

RESEARCH BULLETIN DE RECHERCHES

SERVICE DES LIEUX HISTORIQUES NATIONAUX

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES SERVICE

No. 13

March 1973

TIN-GLAZED EARTHENWARE FROM THE MACHAULT

From 1969 to 1972 the National Historic Sites Service of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa, carried out underwater excavations of the French shipwreck Machault at the site of the Battle of Restigouche. The site is located at the mouth of the Restigouche River in Chaleur Bay between the provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec.

The Machault was the flagship of a convoy of supply ships which departed Bordeaux in April 1760 to aid Montreal during the final months of the Seven Years' War. The three primary supply ships and a number of smaller vessels which reached Canada were sunk at the Restigouche River in July, 1760, during the last naval engagement of the war. The Machault and Bienfaisant were abandoned and blown up by the French commander. The Marquis-de-Malauze was captured and burned by the British.

DIRECTION DES PARCS NATIONAUX ET DES LIEUX HISTORIQUES
NATIONAL AND HISTORIC PARKS BRANCH

MINISTERE DES AFFAIRES INDIENNES ET DU NORD CANADIEN
DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS AND NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

The cargo excavated from the Machault includes a large amount of ceramics. The bulk is made up of coarse earthenwares which have recently been studied by K.J. Barton, Director of the Portsmouth City Museums, England. Chinese export porcelain is also abundant. Other ceramics include a relatively small but interesting collection of tin-glazed earthenware.

The tin-glazed earthenware from the Machault is briefly described in this bulletin. A final report will eventually be published in Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History (National Historic Sites Service, Ottawa). In the meantime, it is hoped that the examples of tin-glazed earthenware illustrated here might be of interest for comparative purposes, especially in view of the precise dating of the artifacts.

The tin-glazed earthenware from the Machault can be divided into two groups. First, there is a group of 158 blue-decorated bowls which were part of the cargo. The second group consists of the remaining tin-glazed earthenware which includes such vessels as plates, platters, bowls, chamber pots, ointment pots and brown kitchenware. Fragments in this diverse material represent about 25 objects which were probably in use or were private possessions on the ship.

In the photographs which follow, the blue painted designs will often appear much darker than normal. Some of the blue designs on the tin-glazed earthenware have turned black or brown. This discolouration could be due in part to the burning of the ship or to a chemical reaction with pollutants such as sulphides in the water at Chaleur Bay.

Illustrations

1-4 Two examples from the group of 158 tin-glazed earthenware bowls are shown here. Figs. 1-3 consist of two side views, a drawing and an interior view of one bowl. Fig. 4 is an interior view of second bowl. (Artifact 2M6A2-4, 2M9B2-5)

The chinese style bowls are decorated with a dragon appearing on the exterior side and on the inside centre. In addition there is a quatrefoil design with scrolls on the side.

The designs are painted in medium blue and dark blue over a pale blue glaze. The scroll lines, which are in relief, were achieved by scratching away the dark blue to expose the lighter glaze underneath, a sgraffito technique.

The bowls, which have a buff-coloured fabric, were fired upside down in the kiln as indicated by saggar-peg scars on the rim. Turning striations can also be seen on the body where the glaze has flaked off. The bowls are hemispherical in shape and have short upright footrings. The bases were the only portions of the fragile bowls which remained relatively intact.

In general the bowl rim diameters measure roughly twice that of the footring. One reconstructable bowl has a footring diameter of 7 cm., a rim diameter of

14 cm., and stands 6.5 cm. high. A larger bowl has a footring diameter of 11 cm., a rim diameter of 22 cm., and stands 10 cm. high.

The bowls are divided into five distinct size groups on the basis of average footring diameters: 6 cm. (71 bowls); 7 cm. (67 bowls); 8.5 cm. (12 bowls); 10.1 cm. (6 bowls) and 11.6 cm. (2 bowls) for a total of 158 bowls.

The dragon bowls from the Machault are unlike any tin-glazed earthenware excavated to date in Canada. A similarity to some Dutch delftware has been noted but there is strong evidence of an English origin.

