

**THE ROOSEVELT INLET SHIPWRECK: IDENTIFICATION, ANALYSIS, AND
HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

A Thesis

by

BRIDGET CHRISTINE MCVAE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

August 2008

Major Subject: Anthropology

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Approved by:

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Committee Members,
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ABSTRACT

The Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck: Identification, Analysis, and Historical Context.

(August 2008)

Bridget Christine McVae, B.A., St. Mary's College of Maryland

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Kevin Crisman

Shipwrecks have a way of catching the imagination of both professionals and the general public. During the fall of 2004 a shipwreck was discovered in Delaware Bay near Lewes, Delaware. This vessel, believed to be British, was lost during the second half of the eighteenth century. Preliminary examination of the wreck site suggested that it was a merchant ship bound for the colonies. While wrecks dating to this period representing various countries have been found, no British merchant vessels bound for the colonies have been examined archaeologically. This project provided the opportunity to investigate a ship and its cargo in light of the historical events of the period.

Analysis of artifacts recovered from the site provided important glimpses of colonial American consumer practices in the period leading up to the American Revolution. In light of the general colonial displeasure over increased Parliamentary restrictions, colonists adjusted their buying habits. Study of the artifact assemblage suggests British merchants were attempting to substitute

non-British manufactured goods for some objects. This study also indicated that colonists were perhaps not idealistic in practice when it came to denying themselves consumer goods. Further excavation of this vessel, and the study of other inbound merchantmen, should help confirm the conclusions regarding British policy and its effect on pre-revolutionary consumer practices. Based upon evidence derived from a handful of artifacts, this study tentatively identified the vessel as the ship *Severn*, lost in 1774 off the coast of Delaware.

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I am very thankful to Mr. Daniel Griffith for his introduction to this project and for his many suggestions during the completion of this work. Thanks also go to Faye Stocum and the Delaware Department of Historical and Cultural Affairs for allowing me access to the collections and research gathered by Delaware archaeologists. I also wish to thank South Eastern Archaeological Research (SEARCH) for graciously allowing me to look at their excavation report before it was publicly available.

Many thanks go to my parents, Lane and Sue, for their assistance in editing and for their encouragement to “just keep writing”. I also owe my eternal gratitude to John for his assistance in editing, formatting, and researching and for the never ending love and encouragement. What other law student can talk so eloquently about little fake watches? Finally I thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ for giving me the strength to accomplish what at times seemed impossible.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history ships have been used to transport cargo from one point to another. It is always assumed that goods simply arrive at their intended destination. However, historians have not explored in detail the shipping and distribution patterns of goods destined for colonial trade, nor have they examined how these patterns fit into the political and economic events of the period. Goods were distributed to wholesale merchants and their warehouses, to retail merchants, or directly to the consumer, but typically reached the intended destination. The merchant vessels operating in the decades immediately preceding the American Revolution were a prime example of the eighteenth century's complex trans-Atlantic system for distribution of goods. Losses of these vessels, which often represent significant investments of labor and material resources on the part of the owners, fascinated the public both at the time of loss and centuries later.

During the fall of 2004, a previously unknown wreck, called the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck was discovered in Delaware Bay off the coast of Lewes, Delaware. Artifacts on the site indicated that it was lost during the second half of the eighteenth century. Very little of the hull structure survived, but other evidence indicated that it was a British merchant ship laden with cargo destined for sale in the American colonies. Given the excellent state of artifact preservation and the relatively undisturbed nature of the site, this vessel provides an excellent

This thesis follows the style and format of *American Journal of Archaeology*.

opportunity to glean a significant amount of data regarding the merchant practices of those trading in the eighteenth century.

While other wrecks dating to this period have been found, no British merchant vessels bound for the colonies with a cargo of European goods have been examined archaeologically. Other contemporary merchant vessels have been excavated, including the brig *Betsy*, a Bermuda collier, and the sloop *Industry*, but all were engaged in the transport of military stores.¹ Artifact assemblages discovered aboard vessels supplying military forces are likely to be vastly different from assemblages originally destined for the colonial marketplace. Given the rarity of colonial-bound merchantman sites, the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck represents a unique window into the world of British-colonial political and economic relationships.

Historians have analyzed colonial consumer patterns once the goods have reached the colonies. Studies including T.H. Breen's *The Marketplace of Revolution* and articles by William Williams and Kenneth Morgan discuss consumer practices once goods arrived in the marketplace. None have truly examined the reasons why specific goods were transported to a given destination.² This thesis begins to fill the gap in colonial economic studies by exploring the origin and initial selection of goods before they reached the marketplace.

Research Questions

Research has indicated that the Roosevelt Inlet vessel was active during the 1770's, a period in which there was great uncertainty regarding the political future of the colonies. Consequently there was great economic uncertainty as well as instability that had the potential to affect the profitability of merchant ventures. In order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between the political situation of the day and its effect upon merchant shipping, it is necessary to examine the cargo of the Roosevelt Inlet vessel within its historical context. The underlying research question to be answered is why each particular type of object selected for transport to the colonies aboard this vessel, what that selection says about the political and economic atmosphere of the day, and what information these objects provide regarding consumer habits.

It is far too expensive, time consuming, and potentially risky to send a shipload of goods to the colonies on the basis of groundless speculation. We can presume that those involved in the process ensured their profit by sending a vessel full of marketable goods. This thesis therefore seeks to examine the reasons behind the selection and transportation of the diverse cargo found aboard the Roosevelt Inlet Wreck, as well as to identify the recipients of these goods. On a more specific level it also seeks to determine the name and history of the vessel lost near Lewes, Delaware in the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

Endnotes

¹Broadwater, J.D. and Adams, R.M, Renner, M. 1985; Krivor, M. 1994; Krivor, M. 1998; Franklin 2005.

²Breen 2004; Morgan 1993; Williams 1958.

CHAPTER II

SITE HISTORY

Delaware Bay, the gateway to the Delaware River and Philadelphia, has long been treacherous for sailors without adequate navigational knowledge of the area. Many ships have been lost in the region over the last four hundred years. One such vessel ran aground off Roosevelt Inlet on the Delaware shore over two centuries ago.

Discovery

In the fall of 2004, the US Army Corps of Engineers was dredging offshore as part of a beach replenishment project in Lewes, Delaware (Fig. 1). Not long after the project was completed, locals frequenting the beach began to notice eighteenth century artifacts scattered amidst the newly deposited sand.¹ Archaeologists from the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs were called in to determine the origin of these artifacts. At first they were unsure where the materials had come from, and it was suggested that they may have washed in from a wreck uncovered by a recent storm. It was soon discovered, however, that the scatter was the result of the dredging project.

To determine whether the dredge had hit a debris field or an actual wreck, a survey was conducted using remote sensing instruments (side scan sonar and magnetometer) and diver exploration. During the course of the investigation it was determined that the artifacts were from a shipwreck rather than simply

anchorage debris or a dump site on the bottom. The study also concluded that the dredge had not hit the wreck, but rather a portion of its debris field. It was estimated that 20% of the south side of the wreck site was disturbed by the dredging operation.²

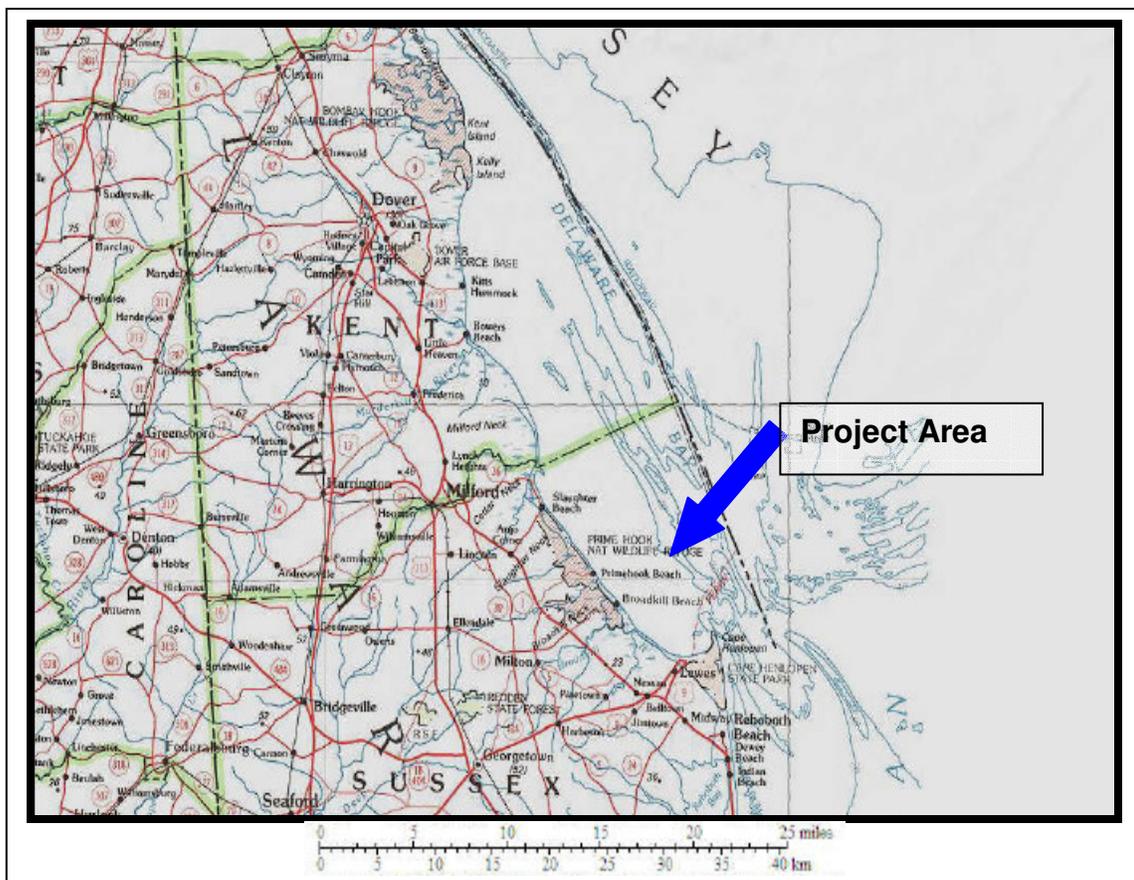


Figure 1. –Map of Roosevelt Inlet region showing project area (USGS Brighton Dam Quad 1982).

Confirmation of the presence of a shipwreck initiated a unique recovery effort. As a result of the beach replenishment project, thousands of artifacts had been pumped onto the shore. Once word of the presence of artifacts spread to the surrounding community both locals and tourists flocked to the area to collect them. In an attempt to gather as much information as possible and determine both the origin and identity of the vessel, the public was called upon to donate artifacts they had collected. By involving the public in the recovery effort, archaeologists from the Delaware Department of State and volunteers collected over 38,000 artifacts.³ Between the impressive collection of eighteenth century artifacts gathered by volunteers and donated to the site collection, and the confirmation of a wreck site, State archaeologists decided it was necessary to conduct further excavations to learn more about the origin and significance of the vessel.

Excavation

In the fall of 2006 the Southeastern Archaeological Research Company (SEARCH) was contracted to excavate a portion of the Roosevelt Inlet Wreck. The operation was conducted from September 27 until October 27, and included a preliminary remote sensing survey, a non-intrusive hydro-probe survey, an excavation of portions of the site, and a post excavation remote sensing survey.⁴

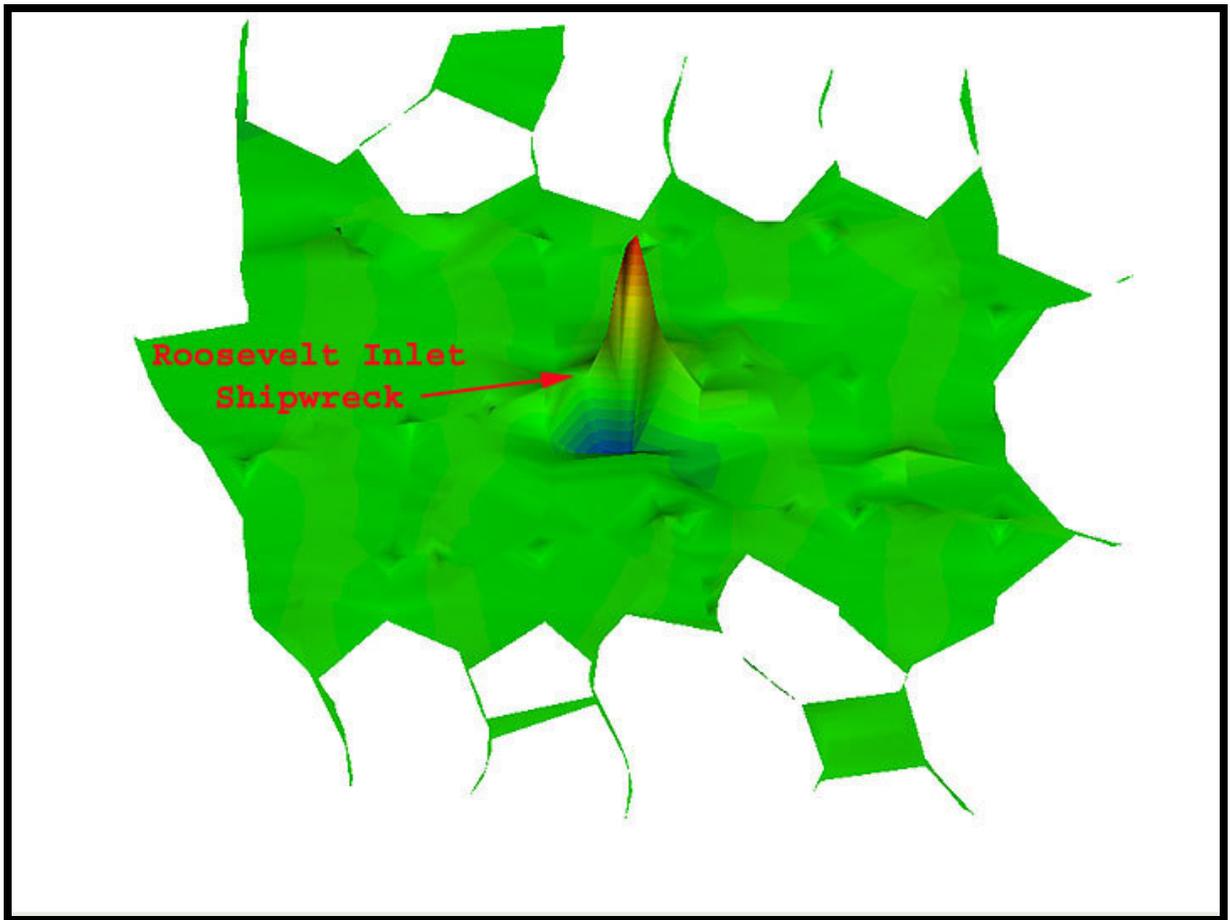


Figure 2. — Three-dimensional magnetic contour map of the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck site (South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 6)

The preliminary remote sensing survey established the extent of the site by delineating the visible remains of the wreck, including artifact concentrations, large concretions, and a longitudinal timber.⁵ This information allowed archaeologists to determine those areas which would most benefit from further excavation (Figs. 2, 3).



Figure 3. — Side scan sonar image of the Roosevelt Inlet Shipwreck (South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 7)

With the preliminary remote sensing work completed, and the extent of the hull remains determined through hydro-probe tests, excavation began. It was decided to excavate eleven 10 foot by 10 foot (3.04 m by 3.04 m) squares. Each square was subdivided into five foot (1.52 m) quadrants and then excavated in one foot (30.48 cm) intervals until undisturbed sediment was reached.⁶ Concretions, artifacts, and timbers were recorded for each one foot layer.⁷

The first squares excavated were located in what was presumed to be the amidships section of the vessel (Fig. 4). A total of four squares were excavated in this area. The investigation next turned to the north end of the site, in which three squares were excavated in a further attempt to determine the full extent of the site. Focus then shifted to the south end of the site—the area closest to that effected by the dredging operation. It was hoped that data gathered from this part of the site would provide further information regarding the origin and identity of the vessel. During the excavation all artifacts, with the exception of several large millstones and numerous large concretions, were recovered.⁸ Due to the large number of bricks already salvaged from the beach, further brick discoveries were recorded but not brought to the surface. Timbers, including those exposed above the sea bottom and those uncovered through excavation, were recorded in situ.

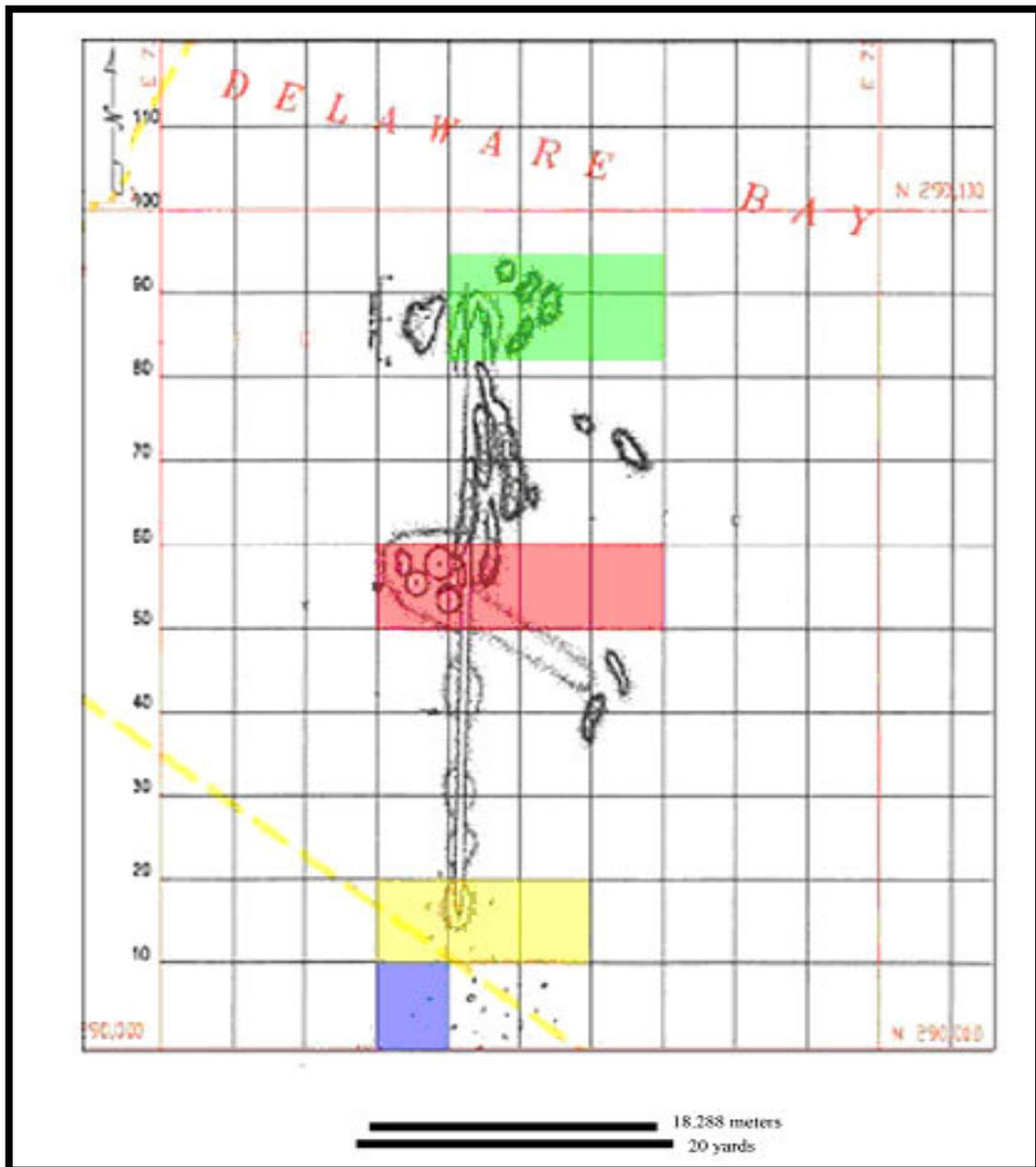


Figure 4. — Excavated units—October 2006 (South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 16)

Preliminary examination of the data gathered through excavation suggests that the wreck, though degraded by biological decay, is intact. The concentrated distribution of debris suggests that the vessel ran aground or sunk, but did not break up and scatter artifacts over the bottom. The evidence also suggests that the vessel was intact when it was lost

There is very little hull structure remaining, as illustrated by the site map created during the October 2006 excavations (Fig. 5). Aside from the longitudinal timber—initially thought to be a keel but now identified as a deck clamp—there were only a few timbers thought to represent interior and outer hull planking.⁹ Since the vessel rests in only 15 feet (4.57 m) of water, it is likely that portions of the vessel were salvaged by the crew and locals. The entrance to Delaware Bay is notoriously treacherous, and in the past wrecks were fairly commonplace. As a result, the people of Lewes frequently salvaged vessels run aground or wrecked in the region, and it is therefore highly likely that a vessel so close to shore and the town itself would have been salvaged by local people. While storms or decay could also account for the lack of rigging elements and the vessel's upper works, the speed with which objects submerged in Delaware Bay become covered with sediment lends credence to the likely salvage of the vessel by local people.

