made in the Netherlands. The authors accept that this classification is simplistic: at this stage the goal of the study is to look at the broadest trends in material change in the region.

Quantification of the ceramics and pipes consisted of a count of the number of sherds and fragments of each category recovered from sealed

features, expressed as a percentage of the total number of ceramics and smoking pipes present in each assemblage. This method was chosen because it allowed the use of some previous analyses; most artefact catalogues used in this survey did not provide a minimum vessel count.

For each of the sites, ceramic and smoking pipe numbers and distributions were generated via Re:discovery, a relational FoxPro database custom-designed for the cataloguing of 17th-century material culture. All artefact assemblages used in this study were recorded in a consistent format, allowing both intra-site and site-to-site comparisons. A lexicon of ceramic and pipe typologies was also prepared, providing a consistent terminology for the sites under study.

The artefact counts for this project come from four sites: James Fort, the 'New Towne' of Jamestown; the George Sandys Site, and the Buck Site (Fig. 1). In chronological order the assemblages analysed were: James Fort Pit 1 (1607–20); the George Sandys Site (all stratified contexts, c. 1630–50); two wells excavated in the 1950s in New Towne, Jamestown (Well 20, c. 1620–50 and Well 21 c. 1625–40) and the Buck Site (all stratified contexts, c. 1630–60). The ceramics and pipes from the two wells at Jamestown were re-catalogued, using the standardized lexicons for artefact characteristics and Re:discovery software.<sup>4</sup> Our work was complemented by recent historical research throwing new light on the identification of property owners, particularly at Jamestown.<sup>5</sup>

### BACKGROUND: HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF JAMESTOWN ISLAND AND ITS ENVIRONS

The archaeological investigations on and around Jamestown Island took place over many years and were undertaken with different methods and recording styles. Work at Jamestown began shortly after 22.5 acres (9.1ha) of the island, including the 17th-century church tower, were given by the Barney family to the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) in 1893.<sup>6</sup> The earliest explorations, such as those of Tyler (at the church site), Yonge (on the Ludwell Statehouse complex after 1901),<sup>7</sup> and architect Henry Chandlee Forman (after 1935–36) used methods that would be judged as primitive by today's standards.<sup>8</sup>

The appointment of archaeologist J.C. Harrington, who supervised work on the Park Service property in 1936–41, was marked by a great improvement in technique: he established a cohesive grid system, and implemented a system

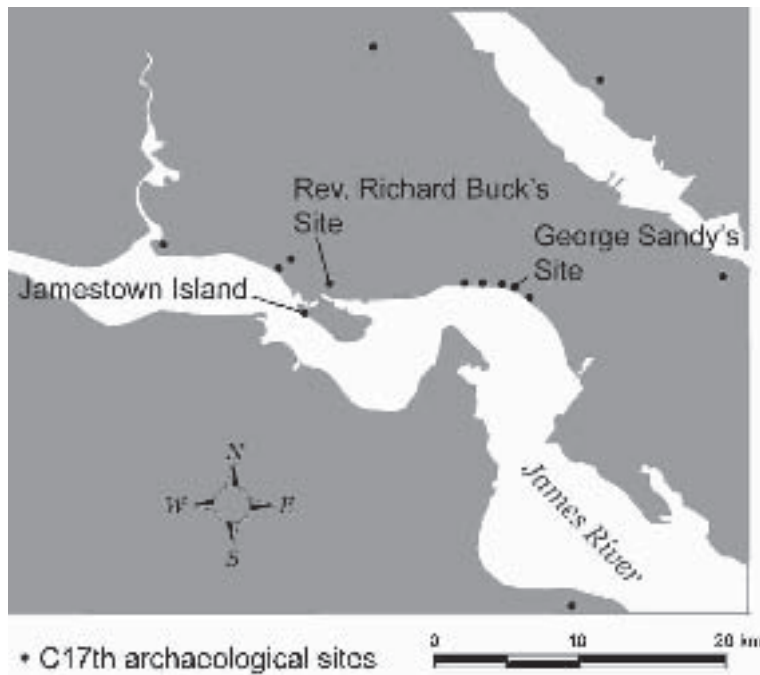


FIG. 1

Map showing the location of sites used in the study (© APVA).

for recording contexts and artefact provenances. Archaeology did not resume until 1954–57 under the direction of John Cotter in preparation for the 1957 Jamestown Anniversary.<sup>9</sup> His tenure was followed by a major report in 1958 that also included the work undertaken by Harrington.<sup>10</sup>

Outside Jamestown, very limited archaeological investigation of 17th-century sites in Tidewater Virginia was carried out before the 1970s, when excavations at Flowerdeew Hundred by Norman Barka,<sup>11</sup> and at Martin's Hundred by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation,<sup>12</sup> prompted archaeologists and historians to evaluate this new-found data in ways Harrington and Cotter had not. Changes in methodology coincided with the emergence of a new generation of excavators who differed from crews of the past: their backgrounds often lay in anthropology or history.<sup>13</sup> At the close of the 1980s, archaeologists had uncovered a number of 17th-century sites in Virginia and Maryland, and were developing a greater understanding of architecture, material culture and excavation strategies. With the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown looming, the focus returned to Jamestown Island.

From 1992–96 the Jamestown Archaeological Assessment (JAA) began; it aimed to re-evaluate

the existing collections, field notes, reports and cultural resources on the National Park Service property.<sup>14</sup> The JAA culled documentary evidence to gain a greater understanding of the use of space in New Towne, and were able to reconstruct far more of the pattern of property ownership than had been achieved previously.<sup>15</sup> The work of the JAA culminated in a multi-volume report which built on the Cotter report, offering much fresh information and new avenues for future research.<sup>16</sup>

While the JAA was in progress, the Jamestown Rediscovery Project directed by William Kelso began in 1994 on the APVA property to search for the James Fort of 1607. The goals of the Rediscovery Project were to '... seek a better understanding of: the extent of the survival, size, construction, and details of the first fortification, including gates, bulwarks, curtain walls, moat, and watch towers; and the first church, statehouse, and "cabins" of the settlers'.<sup>17</sup> Ongoing work on the fort site has worked (and continues to work) towards those original goals.