Dorothy Griffiths, of the National Historic Sites Service staff, has pointed out stylistic relationships in decoration with some Bow (London) and Liverpool porcelain. The use of the sgraffito technique seems to be more common on Liverpool tin-glaze than on Lambeth, but a point in favour of a Lambeth origin is that these earthenware bowls were fired upside-down in the kiln, which seems to be a more common feature of Lambeth than anywhere else in England.

- 5 This is a French faience plate which is decorated in blue with a wavy line around the rim and a small geometric motif in the centre. It has a buff fabric and white glaze. The shape and border design are similar to plates from other sites excavated by the National Historic Sites Service. This type of plate

has been designated as Variety B2 for cataloguing purposes. (Artifact 2M9B1-2)

6 This is a fragment from a French faience plate decorated with a blue band around the rim. It has a buff fabric and slightly bluish glaze. Plates with this decoration and shape (Variety B1) are often found at 18th-century French sites in Canada. (Artifact 2M21B1-1)

7 This is a rim fragment from a French faience plate with blue decoration. It has a buff fabric and white glaze. There is a border design of lace-like lambrequins in the style of Moustiers faience. (Artifact 2M105E1-1)

8-9 These are two rim fragments from a French faience bowl with blue decoration. It has a pinkish buff fabric and white glaze. The border design has a band containing curved lines and dots. (Artifact 2M4C1-1)

10-11 These are two rim fragments from a French faience tureen lid with blue decoration. It has a buff fabric and white glaze. The border decoration is in the style of Moustiers. (Artifact 2M105D1-1)

- 12 This is a rim of a blue-decorated French faience platter. It has a buff fabric and white glaze. There is a lambrequin border design. (Artifact 2M99A4-1)
- 13 This is a rim fragment from a French faience platter with blue decoration. It has a reddish fabric and a greenish white glaze. (Artifact 2M103E1-1)
- 14 This is a rim fragment from a platter similar to that in Fig. 13. (Artifact 2M99A4-3)
- 15 This is a rim fragment from an unidentified dish with orange decoration. The vessel which has a buff fabric and white glaze has been moulded with fluted sides. There are floral designs on the border. (Artifact 2M45A1-1)
- 16-20 These are fragments from an unidentified hollow-ware object which could be a jug. The object is decorated with floral and geometric designs painted orangish yellow. It has a pinkish buff fabric and white glaze. Fig. 16 is a rim fragment. Figs. 17-18 are fragments from a cylindrical neck. Fig. 19 is a fragment from the rounded body portion. Fig. 20 is a handle. (Artifact 2M6B3-1)

- 21 This is a base and side fragment of a French faience chamber pot. It has a buff fabric and white glaze. The base is unglazed and flat. (Artifact 2M99A4-4)
- 22 This is a fragment of a pharmaceutical jar with a wide everted rim. It has a buff fabric and bluish white glaze. (Artifact 2M1A3-1)
- 23-24 These are rim and base fragments from a cylindrical ointment pot. It has a sandy-textured buff fabric and a pinkish white glaze. (Artifact 2M2A3-1)
- 25 This is a rim fragment of a brown faience bowl. It has an orange fabric. The exterior shown here is covered with a dark brown lead glaze. The interior is covered with the ordinary tin-glaze which is greenish white on this example. Some of the light-coloured glaze has streaked the outside. Brown faience which was made primarily for kitchen use is common at 18th-century sites in Canada. (Artifact 2M105C1-1)
- 26 This is a base fragment from a brown faience bowl. The interior is shown here. There is footring on the bottom. (Artifact 2M1C2-1)

