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Santa Elena Ceramics

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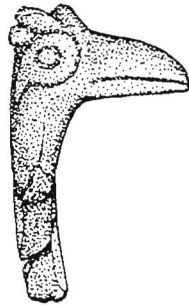
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Santa Elena Publications



DePratter, Chester B., and Stanley South

1995 Discovery at Santa Elena: Boundary Survey. *South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology Research Manuscript Series 221*. University of South Carolina, Columbia.

This report consists of two volumes. The text volume (pages 1-148) includes background history, description of previous excavations at Santa Elena, boundary survey methodology, results, and artifact catalog summaries. The appendix volume (pages 149-310) contains artifact catalogs.

South, Stanley, and Chester B. DePratter

1996 Discovery at Santa Elena: Block Excavation 1993. *South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology Research Manuscript Series 222*. University of South Carolina, Columbia. (Available in August, 1996.)

This report describes excavations on a large, high-status lot in the town of Santa Elena. It includes reports by Dan Weinand on faunal remains, C. Margaret Scary on botanical remains, and David Lawrence on oyster shells.

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Santa Elena Ceramics

By James Legg, Chester B. DePratter, and Stanley South

If you have visited SCIAA's first floor laboratory in the past several months, it is likely that you have seen Jim Legg at work on his latest project. With funds provided by a contract with the U.S. Marine Corps through the Marine Corps Museum in Quantico, Virginia, Jim has been working to crossmend and document imported ceramics from the Santa Elena site which was occupied from 1566 to 1587. Documentation has included photographing and videotaping both the mending process and a catalog of ceramic types found at Santa Elena.

In the seventeen years since SCIAA excavations started at Santa Elena, tens of thousands of sherds of imported ceramics have been found and brought back to Columbia for processing and analysis. These wares include Spanish majolicas (tin-glazed earthenwares), Italian majolicas, green lead-glazed and "red" lead-glazed earthenwares, orange micaceous earthenware, oriental porcelain, and "Mexican" Red Painted (imported from Central America). The accumulated collection forms a unique assemblage of materials derived from a remote colonial site occupied for only 21 years.

Jim's job involves piecing together all of these fragments from imported vessels into reconstructable or measurable vessel forms, so that we can begin to understand the function of the various pottery types in the Santa Elena assemblage. Spanish



Videotaping Santa Elena ceramic collection. (Photo by Nena Powell Rice)

olive jars, used as shipping and storage containers, are abundant in the Santa Elena collection, but no effort is being made to crossmend olive jar fragments in the current project. About one-half of the pottery found at Santa Elena was made by local Indians, and that collection, like the olive jar, will be dealt with later.

Jim has finished the cross-mending portion of his work, and he has completed a videotape catalog of 93 vessel examples. He now is preparing measured profile drawings of representative vessel forms of each type. These drawings will ultimately be published as part of a series of articles describing each of the ceramic types found at Santa Elena. These articles should be of great interest to archaeologists and ceramicists, because the Santa Elena collection (confined as it is to a 21-year interval) provides a snapshot-like view of ceramics in the third quarter of the sixteenth century.