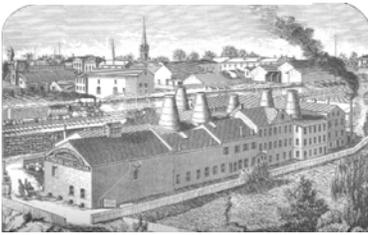


TRENTON POTTERIES

Newsletter of the
Potteries of Trenton Society



Flow Blue Kiln Wasters from the International Pottery Company

William B. Liebeknecht

Recent excavations by Hunter Research, Inc. in the spring of 2009 at the Petty's Run Archaeological site in downtown Trenton unearthed a deposit of waster materials which were marked "BURGESS & CAMPBELL".

William Burgess and John A. Campbell owned the International Pottery Company (1879-1903), located between Stockton, Front and Canal Streets in Trenton, New Jersey. According to the 1880 industrial census the International Pottery Company employed 175 people, (mostly men, but 13 women and 27 children as well), and the total value of their products on hand was \$81,400.00.

Many of the sherds recovered from the site are adorned with "flow blue" floral decoration and are marked "ROYAL BLUE CHINA". According to the Trenton Board of Trade (1900), the International Pottery Company manufactured the "celebrated 'Royal Blue', white granite, semi-porcelain and china wares". The sherds that were recovered from Petty's Run were printed in dark blue and brown, which suggests that the "ROYAL BLUE CHINA" back mark likely refers to the line rather than to the color of the ware.

In addition to the wasters, the deposit included blue-tinted pins used in saggars to separate the vessels during firing. Kiln furniture of this type is very common. Its manufacture was standardized and millions of these pins were produced during the period of Trenton's ceramic manufacturing

prominence. These particular pins, however, had evidence of cobalt blue coloring that bled onto them during the firing process. While finding vessel fragments with blurred transfer print coloring from adjacent vessels is common, recovering kiln furniture with the same coloring is rare.

The origins of flow blue are uncertain but it is generally believed that the deliberate flowing of the blue decoration over the seams of transfer printed decorations was employed to hide bisque flaws, mold flaws, and glazing defects. It is not certain if the flow blue technique was developed accidentally or intentionally as a by-product of the desired blurring of the cobalt oxide in transfer printing. However, Josiah Wedgwood II is commonly credited with having invented the flow blue technique in the 1820's in Staffordshire, England, although some historians believe that "the Flow Blue technique was discovered accidentally when jars of volatilizing chlorides were inadvertently left in kilns during the second firing" (Grammytique.com 2000:2).

Flow blue ceramics were mainly marketed to the United States with production peaking at the turn of the twentieth century. Although the English were the largest producers of flow blue, Germany and Holland also are known to have produced this unique ware. After 1875, American potters began production of flow blue to com-

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The Potteries of Trenton Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of Trenton's ceramic past. Officers: President - Patricia Madrigal; Treasurer - Jay Lewis; Secretary - Brenda Springsted. Board: Ellen Denker, Richard Hunter, Meta Janowitz, Jay Lewis, Emma Lewis, William Liebeknecht, George Miller, Brenda Springsted, Rebecca White. Newsletter Editor: Patricia Madrigal