#### JAMESTOWN ISLAND, JAMES FORT, PIT 1

James Fort Pit 1 (Fig. 2) was a feature measuring 7 × 5m which included five sub-pits dating from

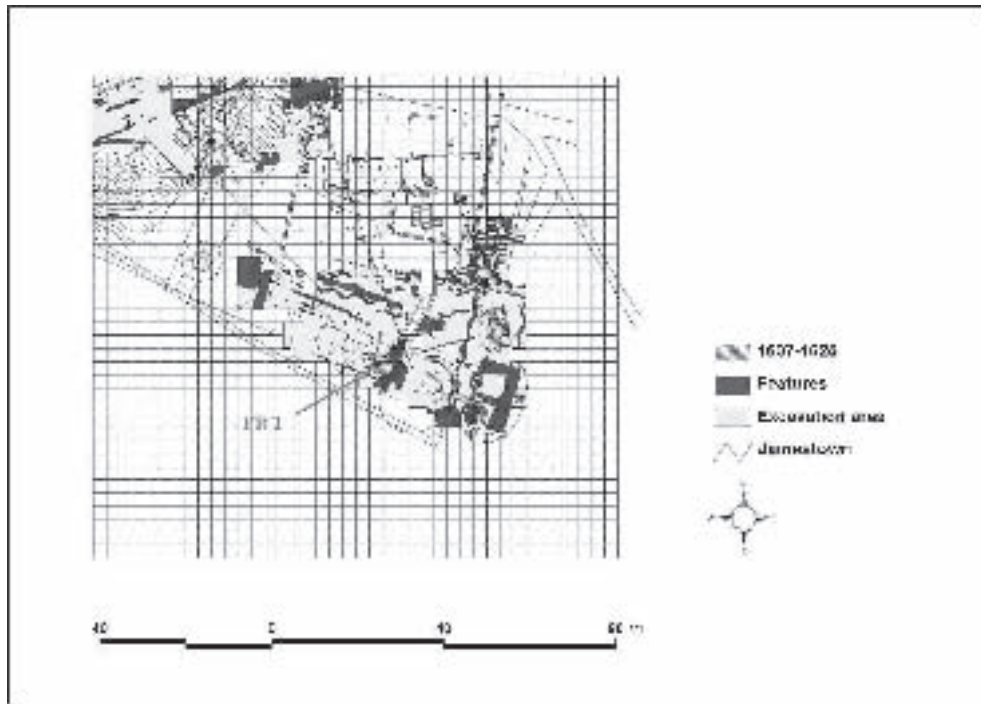


FIG. 2

James Fort: excavation area and location of Pit 1 (© APVA).

1610–20, yielding a vast array of wares. Analyses of the ceramics and tobacco pipes in this context are shown in Figures 3–4. The most striking aspect of the assemblage is the high proportion of locally made products: Native American Contact Period (pre-1610) ceramics far outnumber those from European sources. The presence of Virginia Indian Roanoke simple-stamped pottery provides evidence of the important trade and exchange network between James Fort's inhabitants and their Virginia Indian neighbours, strongly suggesting that provisions from England were scarce. At other James River sites, a similar reliance on Native American ceramics evidently continued into the second quarter of the 17th century: L. Daniel Mouer found that Indian pottery made up a substantial portion of the coarsewares at Jordan's Journey (44PG302) and Pasbehay (44JC298).<sup>18</sup> In James Fort Pit 1 local terracotta tobacco pipes account for 79.2% of those excavated (Fig. 4); there is however one find which may indicate an attempt by a colonist to produce pipes for sale in England (Fig. 5).

In the earliest years of settlement — the period represented by Pit 1 — the Virginia colony was

in large part a London enterprise. Most of the Company's first stockholders were major London investors who had made their fortunes in the established ventures of the Elizabethan era.<sup>19</sup> For example the influential Levant/East India magnate Sir Thomas Smythe was the Virginia Company's first Treasurer, encouraging other city merchants' involvement, and providing much personal funding towards the company's development.<sup>20</sup> Such merchants made up 52.8% of the stockholding membership, and provided almost 60% of the initial investment.<sup>21</sup>

Within a few years the range of people providing financial backing for the Company changed, and its financial position deteriorated; this had an effect on the supply of the colony. Upon realizing that turning a profit in Virginia required the investor to put money into commodity production rather than simply trading for desired goods, many of the major London merchants withdrew, resulting in a fall in Company stock value. As early as 1610, the Virginia Company experienced problems in finding capital to outfit a new voyage to supply the Jamestown colony. Robert Brenner states that between 1609 and 1613, the Virginia Company

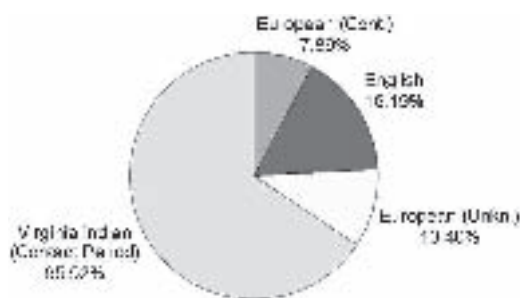


FIG. 3

James Fort, Pit 1: pottery origins (Graphic: David Givens).

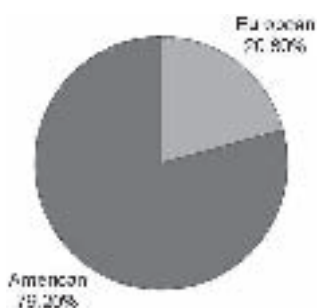


FIG. 4

James Fort, Pit 1: tobacco pipe origins (Graphic: David Givens).

raised £30,000 from stockholders, but only a further c. £6,000 between 1613 and 1619. In contrast with the East India Company, which raised in excess of £2,000,000 between 1609 and 1621, the limited merchant capital in the Virginia Company was acute.<sup>22</sup> By 1614, most of the Company’s assets had fallen into the hands of private contractors, ships’ captains and lesser merchants who had become involved in the colonizing venture through the Company strategy of raising money from lotteries, the sale of debased stock, and the transportation of indentured servants to the colony.<sup>23</sup>

London merchants retained some control of the Virginia Company by developing their involvement in provisioning it. In 1618/19, some of them established a ‘Magazine’<sup>24</sup> for this purpose; it formed a sub-company that brought provisions to the colonists and in return marketed their products. Goods supplied from the Magazine probably make up a significant portion of Pit 1’s European ceramic assemblage.

