

## Chapter 3

# Ceramics

Joseph M. Herbert

Seventy pottery samples were analyzed in this study. They were drawn from 30 sites with Woodland occupations representing cultures spanning the period from 1500 BC–AD 1500. Sites were selected on the basis of their ability to characterize relevant geographic regions, the types of pottery included in their assemblages, and their capacity to represent the regional ceramic sequence. Also taken into consideration were factors concerning the contexts in which the specimens were found. As many of the analytical procedures are destructive, sherds were selected from contexts where provenience was mixed, including the surface, plow zone, excavation balk, and shovel test.

The sample includes sites in three river basins (the Cape Fear, Yadkin-Pee Dee, and Lumber) chosen to represent the Piedmont, Sandhills, and Coastal Plain provinces (Figure 3.1). Appendix A provides a general description of each of the 70 pottery samples.

### **Piedmont Sites and Samples**

Piedmont assemblages are represented by 10 sherds from the Doerschuk site (31Mg22) on the lower Yadkin River and 10 from the Haw River site (31Ch29) on the lower Haw River (Table 3.1).

#### *The Haw River Site (31Ch29)*

The Haw River site is located along an ancient meander loop of the Haw River, now submerged beneath B. Everett Jordan Lake in Chatham County, North Carolina (Figure 3.1). So situated, the site provides pottery representing the Piedmont portion of the Cape Fear River basin. The site was first tested and recorded in the 1960s and 1970s (McCormick 1970; Smith 1965; Wilson 1976) and excavated in 1979 by Commonwealth Associates for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers prior to inundation of the reservoir (Claggett and Cable 1982). Excavation revealed numerous rock hearths, pit features, and single-vessel clusters of pottery buried within the upper strata of alluvium composing the floodplain terraces of the Haw.

The pottery sample from the Haw River site used in this study was from the plow zone and therefore lacked stratigraphic provenience. Nine of the 10 pottery specimens in this sample were classified as Yadkin in consequence of their being tempered with angular quartz particles granule size (2–4 mm) and larger, which are assumed to have been prepared by crushing and winnowing