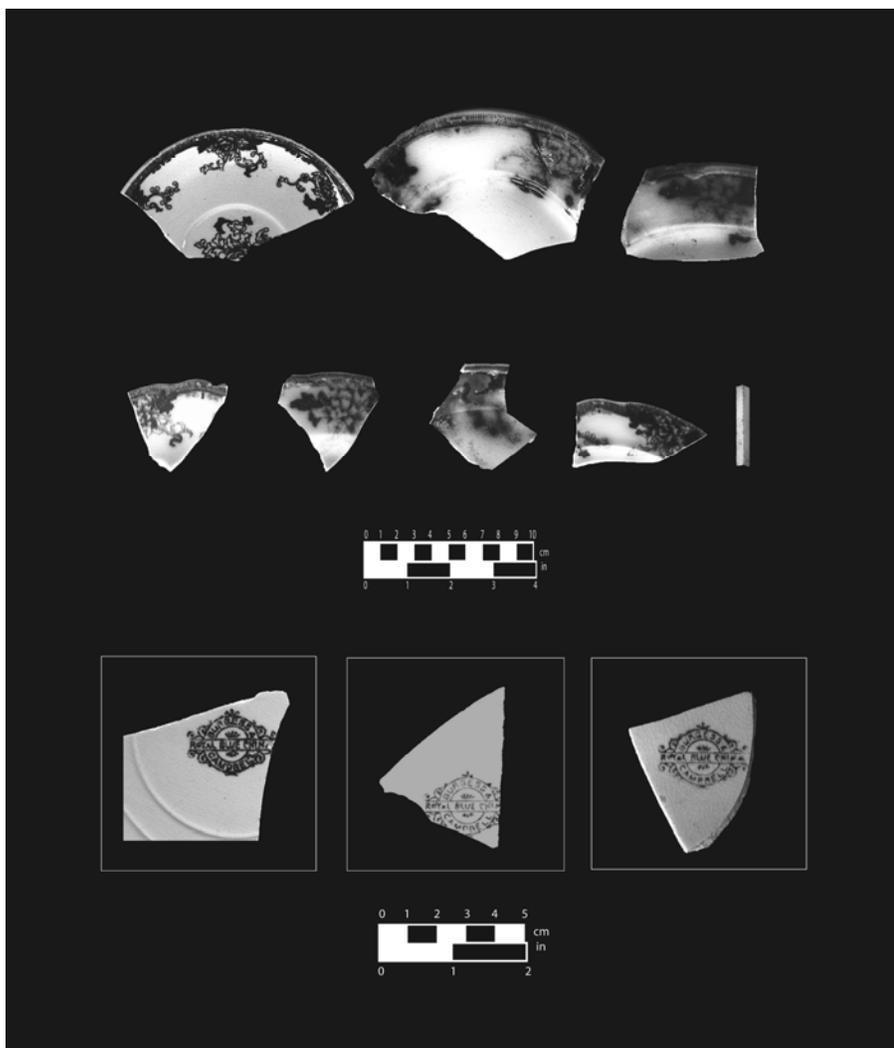
Flow Blue

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pete with overseas imports. Although popular with middle and lower class Americans, flow blue was not admired by all. In 1903 N. Hudson Moore wrote in *The Old China Book*, "There is a certain style of design known as 'flow blue,' which has nondescript patterns, flowers, geometric designs, and occasionally landscapes, and which has nothing whatever of beauty or interest to recommend it..." (Moore 1903:13).

Initially the assemblage of wasters recovered from Petty's Run appeared to be typical of the many other ironstone china waster dumps located

Figure 1. Waster sherds from the International Pottery Company recovered at the Petty's Run excavations in Trenton.



throughout the city of Trenton, but it took on more importance when a correspondence developed with the Flow Blue International Collectors Club (FBICC). The day before the deposit was discovered (March 2, 2009), POTS received an email from Heidi Wolf and Agnes Holst, members of the FBICC (<http://www.flowblue.com/FBICC.aspx>), requesting information on flow blue china made in Trenton. No such collections came to mind, but within 24 hours the Petty's Run sherds were uncovered and the FBICC was immediately notified. The kiln furniture presented a new and unusual category for members of the Flow Blue International Collectors Club and collectors of this special type of ware.

References

Federal Census of New Jersey 1880 *Industrial Schedules*. On file, New Jersey State Archives, Trenton, New Jersey.

Grammytique.com 2000 *A Brief History of Flow Blue China*. <http://www.grammytique.com/library/Flow%20Blue/Flowbluehistory.html>. Accessed February 8, 2010.

Moore, N. Hudson. 1903 *The Old China Book, Including Staffordshire, Wedgwood, Lustre, and Other English Pottery and Porcelain*. Tudor Publishing Company, New York.