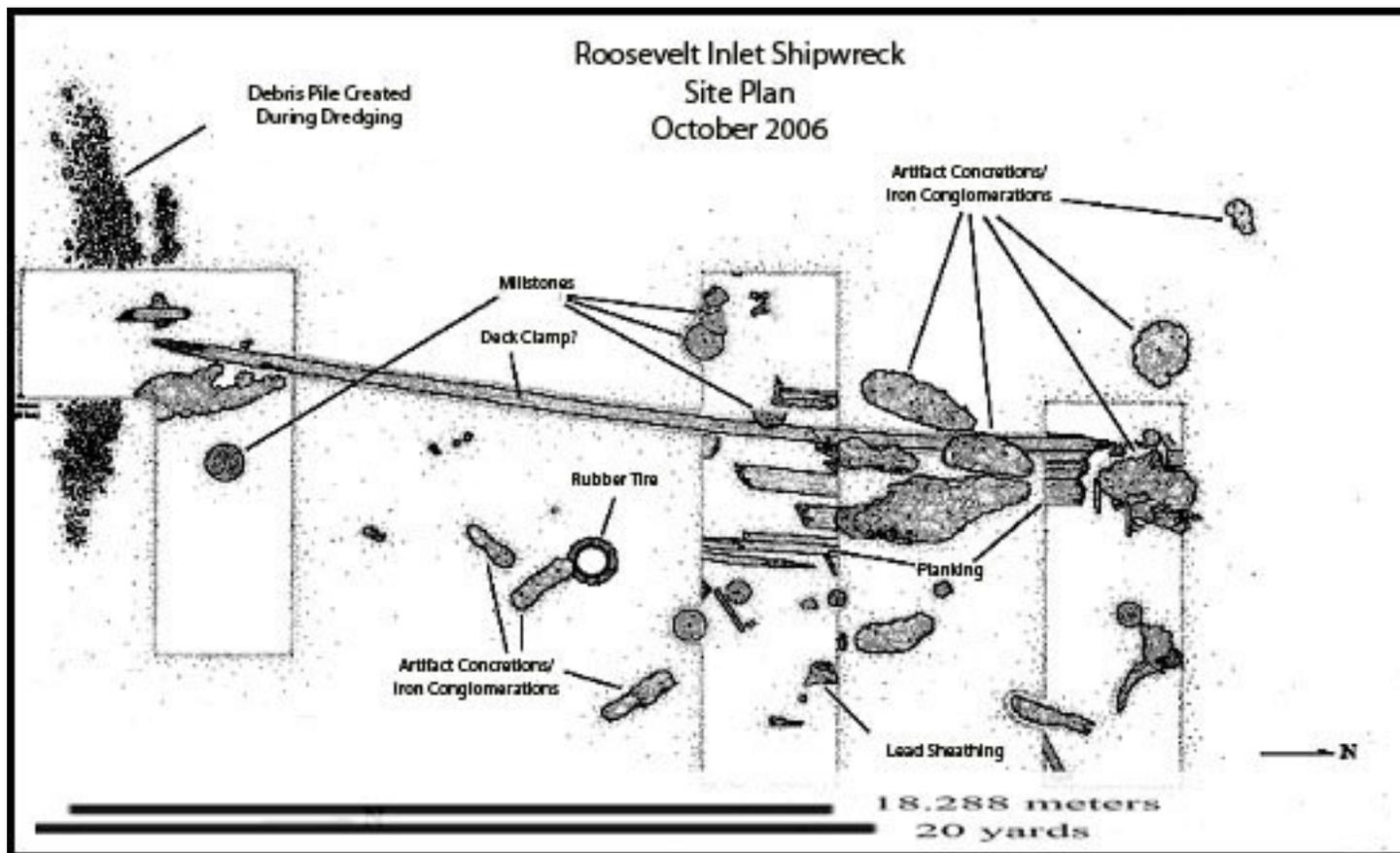


Figure 5. — October 2006 site plan (courtesy of South Eastern Archaeological Research)

Endnotes

- ¹ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 2.
- ² National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 2006, 7.1.
- ³ National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 2006, 7.1.
- ⁴ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 1.
- ⁵ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 6.
- ⁶ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 15.
- ⁷ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006.
- ⁸ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 15.
- ⁹ South Eastern Archaeological Research 2006, 19.

CHAPTER III

VESSEL IDENTIFICATION

Artifact Evidence

Following SEARCH's analysis of the artifacts recovered from both the beach survey and the October 2006 excavations, it became possible to significantly narrow the range of dates during which this vessel could have been lost. A cursory examination of the artifacts confirmed that the vessel was from the second half of the eighteenth century. After the detailed analysis of the artifacts and an examination of the historical record, it was possible to significantly narrow the time frame within which this vessel was lost. The identity of the wreck soon became clear and allowed the story of the vessel to unfold.

Although the Roosevelt Inlet Wreck collection is comprised of thousands of artifacts, only a few key objects were necessary to narrow the date range of this vessel. One of the first discoveries used to pinpoint the earliest possible date was sherds of Frankfurter Ware representing at least 21 individual vessels (Fig. 6). The presence of Frankfurter Ware is significant because it establishes the earliest date in which the vessel could have been lost.



Figure 6. — Frankfurter Ware—representative sample, not from the Roosevelt Inlet site
(photo courtesy of Delaware Department of State)

Characterized by a green and yellow lead glaze on the interior, Frankfurter Ware was typically formed into flat bottomed, utilitarian cooking pots. This inexpensive cookware was first produced in Germany around 1760, and was often in traded with the Dutch.¹ Thus, the presence of this ware on the wreck indicated a post-1760 date for the wrecking; it also marks the first time this ware has been found in a North American archaeological site.

Creamware was the next artifact to tighten the date range. First manufactured by Josiah Wedgwood in 1762, creamware was initially

manufactured as another alternative to Chinese porcelain.² This inexpensive earthenware quickly became popular both in England and in the colonies. In a stroke of retailing genius Wedgwood presented Queen Charlotte with a set of his pottery which allowed him to call his product “Queensware.”³ As with most ceramics, Wedgwood’s Queensware went through a series of changes and improvements in order to keep it popular. Beginning in 1770 enameled creamware, in which a colored underglaze—typically of blue, green, or red—was applied as decoration, became popular.⁴ The Roosevelt Inlet vessel carried hundreds of creamware objects; a handful of which were enameled with blue underglaze (Fig. 7). Philadelphia merchants first advertised “queensware recently imported from England” in 1772.⁵ The delay between the time enameled creamware was first introduced and the time in which it appeared in Philadelphia newspapers does not mean it was not present in Philadelphia prior to 1772, but simply that it had not yet achieved enough acclaim to be advertised by name until this point. The fact that queensware, the unenameled version, is not advertised until 1772 suggests that it is unlikely that the more elaborate ware would have been present in the colonies first.



Figure 7. — Enameled creamware (photo courtesy of Delaware Department of State)

Confirmation that this was in fact a vessel lost in the second half of the eighteenth century was provided by some of the many Dutch tobacco pipes recovered from the wreck. All of the white clay tobacco pipes found on the site were of Dutch origin, and many carried makers' marks on the stems. One pipe bore the mark "GLM" on the heel. This mark, referring to pipemaker Garrett Maarling, was not registered with the pipe-making guild until 1769 (Fig. 8).⁶ It would be unlikely for such a pipe to be on board the Roosevelt Inlet vessel until after 1769—establishing the terminus ante quem date for the ship.

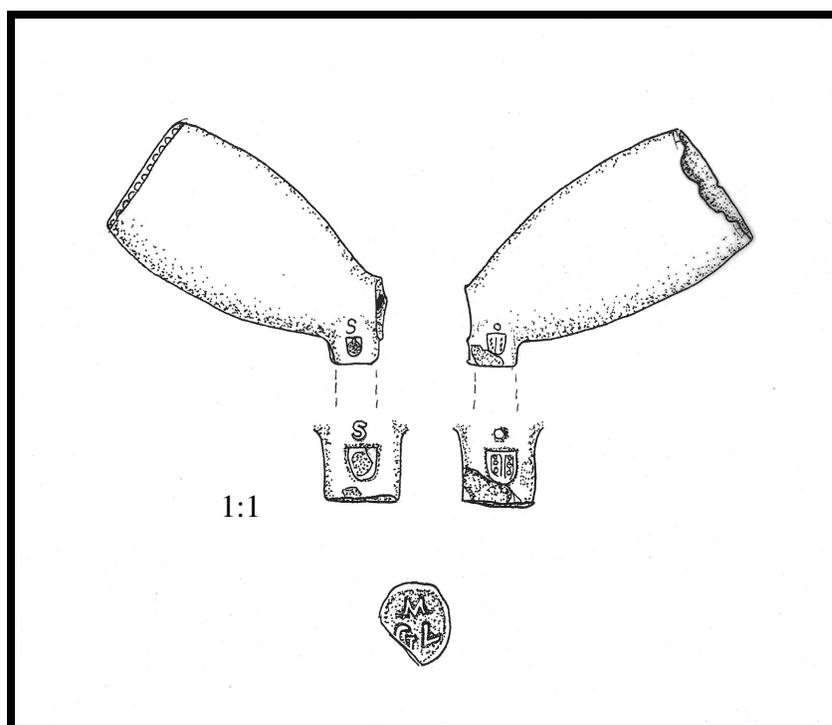


Figure 8. — Dutch white clay tobacco pipe with GLM marking (drawing by Sharyn Murray)

The date ranges established by the GLM pipe, as well as the presence of enameled creamware and Frankfurter Ware were further narrowed by the discovery of two objects bearing actual dates. The first, a commercial token from Holland bearing the word “Zelandia” was dated 1768 (Fig. 9). The second was a button made of copper alloy with a molded profile and the date 1772 on the face (Fig. 10). Thus, it was unlikely for the vessel to have sailed prior to 1772.

The latest date range was not established by the presence of an artifact, but rather by the absence of a very conspicuous artifact—pearlware. Of the over 60,000 artifacts recovered from the Roosevelt Inlet shipwreck, not a single sherd was of pearlware. First produced in 1779 by Josiah Wedgwood, pearlware

became immensely popular in the former American colonies.⁷ The fact that there was absolutely no pearlware on a site with such a vast quantity of artifacts scattered over a wide area is not likely to be a sampling error. It therefore leads to the conclusion that the vessel was likely lost prior to 1779.



Figure 9. — “Zelandia” Dutch commercial token (drawing by Sharyn Murray)

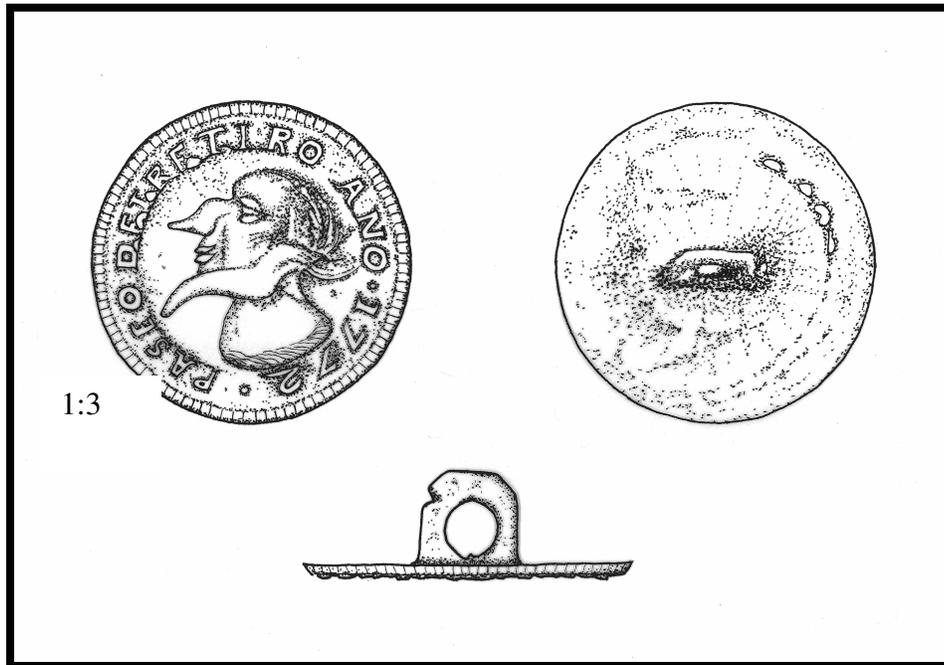


Figure 10. — 1772 button with molded profile (drawing by Sharyn Murray)

The ability to narrow the range of years in which the Roosevelt Inlet vessel was lost to a seven year window, 1772-1779, based upon the presence and absence of artifacts is best illustrated by figure 11. Each of the artifacts overlaps only during this small, seven year window, which makes historical research to determine the identity of the vessel easier.

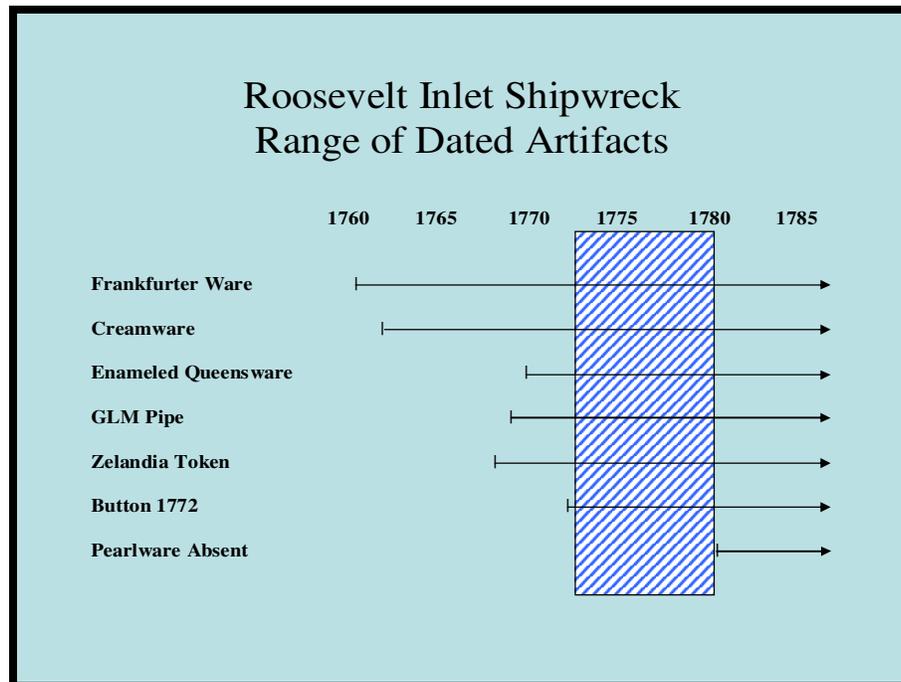


Figure 11. — Artifact timeline (courtesy of Delaware Department of State)

Historical Evidence

With the range of possible dates for the Roosevelt Inlet vessel narrowed to a seven year window between 1772-1779 it was possible to begin in-depth historical research to determine the identification of the ship. Contemporary newspapers as well as the inventories of ships in *Lloyds List* proved invaluable for this wreck.

The first step in identifying the vessel was to create a list of all vessels reported lost in the general vicinity of Delaware Bay in the 1770's. During the Revolutionary War (1776-1783) 82 vessels were reported lost between Cape Henlopen and the head of navigation on the Delaware River.⁹ No defensive armaments, munitions, or military related artifacts have been recovered from the

Roosevelt Inlet site. This suggests that it was not a vessel lost during war time, and therefore all of the Revolutionary War- era ships can be ruled out as candidates.

During the Revolutionary War there were no recorded commercial losses in this region.¹⁰ This allowed the focus to be shifted to ships reported lost in the years before the war. Examination of the cargo carried by the Roosevelt Inlet wreck indicates that it was inbound for Philadelphia at the time of sinking, which allowed the search to be narrowed even further. After a careful examination of available sources, including period newspapers and Lloyds List, two possible vessels stood out—the *Commerce* and the *Severn*.

The *Commerce* was reported lost in 1771, and the *Severn* was lost in 1774. Further delving into historic newspapers soon ruled out the *Commerce*. The December 3, 1770 edition of the *New York Gazette* placed the *Commerce* not in Delaware Bay as previously thought, but off Sinepuxent Inlet along the Maryland Coast. The newspaper reported that,

Monday last the Post from Philadelphia, brought us the melancholy Account of the Loss of the Ship Commerce, Capt. Adde, and most of her Cargo; she was bound from Hull to his Port, loaded with a very valuable Cargo of goods, mostly Woollens, and on the 11th Instant, in a Fog unfortunately run a Ground on a Sand Bank some Distance from the Shore on the Coast of Maryland, near Senepuxent [sic] Inlet, about 40 miles S. of Cape Henlopen where

the Vessel presently bilged. And when the Advice came away was almost full of Water and Sand. The Lives of all the People were providentially saved, and of the Cargo about 400 Pieces of the Cloths.¹¹

Removing the *Commerce* from the list of possible vessels did not automatically identify the Roosevelt Inlet vessel as the *Severn*, but it did point strongly in that direction. On May 11, 1774 the *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported “the ship *Severn*, Captain Hathorn, from Bristol for this port, is ashore in our Bay, full of water, and is thought will be lost.”¹² *New Lloyds List* also reported “The *Severn*, Hathorn, from Bristol for Philadelphia, is on shore in the Delaware Bay, and full of water; the crew saved.”¹³ These newspaper reports strongly suggested that the lost vessel in question might be the *Severn*.

Research into the specifications of the *Severn* provides further historical evidence that the *Severn* and the Roosevelt Inlet vessel are one and the same. Listed in the Lloyds Register of Shipping in 1769, the *Severn* was reported to be a ship –rigged vessel of 200 net tons. The major surviving piece of ship structure on the site was a very heavy deck clamp which measured approximately 71 feet (21.64 m) long. The size of the clamp, when compared with vessels of similar size, suggested a vessel approximately 80-85 feet (24.38-25.90 m) in length, which yields an estimated net tonnage within a reasonable range of the *Severn*.¹⁴

Evidence leading to identification of the Roosevelt Inlet vessel as the *Severn* was also provided by the location in which the vessel was lost. The Roosevelt Inlet vessel lies in 15 feet (4.57 m) of water approximately one half mile (0.80 km) off the beach. Assuming a draft of 15 or 16 feet (4.57 to 4.87 m), based upon dimensions given by J.M. Hilhouse for a similar vessel built in 1776, the *Severn* would have been full of water at this location.¹⁵ Given the variations in depth that occur throughout the Bay, shoaling in the inlet, and variations in water depth caused by tides and storms it offers a possible explanation for why the ship ran aground a half mile from shore.

The half mile (0.80 km) distance from the beach and the shallow water are in accord with the report that the *Severn* was lost “on shore” and the lack of casualties. Assuming the *Severn* had small boats or other means of flotation, it was possible for anyone aboard the vessel to make their way ashore.

Newspaper advertisements by Philadelphia merchants list the items imported by the *Severn* and these are in keeping with the archaeological finds on the Roosevelt Inlet site. The December 6, 1773 edition of the *Pennsylvania Packet* advertises the goods imported aboard what was the *Severn's* last successful inbound voyage. Advertised merchandise includes window glass in boxes, bottles in crates and boxes, and boxes and kegs of pipes.¹⁶ All of these objects were found aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel. Another advertisement in the same newspaper advertises goods imported aboard the *Severn* which also closely resemble the collected artifact assemblage. These advertised materials

included textiles, nails, furniture tacks, shoes, knee buckles, pins, needles, and cutlery.¹⁷ Each of the advertisements for goods recently imported from the *Severn* very closely match the artifacts found in the Roosevelt Inlet site, even down to the many utilitarian items imported from Germany and Holland.

Given the great expense and risk of operating a vessel of this size and purpose, it is highly unlikely that a loss of this magnitude would not be reported. While there has yet to be an object excavated bearing the name of the vessel or its crew, the abundance of historical and archaeological evidence lends credence to the theory that this is the *Severn*. As the only reported vessel of its size, function, and location of loss, the *Severn* fits the parameters of the Roosevelt Inlet vessel closely enough to allow conditional identification of the vessel as the *Severn*. Only time and further excavation will positively identify the vessel beyond a shadow of a doubt, but it is highly unlikely that it is anything but the *Severn*.

The Story of the *Severn*

The story of the *Severn* abruptly ended on May 4, 1774 when it was lost in Delaware Bay during an unusual snow storm. The *Massachusetts Spy* reported that the storm and the unseasonably cold May temperatures were an anomaly that had never before been seen, even by the oldest of men.¹⁸ Despite the relatively undramatic and untimely end experienced by the *Severn*, it had a busy career.