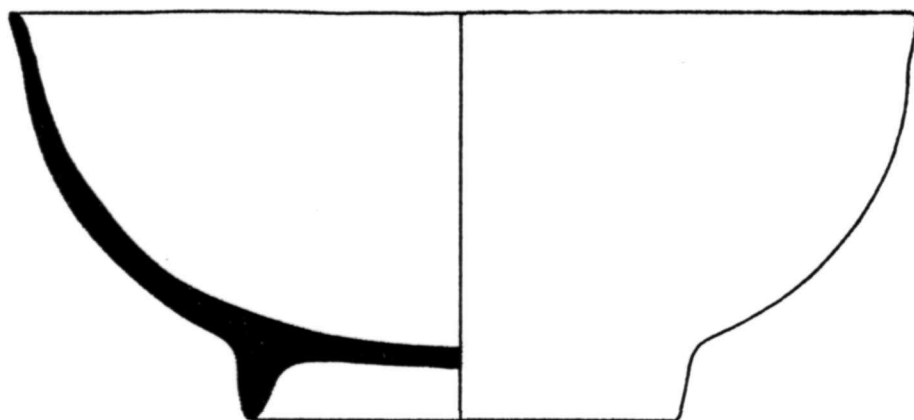
George A. Long,
Archaeological Research Section,
Research Division.