One notable feature of the assemblage from Pit 1 may be taken as a reflection of the central role of London in supplying the colony: the presence of six vessels of Borderware, the most common coarseware in London in the early 17th century.<sup>25</sup> However, an unexpected aspect of the assemblage is the predominance of continental European ceramics over English ones; the former account for the 7.9% of wares in the feature (Fig. 3). Imported goods arrived in London in large quantities from France, the Netherlands and Germany, as Miller’s study of the city’s early 17th-century Port Books shows,<sup>26</sup> but nevertheless most London ceramics collections of this date are dominated by locally made wares.<sup>27</sup> Excavations of a 17th-century waterfront site in Limehouse, London, occupied by a mariner community, may perhaps offer some insight into the manner in which a London-based enterprise might stock its ships with large quantities of continental ceramics. The Limehouse assemblages contained a high percentage of European wares, as well as more exotic finds; these were different from the predominantly local pottery seen on most urban sites away from the waterfront.<sup>28</sup> If ships bound for Virginia were provisioned from this sort of context, they might well have contained a high proportion of European goods.<sup>29</sup>

OUTWARD EXPANSION

From the successful seating of colonists at James Fort, expansion into the hinterland began with the introduction of tobacco from Trinidad in 1614. Through the cultivation of this crop, a planter could expect a 200% to 300% return, creating Virginia’s first lucrative export commodity.<sup>30</sup> The same year also marked the end of the indenture period for the first Company servants, creating an increase in the freeholding population, which numbered around 81 by the end of the year.<sup>31</sup>

In England, changes in the Virginia Company leadership took place that altered colonial development. Edwin Sandys replaced Sir Thomas Smythe as Treasurer of the Company in 1618. Sandys quickly recognized the dangers of over-dependence on tobacco exports, as well as flaws in the provisioning system. By aggressively planting tobacco, Sandys pointed out, the colonists ‘reduced themselves into an extremity of being ready to starve unless the Magazine had supplied them with corn and cattle from hence’.<sup>32</sup> Sandys fought to control the Company by ousting Smythe and other London merchants; he succeeded in doing so by 1619. Problems of financing the Company soon prompted Sandys to initiate a





FIG. 5

James Fort, Pit 1: locally produced Robert Cotton pipe (© APVA).

tobacco contract with Virginia planters that pushed up the export price, depressing tobacco value and causing suffering in the colony.<sup>33</sup>

Troubles within the Company were overshadowed on 22 March 1622, when an uprising of the local Virginia Indians succeeded in destroying or forcing abandonment of many of the newly established outlying plantations, inflicting about 350 settler casualties.<sup>34</sup> When news of the event reached London, King James I, at the behest of Smythe and his merchant faction, removed Sandys from his position of Treasurer, decreed that tobacco grown in Virginia and Bermuda should be imported directly to London, and set in place the revocation of the company charter and its redrafting in favour of the Smythe faction.<sup>35</sup>

King James I dissolved the Virginia Company in May 1624, but before the Smythe faction could realize its goal of establishing a tobacco monopoly, the death of the king brought their plans to a halt. News of the Company's dissolution was generally

well received in the colony, where the planters had already begun to reclaim the settlements abandoned in 1622.<sup>36</sup> The colonists who had the means to go into the hinterland and plant represented the 'new men' of Virginia society. Having been granted land patents during the Company period, they had planted enough to reap the rewards and either entered into agreements with ships' captains to get their product to London, or purchased vessels of their own. Contractual agreements between factors in London and Virginia planters flourished, creating a reliable system for exporting tobacco.<sup>37</sup>

Those planters who did not have the means to ship their crops were left either to pay exorbitant sums to ship it to London, or alternatively to sell to the Dutch. As early as 1620, the Dutch Company of Merchant Adventurers of Middelburg had been plying the Virginia waterways negotiating contracts to ship tobacco to Europe. Dutch trader David Pietersz de Vries remarked on the

difficulties of operating in this manner, commenting: 'there is no trade for us, unless there be an overplus of tobacco or few English ships.'<sup>38</sup>

The entrance of the Dutch into Chesapeake tobacco shipping worried the planters who dealt directly with London merchants — the so-called Virginia faction. These men involving themselves in colonial politics, emerging as a new class of 'merchant-planter-councillors', described by Brenner as follows:

[They] . . . could not resist taking advantage of their position. They appointed themselves to carry out many of the early missions of trade with the Indians, while prohibiting other colonists from doing so. They extracted monopoly profits by exploiting colonists who had become dependent on suppliers from England as a result of their total concentration on tobacco planting and the still irregular nature of the trade with London.<sup>39</sup>

Artefact counts from the George Sandys Site (1630–50), two Jamestown wells (Wells 20 and 21), and the Revd Richard Buck Site (1630–60) could give some insight into the ways in which the changes of these years, especially the development of tobacco monoculture, impacted upon the household goods of colonists. Analysis of these broadly contemporary assemblages shows considerable variation but they display some points in common (Figs 7, 9, 11–14). A first characteristic is the pronounced decline in the Virginia Indian component of these groups — 14.6% of the total at the Sandys Site, much less in Jamestown and at the Buck Site. A second notable feature is the corresponding growth in American (Local colonial) ceramics. The continental European artefacts may reflect the influence of Dutch tobacco traders operating in the James River. Coupled with the presence of locally made pipes, these could serve as a barometer for colonial adaptation to Dutch trade as traditional English mariners ceased to move the tobacco crops.

Other general trends visible in groups of the second and third quarters of the 17th century are the decline in the quantity of Borderware and the rise of English West Country wares. These changes can be illustrated by the rise of Donyatt-type pottery, which was traded from West Country ports such as Poole, Lyme Regis, Exeter, Dartmouth and Bristol, and first appears in any quantity (admittedly still small) in the second quarter of the century.<sup>40</sup> The large volume of English West Country wares found in New Towne from contexts post-dating the dissolution of the Virginia Company appears to show that ports on England's west coast came to supply much of colonial Virginia's needs.