The date of construction of the *Severn* is unknown at this point, but it first appears in *Lloyds Register of Shipping* in 1769¹⁹. Owned by Thomas Pennington, this vessel made numerous trips across the Atlantic from 1769 until the time of its loss. Pennington was a prominent Bristol merchant involved in both exporting goods to the colonies, and importing goods back to England.²⁰ From the time the *Severn* first was registered with Lloyds it made consistent voyages.

In five years of operation, from 1769 to 1774, the *Severn* made a total of ten round trip trans-Atlantic voyages.²¹ A majority of these voyages were direct trips from Bristol to Philadelphia and back again, but in 1770 it deviated from this direct route by making a trip from Philadelphia to Barcelona, and another from Philadelphia to Lisbon. After returning from the trip to Lisbon, *Severn* spent less than a month in Philadelphia prior to returning to Bristol. This deviation from the normal trade route can be explained by the political climate of Philadelphia.

With the decision by many colonials to boycott British goods in response to the Townshend Duties, it would not have been profitable for the *Severn* to arrive in port bearing a cargo of British manufactured goods.²² Instead the *Severn* made the 1770 trip from Philadelphia to Barcelona. In May 1770, Philadelphia merchants agreed to make permanent the non-importation agreement which had sprung up in response to the Townshend Duties. It was only a month later, in July 1770 that the *Severn* left for Lisbon.²³ When the vessel returned to port in November 1770 laden with goods from Portugal,

tempers had cooled enough for the vessel to return to making regular trans-Atlantic voyages to Bristol. During the winter of 1772 the *Severn* made another trip to Leghorn in Italy, returning to Philadelphia in April 1773. By importing goods directly from foreign ports, without stopping in England, merchants were able to avoid the restrictions of the Townshend Acts and therefore avoid raising the ire of colonial consumers.

Each trip the vessel made to a non-British port involved a direct route from Philadelphia to its intended port in Spain or Italy. According to the Navigation Acts the goods being imported from these ports should have been unloaded in a British port prior to transportation to the colonies. Pennington's reason for breaking the provisions of the Navigation Acts is not clear, but it is possible that he is attempting to placate merchants and citizens unwilling to purchase British manufactured goods. It is also possible that he is simply able to make a greater profit by skirting the law. It may also have been a way to avoid trading in ballast and losing money. By shipping a vessel full of some commodity easily obtained in the colonies to a European port the vessel was not idly anchored, draining both time and resources.²⁴

The 1773 and 1774 Bristol wharfage records indicate that the last successful return voyage of the *Severn* into Bristol ended on January 17, 1774 when Pennington imported significant quantities of deer skins, flour, corn, Indian corn, wheat, iron, planks, staves, and barley from Philadelphia.²⁵ It was typically less profitable for British merchants to import American goods into England

simply because there were few North American commodities desired in Britain. Many times it was difficult to fill a vessel completely, so the captain would supplement his cargo by transporting passengers. Between importing American commodities to England and ferrying passengers, it was typically possible to earn a small profit on the return voyage.

According to records kept by the port of Bristol, owner Thomas Pennington was not only involved in the shipping business, but also had long term leases on several warehouses in prominent places along the Bristol waterfront.²⁶ By warehousing commodities for transportation, Pennington was able to diversify his operations and increase his profit.

British customs records for the years 1772-1773 suggest that Pennington was not the only one loading goods aboard the *Severn*.²⁷ While he was the owner of the vessel, it was quite common for owners to rent out space aboard a vessel heading for the colonies in order to avoid sailing in ballast. According to these records, Pennington was doing just that. Many of his voyages report goods trickling onto the ship with the duties being collected from as many as sixteen different merchants seeking to transport goods. Most were transporting only a few objects such as nails, earthenware, or bottles. Pennington accounted for the largest percentage of goods of numerous types, including wool, grindstones, tobacco pipes, and cheese.

The captain of the *Severn*, James Hathorn, was a man of great experience. The first record of a vessel captained by Hathorn arriving in North

America comes in 1749.²⁸ Since he worked aboard numerous vessels prior to becoming captain of the *Severn*, the loss of the ship in 1774 would certainly not have been blamed upon his lack of experience as a captain. Operating primarily out of New York in his earlier years, and transitioning to Philadelphia in approximately 1764, Hathorn eventually moved his home and family from Belfast, Ireland to Pennsylvania.²⁹ No stranger to the politically charged environment in the American colonies, Hathorn had the misfortune of being the first vessel to arrive in New York in 1766 after the Stamp Act boycott had begun. The hold full of imports sent on behalf of British owners was turned over to the Sons of Liberty and eventually returned to Bristol.³⁰ Following the loss of the *Severn*, Captain Hathorn quickly returned to sea in 1775 as captain of the ship *Olive Branch*.³¹

The Roosevelt Inlet vessel, tentatively identified as the *Severn*, provides a window into the world of British trans-Atlantic commerce and American material culture in a way that few vessels can do. As one of the only archaeologically excavated vessels inbound for the colonies, discovery of the *Severn* offers the chance to examine the cargo in light of the political and economic atmosphere of the period.

Endnotes

¹ Bartels 1999, 167.

² Born 1965, 289.

³ Born 1965, 291.

⁴ Griffith 2007, 2.

⁵ *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 27, 1772.

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- ⁶ Griffith 2007, 3.
⁷ Hume 1969, 128.
⁹ Griffith, 2007, 4.
¹⁰ Cox 2005, A-2.
¹¹ *New York Gazette*, December 3, 1770.
¹² *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 11, 1774.
¹³ *New Lloyds List*, No 545, Tuesday June 14, 1774.
¹⁴ National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 2006, 8.3.
¹⁵ MacGregor 1980, 69.
¹⁶ *Pennsylvania Packet* December 6, 1773.
¹⁷ *Pennsylvania Packet* July 6, 1772.
¹⁸ *Massachusetts Spy*, May 26, 1774.
¹⁹ *Lloyds Register of Shipping*, 1769.
²⁰ Morgan 1993.
²¹ For more information on the voyages of the *Severn* see Appendix A.
²² Oaks 1977.
²³ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 19, 1770.
²⁴ Morgan 1993, 71.
²⁵ Merchant Ventures Wharfage Books, September 25, 1773- September 25, 1774.
²⁶ Financial Records for the Corporation of Bristol, December 7, 1762.
²⁷ See Appendix B for transcription of customs records, British Customs Records 1772-1773.
²⁸ *New York Gazette* May 29, 1749.
²⁹ Returns and Assessments of Lancaster County 1897, 235.
³⁰ Schlesinger 1968, 81.
³¹ *Mediterranean Passes, Letters of Marque, and list of Ship's Registers, 1761-1776*, 669.

CHAPTER IV

BRITISH POLICY AND THE AMERICAN MERCANTILE RESPONSE

The decade prior to the American Revolution was fraught with changes that affected the lives of British citizens on both sides of the Atlantic. They manifested themselves both in the political and economic spheres, and while having an effect on the economic atmosphere of Great Britain, the changes most greatly influenced the lives of those in the North American colonies. Parliament passed a series of laws that altered the type and quantity of goods available to colonials. With each new piece of legislation, colonial support for Parliamentary actions eroded. This shift in attitudes dramatically impacted merchants and their ability to make a living. The passage of the Coercive Acts in May 1774, represented the final insult to colonial liberties. Learning of this act, the residents and merchants of Philadelphia awoke to the need to take more drastic measures of resistance.

Prior to the 1765 passage of the Stamp Act, colonial merchants pursued their business interests relatively unhindered by Parliamentary restrictions. Not all trade restrictions had a negative impact on business. The Navigation Acts, variations of which were passed between 1660 to 1849, required certain goods from Europe and goods bound for Europe from the colonies to be landed in a British port and then re-exported.¹ This provided colonial merchants with some protection against Dutch and French competition by limiting trade with the colonies to British citizens.²

The Navigation Acts considered the colonists as Englishmen, and therefore they could use this protection to their fullest advantage. As with any piece of legislation, those most affected by it sought loopholes which could be exploited for their benefit. In this situation, the complex trade network that American colonists had developed outside of the confines of the British Empire worked to their advantage.³ Each colony had developed a slightly different trading network between the colonies and various Dutch, Spanish, and French islands that were frequently overlooked by British officials, which allowed colonists to import certain goods without the extra steps required by the Navigation Acts.⁴ It has been asserted that the “Americans obeyed the Navigation Acts because it was convenient and profitable for them to do so, not because they were coerced.”⁵

Despite the benefit gained by colonial traders from the Navigation Acts, the drawbacks to this legislation became more pronounced as the time progressed. The British government tended to favor citizens residing within England over those in the empire’s outer reaches, such as colonial Americans. English merchants inserted themselves further into the affairs of colonials by attempting to bypass the larger American merchants and acting as middlemen through direct sale to shopkeepers, as well as by undercutting prices through auction sales.⁶ This placed colonial and British merchants in direct competition with one another. While that was cause for consternation among Americans seeking wealth, it did not appreciably affect the overall market for goods.

Beginning in the 1740's, imports of British goods into the colonies increased as much as 40% per capita.⁷ The goods were imported both by British merchants seeking to undercut colonial merchants, and by colonial merchants themselves. However, this flood of British goods available in the colonies did more than create an economic depression for merchants.⁸ It encouraged colonial dependence on inexpensive foreign goods, instead of investing in industries to compete with British imports.

The 1740's and succeeding decades became a time of relative prosperity where "parents of each generation succeeded in raising their children in material circumstances no worse and possibly a little better than that enjoyed by themselves."⁹ The abundance of consumer goods corresponds with a dramatic rise in colonial population and prosperity. During the 1760's, the population rose nearly 40%, further increasing the market.¹⁰ Exports to England rose by 500%, yet the rate of importation was increasing even faster.¹¹ This rapid growth in all areas of colonial life provides an explanation for the increased interest of merchants in the colonial marketplace.

The dramatic influx of goods to the colonies beginning in the 1740's leaves no doubt that a consumer revolution was occurring. This revolution affected not only the wealthy, but also the middling and lower classes. For the first time American colonists had a choice in the goods they purchased. One German minister traveling through Pennsylvania in the 1750's commented on the wide variety of consumer products available for sale by writing, "already it is possible to

obtain all the things one can obtain in Europe in Pennsylvania, since so many merchant ships arrive there every year."¹² The plentiful availability of merchandise forced merchants to invent new ways to describe the wide variety of items. In 1740 merchants were able to simply advertise 'paper'. By 1760, the variety of paper available required them to describe the paper by quality, function, and color.¹³

It has been argued that the great variety of British manufactured goods available to colonial consumers during the second half of the eighteenth century began to standardize the marketplace.¹⁴ Similar goods were now sold in every colony. This commonality of goods created common bonds between previously distinct colonies. A farmer from Pennsylvania could discuss the finer points of the china he had recently purchased with a grocer in North Carolina and be completely understood. The presence of similar consumer goods created a shared experience between colonies which not only bound them closer to England, but also paved the way for politicization of goods (which allowed ordinary citizens to discuss resisting legislative acts).¹⁵

The increase in the availability and demand for consumer products imported from England created a dilemma for merchants. They enjoyed the wide availability of goods, but were also increasingly in debt to the mother country. By 1760, colonial merchants were collectively in debt to England by as much as two million pounds.¹⁶ Prior to the 1760's, colonial merchants earned a sufficient return from their exports to cover the cost of the goods imported, but that was rapidly

changing. Between 1768 and 1772, imports exceeded exports by nearly two million pounds.¹⁷ The flood of goods imported into the colonial marketplace caused prices to plummet and goods to languish on the shelves.¹⁸ Unable to sell the goods lining their shelves, merchants began to find themselves in dire circumstances.

To combat the overabundance of British manufactured goods, and as a means of protesting the Sugar Act of 1764, some colonial merchants proposed an agreement to boycott specific British goods.¹⁹ A few merchants in Boston and Philadelphia adopted the measure, but it was ineffective due to lack of widespread support. The measure was simply ahead of its time.

On March 22, 1765 Parliament passed the Stamp Act. The fourth in a series of similar acts passed by Parliament, it was the first to impose a direct tax upon the American colonists.²⁰ Requiring a stamp placed upon all legal documents, books, contracts, newspapers, wills, and even playing cards, this act became a target for the frustrations of the colonists. The Act raised further concern among merchants by requiring payment of all taxes in specie.²¹ Given the limited supply of specie available to colonial merchants, it was feared that they would be unable to make business transactions due to lack of currency. Coming on the heels of the 1764 Currency Act, which forbade colonial governments from printing paper currency, this additional requirement made it increasingly difficult for colonial merchants to pay their debts to England. There was simply a shortage of currency to send to England in payment of debt.

When news of the Stamp Act first reached Philadelphia, it did not elicit much more than mild protest. As time passed and more information regarding the measure reached newspapers the previous indifference rapidly evaporated.²² Initial resistance to the new legislation was primarily based upon political reasoning, but eventually the broader implications of the act became apparent to Philadelphia residents. John Hughes, the man appointed as the stamp distributor for Pennsylvania, was approached by a committee hoping to persuade him to resign. He refused, but agreed not to enforce the act until other colonies did so.²³

Lack of Stamp Act enforcement in Philadelphia did not prevent merchants and others from protesting it on principle. Merchants did their best to clear ships from port prior to November 1, when the act took effect, in order to avoid being subject to the restrictions. On November 7, just days after the act took effect; Philadelphia merchants signed an agreement not to import any British goods until the act was repealed.²⁴ As part of this agreement both standing orders and future orders were cancelled until the following May, when it was agreed that a meeting would be called to reconsider further action.

It rapidly became clear that for this new non-importation agreement to succeed, it would need to be adhered to by everyone. To achieve that end, the signers of the agreement elected a committee of eleven men assigned to convince non-signing merchants to abide by the decisions made to resist the act.²⁵ Only sixty percent of those who signed the agreement were merchants.²⁶ The number of non-merchants involved in protesting the Stamp Act suggests that

the most vocal proponents of non-importation successfully appealed to both the political and economic sensibilities of Philadelphia's residents.

Obviously, the burden of the Stamp Act fell primarily upon merchants. Many well known merchants voiced their apprehensions regarding the effects of the act upon commerce. John Hancock, expressing his concern wrote "I cannot carry it [trade] on to any profit...[the Stamp Act] will entirely Stagnate Trade here, for it is universally determined here never to submit to it, and the principal merchants here will by no means carry on Business under a Stamp."²⁷

Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in March 1766, not because the non-importation agreements established by various colonies had succeeded in halting British commercial activities, but due to protest by British merchants. Months prior to initiating non-importation agreements, British merchants noticed an increasing decline in orders from colonial markets.²⁸ Following the repeal of the Act, the flood of goods into the colonial marketplace caused many merchants to become even further indebted to their British counterparts. Ultimately it was the adverse effect of the Stamp Act on British merchants that caught the attention of Parliament, not the actions of the colonists.

With the repeal of the Stamp Act, American colonists quickly abandoned the non-importation agreements and returned to purchasing imported goods in record numbers. Yet the precedent for resistance had been set. The boycott sparked by the Stamp Act cannot realistically be termed successful, because it had very little impact in ending the tax. It did, however, cause many colonists to

realize that changing their consumption patterns could become a means of political protest.²⁹ By making a conscious decision to abstain from purchasing everyday consumer goods, and thereby politicizing them, common men and women were forced to make decisions regarding not only what goods to purchase, but how they felt about taxes levied by the British Parliament.

The period of relative calm that followed the repeal of the Stamp Act was short lived. In 1767 the Townshend duties were passed. External taxes were levied on imported lead, paint, paper, tea, and glass, with the hope of avoiding the American objection to internal taxation seen in response to the Stamp Act.³⁰

Upon learning of this new piece of legislation in July, the response in Philadelphia and the other colonies was nominal. It was not until November that opposition began to spring up in Boston.³¹ Philadelphia was very slow in responding largely because they did not feel their assembly was being threatened like the New York assembly. Neither was there a newly instituted Board of Customs located in their town.³² Philadelphia simply did not see the need to protest this particular piece of legislation. That apathy would gradually change.

John Dickinson, a lawyer, was the first Philadelphia resident to voice opposition to the Townshend duties.³³ Through the influence of his "Farmer's Letters", merchants and residents of Philadelphia began to learn why they should oppose the Townshend duties. His influence was initially greater in other colonies than in Philadelphia. In March 1768 Boston merchants' proposed new non-importation agreements.³⁴ Philadelphia merchants were still reluctant to take such

measures. Their hesitancy may have been due to the fact that business had not entirely returned to normal, and they were reluctant to impose further economic hardship upon themselves.³⁵ By March the merchants of Philadelphia were willing to consider ceasing importation of taxed goods, but the general consensus among the city was against another non-importation agreement.³⁶ While Philadelphia residents were content to continue importing goods, New York and Boston merchants had agreed to sign another non-importation agreement only if Philadelphia would comply. Each city was wary that the others would take advantage of the situation unless all were united in non-importation. Philadelphia merchants eventually chose not to participate in this new non-importation league proposed by Boston and New York, and the movement collapsed.³⁷

In an attempt to convince the conservative Philadelphia merchants to join the boycott, John Dickinson praised the willingness of Boston and New York merchants to “lose their *whole trade*, rather than suffer their Country to be enslaved”.³⁸ Many conservative traders chose instead to write a letter to British manufacturers and merchants imploring them to pressure Parliament for repeal of these duties. More than two hundred residents of Philadelphia signed this letter in hopes of avoiding further conflict and resolving the issue without bringing further economic hardship upon themselves.³⁹

It was not until February 6, 1769 that the merchants of Philadelphia finally decided that the only course of action likely to result in a repeal of the Townshend duties was a non-importation agreement.⁴⁰ This agreement prohibited the

ordering of British goods for a month required cancellation of any previous orders. Any goods which arrived from England after April 1 would be given to a select committee to dispose of, or store as they saw fit.⁴¹ Many merchants still held out hope that the earlier letters sent to English merchants might produce results. When it became clear that Parliament would not act, they committed themselves to making this non-importation agreement a success.

In spite of the initial reluctance by Philadelphia merchants to initiate a new non-importation agreement in response to the Townshend duties, once the agreement was in place, they adhered to it more rigidly than any colony. By the spring of 1769, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia were united in their non-importation measures. Once united, the more radical members of the movement pressed for an extension of the boycott until all revenue acts, not just the Townshend duties, were repealed.⁴² While this provision was not accepted by the broader contingent of merchants, it was generally agreed that any who broke the non-importation agreement, whether they signed the document or not, would be stigmatized.⁴³

While Philadelphia may have been the last of the three cities to adopt non-importation measures, it was the strictest in complying with its commitments. When opposition arose, it primarily manifested itself in attempts to modify or repeal the agreement rather than disregard it and resort to smuggling.⁴⁴ When merchants in Boston placed an order for British goods pending the partial repeal

of the Townshend duties, those in Philadelphia rejected the notion, and in May 1770 resolved to make the non-importation agreement permanent.⁴⁵

Unlike the non-importation agreements centered on the Stamp Act, those instituted in response to the Townshend duties began to take a toll on British profits. As time progressed, the focus of the boycott became tea.⁴⁶ In 1769 Philadelphia imported 112,000 pounds of tea. By 1770 British tea imports had plummeted to a scant 65 pounds.⁴⁷ One possible reason for the success of Philadelphia's boycott of tea may have been that due to previous trade connections, they had greater access to smuggled tea. No matter what the reason, the decline in British exports to the colonies began to catch the attention of British merchants.⁴⁸

While British merchants took note of the decline in exports, they were not supportive of the American cause. The loss of American trade was being offset by opportunities for profit from the Russo-Turkish war.⁴⁹ These opportunities, combined with a general irritation over American opposition to British policy, limited British support for the American cause.

In May 1770 Philadelphia merchants and residents learned that Parliament had repealed all provisions of the Townshend duties except for the tax on tea.⁵⁰ While non-importation was not a decisive factor in the British decision to repeal the duties, it did convince the American colonists that altering their consumer habits could be a means of political protest and a unifying factor against perceived injustices. Upon learning of the partial repeal, merchants and Philadelphia

residents were unsure what the status of the non-importation agreement should be. Some argued that a partial repeal should be met with a partial alteration of the agreements, but no consensus was reached.⁵¹ Eventually Philadelphia decided that they would continue to abide by the existing non-importation agreements “until the whole of that Detestable [Townshend] Act is Repealed.”⁵² Philadelphia merchants were a stubborn group and despite their initial reluctance to initiate a non-importation agreement, they decided that defending their freedom was worth any economic inconvenience that might occur.⁵³

By September 1770, seventeen of the wealthier Philadelphia merchants chose to resign from the committee on non-importation because it was no longer effective.⁵⁴ They felt that since many of the other colonies had chosen to end their boycott of British goods, Philadelphia’s continued insistence on non-importation was only hurting the city. As a result, the non-importation of British goods into Philadelphia ended. Like the Stamp Act boycott, the non-importation agreements served to remind merchants and the average consumer that a great deal could be accomplished through alteration of consumer habits. By making a conscious choice not to import or purchase British goods, average consumers—both men and women—were drawn into the cause of American liberty.

