

Höhr Stoneware in Delaware

German brown and blue-gray salt glazed stonewares are generally well represented in 17th- and 18th-century ceramic assemblages recovered from Delaware archaeological sites. Their frequency within assemblages is comparable to that seen on other colonial period sites in the Mid-Atlantic region.

The monochromatic Höhr stoneware also occurs in Delaware assemblages, but with much less frequency. Two late 17th- to early 18th-century Delaware sites have produced clear examples of this ware, and a third has produced another possible example. One body sherd with a portion of sprig-molded floral decoration has been recovered in a surface context at the Old House Site (7S-D-16) near Lewes, Sussex County, Delaware. The form is not discernible due to the small size of the sherd. Excavations at the Walter Powell Plantation Site (7S-K-144B) in Sussex County have produced Höhr stoneware from feature contexts. These features were interpreted as a possible tanning pit (Feature 2) and a well (Feature 3), and were dated to the period between 1680 and 1720. Associated artifacts from these contexts included manganese mottled earthenware, Tippet-marked white clay tobacco pipes, roulette-decorated terra cotta pipes, bottle glass, and other colonial period artifacts. The form is that of an ovoid drinking pot or small jug. Sprig-molded floral motifs with multiple, incised, and connecting lines compose the vessel's surface decoration. The possible third occurrence has been at the Avery's Rest Site (7S-G-57), again in Sussex County, Delaware. The positive identification of this ware at this site, however, awaits further analysis of its ceramic assemblage. In the known Delaware examples, fabric color (uniform light cream to gray) and decoration are consistent with others of this ware type that have been found in the Mid-Atlantic region.

While there have been relatively few occurrences of this ware in Delaware, a couple of tentative observations regarding Höhr stoneware can be made. Similar to what is seen in neighboring Maryland and Virginia, this German salt glazed stoneware variant represents a minority ceramic type within the German stonewares and general colonial ceramic assemblages. This ware's circumscribed geographic distribution is also of note. To date, its range is limited to Sussex County, Delaware's southernmost county, and has not been identified either in extant collections or in more recent field excavations conducted in Kent and New Castle counties. While more study is needed, this ware's limited range may be a product of a sub-regional, localized economic system.

[Click here to view images of the Hohr stoneware in Delaware.](#)

References

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