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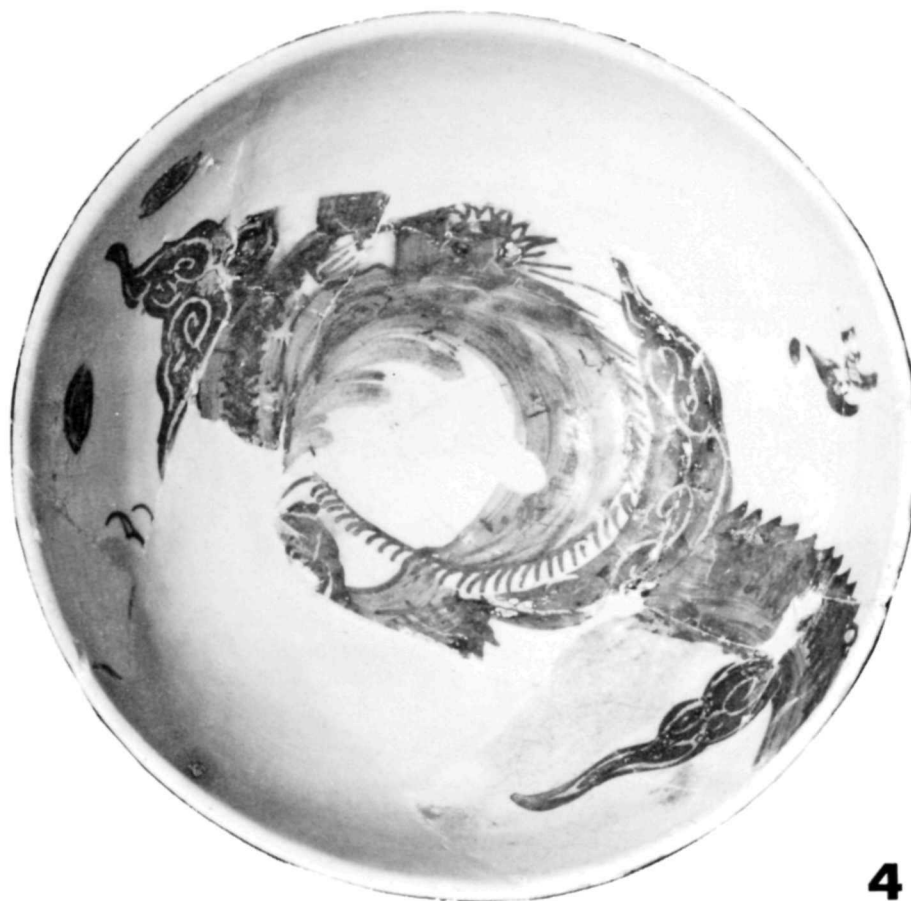
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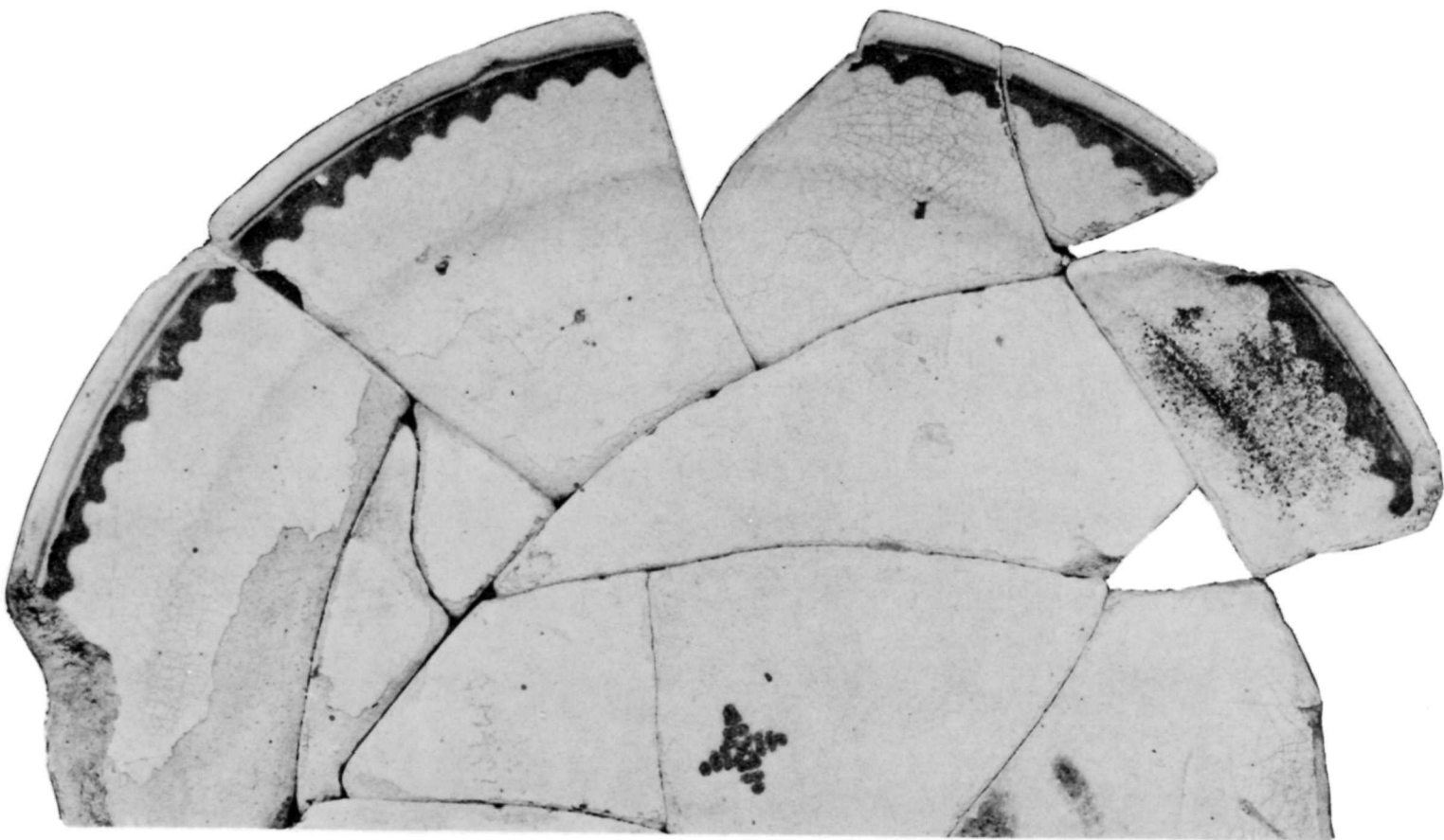