With the end of non-importation came another flood of British manufactured goods. The colonists imported nearly three to five times more than during the period prior to the imposition of the non-importation agreements.⁵⁵

While many consumers were still wary of purchasing imported tea, all other goods were being imported in vast quantities.

The non-importation agreement prompted by the Townshend duties had an unintended benefit for many merchants. There was a flood of goods available on the market prior to non-importation, and many merchants were unable to sell their wares at a great enough profit to pay their debts to the British merchant companies. The cessation of imported goods from Britain did not prevent merchants from exporting local items. For example, there was a demand for corn in France, Italy, and Spain that allowed many Philadelphia merchants to earn enough money through exports to pay their outstanding debts to England while not incurring new debt.⁵⁶ The merchants sought payment for their exports in bullion rather than in merchandise.⁵⁷ This created a temporary availability of specie in the colonies in amounts that had not been seen for decades.

The non-importation agreement allowed Philadelphia merchants an unintentional “eighteen month respite from the relentless cascade of British capital and goods, during which they could sell off inventories, pay debts to English suppliers at favorable exchange rates, and build up cash reserves.”⁵⁸ While an unintended consequence, this break from importing British goods allowed Philadelphia merchants to sell their surplus inventory at higher prices than they might otherwise have received.⁵⁹ Non-importation also benefited many artisans, especially metal and textile workers. They were the only ones available to make and repair articles that previously would have come from England.⁶⁰

The repeal of the Townshend duties offered a short respite from non-importation and another return to business as usual. On May 10, 1773 Parliament passed the Tea Act, which stirred up discontent among colonists faster than any of the previous acts.⁶¹ This act allowed the East India Company to sell tea directly to the colonies without first stopping in England.⁶² This act was an attempt to ease the financial burden on the struggling East India Company by granting them to special exemption from the Navigation Acts, allowing them to pay only the import duty imposed by the Townshend Acts. When importing tea through an English port, the duty paid averaged two shillings and six pence per pound of tea, while trading tea imported directly into a British colony only required a payment of approximately three shillings per pound.⁶³ This price break allowed them an unfair advantage over their competitors.

By this time, tea had become a quintessential consumer item. Having become widely accessible in the proceeding decades, the importation and consumption of tea had sparked the demand for a whole new category of consumer goods, which were now deemed necessary.⁶⁴ To support this new interest, the demand for matched tea cups, bowls, tea strainers, sugar tongs, and teapots in the latest styles—most of which were not manufactured in the colonies increased.⁶⁵ Tea had become nearly ubiquitous at all levels of society; a tax on it affected a significantly greater number of consumers. One colonist commented that “it is Tea that has kept all America trembling for Years. It is Tea that has brought Vengeance upon Boston.”⁶⁶

With its pervasiveness throughout society, tea quickly became a politically charged commodity. On the surface, the purpose of the Tea Act was to assist the East India Company in disposing of their surplus of tea. The act itself imposed no real economic hardship upon the colonists, but it was opposed nonetheless as it reinforced the Parliamentary right to tax the American colonists.⁶⁷

The consumer of tea in America was obligated to pay only one profit to the Company, another to the shopkeeper. But before the act they usually paid a profit to the Company, to the London merchant, who bought it of the Company and sold it to the American merchant, and also to the American merchant, besides the profit of the retailer. So that, by this act, the consumer of this necessary and common article of subsistence was enabled to purchase it at one-half of its usual price.⁶⁸

East India Company tea cost less than previously, but many colonists still felt the acceptance of this tax displaced American merchants involved in the tea trade and were not willing to make the sacrifice for less expensive tea. The primary reason for resistance was not the tax, which had been in existence since the Townshend duties, but the removal of the American middle-man from the importation of British tea, as well as competition with smugglers of Holland tea.⁶⁹ Many worried that the East India Company would periodically undersell all competition, leading to a monopoly.⁷⁰ American liberties and consumer choice became the reason for action against the Tea Act.

Merchants worried that if England were allowed to establish dominance in the importation of tea, other goods would soon follow. One merchant expressed his worries in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in 1773,

they will send their own Factors and Creatures, establish Houses among US, Ship US all other East-India Goods; and in order to full freight their Ships, take in other Kind of Goods at under Freight, or (more probably) ship them on their own Accounts to their own Factors, and undersell our Merchants, till they monopolize the whole Trade. Thus our Merchants are ruined, Ship Building ceases. They will then sell Goods at any exorbitant Price. Our Artificers will be unemployed, and every Tradesman will groan under dire Oppression.⁷¹

The greatest concern was not the cost to import tea, but the precedent it might set for future goods.

To protect American liberties and trading interests, the merchants of Philadelphia united, hoping to prevent ships carrying tea from arriving in port.⁷² They believed the only way to prevent consumers from purchasing the tea was to keep vessels carrying it from landing. Philadelphia, the first city to take action against the Tea Act, quickly issued eight resolutions calling the act taxation without representation, and calling the shipment of tea by the East India Company an attempt to “enforce the ministerial plan.”⁷³ Steps were taken to prevent tea

from being landed, and the tea consignees—those who were to accept the tea—were asked to refuse the tea.

On Christmas Day 1773, one ship captain attempted to bring a vessel laden with tea into Philadelphia. It was stopped the following day, approximately four miles (6.43 km) from the city, the captain was brought ashore and informed of the agreement not to allow tea into Philadelphia.⁷⁴ After hearing the sentiments from nearly eight thousand citizens, the captain departed for England peacefully.⁷⁵ This came just days after the famous Boston Tea Party. With time, the vehement protests calmed, and the tenets of the earlier resolutions to boycott tea were upheld in Philadelphia.

Given the pervasiveness of tea in colonial households, the decision not to import or purchase tea allowed the general population to participate in the struggle for their liberties. The majority of American colonists demonstrated their willingness to support the cause of freedom by denying themselves imports from a country they believed to be acting unjustly.⁷⁶ Tea, and the non-consumption of it, became a badge of support for political change.

While the Tea Act was not repealed until 1778, the initial uproar caused by the act eventually calmed. American colonists settled into a pattern of simply refusing to purchase tea. Only a year after the Tea Act was passed, Parliament passed another series of acts which became known in the colonies as the Intolerable or Coercive Acts. The first, the Boston Port Act, was passed in March of 1774 and was followed two months later by the Massachusetts Government

Act and the Administration of Justice Act.⁷⁷ The Boston Port Act closed the port of Boston to all commerce, while the other acts drastically altered the established method of government in Massachusetts.⁷⁸ One of the greatest affronts to the developing sense of American liberty was the limitation of town meetings to one session per year.⁷⁹ In a country proud of governing themselves, this restriction was a serious concern and cause for much discussion. While these acts were limited to the city of Boston, and designed to punish Bostonians for their actions during the Boston Tea Party, they stirred up concern for American liberties among the residents of all colonies. If such events could happen in Boston, it was believed there was nothing preventing Parliament from extending the provisions of these acts to the other colonies.

Prior to receiving news of the Coercive Acts, many Philadelphia merchants advocated moderation in dealing with their English counterparts. It was suggested that it would be best “to keep the transactions of our City within the limits of Moderation and not Indecent or offensive to our parent State.”⁸⁰ There was no commercial principle at stake. Consequently many merchants in Philadelphia and elsewhere initially sided with the British perspective and chose to ignore an act which had no commercial effect upon them.⁸¹

As time progressed, and the Acts went into effect, merchants began to view the sealing of the Port of Boston and the other measures implemented through the Coercive Acts as an affront to American liberties. The merchants of Philadelphia were divided in their opinion regarding the necessary response to

the Coercive Acts. The conservative element, led by the Quakers, advocated maintaining the status quo, while a more radical element advocated open support for the residents of Boston.⁸² There was discussion of initiating another non-importation agreement, but there was not sufficient support for one to be successful. Newspapers were full of predictions that other cities would soon suffer the same fate as Boston.⁸³ As a whole, Philadelphia came to sympathize with the plight of Boston. They simply were not sure how to express this sympathy.

The decision to openly support the citizens of Boston, and express disfavor with the Coercive Acts, came from an unusual direction. Benjamin Franklin, having served as an agent for Massachusetts, had been denounced in the Acts for stirring up discontent in New England.⁸⁴ The attack on Franklin, and the resulting consequence of his being removed from his position as Deputy Postmaster for North America, upset the residents of more than the closing of the Boston port.⁸⁵ News of the attack on Franklin sparked an unusual display of violence in Philadelphia. On May 3, 1774, effigies of Wedderburn and Hutchinson—officials involved in condemning Franklin—were hanged and burned.⁸⁶ This violent act precipitated a radical change in the attitude of Philadelphia residents. They willingly considered open defiance of the Parliamentary edicts by sending aid to Boston. This was the beginning of Philadelphia merchants and residents willingness to place the cause of American liberty above their needs and desires for British consumer goods.

It was into this highly charged environment the *Severn* would have arrived. Had it reached Philadelphia, instead of sinking in Delaware Bay on the 4th of May, there is no telling how merchants and citizens would have reacted to a ship laden with British consumer goods arriving in port only days following a politically charged display of violence against the home country.

Each act passed by Parliament, from the 1765 Stamp Act to the Coercive Acts, chipped away at the colonial American desire to remain subject to increasingly restrictive British demands. Consumer goods had become a means of demonstrating dissatisfaction with political events in a way that had never before been seen in America. By politicizing these items, the average citizen was forced to determine where he stood in respect to each new piece of legislation handed down from Parliament. It was no longer the politicians and merchants alone who determined the response to each piece of legislation. The average man and woman could now express dissatisfaction with taxes or affronts to their liberties by choosing not to purchase tea or other consumer goods. The Coercive Acts represented the final piece of legislation necessary for Philadelphia residents and merchants to support the cause of American liberties. The decision to provide support for their counterparts in Boston set them on the path to protect American liberty which would lead them to the First Continental Congress in September 1774 and from there into open rebellion against Britain.⁸⁷

Endnotes

¹ Sawyers 1992, 263.

² Sawyers 1992, 270, 272.

³ Fleming 2002, 373.

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- ⁴ Fleming 2002, 373.
 - ⁵ Breen 1986, 470.
 - ⁶ Sawyers 1992, 270.
 - ⁷ Sawyers 1992, 271.
 - ⁸ Sawyers 1992, 271.
 - ⁹ Main 1983, 108.
 - ¹⁰ Breen 1986, 485.
 - ¹¹ Breen 1986, 485.
 - ¹² Breen 1986, 489.
 - ¹³ Breen 1988, 80.
 - ¹⁴ Breen 1988, 81.
 - ¹⁵ Breen 1988, 76.
 - ¹⁶ Witkowski 1989, 219.
 - ¹⁷ Witkowski 1989, 219.
 - ¹⁸ East 1946, 18.
 - ¹⁹ Schlesinger 1968, 62.
 - ²⁰ Morgan and Morgan 1953, 96-97.
 - ²¹ Doerflinger 1986, 181.
 - ²² Oaks 1977, 408.
 - ²³ Oaks 1977, 409.
 - ²⁴ Oaks 1977, 409.
 - ²⁵ Oaks 1977, 409.
 - ²⁶ Oaks 1977, 410.
 - ²⁷ Schlesinger 1968, 66-67.
 - ²⁸ Schlesinger 1968, 80.
 - ²⁹ Breen 1988, 90.
 - ³⁰ Oaks 1977, 412.
 - ³¹ Oaks 1977, 412.
 - ³² Oaks 1977, 412.
 - ³³ Oaks 1977, 412.
 - ³⁴ Oaks 1977, 412.
 - ³⁵ Bezanson 1951, 12.
 - ³⁶ Oaks 1977, 413.
 - ³⁷ Schlesinger 1968, 119.
 - ³⁸ Oaks 1977, 413.
 - ³⁹ Oaks 1977, 414.
 - ⁴⁰ Oaks 1977, 415.
 - ⁴¹ Oaks 1977, 416.
 - ⁴² Schlesinger 1968, 131.
 - ⁴³ Schlesinger 1968, 130.
 - ⁴⁴ Schlesinger 1968, 191.
 - ⁴⁵ Schlesinger 1968, 219.
 - ⁴⁶ Oaks 1977, 418.
 - ⁴⁷ Oaks 1977, 418.
 - ⁴⁸ Oaks 1977, 418.
 - ⁴⁹ Oaks 1977, 419.
 - ⁵⁰ Oaks 1977, 420.
 - ⁵¹ Oaks 1977, 420.
 - ⁵² *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 7, 1770.
 - ⁵³ Oaks 1977, 420.
 - ⁵⁴ Oaks 1977, 420.
 - ⁵⁵ Schlesinger 1968, 242.

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- ⁵⁶ Schlesinger 1968, 242.
⁵⁷ Schlesinger 1968, 242.
⁵⁸ Doerflinger 1983, 218.
⁵⁹ Witkowski 1989, 221.
⁶⁰ Witkowski 1989, 221.
⁶¹ Breen 1988, 97.
⁶² Ketchum 2002, 240.
⁶³ Ketchum 2002, 240.
⁶⁴ Breen 1988, 83.
⁶⁵ Breen 1988, 83.
⁶⁶ *New York General Advertiser*, August 4, 1774.
⁶⁷ Schlesinger 1968, 262.
⁶⁸ Schlesinger 1968, 264.
⁶⁹ Schlesinger 1968, 266.
⁷⁰ Schlesinger 1968, 267.
⁷¹ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, December 8, 1773.
⁷² Schlesinger 1968, 279.
⁷³ Schlesinger 1968, 281.
⁷⁴ Schlesinger 1968, 290.
⁷⁵ Schlesinger 1968, 290.
⁷⁶ Breen 1988, 98.
⁷⁷ Schlesinger 1968, 305-306.
⁷⁸ Breen 2004, 302.
⁷⁹ Breen 2004, 302.
⁸⁰ Doerflinger 1983, 223.
⁸¹ Schlesinger 1968, 309.
⁸² Schlesinger 1968, 341.
⁸³ Oaks 1977, 424.
⁸⁴ Oaks 1977, 424.
⁸⁵ Oaks 1977, 424.
⁸⁶ Oaks 1977, 424.
⁸⁷ Oaks 1977, 427.

CHAPTER V

STRUCTURE OF PHILADELPHIA'S MERCHANTS

On the afternoon of May 4, 1774, the *Severn* ran aground off present-day Roosevelt Inlet near the town of Lewes, Delaware.¹ Lost during a rare May snowstorm, this vessel was filled with cargo destined for the merchants of Philadelphia.³ Hailing from Bristol, England, the unfortunate voyage that became its last was only one in a series of previously successful and profitable ventures designed to distribute goods from England to Philadelphia and its surrounding countryside.

While the ship itself represents a veritable time capsule of artifacts destined for the commercial market of Philadelphia, it also serves as a valuable backdrop to examine the lading and cargo distribution practices of eighteenth century Bristol and Philadelphia in the years immediately prior to the American Revolution. A great deal of study by various researchers has gone into examining the goods being transported to the colonies, or the economic importance of this system of importation. Yet little analysis has been done concerning how these goods came to be on a particular vessel, the routes in which they traveled to the final destination, and the pattern in which they were distributed upon arrival in Philadelphia. The following pages seek to provide an overview of each of these elements using the *Severn* as a case study.

The loading and distribution of goods in the current century is a highly automated and integrated process. Sophisticated loading programs calculate the

optimum placement of cargo considering a ship's stability and the cargo's destination. Satellite communication systems allow merchants and ship owners near real-time access and information to their ships at sea. In contrast, transportation in the third quarter of the eighteenth century was a far less integrated process. It began with the arrival of a vessel into port for loading. In order to transport goods to the colonies, the British government demanded compliance with the Navigation Acts. The act required that the ship, the master, and three quarters of the crew be English.⁴ As many goods being shipped from England to Philadelphia and the other colonies were frequently imported from non-British countries, the Navigation Acts were an important consideration for merchants seeking to transport goods across the Atlantic. Goods and vessels that violated this statute were subject to heavy monetary penalties or even seizure of the goods. It was, therefore, in the best interest of merchants seeking to transport goods on a specific vessel to ensure it was in full compliance with Navigation Act regulations.

While compliance with the Navigation Acts was important, there were other, more pressing, issues to be dealt with when preparing a vessel to transport goods. The most immediate problem faced by ship owners was filling their holds with cargo in an expedient fashion in order to minimize time in port. Generally, merchant vessels were owned by one or more investors who would use the vessel to transport their own goods, or rent out space for others to transport cargo.⁵ Then, as now, it was in everyone's best interest to minimize

time in port in order to get underway and to arrive at the destination as soon as possible. Shortening turnaround times allowed merchants to maximize their profits for each voyage, and occasionally allowed them to make more than the usual single round trip trans-Atlantic voyage per year.⁶

Filling the hold of a vessel with goods was a potentially time consuming process. The owner of a vessel was responsible for ensuring that the vessel was filled to the capacity required to ensure a profitable voyage. That often meant advertising in the local newspaper that the vessel was sailing and willing to transport cargo. The goods being transported would then be recorded in the custom's records of the port. A 1757 letter from Henry Laurens reflects the importance of filling a ship with profitable cargo in a relatively expedient manner, " 'tis bad, ships should move from place to place now their Expenses run high without carrying some thing to defray it."⁷ The goods required to fill a vessel rarely originated with one merchant. Goods were frequently sent across the Atlantic by small merchants who had relatively little interest in making trans-Atlantic trade their primary focus. They were simply looking for another outlet for the goods they had on hand.⁸ It was not uncommon to see a merchant contributing only one or two cargos to export during the lifetime of their business.⁹

There were three major categories of merchants involved in exporting goods to the colonies. There were those who specialized in sending specific products to numerous ports, those who sent specialized goods to a very limited

number of ports, and those who assembled cargoes of wide variety destined for a very specific port.¹⁰ Merchants trading in very specialized cargoes tended to rely upon goods which could be reliably sold for profit in the colony of destination. These goods included soap, saddlery, or wrought iron. The variation in both goods and destinations that occurred with each vessel ensured that a wide variety of goods would be transported to the colonies.

Just as there were variations in the types of merchants sending goods to the colonies, there were variations in the types of goods each vessel sought to carry. There were two categories into which these goods can be divided: the dry goods trade, and the provisions trade. Both were very profitable ventures during this period. It is important to note, however, that these two trades were rarely mixed. A vessel which spent most of its time in the dry goods trade was unlikely to dabble in the provisions trade, simply because the process of acquiring a cargo required reliance upon a complex network of contacts. If a vessel owner had contacts developed primarily in the dry goods world it was more difficult, and potentially less profitable, to attempt to develop a new network for provisions simply for one voyage. There was obviously some overlap in contacts, but on the whole it was much less time consuming, and therefore more profitable for a merchant captain to remain in one sphere or the other.¹¹ Since the provisions trade involved highly perishable consumables, they generally have not survived to the present for archaeological study. Due to the fact that there was much less evidence for these goods, both in the wreck of the *Severn* and on other

comparable sites, they will not be included in this analysis of shipping and cargo distribution practices.

Once a vessel to transport goods to the colonies had been located, it became necessary to determine what goods were likely to sell once they reached their final destination. One study indicates that by the third quarter of the eighteenth century colonists purchased increasingly more goods manufactured in Britain every year, so there was a constant market for goods.¹² The sum of Pennsylvania's imports from England increased from £46, 5000 sterling in 1725-1729 to £532, 8000 sterling in the years 1770-1774.¹³ Clearly there was a high demand for British goods. These goods included woolens, canvas, glass, hardware, china, and other specialty items.¹⁴ Generally these goods would be ordered by Philadelphia merchants on credit with the balance due within one year of receipt of the goods.¹⁵

After the arduous task of selecting a cargo and loading the vessel, the ship captain determined the route of travel to the colonies. There were generally two options—a direct route, and a circuitous route involving multiple ports of call. The direct route was the primary route of travel for vessels originating in England and making their way to the colonies, especially those of the mid-Atlantic regions, due to the steady demand for goods.¹⁶ As there was a ready market for British products in colonial centers like Philadelphia, there was not as great a need to stop in other ports prior to arrival. Direct routes were lucrative and

minimized the potential for loss or vessel damage that increases with the number of ports visited and distance traveled.

It was especially profitable to bring ships directly into Philadelphia due to the large established network for distributing goods. Trade could go directly to Philadelphia and be dispersed through the region's numerous small rivers and creeks.¹⁷ During ten months of the year there were small working boats traveling to and from Philadelphia to transport items from the Pennsylvania hinterland to New Jersey, to Delaware, and to Maryland. The accessibility of the port itself to ships combined with the extensive network for dispersion of merchandise made Philadelphia an especially desirable location in which to import goods.

Upon arriving in Philadelphia there was a series of requirements to be met prior to delivering cargoes to the merchants who requested them. In order to comply with the Navigation Acts, it was necessary to participate in the bureaucratic maze set forth by the British government. When a vessel arrived in port, the harbor master was required to make a report to the ranking port official, generally the comptroller. The law required the captain of the recently-arrived vessel to present the official with sealed certificates detailing the description, weight, and quantity of all items on board the ship as cargo.¹⁸ While this occurred, a tidesman was sent aboard to ensure cargo was not landed until all items had been listed and the ship had been scoured for illegal materials. During the unloading, another official supervised the process to prevent unloading of contraband and ensure payment of all obligatory taxes.¹⁹ This complex system

of clearances and certifications was instituted to minimize smuggling and provide customs revenue to the British government.