The rise of these classes of pottery can probably be linked to the breaking of the 'Magazine' control of provisioning from London and a shift to Crown-supported supply,<sup>41</sup> when '... the colonists' market [was] no longer confined to goods transported by ships from London'.<sup>42</sup>

#### THE GEORGE SANDYS SITE (44JC802)

Excavation of the George Sandys Site was carried out in 1996–98 under the direction of APVA Jamestown Rediscovery archaeologists, following testing by the James River Institute for Archaeology in 1992 and 1994.<sup>43</sup> The site was occupied from c. 1630 to c. 1650 — the period following the dissolution of the Company and the depression of the Chesapeake tobacco market. In December 1624, George Sandys, the colony's resident Treasurer (also brother of Company Treasurer Edwin Sandys) patented a 400 acre (162ha) tract 8 miles (13km) east of Jamestown Island (Fig. 6) on a bluff overlooking the James River.<sup>44</sup> Sandys may never have lived on the site; he probably seated some of his indentured servants on the property, which included a well, one dwelling, storehouse and an additional structure, partially enclosed within a palisade.<sup>45</sup> Sandys sold his tract to Edward Grendon some time before 1628. The probable occupier of the property was a merchant, John Wareham, who came into possession of the tract in 1628. Wareham was listed as a representative to the House of Burgesses for 1632/3; other court records associate him with the site until at least 1638.<sup>46</sup> The presence of a storehouse, as well as the site's close proximity to the navigable waters of the James, would have made the property ideal for the shipment of tobacco to Europe in either English or Dutch ships, whilst also serving as a distribution point for European goods.

Analysis of the ceramics from Sandys shows that 52.4% came from Europe including England, with 20.4% specifically attributable to continental Europe and 14.3% of English origin (Fig. 7). Locally produced wares from potters operating at nearby Jamestown and Martin's Hundred account for 32.9% of the ceramic assemblage, indicating a growing dependence on locally-made goods (Fig. 8).

European pipe fragments dominate the assemblage, forming 96.1% of the total, with local American examples forming only 3.9% (Fig. 9). Examination of 28 marked tobacco pipe heels indicates that sixteen are of Dutch origin: seven from ploughzone, the remaining nine from sealed contexts. There are seven identifiable English maker's marks, all from ploughzone. Two of the Dutch pipes, made and used c. 1635–45, were

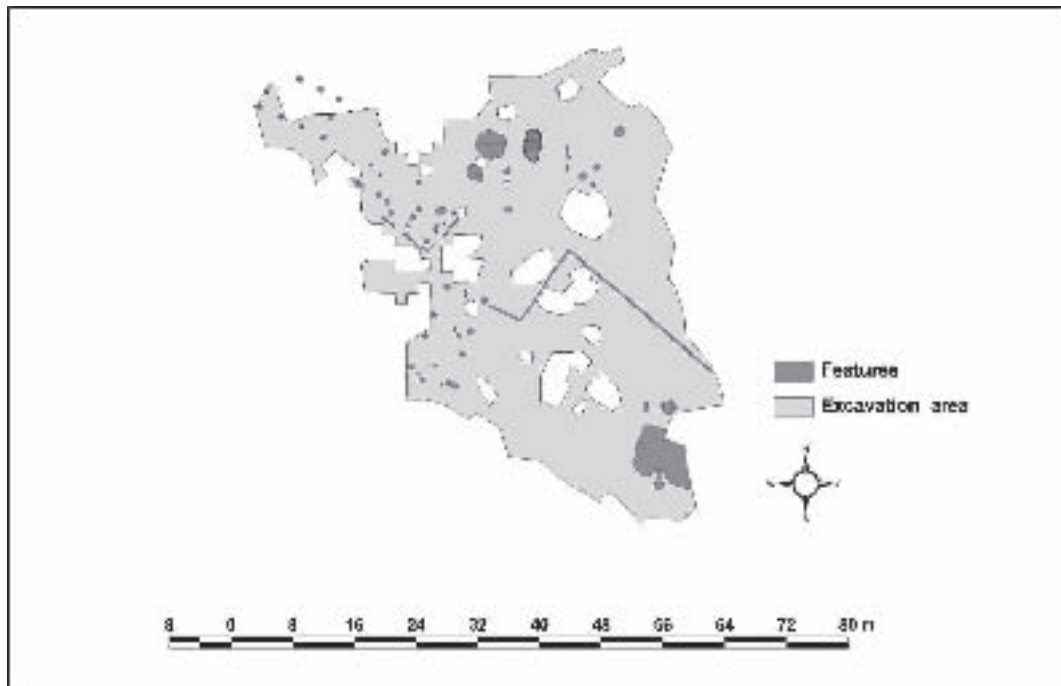


FIG. 6

George Sandys site: excavated area (© APVA).

ornately decorated with floral relief patterns along the stem and bowl (Fig. 10).<sup>47</sup>

The difference between the sources of the ceramics and the pipes can perhaps be explained by new emerging trade networks. By 1633 there were five tobacco warehouses in the colony. The one at Jamestown would have been close enough to serve the Sandys tract and so would have been the point to which the annual crop was to be brought for export each December.<sup>48</sup> Virginia law stipulated that:

All incoming ships had to land first at Jamestown, where all transactions involving tobacco had to be conducted. Ships' officers were to provide lists of the goods they were bringing in, which were presented to officials at Jamestown. All incoming goods (except ships' passengers' belongings) had to be off-loaded at Jamestown. Imported goods and merchandise were bartered and sold there with the obligatory involvement of the community's merchants and storekeepers.<sup>49</sup>

Despite the legislation attempting to control mariner's activities, traffic between hinterland planters and New Amsterdam factors increased from the 1630s to the 1650s.<sup>50</sup>

#### JAMESTOWN ISLAND, NEW TOWNE, WELL 20

Well 20 was excavated in 1955 during John Cotter's stint as chief archaeologist on the Park Service Property.<sup>51</sup> Seven feet (2.1m) of well fill were dug;<sup>52</sup> the bottom was never reached.<sup>53</sup> Cotter assigned it a date range of 1620–50 based on European tobacco pipe stems; this dating was further substantiated during artefact re-analysis by the JAA.<sup>54</sup> The well lies in New Towne, east of James Fort. The recent re-examination of early land patents has shown that the property was occupied by John Jackson, whose ownership of the tract ceased by 1638.<sup>55</sup> In 1638 the half-acre (0.2ha) tract was allotted to Dutch merchants Derek and Arent Corstenstam.<sup>56</sup> Two years later, the Corstenstams negotiated tobacco contracts



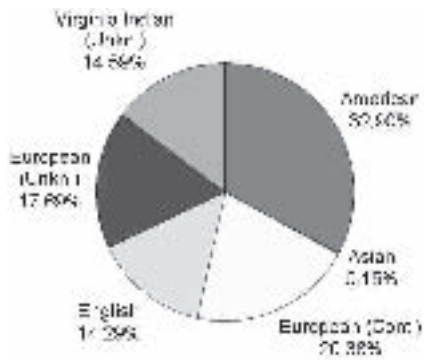


FIG. 7

George Sandys site: pottery origins (Graphic: David Givens).