Trenton Board of Trade 1900 *Industrial Trenton and Vicinity*. George A. Wolf Publishers, Wilmington, Delaware.

Salt-glazed Stoneware in Early America

By *Janine E. Skerry and Suzanne Findlin Hood*

Imported from Germany and England and domestically made, salt-glazed stoneware vessels were an integral part of daily life in America from the time of European settlement until the dawn of the last century. *Salt-glazed Stoneware in Early America* examines the range of stoneware owned in the Anglo-American colonies and the new nation. Janine E. Skerry and Suzanne Findlin Hood focus on the unique characteristics and crosscurrents evident in this rich genre of ceramic history.

"Whether robustly potted in brown or gray or delicately fashioned in white, German and British stoneware was ubiquitous on the eve of the American Revolution," write the authors. "By that time, it played a role akin to modern-day plastics: ever present and essential, but rarely celebrated. They were affordable, durable, plentiful, and – in many instances – expressive of current fashion." *Salt-glazed Stoneware in Early America* covers Germanic stoneware for the British and American market, English stoneware in colonial America, and the early development of American stoneware traditions. Archaeological examples recovered from sites in New England, Middle Atlantic, and Southern colonies are used as key evidence along with rare extant objects with histories of ownership.

Documentary sources also include newspaper advertisements, shopkeepers' accounts, inventories, diary entries, and letters. Objects drawn from Colonial Williamsburg's holdings are presented alongside stoneware from more than forty-five public and private collections to create a useful overview of the range and function of goods found in early

America. 300 color photographs, together with maps and line drawings, accompany the text.

"A must-have volume for all ceramic enthusiasts, *Salt-glazed Stoneware in Early America* is a long-overdue tribute to the often-neglected but indispensable role that stoneware played in the American context. Janine E. Skerry and Suzanne Findlin Hood's comprehensive research celebrates the functional, durable, and often sublimely beautiful character of stoneware." – Robert Hunter, editor, *Ceramics in America*

JANINE E. SKERRY has been curator of ceramics and glass at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation since 1993.

SUZANNE FINDLEN HOOD is associate curator of ceramics and glass at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

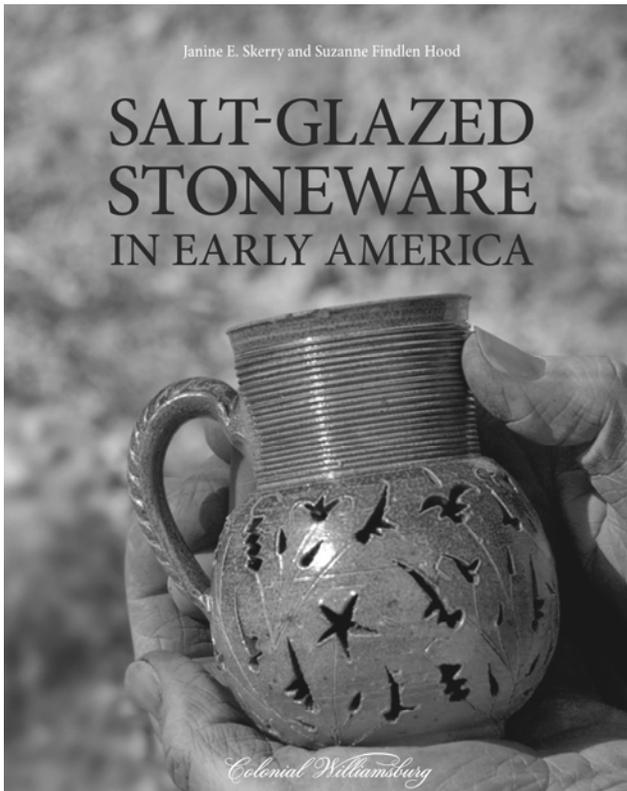
Salt-glazed Stoneware in Early America

Janine E. Skerry and Suzanne Findlin Hood

Publication date:
January 12, 2010

288 pp., 9 x 11 1/4"
300 color illustrations
978-1-58465-820-7
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Colonial Williamsburg
Foundation