While getting goods into port is central to any merchant system, examining the merchants themselves is vital to understanding the system in which they operate. According to one 1780 dictionary, a trader, or merchant, is “one engaged in merchandise or commerce.”²⁰ Use of this definition is key, as the eighteenth-century trading system had numerous terms referring to various roles played by merchants. Eighteenth-century merchants were arranged in a hierarchical system in which each category of merchants played a different role in the trade network. According to period documents nine categories of traders can be defined—merchants, factors, brokers, dealers, warehouse-keepers and wholesalers, those involved in textile sales, grocers, shopkeepers, and itinerant dealers.²¹ Arranged according to their socio-economic status, these groups have different consumer markets and different needs. Merchants, grocers, and shopkeepers were the dominant forces in Philadelphia and most of the colonies, as they carried the most diversified inventory and drew on the widest range of locations for importation. Despite their division by socio-economic status it was not impossible for a merchant to move from one group into another.²²

Merchants tended to be highly respected by those involved in the trading process due to the great deal of capital required for opening a trading house. They tended to be involved in most aspects of buying and selling, and often assisted others by shipping goods on commission.²³ This group was also the

largest trading force in Philadelphia with 549 merchants recorded as operating in 1785. The second largest occupational category, shopkeepers, numbered only 402.²⁴ This large difference in numbers, while occurring after the period being examined here, provides a glimpse of the importance and structure of the trade community in Philadelphia.

Grocers, the second group in terms of socio-economic status, tended to trade in high status, high profit imports including sugar, spices, dried fruit, chocolate, and tea.²⁵ The 1780 directory of tradesmen calculated 159 grocers operating in Philadelphia at one time.²⁶ Given the more specialized nature of their wares, it is logical that there would be fewer of them distributing goods to the region. There were instances in which grocers became involved in wholesale as well as retail, but generally they limited themselves to retail operations.

The last major commercial block to distributing goods throughout the Philadelphia region was shopkeepers. While this group represented the bottom of the three key groups in terms of status, they also performed a vital occupation. Dealing in non-consumable, functional goods, they had the most frequent interaction with the general public. They can be split into two groups—those dealing with specialized single items, and general shopkeepers.²⁷ Shopkeepers dealing in more specialized goods frequently sold stationery, china, or ironmongery. They generally sold items fabricated from one type of material. In keeping with the status associated with their goods, single-item merchants were often located in the more fashionable areas of town, while the

general shopkeepers could be found throughout the city.²⁸ Shopkeepers who operated a general store tended to deal in goods that were commonly desired and used by the public, including candles, and soap. Many other items, in smaller quantities, could also be found in a grocer's shop.²⁹ They dealt in goods that were necessities to most of the city and, in keeping with more utilitarian goods, tended to yield a lower profit than would be expected by merchants dealing in the higher-end luxury goods.

In order for merchants to be successful at their trade and maximize profits, it was necessary for them to develop contacts of their own in Britain. Through direct contact with manufacturers in England, colonial merchants eliminated the British middleman and had a greater influence upon the goods sent to them to sell.³¹ While this was a successful practice throughout much of the century, as the century drew to a close, the dry goods trade came to be largely controlled by a group of English export firms who acted as middlemen.³² This immensely affected colonial merchants, as it effectively controlled the business climate of Philadelphia. They were granted credit, and expected to repay these firms. The goods shipped for sale were the goods believed to be necessary, rather than goods they desired. It also led to a great influx of dry goods in the region and therefore a drop in prices and profits for Philadelphia merchants. Venting his frustration, one importer wrote,

the merchants in England are such Fools that if they can Possibly get
Credit for the good they will be Shipped so long as the People are

Rogues enough here to write for them when they know they cant pay for them, and be assured we shall not cease to have enough of such Rogues, so you see between the Folley of England & the viliany of this country we are all likely to be ruined.³³

This practice of dealing with middlemen introduced another level of uncertainty into an already risky business. Traders who relied upon British firms to send them goods were at the mercy of their suppliers. There was always the possibility that the goods received would arrive too late in the season to be sold, or that they would be of poor quality.³⁴ In an increasingly competitive dry goods market, this was a problem that could bring about the bankruptcy of a merchant, especially for shopkeepers who already operated on a very limited profit margin. This was not as large an issue for the better connected, wealthier merchants who dealt with many suppliers, but it created a great amount of risk for those who dealt with only one firm. Any delay in shipping, transit, or simply the lading of unsatisfactory goods could easily put a small merchant out of business.

Assuming the goods ordered by a merchant both arrived on time and were of satisfactory quality for sale, the merchant still had to find a market for the items. This market depended upon their location and the types of products being offered for sale. There was a definite correlation between the location a merchant occupied and the type of commodities sold. This correlation was also tied into the socio-economic status of the trader.

Philadelphia, like any city, was made up of distinct districts (Fig. 12). While these districts may not have been explicitly delineated, they were organized in such a fashion that the occupants of the city knew what area to visit for a given purpose. Prior to the American Revolution, Philadelphia was organized around the mercantile activities which made it the active port it had become. Its location as a port, with easy access to vast stretches of the country's interior as well as access to the Atlantic world, allowed it to develop and maintain this thriving trade network.

In examining the city itself, historian Mary Schweitzer suggested that the intersection of Market and Second Streets, where the primary city market was located, formed an axis around which the rest of the city revolved.³⁵ The farther geographically one moved from this axis, the less the population density. While the intersection of Market and Second Streets marked the fulcrum of population distribution for the city, the waterfront delineated the central point for determining value of a building.³⁶ As would be expected in a city dependant upon its trade networks, the waterfront was vital to commercial operations as it represented the primary entrance point for goods and traders. The intersection of the waterfront and Market Street represented the point at which property values hinged.

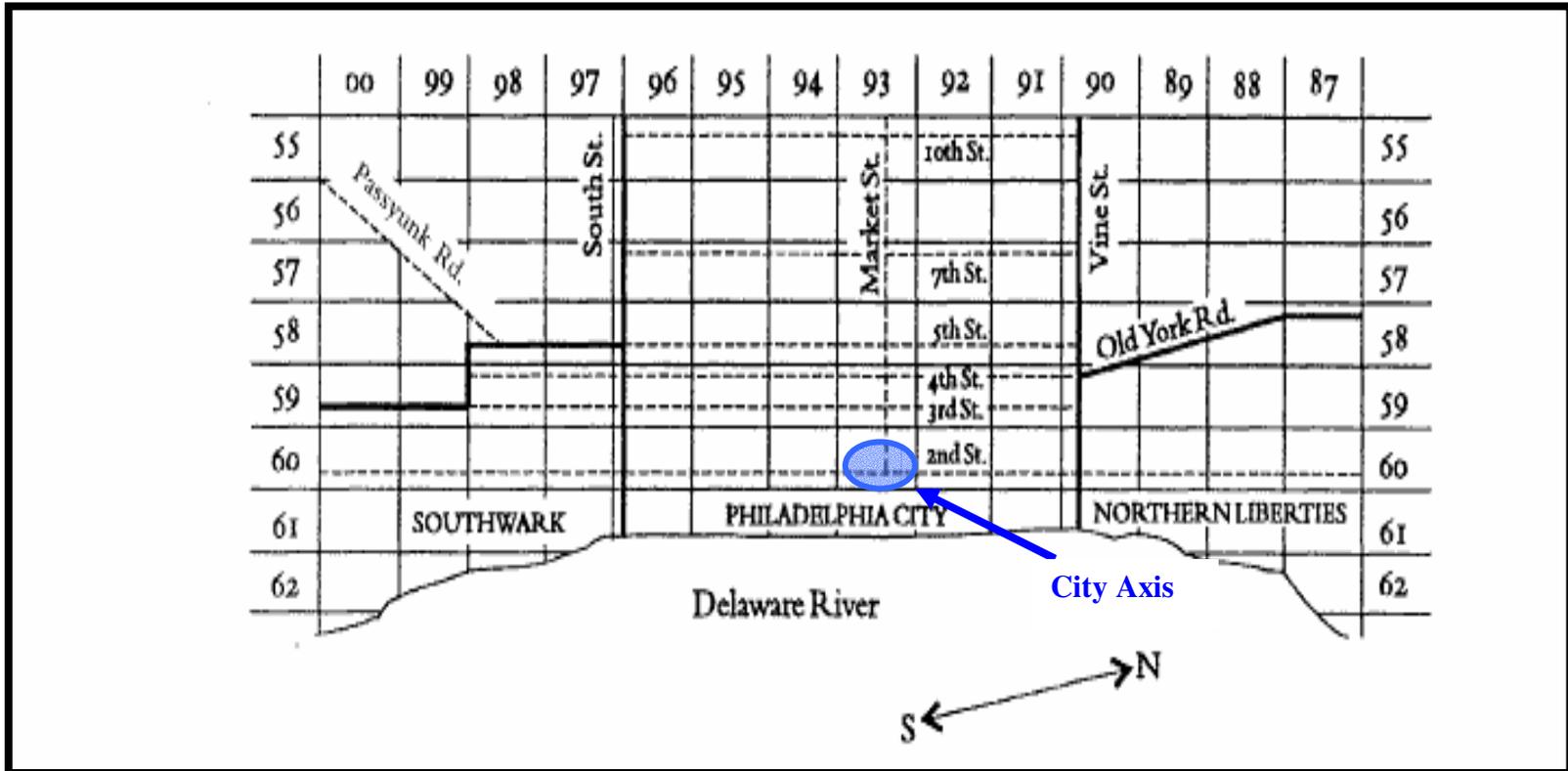


Figure 12. – Map of Philadelphia 1794 (After Schweitzer, M.M. 1993, 32).

As is the case in most cities, residents chose to congregate near those who are like them. This meant that merchants lived and worked near other merchants, tailors near tailors, and sailors near sailors.³⁸ While the natural inclination was to live and work near those who hold similar occupations, the stronger force determining location was socio-economic status. Merchants, no matter how much they enjoyed the company of other merchants, were not going to live with poor traders simply because of a common occupation. Obviously more than one factor contributed to where a person would live including cost of property, distance from the central portions of the city, and desirable neighbors.

The influence of the waterfront is clearly visible in a close study of both the population density and the value of house lots per grid (Figs. 13, 14). In 1774 a total of 49.8% of merchants were operating along the waterfront—illustrating the importance of this central location.³⁹ Lots closest to the central portions of the waterfront, near the docks where goods were unloaded, tended to be the most costly.⁴⁰ These lots, and those immediately surrounding them, tended to be very densely populated.

	00	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91	90	89	88	87	
55							37	184	213	176					55
56						36	130	230	430	116					56
57						117	86	695	941	451	38				57
58				44	110	647	378	634	588	687	401	72	18	20	58
59			1115	743	843	652	903	1229	1131	1453	783	230	328	173	59
60		346	509	758	883	1080	1405	1411	1211	1052	1240	354	718	293	60
61	99	620	776	933	861	619	880	885	1029	1038	913	399	514	123	61
62	107	202	49									32	24		62

Delaware River

Figure 13. – Population density in Philadelphia (Schweitzer, M.M. 1993, 39).

	00	99	98	97	96	95	94	93	92	91	90	89	88	87	
55								232	279	124					55
56						87	298	621	192	173					56
57						98	557	538	236	133					57
58				115	192	168	500	572	271	234	185				58
59			115	196	347	589	518	614	479	352	345			115	59
60		141	229	258	402	471	491	596	555	403	303	166	154	99	60
61	124	144	210	414	712	754	748	677	580	420	320	257	190	110	61
62	222	284	455												62

Delaware River

Figure 14. – Average value of a house and lot in Philadelphia (Schweitzer, M.M. 1993, 40).

Residents of the city knew the advantages of remaining in the central economic portions of the city and vied for property here. The city's wealthier merchants also tended to congregate here. The farther from the city center, the river, and Market Street, the less desirable property became (Fig. 15).⁴²

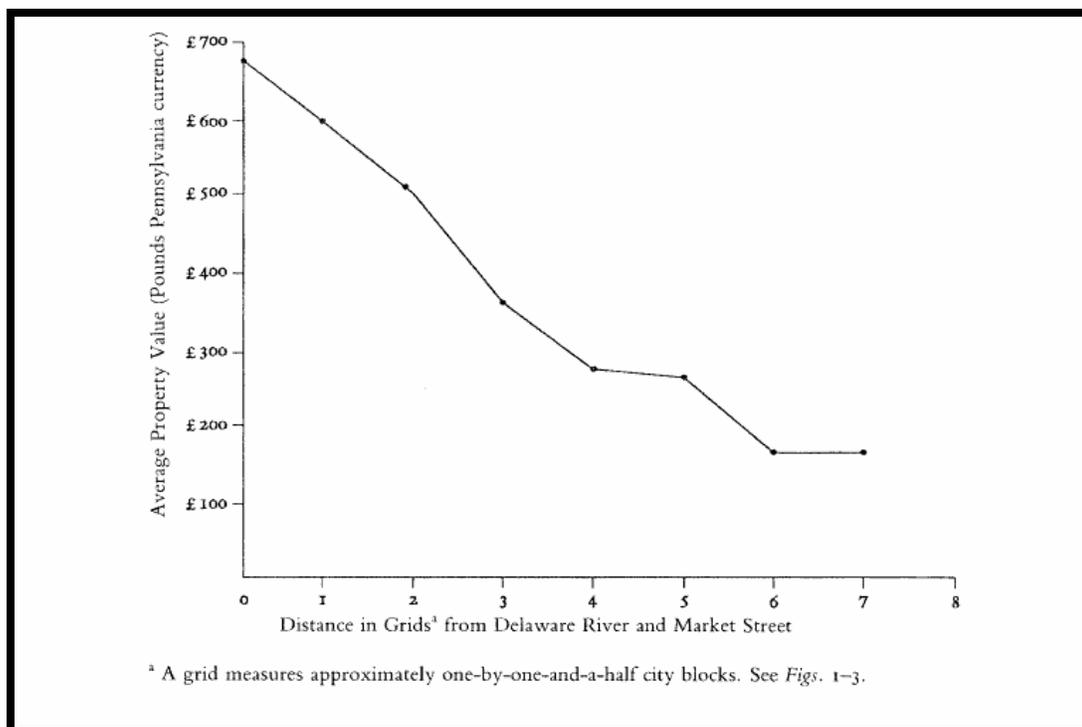


Figure 15. – Property values and distance from the center of the city of Philadelphia (Schweitzer, M.M. 1993, 42).

Location was key to the success of any trader, no matter what goods he offered; therefore it was logical to conclude that each merchant—at least the intelligent ones—would expend effort in selecting a location most advantageous to his particular business. Philadelphia merchants arranged themselves in a pattern very much like that of London with distinct sectors arranged throughout the city (Fig. 16).⁴³ These sectors include a small financial district, and a concentrated area of shops all located in the general vicinity of the city center. In addition to these concentrated centers of commerce, specialized businesses appeared throughout the city in locations which would be most advantageous to the needs of their patrons. For example, those making their living by the building, supplying, and operation of shipping from the port would be located in close proximity to the wharf, while blacksmiths might be located on the outskirts of town to attract business of those entering town (Fig. 17).

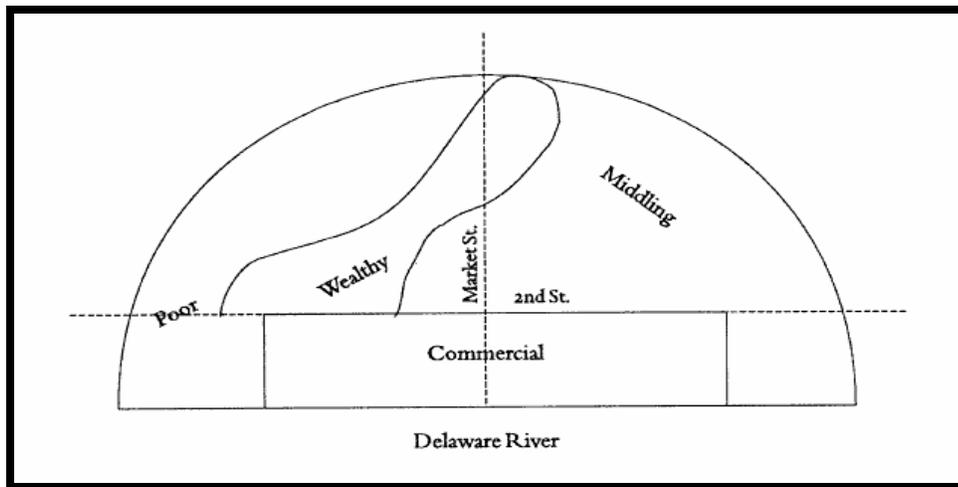


Figure 16. – Spatial distribution of classes in greater Philadelphia (Schweitzer, M.M. 1993, 45).

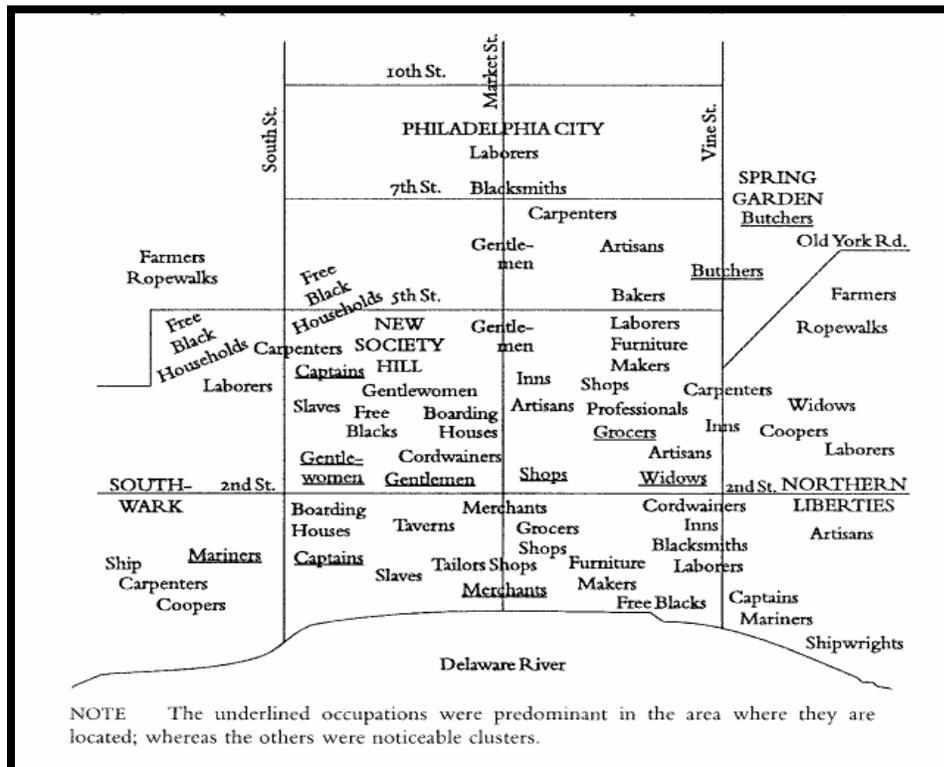


Figure 17. – Occupational clusters in greater Philadelphia (Schweitzer, M.M. 1993, 46).

Selecting a location for business was not nearly so simple, however. As with most aspects of life in Philadelphia, socio-economic status played a role in determining both what merchants could afford to import, as well as the location in which they displayed their wares. The waterfront was generally the more desirable location as it was closest to the source of goods being offloaded from incoming vessels, but there was a concentration of shopkeepers located to the northwest of Market and Second Streets.⁴⁴ There was a distinct shopping district in the center of town between Merchant and West Streets in which traders of all sorts peddled their goods.⁴⁵

The shopkeeping district was very well defined and represented about sixty shopkeepers all concentrated in shops lining Market Street to the waterfront and extending to the northwest of Market Street.⁴⁶ Despite the concentration of traders in this region it was by no means uniform. Grocers, who were generally slightly above shopkeepers in socio-economic status, were also located in the shopkeeping district but to the north and west of Market and Second Streets.⁴⁷ In spite of their intrusion into an area generally occupied by shopkeepers, the grocers also tended to cluster near one another. Perhaps it was due to a basic desire to be surrounded by those alike in occupation and status

While the examination of property information and occupation statistics reveals the trends detailed above, what is true in theory is often very different from reality. In order to test the conclusions regarding the settlement patterns of

Philadelphia's merchants it is beneficial to compare archaeological evidence with the historical record to determine whether trends emerging from historical documentation correspond with reality. The voyages and documentation surrounding the *Severn*, lost in 1774 with a cargo destined for Philadelphia merchants, allows such an examination to be undertaken.