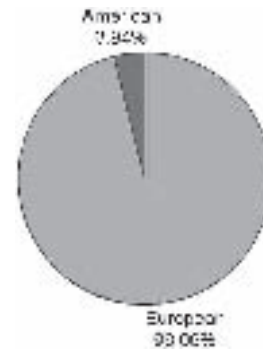


FIG. 9

George Sandys site: tobacco pipe origins (Graphic: David Givens).



FIG. 8

Vessels recovered from George Sandys site . (© APVA).



FIG. 10  
George Sandys site: Dutch tobacco pipe bowls  
(© APVA).

with planters in the Tidewater, shipping 27,215kg of tobacco to Holland — a higher volume than any English shipper.<sup>57</sup>

The Corstenstams' business ties served them well as tobacco factors. For example, the planter Nathaniel Littleton permitted the Dutchmen to use a portion of his land as well as his boats to collect tobacco from other area planters. The Corstenstams reciprocated by allowing Littleton to purchase goods at special prices,<sup>58</sup> perhaps enabling planters to acquire European goods that would not have been available to them otherwise.

The ceramic counts from the well (Fig. 11) indicate a strong local American presence (67.1%), followed by continental European material (26.6%). (The local American wares may have been products of potters working on Jamestown Island.) European pipes, on the other hand, far outweighed local ones (Fig. 12), suggesting perhaps a more limited use of the latter in the 'urban' setting of Jamestown than in the hinterland. If the deposits in Well 20 do indeed represent the merchant activities of the Corstenstams, the paucity of English artefacts is not surprising.

The impending tobacco depression was brought on by a glut in the English market, causing a fall in tobacco prices from between twelve and 36 pence per pound in early 1620 to one penny per pound in 1630. With tobacco used as colonial currency, its marginalized value made it difficult to purchase goods from England.

When Crown-appointed Governor Sir John Harvey was installed in 1630, he intended to limit dependence on the provisioning and shipping syndicate operated by the merchant-planter-councillor faction. Harvey supported free trade with the Dutch, who had helped some of the planters return to a relative state of prosperity<sup>59</sup>

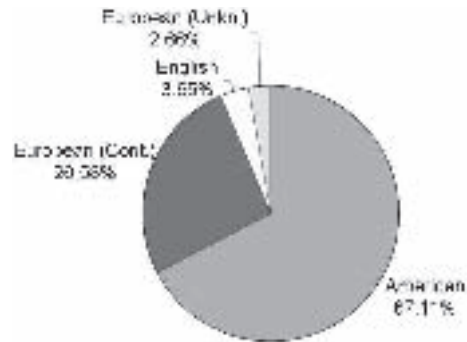


FIG. 11  
New Towne, Jamestown, Well 20: pottery origins  
(Graphic: David Givens).



FIG. 12  
New Towne, Jamestown, Well 20: tobacco pipe origins  
(Graphic: David Givens).

with their willingness to buy in bulk and grant credit, in addition to the regular arrival of trading fleets. In 1632, in an attempt to revive the tobacco boom, the Virginia House of Burgesses '... forbade anyone to buy English goods at a rate less than one pound of tobacco for every sixpence that goods cost in England'.<sup>60</sup>

#### JAMESTOWN ISLAND, NEW TOWNE, WELL 21

The barrel-lined Well 21 was excavated by John Cotter and others in 1956;<sup>61</sup> the feature has recently been shown to lie within the George Menefie lot.<sup>62</sup> An early reaper of the tobacco boom, Menefie had risen to power as Merchant for James City in 1620, continuing in that post until 1637.<sup>63</sup> He grew rich by establishing partnerships with London-based merchants, as well as serving in various municipal

bodies.<sup>64</sup> An early New Towne patentee, Menifie was given a lot of  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an acre (0.35ha) fronting the James River, adjacent to lots occupied by other colonial merchants.<sup>65</sup> The ceramics recovered indicate use in the second quarter of the 17th century, with Harrington pipe stem bore dating of 1625–40.<sup>66</sup>

English ceramics formed 39.5% of sherds in Well 21 (Fig. 13). This quite high percentage could be linked with Menifie’s involvement with London merchants who provisioned voyages to the colony. From the 1620s until the 1640s Menifie is listed as a partner with the London-based merchants Samuel Vassall and Peter Andrews in the Virginia tobacco trade.<sup>67</sup> The high percentage of European pipes in the well (87%) is probably related to Menifie’s involvement in the tobacco trade with Europe (Fig. 14).

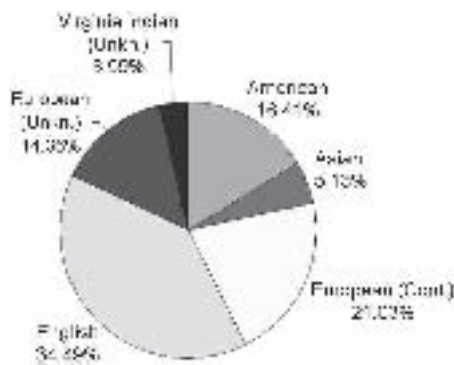


FIG. 13

New Towne, Jamestown, Well 21: pottery origins (Graphic: David Givens).



FIG. 14

New Towne, Jamestown, Well 21: tobacco pipe origins (Graphic: David Givens).