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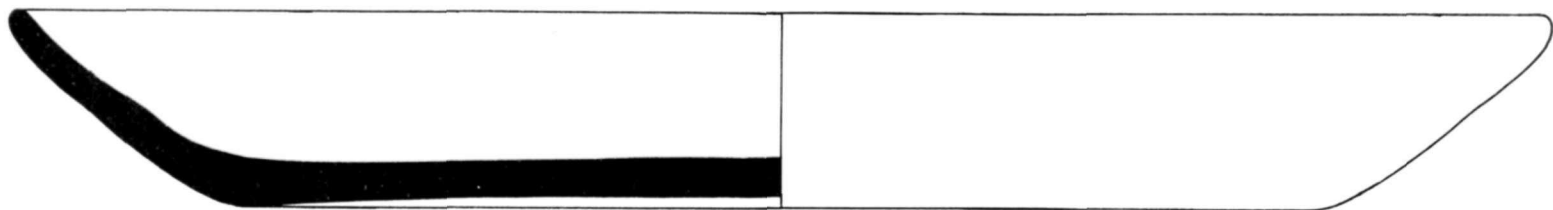


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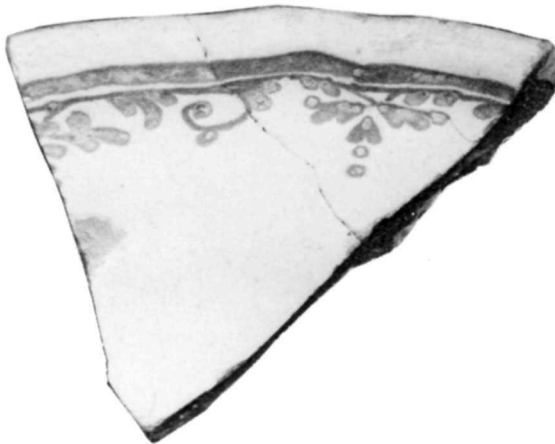
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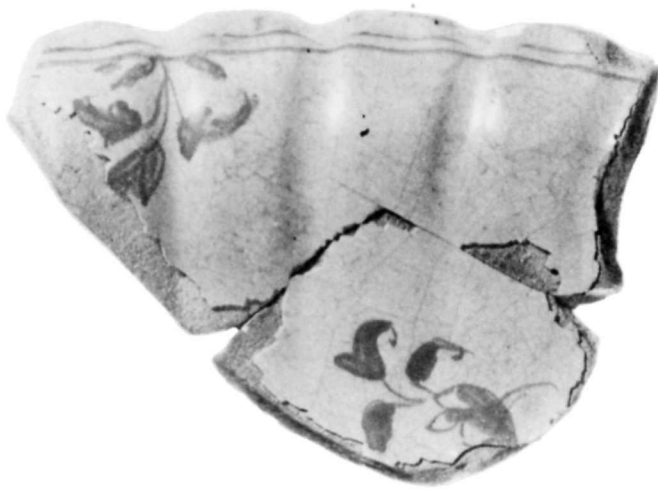
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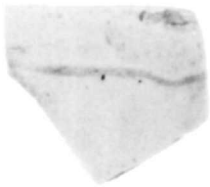
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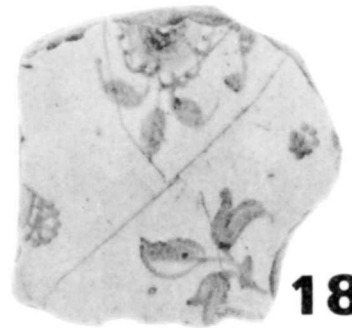
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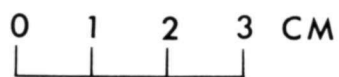
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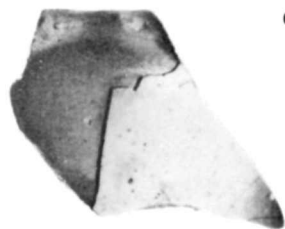


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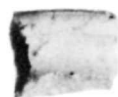




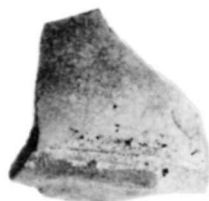
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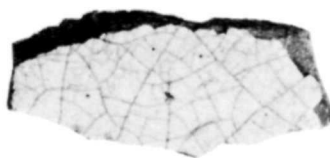
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