Owned by Thomas Pennington of Bristol, the *Severn* made regular, yearly voyages from Bristol to Philadelphia since at least 1769. Displacing between 225-275 tons, this Bristol built vessel was more than adequate for the activities in which it was engaged.⁴⁸ On its final voyage, she was laden with goods ranging from antimony ingots, pewter toys, cut glass gemstones, earthenware, desktop tools, woolen blankets, mineral water, and numerous other goods intended for the burgeoning dry goods trade.⁴⁹ As there are no surviving port records for the final voyage of the *Severn*, this listing of cargo is based upon archaeologically recovered materials.

With one exception in 1770, this vessel operated on a direct route from Bristol to Philadelphia. By running a direct route from one port to another, it allowed a relative short turn around time which maximized profits and facilitated more than one trans-Atlantic voyage per year. Generally, the *Severn* made two Atlantic crossings yearly. Working through established trade networks Pennington filled his ship in a relatively short period of time and sent it to the colonies. Upon clearing the customs office, the goods were distributed to

merchants for sale. This expedience made him a successful and wealthy merchant.

Pennington's ambition and haste in getting his ships loaded and back to sea, however, was not always appreciated. He was known to occasionally contribute to the glut of dry goods available on the Philadelphia market by shipping goods which were not always requested by local merchants. One Philadelphia merchant complained that he had received far too much earthenware and glassware and was unable to sell much of the cargo. This led him to consider finding a factor in Bristol other than Pennington.⁵⁰

According to British customs records for the years 1772-1773, on the last successful voyage made by the *Severn*, she was laden with goods such as wool cards, tin plates, felt hats, cheese, tobacco pipes, grindstones, glass, corks, wrought iron, silk, manila, and clothing.⁵¹ These goods were destined for various merchants, grocers, and shopkeepers throughout Philadelphia.

It is possible to determine which merchants were receiving the goods transported aboard the *Severn* by utilizing newspaper advertisements of the day (Fig. 18).⁵² It was not uncommon for a merchant to place an advertisement in the newspaper when a ship came into port listing some of the goods newly

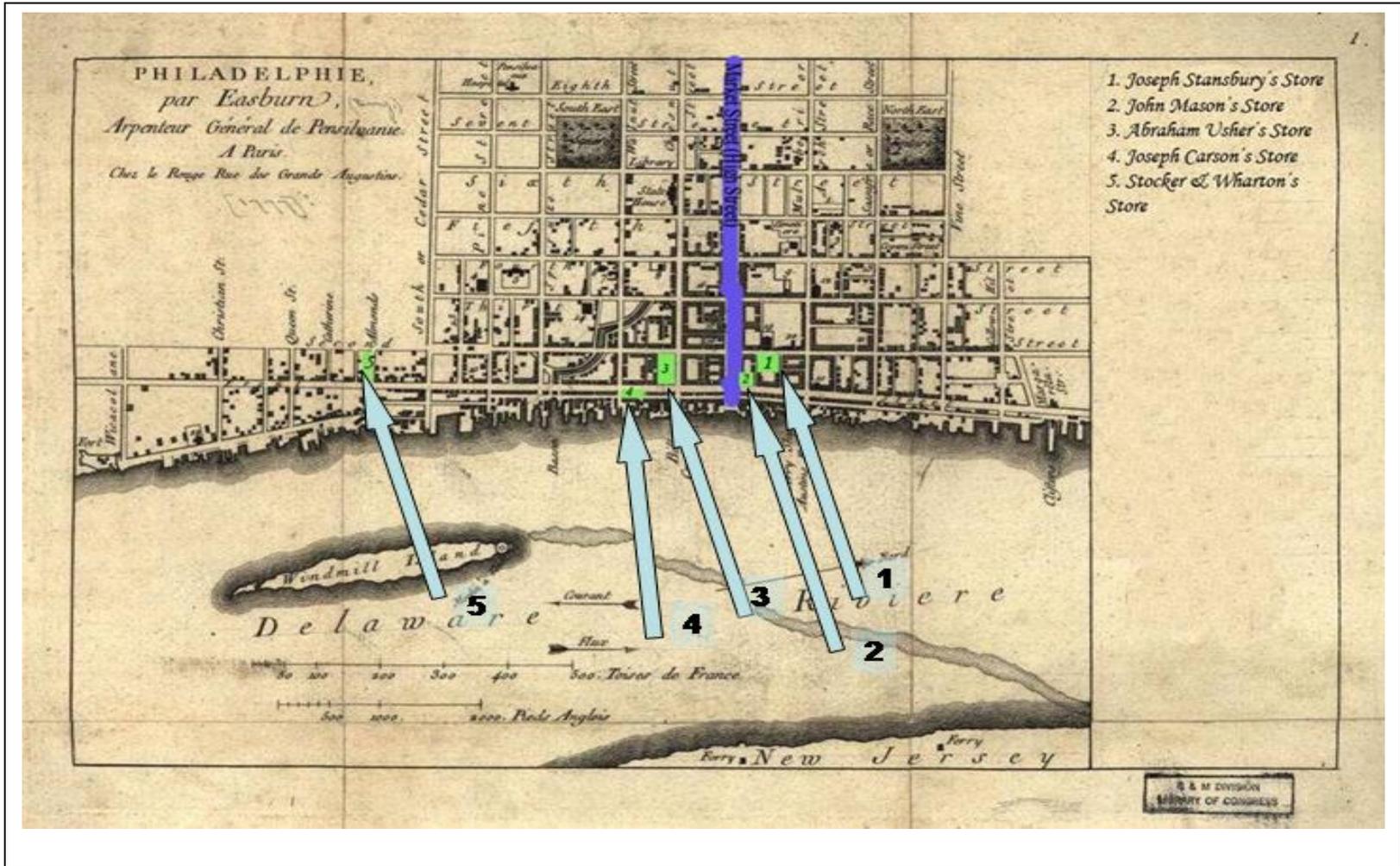


Figure 18. – Map of Philadelphia showing **Severn** merchants (After Eastburn Map, 1777. Pennsylvania Historical Society).

arrived in store. By examining the advertisements of six different merchants it was possible to determine the distribution of goods carried aboard the *Severn*. The merchants, operating during different periods of the *Severn's* lifespan, not only carried different goods, but were located in very different parts of the city.

It is possible to gain a picture of the general socio-economic status of these merchants through an examination of the goods advertised by each merchant, their location, and by comparing these to the occupational distribution of the city. It is also possible to determine where they fit into the hierarchy of traders, and to learn a great deal about the status of the captain transporting these goods.

The first merchant to advertise goods from the *Severn* was Donald McLean. With a shop located in Hanover Square, to the north of Market Street, McLean can be classified as a shopkeeper.⁵³ He generally carried drugs and medicines and was located in an area known to be inhabited by grocers. The north side of Market Street, closest to the waterfront tended to be occupied by laborers, including blacksmiths and furniture makers. It was also located in the heart of the area containing shopkeepers.

Joseph Stansbury, a merchant who first appears in July 1772, can be classified as a grocer.⁵⁴ He was the only grocer known to be selling goods carried by the *Severn*. This can be attributed to the fact that the vessel seems to be carrying a large percentage of utilitarian goods and a much smaller quantity and variety of the high end goods typically sold by grocers. Located just to the north of Market Street, along Front Street, Stansbury's shop was

directly across the street from the waterfront in an area prized by merchants for its close proximity to newly-arrived vessels. Its proximity to the waterfront likely had some effect on the types of goods carried. The closer one was to the arriving vessels, the easier it would be to acquire some of the high quality goods that did not have predetermined recipients. It also situates the merchant within easy reach of passengers disembarking from vessels who might find themselves in need of the consumer items offered. Stansbury advertised “a large and elegant assortment” of goods including china from India, wine, and jellies.⁵⁵

Also appearing on the north side of Market Street is John Mason. First appearing in newspaper records in 1766 as an upholsterer, Mason began selling glass, china, and various ceramics in 1771.⁵⁶ He represented a divergence in the typical pattern of settlement. Classified as a shopkeeper, Mason ran his business at the corner of Market and Front Streets in an area typically associated with tailors. This location suggests that it was possible for those who originally went into business in one sphere to prosper in the same location even when changing businesses. This location was very near the waterfront, on the crossroads of two major streets, and likely assisted Mason in his ventures into the mercantile system.

The final merchant operating on the North end of Market Street was Joseph Carson. First making an appearance in the local newspapers in December 1771, Carson primarily sold goods associated with clothing, including fabrics, buttons, gloves, and shoes.⁵⁷ He also carried goods such as

ink powder, glass, and spices. This diversity of goods classified him as a shopkeeper. His location on the corner of Second Street and Market Street, an increased distance from the waterfront, and the center of mercantile prosperity, suggests that he was not as wealthy a merchant as the others examined so far. His shop was, however, located amongst a number of other shops of varying purposes, which further corroborates the idea that traders of similar status tended to congregate near one another. Perhaps this was also appealing to clients by allowing them to shop among others of like status.

Of the six merchants advertising goods from the *Severn*, only two were located on the more prosperous side of Market Street, the south side. The first of these was Abraham Usher. First appearing in August 1766, Usher advertised an assortment of dry goods from Europe and India.⁵⁸ These goods tended to be very high end, which explains his placement on the south side of Market Street along the waterfront among other wealthy merchants.

The last merchant house studied, Stocker & Wharton, was located closest to the wharves. First appearing in October 1771, this company advertised pipes, glass, wine, Barcelona handkerchiefs, and other imported goods. Oddly enough, this firm also chose to offer more utilitarian goods including ship supplies, rigging, and buttons.⁵⁹ While clearly classified as wealthy merchants, Stocker and Wharton's store was located along the waterfront immediately south of South Street which still places them in the realm of wealthy merchants but also in close proximity to mariners. By carrying goods which appealed to both groups they were able to expand their client base

and therefore profits. It was a sound business strategy which could explain why they eventually become directly involved with shipping—a venture requiring a great deal of capital.

Examination of the physical locations of each of these merchants suggests that each operated in an area befitting the goods they sold. There was a definite hierarchical structure to the merchant community of Philadelphia. Those selling higher end goods clustered closer to the waterfront, while those specializing in specific products or utilitarian items operated further from the waterfront and to the north of Market Street. The fact that there were no deviations from this pattern, among this relatively limited sample, suggests that there was a very strong sense of social and mercantile order present in Philadelphia during this time.

Perhaps the goods discovered archaeologically aboard the remains of the *Severn* were destined for these very merchants who had merchandise carried by her in the past. By using these items as a case study of distribution it becomes possible to examine not only the structure of the merchant community of Philadelphia prior to the American Revolution, but also to gain a glimpse of how cargoes would be distributed among merchants following their loading aboard ship. From the moment an object was considered for transport to the colonies, the merchants made a conscious choice whether it would be transported to a specified location. These choices are evident in not only the goods themselves, but also the location in which they were sold to the public for consumption.

Endnotes

- ¹ *Pennsylvania Gazette* May 15, 1774.
- ³ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 15, 1774.
- ⁴ Morgan 1993, 11.
- ⁵ Morgan 1993, 34.
- ⁶ Walton 1966, 597.
- ⁷ Hamer 1968, 405.
- ⁸ Morgan 1993, 95.
- ⁹ Morgan 1993, 95.
- ¹⁰ Morgan 1993, 95-96.
- ¹¹ Doerflinger 1986, 77.
- ¹² Breen 1988, 78.
- ¹³ McCusker 1967, 155.
- ¹⁴ Doerflinger 1986, 86.
- ¹⁵ Doerflinger 1986, 86.
- ¹⁶ Morgan 1993, 85.
- ¹⁷ Walzer 1972, 163.
- ¹⁸ Martin 1948, 202.
- ¹⁹ Morgan 1993, 202.
- ²⁰ Sheridan 1967.
- ²¹ Haggerty 2006, 174.
- ²² Haggerty 2006, 174.
- ²³ Haggerty 2006, 176.
- ²⁴ Haggerty 2006, 176.
- ²⁵ Haggerty 2006, 177.
- ²⁶ Haggerty 2006, 176.
- ²⁷ Haggerty 2006, 177.
- ²⁸ Haggerty 2006, 177.
- ²⁹ Haggerty 2006, 177.
- ³¹ Haggerty 2006, 184.
- ³² Doerflinger 1986, 86.
- ³³ Collins 1775, 158.
- ³⁴ Doerflinger 1986, 94.
- ³⁵ Schweitzer 1993, 35.
- ³⁶ Schweitzer, 35.
- ³⁸ Schweitzer, 36.
- ³⁹ Doerflinger 1986, 41.
- ⁴⁰ Schweitzer 1993, 39- 40.
- ⁴² Schweitzer 1993, 42.
- ⁴³ Schweitzer 1993, 44.
- ⁴⁴ Schweitzer 1993, 45.
- ⁴⁵ Schweitzer 1993, 46.
- ⁴⁶ Schweitzer 1993, 49.
- ⁴⁷ Schweitzer 1993, 49.
- ⁴⁸ National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 2006, 7.1.
- ⁴⁹ National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 2006, 7.1.
- ⁵⁰ Clifford Correspondence, 1767.
- ⁵¹ British customs records, 1772-1773.
- ⁵² See *New York Gazette*, *Pennsylvania Packet*, *Pennsylvania Chronicle* for more information.
- ⁵³ *New York Gazette*, December 12, 1771.
- ⁵⁴ *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 11, 1772.
- ⁵⁵ *Pennsylvania Packet*, June 15, 1773.

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- ⁵⁶ *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, May 18, 1772.
⁵⁷ *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 6, 1772.
⁵⁸ *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, May 18, 1772.
⁵⁹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, October 25, 1773.

CHAPTER VI

ARTIFACT ANALYSIS

Between the beach recovery project and the October 2006 excavation, the Roosevelt Inlet shipwreck has produced over 60,000 artifacts. The majority of these items were likely destined for the Philadelphia market and none of the cargo-related finds show signs of use—further supporting the notion that this was a vessel transporting consumer goods. The artifacts can be divided into three main categories for analysis based upon the material from which they were manufactured—metals, ceramics, and glass. Examination of representative samples from each classification of goods carried aboard the *Severn* provides a glimpse into consumer habits and material culture of the period.

The diversity of objects discovered aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel has shed light on the desire of colonial Americans for British made goods in spite of their displeasure with the current British policy. Because the Roosevelt Inlet vessel has yielded thousands of artifacts of varying quality and type it would be difficult to discuss all of them in the scope of this work. There are numerous objects not discussed here which nevertheless have the potential to shed further light on the consumer relationship between England and her colonies on the eve of revolution.

Due to the complex nature of the recovery, with many artifacts retrieved from the beach by the public and subsequently donated to the collection, followed by the excavation of the wreck, exact numbers of artifacts are

frequently changing. Every attempt has been made to provide precise numbers of artifacts in each category, but in many cases this is not possible due to the continued influx of artifacts so an approximate range has been given. All numbers given represent a minimum of objects. There are no less than what is stated, but in some cases more objects may have been added to the collection.

Metals

Hundreds of metal objects were recovered during the excavation of the vessel, and donated from the beach recovery project. The first group of metal objects discussed are a handful of small pewter toys—primarily soldiers and ships, with a few civilian workers also represented (Figs. 19-20). These molded objects were very detailed: even the hairstyles and expressions on the faces of the soldiers standing on the deck of the ship are visible when examined closely. Small traces of pigment remaining indicate that these soldiers and ships were once painted, and it is clear that time was spent decorating these objects.

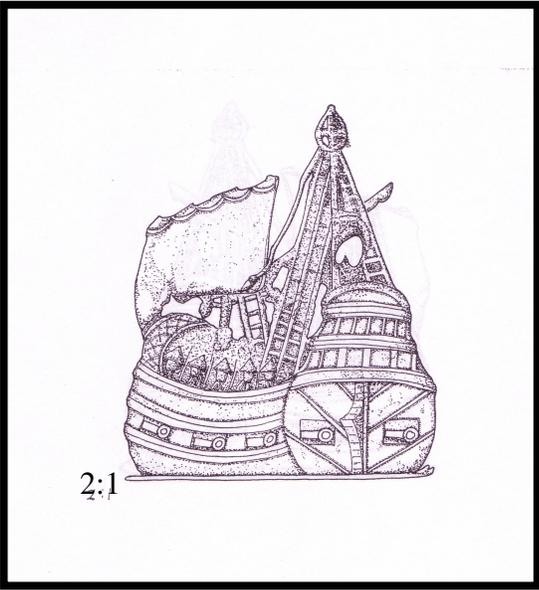


Figure 19. – Pewter ship toy (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

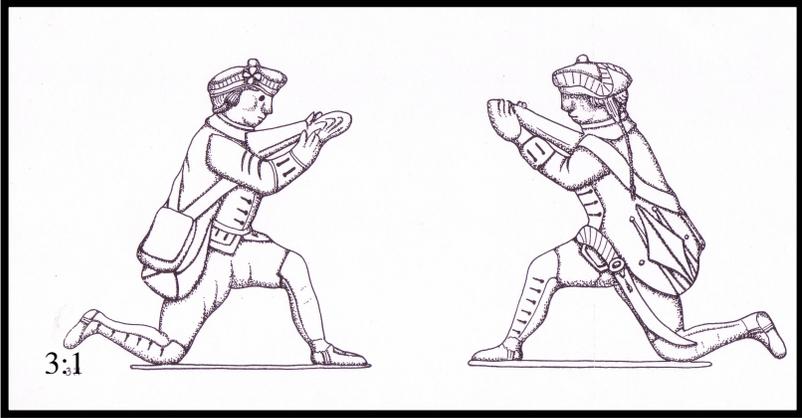


Figure 20. – German soldier toy (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

The small size and lack of moving parts suggests that these soldiers and ships can be classified as children's toys. However given their small size and complex details frequently overlooked by children it is possible that they may have been a part of the adult luxuries trade, and used as trinkets or part of a game similar to "Risk."¹

While the origin of these objects can not be determined conclusively, an examination uniform worn by one of the soldiers, specifically the hat, the boots, and the cut of the jacket, suggests that he was a grenadier in the Bavarian army in the first half of the eighteenth century.² Pewter soldiers like these were first produced in Germany with production centered in the cities of Nuremberg and Augsburg.³ These toys are characterized by very high quality molding details on both sides of the piece—this is clearly visible in the objects recovered from this site. The possibility that these pieces originated in Germany is lent credence by a lament of one English writer that "toys were at that time [late 18th century] all of foreign make."⁴ While this is an exaggeration, it does suggest that a large portion of the toys, especially metal miniatures, available in England and the colonies were German made.

It is possible that the pieces could have originated in England. By the middle of the eighteenth century, England's toy manufacturing industry had begun to flourish.⁵ While not nearly as profitable or prolific as that already established in Germany, British toymakers were beginning to expand both production and variety of toys manufactured. London had a few toy

manufacturers, but Birmingham was one of the largest towns producing metal toys.⁶ They established an industry noted for the production of luxury items for consumption by those in England and abroad. One manufacturer commented that without the luxury trade, Birmingham would have no purpose. “If we had no Nobility, Gentry, or Rich people, who would consume the Manufactures of Birmingham? Our Manufactures are principally Luxuries or Superfluities.”⁷

Despite the increasing luxury goods manufacturing abilities of some English cities, there is still no mention of the manufacture of small soldiers or miniature ships such as those found aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel. While there is a possibility that these objects were produced in England, given the established prolific manufacture of them in German cities, and the uniform worn by the soldiers, it is most likely that these objects came from Germany.

Other metal items associated with the luxury trade were discovered aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel. A faux watch and a miniature pewter pitcher, along with at least fifteen miniature serving pieces including a plate, and a soup tureen were discovered (Figs. 21, 22). Unlike the miniature soldiers and ships, these objects could have come from either Germany or Britain. British manufacturers were more frequently noted for producing such faux watches and miniature kitchen and serving vessels.