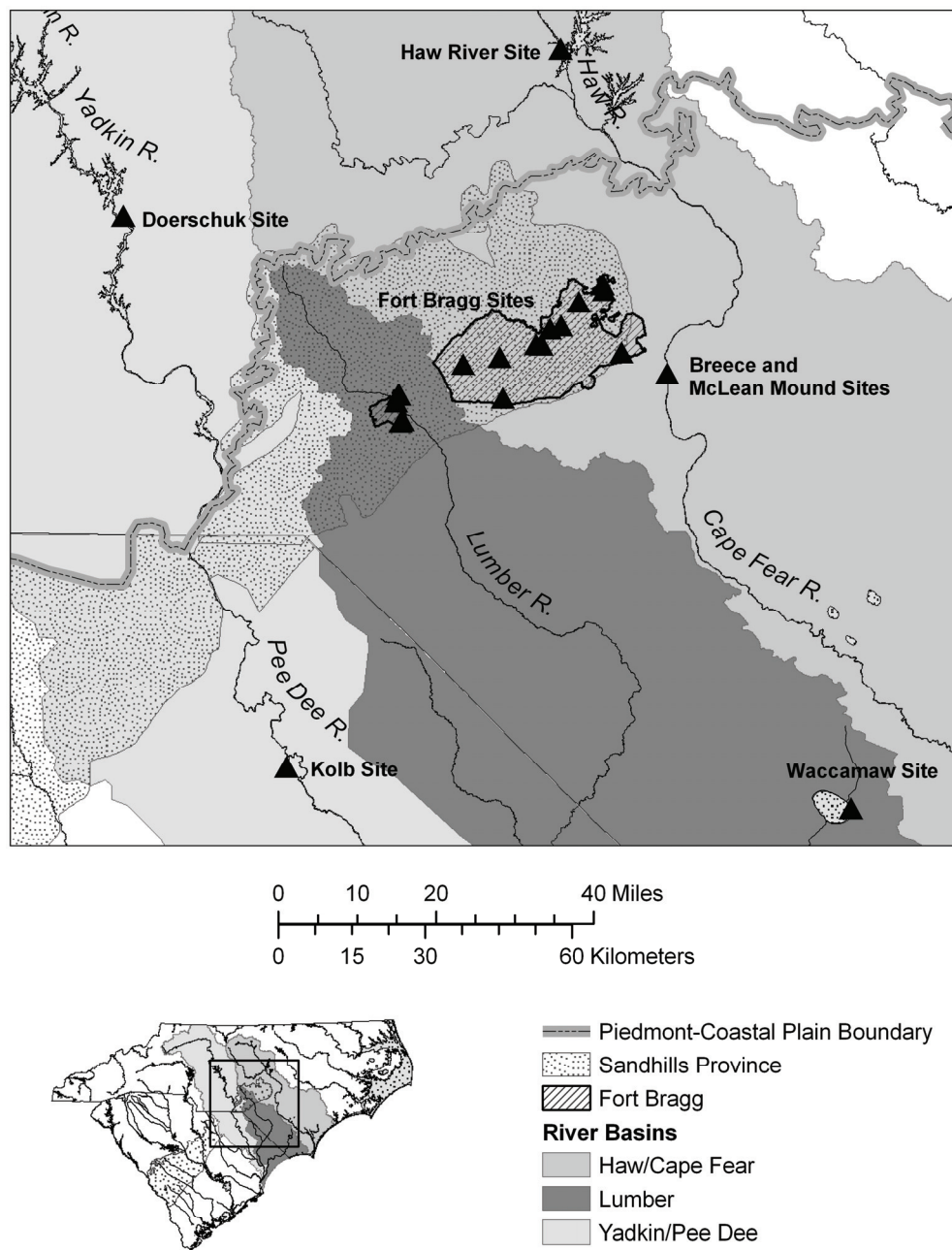


Figure 3.1. Archaeological sites from which pottery samples were drawn (United States Department of Agriculture 1998; United States Geological Survey 2002).

(Table 3.2; Figure 3.2). Petrographic analysis identified grog in very low proportion (2–3%) in two of the Yadkin sherds (Appendix A). The combination of angular quartz and grog in the Yadkin series is not without precedent, having been observed in a minority of sherds at the Doerschuk site (Coe 1964:33) and the Mattassee Lake sites in South Carolina (Anderson et al. 1982:299). One sand-tempered, fabric-impressed specimen in the Haw River site sample was classified as Cape Fear.

**Table 3.1. Distribution of Pottery Samples by Physiographic Region and Drainage.**

Site	Physiographic Region	Drainage	Count
Haw River	Piedmont	Haw	10
Doerschuk	Piedmont	Yadkin	10
Fort Bragg	Sandhills	Lower Little	12
Fort Bragg	Sandhills	Drowning Creek	8
Breece	Coastal Plain	Cape Fear	10
Waccamaw	Coastal Plain	Waccamaw	10
Kolb	Coastal Plain	Pee Dee	10
			<u>70</u>

*The Doerschuk Site (31Mg22)*

The Doerschuk site is situated on the banks of the Yadkin River where it is narrowly constrained between steep flanks of the Uwharrie Mountains just below Falls Dam in Montgomery County, North Carolina (Figure 3.1). Excavations were begun by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1946 and continued for several years thereafter, uncovering luxuriant assemblages of projectile points and pottery within the deeply stratified alluvial terraces below the falls. The Archaic projectile point types from Doerschuk, so lavishly described by Coe (1964:14–55), have all but become household names, certainly the fundamental units of North Carolina’s archaeological lexicon. The Woodland pottery types defined on the basis of those excavated assemblages also remain in use, although their ages and distributions are, perhaps, more in need of refinement. The sample of 10 sherds from the Doerschuk site used in this study was from an excavation wall that slumped, leaving no stratigraphic provenience for these specimens (Figure 3.3).