In her discussion of the major merchants of the colony such as Menifie, McCartney commented, ‘efforts should be made to learn more about their activities at Jamestown and the trading work of which they were part’.<sup>68</sup> Menifie and other merchant-planter-councillors espoused interests that opposed Governor Harvey’s policies, undermining his authority while turning large profits. In April 1635 Harvey was ‘thrust out’ of his governorship by the merchant-planter-councillors, but not before he had been coerced into signing a tobacco contract with them. In a letter to the Privy Council, Harvey urged them to ‘take into your grave consideration why Mr [Thomas] Stone, Maurice Thomson, and Capt. [William] Tucker cannot afford to allow a penny per pound of tobacco when our intruding neighbors the Dutch do allow us eighteen pence per pound in the same commodity’. Harvey lamely justified approving the contract by saying it was better to give those men who already had ‘the greatest trade of all others in that commodity’ an official monopoly at a negotiated price than to allow them to continue to use their powerful market position to extract exorbitant profits from the planters.<sup>69</sup>

Passage of the faction-backed tobacco contract served to increase the frustrations felt by the majority of planters in Virginia. It also fostered a growth in the trade with the Dutch; Pagan documented a marked rise in Dutch shipping and commercial interests in Virginia following the outbreak of the English Civil War in 1642.<sup>70</sup>

Virginians living on the Eastern Shore and the south side of the James River vociferously supported Dutch trade, as the Dutch factors provided a reliable means of moving their lower-grade tobacco.<sup>71</sup> Many of these planters became local elites through this traffic, making up the voices in the Virginia Assembly who ‘... explicitly protected Dutch trade’ in 1643, ‘reflecting its realization that diverse markets and shippers would be crucial during the upheavals then beginning’.<sup>72</sup> Equally important to Chesapeake planters, the Dutch were the chief suppliers of slaves to the colony prior to the passage of the Navigation Acts.<sup>73</sup>

ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE REVEREND RICHARD BUCK SITE (44JC568)

Civil war in England coincided with the main phase of occupation at the Buck Site, which lies about 3km north-east of Jamestown (Fig. 15). Located during survey in 1990, the site was excavated by APVA Jamestown Rediscovery archaeologists during 1996–97.<sup>74</sup> Since it was threatened by impending suburban development, open area

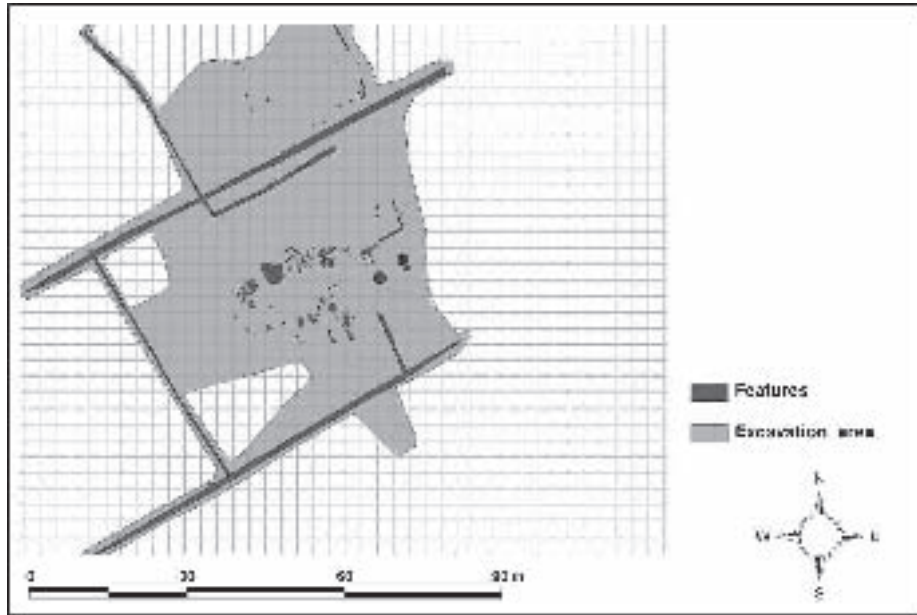


FIG. 15

Excavated area of Buck site (Graphic: David Givens).

excavation was employed, funded by the APVA and Virginia Department of Historic Resources Threatened Sites Program.<sup>75</sup>

The excavation was carried out within a 750 acre (303ha) area known as 'Neck-of-Land' which was originally patented by Jamestown's third resident minister, Revd Richard Buck.<sup>76</sup> Ownership of the tract changed through the 17th century, and 'during the post-Uprising expansion era, c. 1623–50, Neck-of-Land developed into a most "self-sufficient suburb" of Jamestown with 145 people, 31 dwellings, 6 stores, 4000 pounds of fish, more bushels of corn than Jamestown, 32 cattle, 55 swine and 15 goats'.<sup>77</sup> The property was probably never occupied by Revd Buck himself, but given to his six surviving children, who were placed under guardianship until they reached maturity. In 1635, Thomas Crump, husband of Buck's eldest daughter Elizabeth, patented 500 acres (202ha) north of the original Buck tract of 1619.

Open area excavation conducted on a portion of the site located three barrel-lined wells, nine burials and four earth-fast 'sheds' demarcated by a series of ditches.<sup>78</sup> The excavated area apparently lay centrally in the 1635 Crump patent, where, in the period c. 1630–50, tenants and indentured servants of the Buck children or guardians 'most likely worked this farmstead, digging ditches

and wells, cultivating adjacent fields, maintaining livestock, erecting buildings and thus contributing to Neck-of-Land's . . . prominence'.<sup>79</sup>

The artefacts from the Buck Site are explicable in terms of a change in trading patterns in which shipping from England was hampered by the country's civil war. Among the ceramics represented in the assemblage, 52.5% of sherds were of local manufacture (Fig. 16), as were 80% of

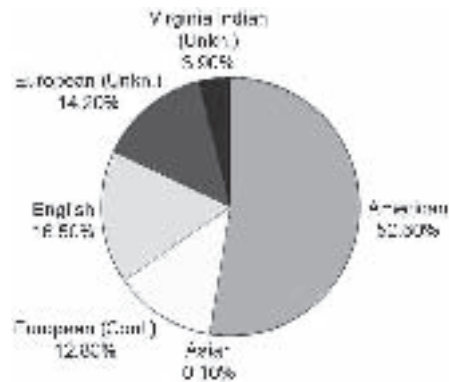


FIG. 16

Buck site: pottery origins (Graphic: David Givens).