Staying Alive: The Hill-Fulper-Stangl Pottery in a Changing Marketplace

Presented by

**Potteries of Trenton Society
New Jersey State Museum
Trenton Museum Society**

**Saturday, April 17, 2010, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
New Jersey State Museum Auditorium, 205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ**

The Potteries of Trenton Society in partnership with the New Jersey State Museum and the Trenton Museum Society is pleased to present *Staying Alive: The Hill-Fulper-Stangl Pottery in a Changing Marketplace*. This program has been organized in conjunction with an exhibit at the Trenton City Museum at Ellarslie Mansion, *Utility & Artistry: Works of the Stangl and Fulper Potteries*.

This year's symposium will examine many chapters of the Hill-Fulper-Stangl pottery's history, beginning with its founding by utilitarian stoneware maker Samuel Hill in the early 1800s, moving through the era of exciting forms and glazes related to the Fulper Pottery, and ending with many successful years as a dinnerware manufacturer called Stangl. Over this long period, the pottery produced an extraordinary body of work that appeals today to many types of collectors. Much has happened since the 1970s to keep this pottery in the spotlight, ranging from legal controversies to adaptation of historic glaze formulas to preservation activities to the collector's market.

Program Schedule

- 9:30 a.m. Registration and Coffee, New Jersey State Museum Auditorium
- 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Morning Program
- Gorden Gray, collector and scholar, *Fulper: An Overview*
- Peter Meissner, collector and guest curator, "Utility and Artistry: Works of The Sangl and Fulper Potteries," *History of Fulper/Stangl*
- David Rago, founder and principal of Rago Arts and Auction Center in Lambertville, *Today's Market for Collecting Fulper*
- 1:00-2:30 p.m. Lunch, New Jersey State Museum
- 2:30-4:00 p.m. Afternoon Program
- Anne Fulper, one of the four Fulper sisters who created Fulper Glazes, Inc., *Adaptive Reuse: Putting Family Documents to Work*
- Ellen Denker, Museum consultant and writer, *Industrial Monuments: Preserving New Jersey's Potteries through the Built Environment*
- Gordon Gray returns to introduce the showing of an industrial film documenting the workings of the Fulper/Stangl Pottery ca. 1935-37
- 4:00-5:00 p.m. Reception and Viewing of *Utility & Artistry: Works of the Stangl and Fulper Potteries* at the Trenton City Museum at Ellarslie Mansion

***Staying Alive:
The Hill-Fulper-Stangl Pottery in a Changing Marketplace***

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**Saturday, April 17, 2010
9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

New Jersey State Museum Auditorium, 205 West State Street, Trenton, NJ

Advance registration must be received by **April 5, 2010**; after that date, you must register on site. We regret that we do not take credit cards; check or money order only. All advance registrations must be made via the mail; telephone registrations will not be accepted. On site registration is \$40. Registration includes lunch.

Please Print

Name: _____

Affiliation (for name tag): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email _____
(optional) (for email confirmation of registration)

Meeting Registration Fees:

Member Potteries of Trenton Society	\$30.00	_____
Member Friends of the NJ State Museum	\$30.00	_____
Member Trenton Museum Society	\$30.00	_____
Non Member	\$35.00	_____

Please circle your choice for sandwich (if no choice is made we will make one for you):

Cheese Turkey Roast beef Tuna

Registration will be \$40 the day of the symposium.

Please make your check payable to the Potteries of Trenton Society and mail to:

Potteries of Trenton Society, 120 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

POTS Membership

Membership in the Potteries of Trenton Society is open to all interested in Trenton's pottery industry and the ceramic products manufactured here. We welcome pottery workers, historians, archaeologists and collectors. Your contribution is used to support newsletter, lecture, meeting, and conference costs.

Annual Membership \$25

Name: _____

Address: _____

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