Coe recognized five pottery series among the Doerschuk site materials, and four of these are represented in the current sample (Table 3.2). He conceived Badin as the earliest series, a fine-sand-tempered ware comprising three surface treatment types (fabric marked, cord marked, and net impressed). Two sherds of this ware, one net impressed and one cord marked, were identified in the current study and are considered to be the same as the Early Woodland New River Net Impressed and New River Cord Marked types, estimated to date from 1200–500 BC (Herbert et al. 2002:102).

The Yadkin series, thought to be somewhat younger than Badin in Coe’s scheme and now considered to range in age from 1000 BC–AD 200 (Herbert et al. 2002:103), is represented in this study by five sherds from Doerschuk (Table 3.2). Of the five, two are fabric marked, one is cord marked, one is check stamped, and one is net impressed. Coe did not recognize a net-impressed component of the Yadkin series, but this designation seems most accurate given the sherd’s characteristics.

Two Late Woodland series are recognized in the Doerschuk sample: Dan River and Jenrette. Coe (1964:33) envisioned the Dan River series as the Late Woodland component of the Piedmont sequence consisting of Badin, Yadkin, Uwharrie, Dan River, and Caraway. Dan River Net Impressed was the only type originally recognized in the Doerschuk site report (Coe 1964), but Dan River Simple Stamped was identified in this study. A single Jenrette Plain sherd was

**Table 3.2. Distribution of Pottery Samples by Period and Type.**

Site	Early Woodland				Middle Woodland				Late Woodland				Total	
	Thom's Creek	New River	Deptford	Cape Fear	Yadkin	Hanover	Hanover I	Mount Pleasant	Yadkin/ Hanover	Cape Fear III	Hanover II	Dan River		Jenrette
Haw River				1	9									10
Doerschuk	2				5							2	1	10
Fort Bragg	3		2	1	2	1	3	1		1	5			20
Breece	1			1			3				5			10
Waccamaw	1			5		1	1				2			10
Kolb	3			2	2		1		2					10
Total	1	9	2	10	18	2	8	1	2	1	12	2	1	70