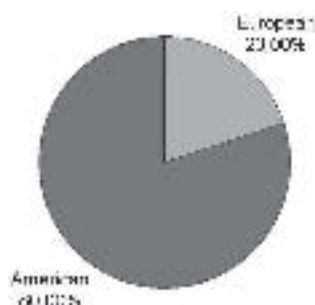


FIG. 17

Buck site: tobacco pipe origins (Graphic: David Givens).

in large part from Dutch vessels which appeared with growing regularity to move the burgeoning tobacco crops during the 1640s and 50s.

Lending some support to the notion of an increased Dutch presence in the Buck collection is the base of a Chinese porcelain wine cup dating to c. 1613–44 (Fig. 21).<sup>81</sup> This find from a sealed context mirrors examples from the wreck of the Dutch East Indiaman *Witte Leuw*, which sank off of the island of St Helena in 1613. In a study of Chinese export porcelain in Tidewater Virginia, Julie Curtis suggested that:

In the absence of direct documentary evidence explaining how the early Chinese



FIG. 18

Locally produced bowl recovered from the Buck site (Photo: © APVA).

the tobacco pipes — a strikingly high percentage (Fig. 17). The Pasbehay Tenement (c. 1630–45), a few kilometers away from the Buck Site, had an assemblage consisting almost exclusively of ceramics and pipes made in the colony (Figs 18–19). The excavators interpreted this as evidence of the depressed tobacco market and limited ‘investment capability’.<sup>80</sup> The European manufactured goods encountered at Buck (Fig. 20) probably came

export porcelain got to the earliest settlements in Virginia, the sum of circumstantial evidence indicates that the Dutch traders in the Colony were responsible for its transshipment to Virginia. . . . The striking resemblance between the export ware found on the *Witte Leuw* and the majority of the types found at the archaeological sites in the James River basin supports this explanation.<sup>82</sup>





FIG. 19

Locally produced tobacco pipes from the Buck site (Photo: © APVA).

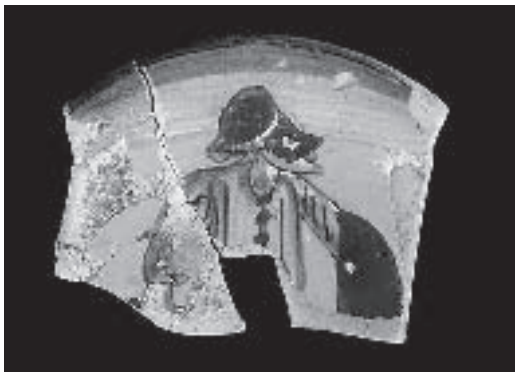


FIG. 20

Montelupo sherd from the Buck site (Photo: © APVA).

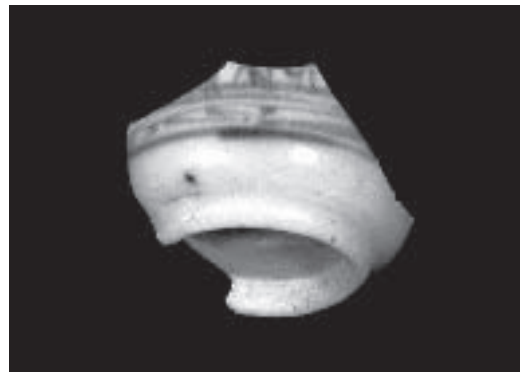


FIG. 21

Base of a Chinese wine cup from the Buck site (Photo: © APVA).

Through the period of the English Civil War, Virginia's Royalist-leaning burgesses approved an act allowing Dutch factors and merchants to bring goods for sale to Virginia, as well as shipping the commodities of the colony.<sup>83</sup> Not only were the Dutch encouraged to come to Virginia, but Virginians also trafficked with the Dutch colonies. For example, records of the Dutch West India Company indicate that in 1646 many Virginia ships were conducting business in Curacao.<sup>84</sup>

In order to gain control of pro-Royalist Virginia, Oliver Cromwell's government, on the advice of London merchants, coerced Governor Berkeley to surrender the colony to Parliament. Item 7 of the surrender terms paved the way for the implementation of the Navigation Acts, granting the colonists 'free trade as the people of England do enjoy to all places with all nations according to the laws of that commonwealth'. The phrasing put the best possible face on the fact that, despite their previous reliance on Dutch merchants to keep the tobacco trade free from monopoly, Virginians were to comply with the new Navigation Acts.<sup>85</sup> With the surrender terms signed, a victory had been won for the merchant-planter-councillor faction, driving out Dutch competition in the Chesapeake.

A final factor which may be evident in mid-17th-century assemblages such as that from the Buck Site is the impact of Opecancannough's War (1644–46), an uprising by the Virginia Indians that ravaged outlying settlements, accounting for several hundred colonist deaths, and created a strain on the Virginia economy. The House of Burgesses responded by opening up free trade with 'all-comers', regardless of their nationality or political affiliation.<sup>86</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

The study has shown that the artefact counts generated from the JCAB dataset, focusing on broad trends in material culture, are capable of yielding important information about local and foreign trading patterns: both broad chronological trends and local variations are visible in the data. While correlations with historical changes have been given consideration in accounting for these variations, various other approaches deserve exploration. These include comparison of assemblages from different types of settlement (e.g. urban or rural), people of different status, or different site functions. The significance of site location and the study of proximity to the colonial capital also deserve further work. The significance of this factor was tested on a limited basis by

L. Daniel Mouer in a 'core versus periphery' investigation of the material culture of a few late 17th-century James River sites.<sup>87</sup> As Brown and Edwards pointed out,<sup>88</sup> however, Mouer's work was compromised by the incompatibility of data from different sites. The approach described here could probably be applied to the most basic finds lists, making possible a study like Mouer's.

It should again be emphasized that information from other sites needs to be incorporated before more concrete conclusions can be drawn. We plan to expand our research first by examining broad trends and then by addressing more specific questions. The first approach could throw light on the changing pattern of shipping; the second could pinpoint more specifically the English and continental European ports supplying Virginia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kingsbury 1909, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Kingsbury 1909, 42.

<sup>3</sup> Mallios & Straube 1999, 10.

<sup>4</sup> Hudgins 1993, 175.