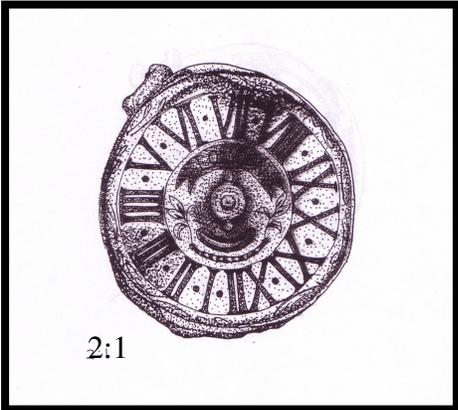


Figure 21. – Faux pewter watch (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

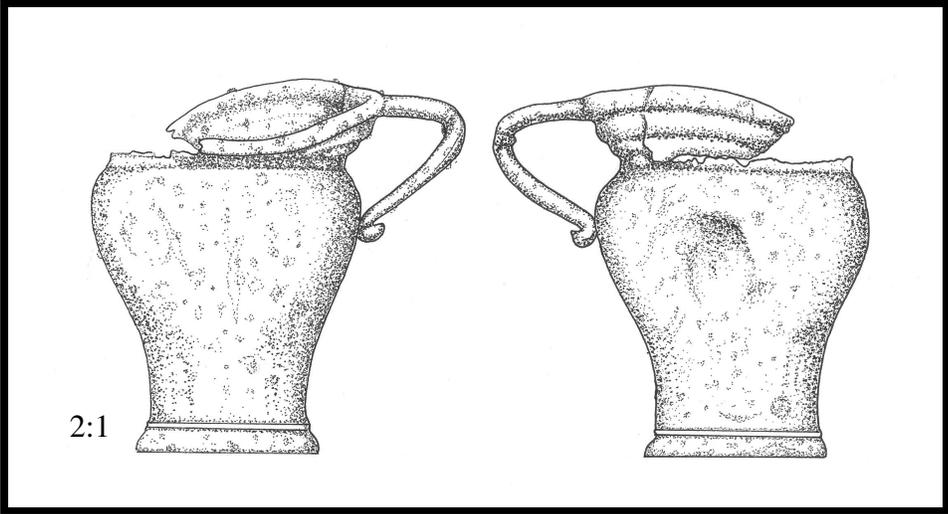


Figure 22. – Miniature pewter pitcher (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

Birmingham toymakers, in particular, were known to produce small metal items intended as keepsakes fashioned in the form of cups, spoons, and tankards.⁸ Defined as a trifle, or a small article with little value, the term “toy” can be applied to these items.⁹

The faux watch was first was thought to be a real watch which had simply lost its hands. Upon further examination, it was determined there were no internal workings which suggests that this may have been a faux watch or sundial. Watches and timekeeping had become a measure of sociability.¹⁰ It was a way to keep track of the passage of time and establish a consistent pattern for meals, or meeting times. It made little difference to many whether the watch actually worked or was a watch shaped miniature in ones pocket. In a society where conspicuous consumption was a mark of wealth, displaying a pocket watch on one’s person was a mark of refinement and status.

There were a minimum of 29 buckles and buckle fragments were discovered aboard the ship (Fig. 23). While not all were elaborately decorated, some were highly decorated and clearly intended for dress clothing. Several were highly decorated shoe buckles, while others were very plain and utilitarian. One buckle was ornamented with cannon, ships, and drums, possibly designed to commemorate a military success as such highly decorated, event specific objects were typically not manufactured without being commissioned (Fig. 24).



Figure 23. – Assortment of buckles (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

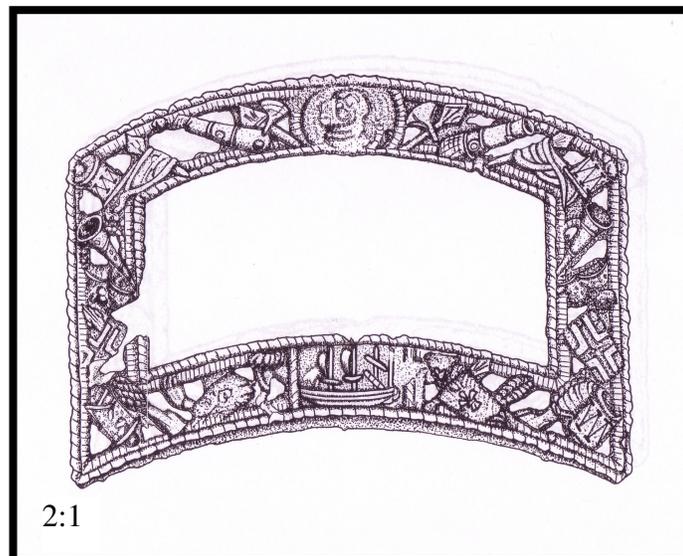


Figure 24. – Commemorative buckle with a military-naval motif (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

As with the other luxury metal items discussed, it is highly likely that some of these buckles originated in Birmingham. While not known for their high quality, Birmingham buckles appealed to those looking to embellish their clothing for a lower price.¹¹ While criticized for their low quality and the usage of what many considered to be second rate materials, the design, price, and novelty of the various buckles insured their popularity.¹² In order to appeal to the widest market in the colonies, it has been suggested that “most simply adopted the broad trend of prevailing London high fashion to the prejudices and pockets of their intended customers; as in most eighteenth-century industrial innovation, a process of copying combined with small incremental adjustments was the norm.”¹³ Fashioned of pewter rather than silver, low cost, fashionable buckles appealed to the colonists in Philadelphia. They allowed the colonists to save money and still wear a very fashionable design.

Only a handful of pieces of jewelry were discovered. The limited jewelry discoveries suggest that perhaps these items were filling an order placed by a merchant prior to sailing, rather than being shipped on speculation. Items of this description include a pair of copper alloy, teardrop-shaped ear rings, and a decorative metal object inset with pressed glass stones, likely a pin or broach. The transport of jewelry to Philadelphia illustrates yet again the colonial desire for cheap luxury items. Where there was a market for such goods, British merchants were always willing to meet the demand.

Trade in textiles has always been an important component of British trade, so the finding of lead seals of various shapes and sizes during excavation of the Roosevelt Inlet shipwreck was not surprising (Fig. 25). These seals were typically used in one of two ways; to indicate that an excise tax had been paid, and as a label attached by the merchant owning the item to indicate either ownership or type of material.¹⁴ The majority of the seals from the ship denoted ownership. It is likely that most of these seals were attached to textiles of varying sorts. One seal bore text which can be translated to “woolen blankets” from Holland. During the third quarter of the eighteenth century England was importing large quantities of coarse linen and other textiles from Holland and Germany. It is no surprise that such a seal was found aboard the vessel.¹⁵ At this time Holland and Germany had a much more developed textile industry than England, and until protectionist legislation was passed, they were able to out produce and undersell British made textiles. Discovery of textile seals accords with customs records of the previous successful voyage made by the *Severn*. They report 595 yards of British linens, “woolen stuff”, and “stuff silk.”¹⁶ All of these would have been in great demand by Philadelphia colonists for both practical and fashionable purposes. It has been suggested that “textiles were the most important single category of merchandise exported to the colonies, and wool the most valuable type of fabric” so it is logical that colonists would seek to continue importation of better quality or differently woven wool from alternative sources when British wool was either unavailable or deemed insufficient.¹⁷

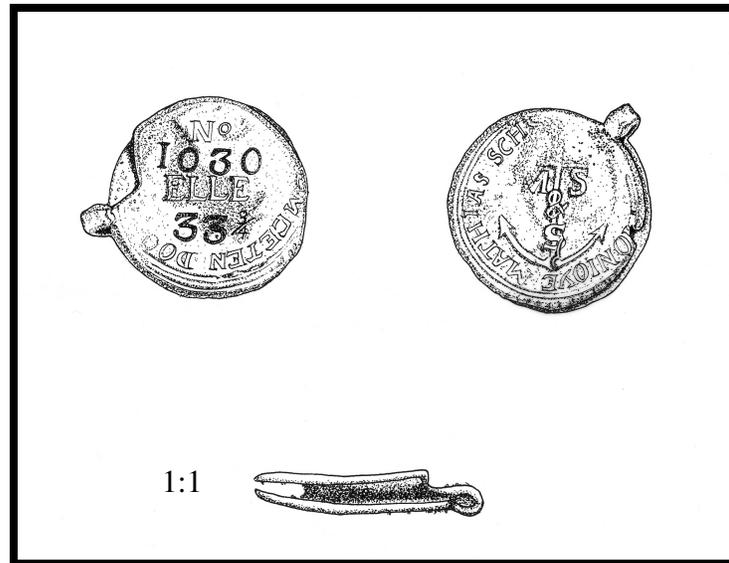


Figure 25. — Textile seal (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

Over two hundred utilitarian metal objects, including many associated with clothing and sewing, form one of the larger categories of metal artifacts. In spite of the great desire for luxury goods and status symbols, Philadelphia colonists still needed everyday necessities. To accommodate this need, the Roosevelt Inlet vessel was transporting hundreds—perhaps thousands of brass straight pins for fastening clothing, as well as hooks and eyes for fastening clothing (Fig. 26, 27).



Figure 26. – Straight pins (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).



Figure 27. – Clothing fasteners—hook and eye (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

These items and several thimbles, including a small stack of brass thimbles found corroded together, indicate the colonists dependency upon foreign imports as they simply had not developed the industry to manufacture these goods (Fig. 28). With cheap, mass-produced items like these, the local industry could not compete with the price of the imported goods; it was far less costly to import these utilitarian goods than it was to manufacture them.

In keeping with the importation of necessary clothing items, several pair of pewter cuff links and at least fifty metal buttons were discovered. These objects, like the sewing objects, were imported because they were cheaper to manufacture elsewhere. Buttons and cuff links ranged in quality from the utilitarian to highly decorated, gold plated, brass, and imitation-jewel-inset luxury items (Fig. 29). It is also logical that the ever fashion conscious colonists would desire fancy buttons and cuff links as a means of decorating their clothing rather than just being functional.



Figure 28. – Three stacked thimbles (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).



Figure 29. – Assortment of buttons (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

Approximately half of the brass buttons and cuff links excavated were cast with molded decorations and inset with both cut and pressed glass gemstones (Fig. 30). In addition to the previously-mentioned metal luxury items, Birmingham had an established button manufacturing industry.¹⁸ Since many of the other items carried aboard this vessel may have originated with Birmingham manufactures, some of these buttons likely originated here.

One of the more unexpected utilitarian items found aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel were antimony ingots (Fig. 31). Antimony's use ranged from an ingredient in rat poison, to a component in colonial pewter manufacturing, and in casting applications.¹⁹ It is noted that colonists were exporting materials such as wood or furs to England, rarely did they import raw materials. Antimony was one of the relatively few raw materials imported by colonists. It was a necessary ingredient in the manufacture of pewter objects and its presence on this vessel lends credence to the growing pewter industry in the colonies. With the non-importation agreements so recently on the minds of American colonists, the push to establish American industries had been revived.

These metal artifacts demonstrate the breadth of colonial consumer activity and the interconnectedness of colonial trade. Metal-based commodities, both manufactured and raw materials, were coming from Germany and Britain to satisfy the colonial desire for goods. Importation of antimony for manufacturing purposes foreshadows the colonial struggle for independence from an earlier state of dependence upon the British social, commercial, and political world.



Figure 30. – Button with pressed glass gem detail of figure 29 (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).



Figure 31. – Antimony ingots (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

Ceramics

The thousands of ceramic sherds recovered from the Roosevelt Inlet vessel provide a glimpse of consumer habits pertaining to both luxury and utilitarian goods. For many of the ceramics discovered aboard this vessel, their classification as luxury goods and utilitarian goods is unclear. The first such items are the German stoneware mineral water bottles (Fig. 32). Each bottle has a long oval shape with a very small neck. Incised markings indicate that two German companies manufactured these bottles—the Selters Company, and the Tolles Company. The Selters bottles represent a majority of the collection, with only a few Tolles bottles and bottle fragments present. The Selters bottles also have incised marks indicating the towns in which the water was bottled, further confirming their manufacture in Germany.

Despite the extremely utilitarian outward appearance of these mineral water bottles, they are clearly a part of the luxury trade. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* extolled the virtues of mineral water in an advertisement for a newly opened spa saying, “many have experienced the happy effects of these waters in removing obstinate disorders that have baffled all medicine, and they have been recommended often by some of our best Physicians.”²⁰ One traveler in 1858 described the Selters springs, which are still in operation today, as having an “acidulous taste” and containing “bicarbonate of soda in moderate quantity.”²¹



Figure 32. – German stoneware mineral water bottle (photo by author).

This same traveler compares Selters water with water from other springs, which are said to contain far too much iron. He writes that “in the waters of Selters, as is well known, the iron is deposited on the inside of the earthen bottle in which it is exported, and is altogether gone before it reaches the lip of the drinker.”²² He describes a pleasant tasting, carbonated water known for its restorative properties—something that appealed to the American colonists as well as the people frequenting the German spas.

Porcelain items were carried to meet the colonists’ taste for imported luxury items. Recovered porcelain finds included seven bowls, two colanders, eight plates, two possible saucers, and two unidentifiable fragments. The

quantity of porcelain discovered is very low when compared to the quantity of other items. One possible explanation for the limited quantity of Chinese porcelain found on the wreck is that the provisions of the Navigation Acts required Chinese porcelain to be unloaded in England and then reloaded and transported to the colonies. This restriction on the flow of goods to the colonies was a reflection of the reduced popular demand for British made and imported goods, one of which was porcelain. Although porcelain was not expressly forbidden in the non-importation acts, it was a commodity imported by the British East India Company, which was not in favor with American colonists.

While porcelain was apparently not being imported in large quantities, in part to protest British policy, it was also much more expensive than other wares. In order to counter this expense, many British potters attempted to imitate Chinese porcelain by decorating tin glazed earthenware in similar patterns. The pieces found on this site come primarily from plates and bowls, with a few pharmaceutical jar fragments also found. All white bodied ceramics, they were primarily decorated with a monochrome blue design which varied from a simple squiggled line, to a landscape scene, to a floral urn scene (Fig. 33). Polychromatic designs were also represented in this assemblage, but with less frequency than the monochrome. Each piece of polychrome discovered was characterized by a floral motif (Fig. 34).



Figure 33. – Monochromatic blue tin glazed earthenware (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).



Figure 34. – Polychromatic tin glazed earthenware (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

At least three pieces of tin-glazed earthenware pieces with monochromatic painting had with very complex designs representing an attempt to imitate more detailed Chinese porcelain patterns with a European adaptation. This came to be known as chinoiserie (Fig. 35). The patterns displayed on these pieces “reduced the complexity of Chinese visual culture, and met demands for styles conveying a creative imagining of China.”²³



Figure 35. – Monochromatic blue earthenware (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

The attempt to replicate the patterns on Chinese porcelain originated with British potters and was used for a variety of tableware. It is less common to find small vessels, such as teacups, decorated using this design as the thick glaze had a tendency to flake off in the mouth of the consumer.²⁴ Larger items such as plates, bowls, and punch bowls held their glaze much better and were therefore much more popular. The presence of these items aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel represents the desire of some American colonists to keep up with the current fashion trends followed by the wealthy. Tin glazed earthenware was a more affordable version of the porcelain craved by many of the wealthier members of society.

Queensware, one of the means by which the vessel has tentatively been identified as the *Severn*, was found aboard the vessel primarily in the form of cups and bowls (Fig. 36). It has been argued that the

impermeable and brilliant glaze over the light delicate body, molded into forms in keeping with the demand of the period for graceful contours, was accessible not only to the wealthy but also to the yeoman and middle classes who had hitherto been obliged to be content with either wooden platters and dishes or coarse earthenware.²⁵



Figure 36. – Queensware bowl (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

Because Queensware allowed a greater percentage of the population to have fashionable, popular goods at an affordable price, it is no surprise that such ceramics were being imported into the colonies.

While many ceramics aboard *Severn*, such as porcelain and some of the tin-glazed earthenware items, could be designated as luxuries, this vessel was also transporting some very utilitarian wares. There were a number of red bodied earthenware items destined for every day usage (Fig. 37). Two of the sherds pictured in figure 37 were obviously fragments of colanders, as evidenced by the holes distributed over their surfaces.



Figure 37. – Red bodied earthenware samples—top row are colanders (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

Of the red-ware fragments whose intended purpose can be determined, all were storage or cooking vessels, many were flat pans. American industry was not able to profitably compete with European capability to manufacture such utilitarian wares, therefore it was more expedient and cost effective to purchase imported goods.²⁶ However, there was great production of coarse unglazed earthenware, but it was not until the nineteenth-century that there was any production of fine earthenware in the colonies.

One of the more surprising utilitarian forms discovered aboard the vessel was Frankfurterware. Originating in Germany, this ceramic class was typically fashioned into flat bottomed cooking pots with a green or yellow glaze on the interior.²⁷ This is the first time it has been found in the American colonies, although it is possible it has not been identified on other sites²⁸. In light of the political tensions arising in the colonies over British policy, discovery of Frankfurterware suggests that merchants were attempting to gather cargo from non-British ports in order to ensure continued sale of goods. It is also possible that these utilitarian goods were imported, stored in warehouses near the docks, and loaded aboard this vessel to clear them from inventory.

There were thousands of stoneware fragments of various qualities recovered from the Roosevelt Inlet vessel. With only approximately 40 sherds recovered, English white salt glazed stoneware was one of the more sought-after articles of stoneware recovered from the site (Fig. 38). White salt glazed stoneware was thought to be one of the most fashionable types of ceramics available.²⁹ While still a very popular item, it was rapidly being replaced in popularity by creamware.³⁰ Due to the marketing genius of Josiah Wedgwood, who named his ceramic Queensware, and creamware's lower price, it is no surprise that it surpassed white salt glazed stoneware in sales. White salt glazed stoneware was still a desirable article to own, but the price and the colonial displeasure with British manufactured goods may have played a part in the comparatively small quantity of it being transported aboard this vessel.



Figure 38. – English white salt glazed stoneware (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

Blue and grey salt glazed Westerwald stoneware was popular at this time. Formed into bowls, plates, mugs, and serving pieces, blue and grey salt glazed stoneware was attractive yet affordable to a large portion of the population (Fig. 39). Largely imported from Germany, the blue and gray stoneware pieces aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel were characterized by incised floral motifs and a banded/geometric design. Of the sherds for which function could be determined, the pieces were largely utilitarian—including several chamber pots and mugs. It has been suggested that the demand for stoneware began to decline in the 1760's, with imports dropping by as much as half.³¹



Figure 39. – Blue and grey stoneware (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

These ceramics were manufactured in Germany and frequently shipped to Holland for transport to England.³² Upon arriving in England, they were either sold in the country or transported across the Atlantic to the colonies. As illustrated in a 1774 Boston merchant's advertisement, blue and grey stoneware had declined in status. After listing the various high status and more desirable items the advertiser mentions selling an assortment of "stoneware, a few crates of Black & Yellow Ware, and a Variety of other Articles as Cheap as any Place in Town"³³ Blue and grey stoneware had yet to be reduced entirely to utilitarian pieces, but they were no longer seen as luxury items.



Figure 40. — **Stoneware jug** (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

The most common utilitarian stoneware items recovered were hundreds of brown jug fragments of British manufacture (Fig. 40). These jugs were used to transport any number of liquids. They are characterized by a brown exterior and an unglazed, matte interior. One sherd collected had a “1” incised on the exterior, which likely represented the capacity—one gallon.³⁴ The utilitarian nature of these jugs is suggested, like that of the blue and gray stoneware, by their low

position on the lists of wares in merchant advertisements. These jugs seem to be sold either empty or filled with liquid, but they are never used as high-status items intended to give an impression of wealth.

Glass

Similar to the metal and ceramic items recovered from this site, glass vessels can be classified as either luxury or utilitarian items. Much of the table glass excavated from the beach and the wreck fits into the luxury category. Vessel forms include stemware, pitchers, decanters, and stoppers (Figs. 41-42). It has been suggested that British glass “introduced a whole new British style of modern consumer goods to middling- and upper-class markets at home as well as in Europe and the colonies.”³⁵ Glass was a luxury coveted by all who could afford to display it on their tables. London was the primary marketing center for glass and the place where merchants would go to order fine tableware, drinking glasses, and bottles.³⁶ It was manufactured throughout the country, but was typically transported to London for distribution. While a desired luxury product at the height of fashion in the late eighteenth-century, the relatively small quantity of table glass found aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel may be partially attributed a tax upon it and the non-importation agreements made by American colonists.



Figure 41. – Glass stemware (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

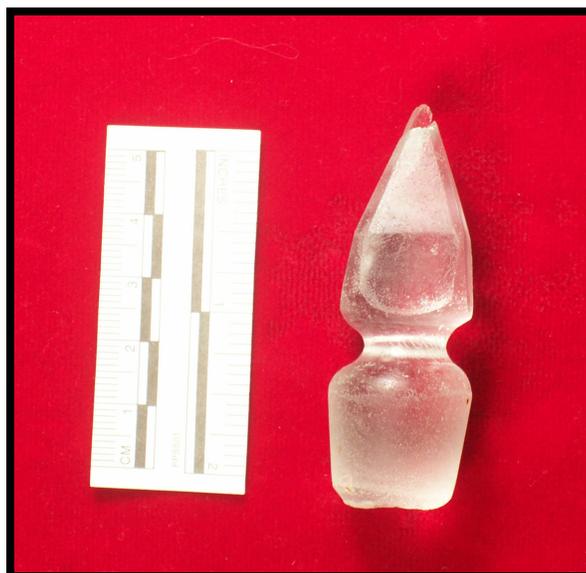


Figure 42. – Glass stopper (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).



Figure 43. – **Glass wine bottle** (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

While table glass was a luxury not everyone could afford, wine in glass bottles was something consumed by a much larger percentage of the population. The green bottles associated with the Roosevelt Inlet site are commonly referred to as wine bottles, but they were also used to transport beer and cider (Fig. 43).³⁷ The presence of green bottle fragments representing nearly one hundred bottles is no surprise since Bristol, the vessel's port of origin, was a major glass manufacturing center. One Bristol directory noted, "The great demand for glass

bottles for the Bristol water, for the exportation of beer, cider and Perry; for wine, and for the use of Town and Country keep the various bottle glasshouses here constantly at work.”³⁸ Thomas Lucas, a major exporter of bottled beer and cider, shipped 3 tons of beer in bottles and 4,000 green glass bottles aboard the *Severn* on its last successful voyage to the colonies.³⁹ As Lucas clearly had a business relationship with *Severn* owner Thomas Pennington, it would be logical to suggest that many of the bottles recovered archaeologically were produced by Lucas in Bristol.