<sup>4</sup> Artefacts from Well 20 and 21 were recatalogued in 2002 by Merry Outlaw using the same system as the Jamestown Rediscovery Project. This work was carried out as part of a test to integrate collections held by the National Park Service into the JCAB dataset.

<sup>5</sup> Notably McCartney 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Cotter 1958, 1; Horna 2005, 15.

<sup>7</sup> Cotter 1958, 1.

<sup>8</sup> Forman 1938, ix; Horna 2005, 16.

<sup>9</sup> Cotter 1958, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Cotter 1958.

<sup>11</sup> Deetz 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Noël Hume 1982.

<sup>13</sup> Hudgins 1993, 171–2.

- <sup>14</sup> Horning & Wehner 2001, 7.  
<sup>15</sup> Horning & Wehner 2001, 8.  
<sup>16</sup> Horning & Edwards 2000; Horning & Wehner 2001; McCartney 2000; Carson *et al.* 2004.  
<sup>17</sup> Kelso 1995, 11.  
<sup>18</sup> Mouer 1993, 114.  
<sup>19</sup> Brenner 1993, 51.  
<sup>20</sup> Brenner 1993, 96.  
<sup>21</sup> Rabb 1967, 57.  
<sup>22</sup> Brenner 1993, 97.  
<sup>23</sup> Brenner 1993, 94.  
<sup>24</sup> 'The "Magazine" was dominated by representatives of the Virginia Company's merchant leadership. Its directorship included Sir Thomas Smythe, at various times governor of the East India, Muscovy, French, and Somers Island companies, as well as Lord Mayor of London; Robert Johnson, Smythe's son-in-law and a director in both the Levant and East India companies, and a London alderman; Sir John Wostenholme, one of London's leading financiers and later an East India Company director; William Essington, a leading Merchant Adventurer and a son of a Lord Mayor of London; and William Canning, another important Merchant Adventurer, as well as deputy governor of the Bermuda Company and several times master of Ironmongers.' Brenner 1993, 98.  
<sup>25</sup> Pearce 1999, 247.  
<sup>26</sup> Miller 1927, 752.  
<sup>27</sup> Jacqui Pearce, pers. comm.  
<sup>28</sup> Killock & Meddens 2005, 16.  
<sup>29</sup> For London's role as a redistributor of north European ceramics see Allan 1999, 286.  
<sup>30</sup> Kukla 1979, 21.  
<sup>31</sup> Kukla 1979, 19.  
<sup>32</sup> Brenner 1993, 95.  
<sup>33</sup> Brenner 1993, 99.  
<sup>34</sup> Mallios 2000, 15.  
<sup>35</sup> Brenner 1993, 215; Kukla 1979, 72.  
<sup>36</sup> McCartney 2000, 65.  
<sup>37</sup> Brenner 1993, 103–5, 115; Pagan 1982, 485; Kukla 1979, 34.  
<sup>38</sup> Pagan 1982, 486.  
<sup>39</sup> Brenner 1993, 118.  
<sup>40</sup> Coleman-Smith *et al.* 2005, 302.  
<sup>41</sup> Luccchetti & Straube 1995, 22.  
<sup>42</sup> Straube & Luccchetti 1996, 22.  
<sup>43</sup> Mallios 2000, 9.  
<sup>44</sup> Mallios 2000, 11, 17.  
<sup>45</sup> Mallios 2000, 24.  
<sup>46</sup> Mallios 2000, 21, 66.  
<sup>47</sup> Mallios 2000, 70–2.  
<sup>48</sup> McCartney 2000, 87.  
<sup>49</sup> McCartney 2000, 87.  
<sup>50</sup> Schnurmann 1999, 188; McCartney 2000, 87.  
<sup>51</sup> Horning & Wehner 2001, 18  
<sup>52</sup> Horning & Wehner 2001, 18.

- <sup>53</sup> Carson *et al.* 2004, 334.  
<sup>54</sup> Cotter 1958, 62; Carson *et al.* 2004, 334; Horning & Edwards 2000, 46–7; Wehner 2006.  
<sup>55</sup> Carson *et al.* 2004, 47.  
<sup>56</sup> McCartney 2000, 67.  
<sup>57</sup> Pagan 1982, 488.  
<sup>58</sup> Pagan 1982, 487.  
<sup>59</sup> Kupp 1973, 654.  
<sup>60</sup> Morgan 1974, 134.  
<sup>61</sup> Cotter 1958, 158; Carson *et al.* 2004, 336.  
<sup>62</sup> Like the Corstenstam lot, the projected Menefie lot has a description and ownership history: McCartney 2000, 66 & 330.  
<sup>63</sup> McCartney 2000, 66.  
<sup>64</sup> Brenner 1993, 185; McCartney 2000, 86.  
<sup>65</sup> McCartney 2000, 66.  
<sup>66</sup> Cotter 1958, 210.  
<sup>67</sup> Brenner 1993, 185.  
<sup>68</sup> McCartney 2000, 330.  
<sup>69</sup> Brenner 1993, 131.  
<sup>70</sup> Pagan 1982, 491.  
<sup>71</sup> Schnurman 1999, 189.  
<sup>72</sup> Hatfield 1999, 206.  
<sup>73</sup> Hatfield 1999, 208.  
<sup>74</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 3.  
<sup>75</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 5.  
<sup>76</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 18.  
<sup>77</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 9.  
<sup>78</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 21–5.  
<sup>79</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 63.  
<sup>80</sup> Outlaw 1990, 79.  
<sup>81</sup> Mallios & Fesler 1999, 41.  
<sup>82</sup> Curtis 1985, 13. It should be noted, however, that since Curtis published, evidence has accumulated for the use of Ming porcelain in some parts of Britain (possibly restricted), notably London's waterfront sites and some of the ports of south-west England: Killock & Meddens 2005; Allan 1996, 202. These also include parallels to the *Witte Leuw* finds.  
<sup>83</sup> Brenner 1993, 586.  
<sup>84</sup> Hatfield 1999, 206.  
<sup>85</sup> Kukla 1979, 162.  
<sup>86</sup> Pagan 1982, 492.  
<sup>87</sup> Edwards & Brown 1993, 290.  
<sup>88</sup> Edwards & Brown 1993, 290.

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# Author Query

Title: *'Like to perish from want of succor or relieve'*: the provisioning of 17th-century Virginia during times of change

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