Bristol was also a major exporter of window glass and case bottles to the colonies (Figs. 44, 45).⁴⁰ The excavation recovered over one thousand fragments of both. The same Bristol directory reported, “The call for window glass at home, at Bath and in the Towns about Bristol: in the Western Counties, Wales and from North to South wherever Bristol trade extends, and the great quantities sent to America, employ several houses for this article.”⁴¹ Coghlan, Peach & Co, and Samuel Taylor & Sons were major manufacturers of both items and transported numerous chests of window glass aboard *Severn* on its last successful voyage.⁴²



Figure 44. – Window glass fragments (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).



Figure 45. – Case bottle fragments and representative bottle not from *Severn* (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

The window glass shipped on *Severn's* last voyage was primarily "crown" glass. This quality glass was blown into approximately five foot (1.52 m) diameter circles, then shipped to the colonies by crate to be cut to size by the customer.⁴³ Broad glass, a glass of lesser quality and manufactured using older, less refined, methods was shipped aboard *Severn* on previous voyages.⁴⁴ This type of glass would be used in leaded windows and tended to be greenish-blue or greenish-yellow colored.⁴⁵ While not positively identified as such, a few fragments which are likely to be broad glass were recovered archaeologically.

Due to trade restrictions, including the Townshend duties, most window and bottle glass originated in either London or Bristol, rather than from other European cities.⁴⁶ At least one exception to this practice was discovered aboard the Roosevelt Inlet vessel. Recovery of a bottle seal bearing the inscription "Constantia Wyn" indicates that wine was being exported from vineyards in South Africa (Fig. 46). The bottles were likely manufactured in the glass manufacturing facilities in England. Wine could have been shipped in barrels to England and filled upon arrival, or bottles would have been shipped as ballast for filling at the winery. Trade from this region was under control of the Dutch East India Company who had successfully created a European market for the high quality wine produced by the Constantia vineyards.⁴⁷ Imported through Dutch channels to England, and then re-exported to the colonies, this was clearly a luxury item designed to appeal to the colonial taste for exotic beverages.

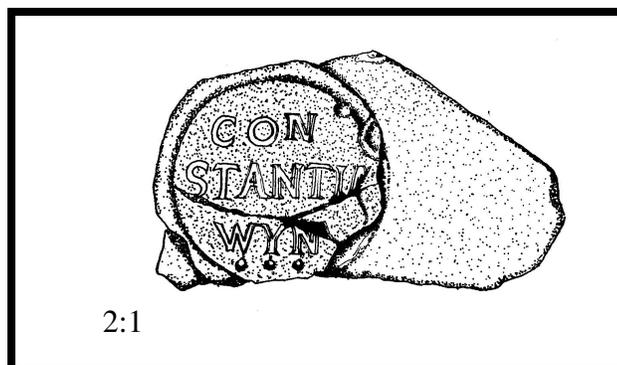


Figure 46. – “Constantia Wyn” bottle seal (courtesy of Sharyn Murray).

Miscellaneous Materials

A few objects associated with the Roosevelt Inlet vessel do not fit into any of the categories discussed above, but do provide insights into consumer practices and the trade network utilized in exporting goods to the colonies. The first of these objects were a series of millstones (Fig. 47). Millstones were frequently used as paying ballast⁴⁸. They could be loaded to lend the necessary stability, yet could be sold for some profit upon reaching Philadelphia.



Figure 47. – Unused millstone (courtesy of Delaware Department of State).

These millstones represent yet another commodity that colonial Americans were unable to produce themselves in any quantity. Despite their displeasure with England, colonists were dependant upon England for transportation of many objects, among them millstones⁴⁹.

While colonists may have been dependant upon England for importation of their millstones, they were not bound in such a way to purchase British made tobacco pipes. Not a single British made tobacco pipe has been found aboard this vessel. Of the several hundred white clay tobacco pipe fragments recovered, each was of Dutch origin. Some of the pipes were stamped with the word “Gouda” which represented the principal place of manufacture.⁵⁰ Bristol was a major pipe producing town. In 1773 there were 2386 boxes of tobacco pipes

exported, which amounted to as many as four to five million pipes exported in one year.⁵¹ Given the prolific production of tobacco pipes in Bristol it is surprising that none of them were exported to the colonies in *Severn*. This likely represents a conscious decision by the merchants loading the vessel to provide an alternative to British goods which were increasingly falling out of favor in the colonies. Holland at this time was a major producer of white clay tobacco pipes, yet they were not commonly used in England but instead exported to the colonies. This makes it even more probable that these were consciously imported in order to provide colonial Americans with an alternative to British made pipes.

The presence of Dutch tobacco pipes and utilitarian German ceramics, with the exception of German stoneware, illustrate what may be an attempt to substitute continental European goods for British made goods. There can be no doubt that Bristol and Philadelphia merchants were making attempts to find manufactured items from other locations that would abide by non-importation agreements. One Admiral in the Royal Navy commented in a 1773 letter to the British Admiralty on the amount of goods being legitimately imported “it would amaze your Lordships to see the great quantity of Holland goods that is run annually into Virginia, Philadelphia and New York.”⁵²

There were many objects imported into the colonies from European ports, yet nothing could quite replace the comfort of British made goods. The repeal of the Townshend Duties in 1773 ended the non-importation coalition which had

formed among merchants and citizens and which brought about a return to importation of British goods in large numbers. While the Tea Act and the Coercive Acts played a part in limiting the importation of British goods, especially those related to consumption of tea, there were still many luxury goods carried from Britain. The violence which broke out in Philadelphia in early May 1774 over the Coercive Acts and the resurgence of non-importation sentiment may have greatly affected the demand for the British made goods carried on the *Severn's* final voyage

This vessel likely left England during the relative calm that followed the repeal of the Townshend Acts, yet would have arrived to deliver a full compliment of British goods into a much different political environment. This calm, which included a break in non-importation agreements, suggests that perhaps colonial consumers were not as politically driven when it had a direct effect upon the luxury goods they were able to purchase. Idealism was rampant, but it was much more difficult to keep the average consumer focused on political resistance when so many British luxury items had become a part of everyday life for residents of the Middle American colonies.

Endnotes

¹ Griffith 2007, 1.

² Schick 1993, 5.

³ Hume 1969, 320.

⁴ Brown 1996, 12.

⁵ Brown 1996, 18.

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- ⁶ Berg 2005, 158.
 - ⁷ Berg 2005, 159.
 - ⁸ Berg 2005, 158.
 - ⁹ Hume 1969, 313.
 - ¹⁰ Berg 2005, 227.
 - ¹¹ Wise 1949, 65.
 - ¹² Berg 2005, 166.
 - ¹³ Styles 1988, 14.
 - ¹⁴ Hume 1969, 269.
 - ¹⁵ Davis 1962, 287.
 - ¹⁶ British Customs Records 1772-1773.
 - ¹⁷ Smith 1998, 679.
 - ¹⁸ Hume 1969, 93.
 - ¹⁹ Carlson 1977, 65; Smith and Secoy 1976, 1180.
 - ²⁰ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 11, 1772.
 - ²¹ Wilson 1858, 97.
 - ²² Wilson 1858, 98.
 - ²³ Berg 2005, 52.
 - ²⁴ Hume 1969, 111.
 - ²⁵ Finch 1930, 20.
 - ²⁶ Griffith 2007:2
 - ²⁷ Bartels 1999,166.
 - ²⁸ Griffith 2007, 2.
 - ²⁹ Baugher, S. and Venables, R.W. 1987, 43.
 - ³⁰ Miller 1984, 2
 - ³¹ Hume 1969, 283.
 - ³² Hume 1969, 283.
 - ³³ *Boston Evening Post*, May 30, 1774.
 - ³⁴ Hume 1969, 282.
 - ³⁵ Berg 2005, 117.
 - ³⁶ Berg 2005, 122.
 - ³⁷ Jones 1970, 67.
 - ³⁸ Minchinton 1954, 77.
 - ³⁹ British Customs Records 1772-1773; Morgan 1993, 99.
 - ⁴⁰ Morgan 1993, 97.
 - ⁴¹ Minchinton 1954, 77.
 - ⁴² British Customs Records 1772-1773; Morgan 1993, 99.
 - ⁴³ Hume 1969, 234, 19.
 - ⁴⁴ Hume 1969, 233.
 - ⁴⁵ Hume 1969, 233.
 - ⁴⁶ Palmer 1976, 77.
 - ⁴⁷ Ross 1988, 247.
 - ⁴⁸ Roberts 1965, 159.
 - ⁴⁹ Coulter 1945, 297.
 - ⁵⁰ Hume 1969, 307.
 - ⁵¹ Higgins 1995, 49.
 - ⁵² Stout 1973, 136.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The Roosevelt Inlet shipwreck represents an opportunity to explore the political and economic environment in which British merchants were operating immediately prior to outbreak of the American Revolution. Inbound for Philadelphia transporting consumer goods, this vessel provides a rare glimpse into American colonial consumer and British mercantile responses to the political events of the day.

This study examined the vessel and its contents in light of the historical events of the period. In order to do so it was necessary to delve into the identity of the vessel itself and the stories of its owner, captain, and voyages. Identifying the vessel as the *Severn* aided in the interpretation of the various goods associated with the vessel. While only a tentatively established identification, it allows use of the historic record to gather further information about its history and cargo.

With the vessel identified as the *Severn*, it became possible to compare the artifacts associated with the Roosevelt Inlet site to the British customs record of previous successful voyages made by the vessel. As it is likely that ship owner Thomas Pennington had established contacts with Bristol merchants, many of the artifacts recovered likely came from these sources. This allowed the origins of the objects to be examined in more detail than would otherwise have been possible.

Analysis of the various artifacts recovered from the site, in light of the events of the day, suggests that in spite of the general colonial displeasure with British policy, there were still relatively large quantities of British manufactured goods being imported—especially luxury items. Merchants seemed to be making some effort to find alternative merchandise in hopes of retaining customers' intent on protesting British policy. The substitutions, however, occurred primarily in the more utilitarian items, such as ceramics and white clay tobacco pipes. There simply was no reliable, acceptable substitute for many of the finer manufactures of British origin.

The colonist relied on British manufactures in large part due to trade restrictions placed upon commerce with the colonies. It was very difficult to import goods directly from other European countries, therefore, many colonists chose to continue relying upon the familiar until a dependable substitute could be located. The fact that a majority of luxury items were of British origin is also indicative of the strong reliance upon Britain for consumer merchandise. The presence of so many luxury items may also be a reflection of the break in the non-importation agreements. It would have been difficult to stop shipments of goods which left England prior to institution of the various non-importation agreements, which would account for the importation of some forbidden luxury goods; however, the non-importation agreements were having a visible impact upon trade with England. When this vessel left England, there was a period of relative calm, the exception being the continued boycott on tea and tea related objects. This calm, shattered days before the vessel would have reached

Philadelphia, represented a chance for British merchants to once again export the profitable luxury goods to the colonies in hopes that they would sell quickly. Had the vessel arrived at its intended destination, its reception may have been less than cordial given the primary cargo of British manufactured items.

The Roosevelt Inlet vessel, the *Severn*, and its cargo provided an excellent opportunity to examine the practices of eighteenth-century British and colonial merchants in light of the contemporary political situation. Glimpses of the practices of colonial consumers have come to light in a surprising fashion. Colonists may not have been as idealistic in practice as they were on paper when it came to denying themselves consumer products. The British merchants would not go to the expense of transporting goods which had no hope of sale; they believed there was a market for the items they were shipping. Further excavation of this vessel and other inbound merchantmen should confirm the conclusions regarding pre-revolutionary consumer practices and the effect of British policy which were reached through examination of the Roosevelt Inlet site.

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APPENDIX A
SEVERN TIMELINE

SHIP SEVERN TIMELINE

1769
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 27, 1769 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • April 24-May 1, 1769 expected to sail for Bristol May 15 (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) (<i>Universal Advertiser</i>) • May 25, 1769 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • October 23-October 30, 1769 inbound from Bristol to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • October 26, 1769 inbound from Bristol to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>)
1770
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 28, 1770 inbound to Philadelphia from Barcelona (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • July 19, 1770 outbound to Lisbon from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • November 22, 1770 inbound from Lisbon [?] to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • December 20, 1770 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • December 27, 1770 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>)
1771
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 6, 1771 arrived in Bristol from [NY or Philadelphia] (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • June 3, 1771 to sail from Philadelphia to NY in 5-6 weeks from May 30 (<i>New York Gazette</i>) • October 3, 1771 arrived in New York from Bristol on August 18 (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • October 11, 1771 arrived in New York from Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • October 21- October 28, 1771 inbound from Philadelphia to New York (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • October 24, 1771 inbound from Bristol to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • October 28, 1771 inbound from New York to Philadelphia [?] (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • November 14, 1771 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • November 18, 1771 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • November 25, 1771 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • November 28, 1771 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol

<i>(Pennsylvania Gazette)</i>	
1772	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 11, 1772 inbound from Bristol to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • May 21, 1772 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • June 1- June 8, 1772 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • June 8, 1772 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • June 11, 1772 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • November 4, 1772 inbound from Bristol to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • November 30, 1772 cleared Philadelphia for Leghorn (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • November 28 – December 5, 1772 cleared Philadelphia for Leghorn (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • Dec 2, 1772 cleared Philadelphia for Leghorn (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>)
1773	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 10, 1773 reported by Captain Straughn of the Sloop Nancy to be at latitude 38, longitude 70 from Philadelphia to Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • April 15, 1773 arrival at Philadelphia from Leghorn after being shore (<i>New York Journal</i>) • April 19, 1773 inbound from Leghorn to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • April 26-May 3, 1773 inbound from Leghorn to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • May 3, 1773 inbound to Philadelphia from Leghorn (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • May 5, 1773 inbound from Leghorn to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • May 10, 1773 arrived in Philadelphia May 5 from Leghorn (<i>New York Gazette</i>) • May 12, 1773 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • May 13, 1773 arrived in Philadelphia from Leghorn May 3 (<i>Massachusetts Spy</i>) • May 15-May 22, 1773 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • May 17- May 24, 1773 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Chronicle</i>) • May 17, 1773 outbound to Bristol from Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • May 24, 1773 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>) • May 26, 1773 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • September 1, 1773 arrived in Philadelphia from Spain (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>) • September 29, 1773 to set sail for Philadelphia from ?? [Page cuts off]

<p>(<i>New York Gazette</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• October 25, 1773 arrived in Philadelphia from Bristol (<i>Dunlap's Pennsylvania Packet</i>)• Oct 27, 1773 inbound from Bristol to Philadelphia (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>)• November 15- November 22, 1773 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>)• November 24, 1773 cleared Philadelphia for Bristol (<i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>)
1774
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 11, 1774 from Bristol to Philadelphia, ashore, full of water, believed lost.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Snow storm reported Wednesday last (May 4 <i>Pennsylvania Gazette</i>)

APPENDIX B
BRITISH CUSTOMS RECORDS 1772-1773

BRISTOL CUSTOMS 1772-1773—SEVERN, JAMES HATHORN

Bristol

In Account of Money collected by Dan Harson Esq. for the Duties on Goods and Merchandize imported out of this Port from the 5th of January 1772 to the 5th April following Inclusive

1/29/1772

126 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Jas. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Tho [Thomas] Pennington

150 Nails

2/26/1772

#302 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Sam _____ & Co.

60 Nails

2/27/1772

#311 Ledger Entry, *Severn* _____
Tho [Thomas] Pennington

40 Doz [dozen] New Wool Cards
19 Doz [dozen] Old Wool Cards
4,000 Tin Plates, Val [value] L20
20 Pewter, 20 Brass Man
50 wro [wrought] Iron, 20 habry [haberdashery] ware
10 pc [pieces] Swanskins, 8/20 Short Cloths dyed
100 Worsted Shirts
50 pc [pieces] Girth Webb, val [value] L5
10 Doz [dozen] Felt Hatts [hats]
17 Lead
20 Cheese, 200 gro. [gross] Tobacco Pipes
5 Chalders Grindestones _____
1,000 pc [pieces] Flint Glass Wares v 20.12.14

2/29/1772

#332 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Henry Croyer Dun [?]

3,000 pc [pieces] Earthen Ware
400 Eng. [English] Tin Plates, val [value] L5
100 Groce [Gross] Corks, val [value] L5
15 Doz [dozen] Saddle Trees

3/3/1772

#356 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Thomas Lucas

3 Tons Beer in Bottles
 4,000 Green Glass Bottles v. [value] 73.0.4

3/5/1772

#372 Ledger Entry, In the *Severn* _____
 _____ *Freeman [?] & Co*

100 Brit [British] unwro [unwrought] Copper

3/6/1772

#387 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Purnell and Lockier

4 Bedsteads and Furniture, val [value] 6
 20 Mattresses, Val 14

#388

Joseph Godwin

100 doz [dozen] wom [women] Stuff Shoes, val [value] L20

3/7/1772

#399 Ledger Entry, In the *Severn* _____
 _____ *Coghlan [?] & Co*

5 & 2/3rd Chests, cro. [crown] Wind [window] Glass, v [value]
 17.0.10

#400 Ledger Entry

Sam Taylor & Sons

18 Chest cro [crown] Wind [window] Glass, v [value] 41.0.8
 1,000 pc [pieces] Flint Glass Ware v [value] 10.3.22

3/9/1772

#410 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Robert Rodgers

20 Nail
 10 wro [wrought] Iron

3/10/1772

#432 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Wm [William] Teede or Seede [?] & Co.

25 wro [wrought] Iron

#433 Ledger Entry
Geo. [George] Watson Sons

500 wro [wrought] Iron
 5 Cast Iron
 3 Brass Man

#434 Ledger Entry
Peach & Brown

15 Stuff Silk only

#435 Ledger Entry
Sam Child [?]

72 Tons Beer in Bottles
 888 Green Glass Bottles v. 15.3.12
 1,800 pc [pieces] Flint Glass wares, 7.3.20

3/12/1772

#446 Ledger Entry, *Severn* _____ (possibly the word "paid")
Warren & Co

3 Chest cro [crown] Wind [window] Glass v [value] 10.1.93
 14,496 p. [pieces] Flint Glass wares
 4,800 Green Glass Vials v [value] 4.3.26

3/14/1772

#455 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Will [William?] King

1,800 Green Glass Bottles 144.1.4

8/13/1772

#235 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, James Hathorn, Philadelphia
Tho [Thomas] Pennington

100 Worsted Shirts

10 pc [pieces] hair plush val [value] L10
 50 Woolen Stuff
 100 Nails
 50 wro [wrought] Iron
 10 Brass Mann
 5 habry [haberdashery] ware
 10 Pewter

8/22/1772

#314 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Bence & Lock

46 doz [dozen] Wom [women] Stuff Shoes, val [value] L20

8/28/1772

#353 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Tho [Thomas] Pennington

____ Lead
 Brit [British] Gun Powder
 50 Cordage

9/1/1772

#373 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Joseph Godwin

80 doz [dozen] Wom [women] Stuff shoes, val [value] L20

9/3/1772

#385 Ledger entry
Peach & Pierce

595 yds [yards] Brit [British] Linens

#386 Ledger entry
Coghlán & Co

32 Chest cro [crown] Wind [window] Glass, v [value] 97.0.20

#387 Ledger entry
Thomas Lucas

1 Ton Beer in Bottles
 1,200 Green Glass Bottles, v [value] 21.9.0

9/5/1772

#407 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Sam Taylor & Sons

23 & 2/3 Chests cro [crown] Wind [window] Glass v [value] 58.2.6

#408 Ledger Entry
Will [William] King

20,172 Green Glass Bottles v [value] 401.9.12

7/26/1773

#88 Ledger Entry
Tho [Thomas] Pennington

Cargo listing is unreadable

8/6/1773

#194 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Tho [Thomas] Smith p [paid to] Tho [Thomas] Pennington

2,000 bus [bushels] White Salt, va [value] 7 ____

8/17/1773

#260 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Sam Taylor & Sons

51 & 2/3 Chest cro [crown] Wind [window] Glass, v [value]
133.0.20

8/19/1772

#271 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, _____ Brit [British] Built
Tho [Thomas] Pennington

10 Cheese
16 Chald. [*Chaldron*] Coal Wind [Windsor?] Measure

#272 Ledger Entry
Coghlan & Co

8 Chest cro [crown] Wind [window] Glass, v [value] 24.0.12

#273 Ledger Entry
William King

10,8000 green glass Bottles, v. 401.3.4

8/20/1773

#278 Ledger Entry: In the *Severn*, Ja. [James] Hathorn, Philadelphia
Sam Child

1st Unreadable

2nd Entry not fully readable: _____ Beer in Bottles

3rd Entry not fully readable: _____ 6,800 Green Glass Bottles,
v [value] 705

VITA

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