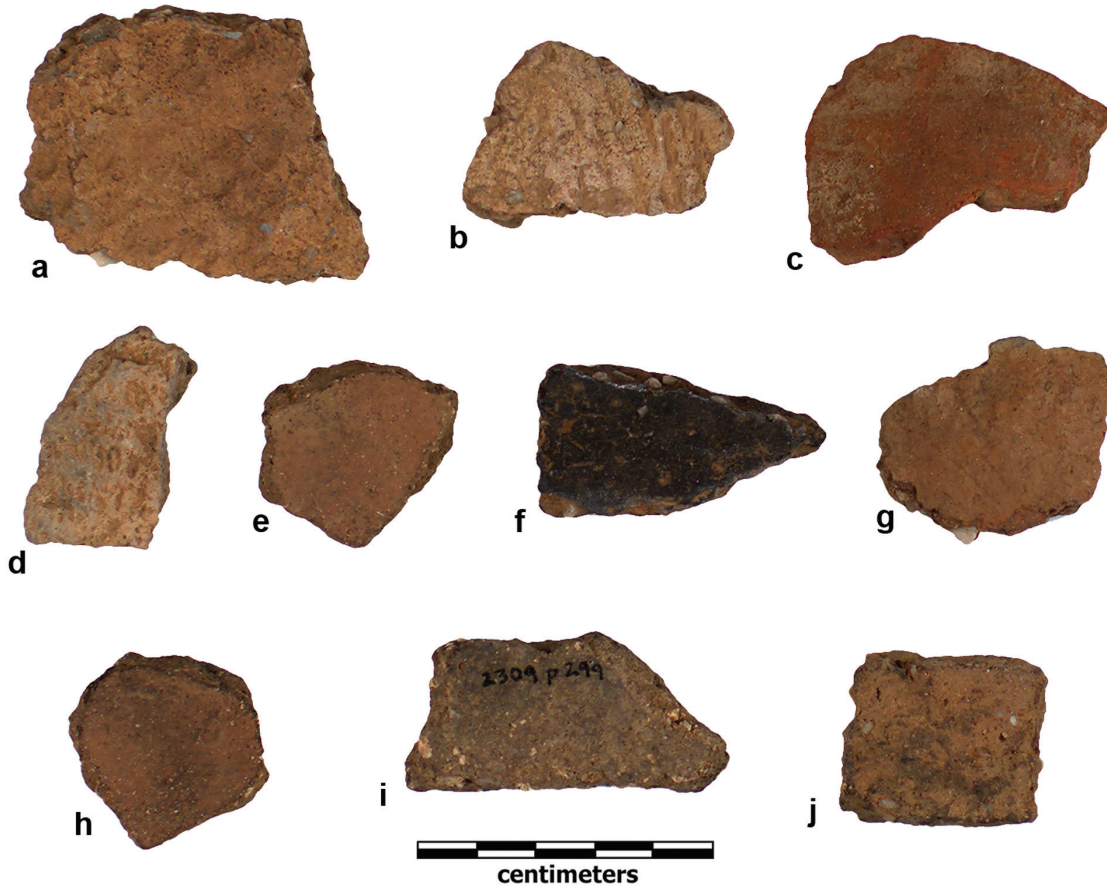


Figure 3.2. Pottery samples from the Haw River site (31Ch29): (a) JMH041, Yadkin Paddle-edge Stamped; (b) JMH042, Yadkin Cord Marked; (c) JMH043, Yadkin Plain; (d) JMH044, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (e) JMH045, Yadkin Plain; (f) JMH046, Yadkin Plain; (g) JMH047, Yadkin/Hanover eroded; (h) JMH048, Yadkin Plain; (i) JMH049, Yadkin Plain; (j) JMH050, Yadkin eroded.

also identified in the current sample. Slightly burnished or very highly smoothed and tempered with very coarse subangular quartz, this sherd is very similar to those found at the Mitchum site in Orange County. The Jenrette Phase is considered to be contemporary with Caraway, dating to the seventeenth century.

### Sandhills Sites and Samples

Sandhills assemblages are characterized by 12 sherds drawn from Fort Bragg sites on the Lower Little River in the Cape Fear basin and 8 sherds from Fort Bragg sites at Camp Mackall on Drowning Creek in the upper Lumber River basin.

One potsherd each was drawn from 12 sites in the Lower Little River drainage in Cumberland, Hoke, and Harnett Counties on Fort Bragg (Figure 3.1). These samples represent the Sandhills area of the upper Coastal Plain within the Cape Fear River basin (Table 3.1). Eight potsherds were also drawn from six sites in the Drowning Creek drainage in Moore and Scotland Counties on the western boundary of Fort Bragg or on Camp Mackall. This sample also



Figure 3.3. Pottery samples from the Doerschuk site (31Mg22): (a) JMH031, Yadkin Fabric Impressed; (b) JMH032, Dan River Simple Stamped; (c) JMH033, Yadkin Fabric Impressed; (d) JMH034, Jenrette Plain (Bruton); (e) JMH035, New River Cord Marked; (f) JMH036, New River Net Impressed; (g) JMH037, Yadkin Check Stamped; (h) JMH038, Yadkin Cord Marked; (i) JMH039, Dan River Net Impressed; (j) JMH040, Yadkin Net Impressed.

represents the Sandhills area of the upper Coastal Plain, although specifically that portion within the upper reaches of the Lumber River basin.

Pottery samples from these sites were selected with the idea of gaining a reasonable representation of the variability across the geographic area represented by Fort Bragg. As might be expected, the number of pottery types represented in the 18-site, 20-specimen sample from Fort Bragg is greater than that seen in the 10-specimen samples from individual sites. Pottery types from sites in the Lower Little River and Drowning Creek watersheds include Early Woodland New River; Middle Woodland Deptford, Yadkin, Mount Pleasant, Cape Fear I, and Hanover I; and Late Woodland Hanover II and Cape Fear III (Table 3.2; Figures 3.4–3.5).

### Coastal Plain Sites and Samples

The Coastal Plain is represented by 10 sherds from the Breece site (31Cd8) adjacent to the former location of the McLean Mound site in the Cape Fear basin, 10 from the Waccamaw site (31Cb1) in the Lumber River basin, and 10 from the Kolb site on the central Pee Dee River in South Carolina.

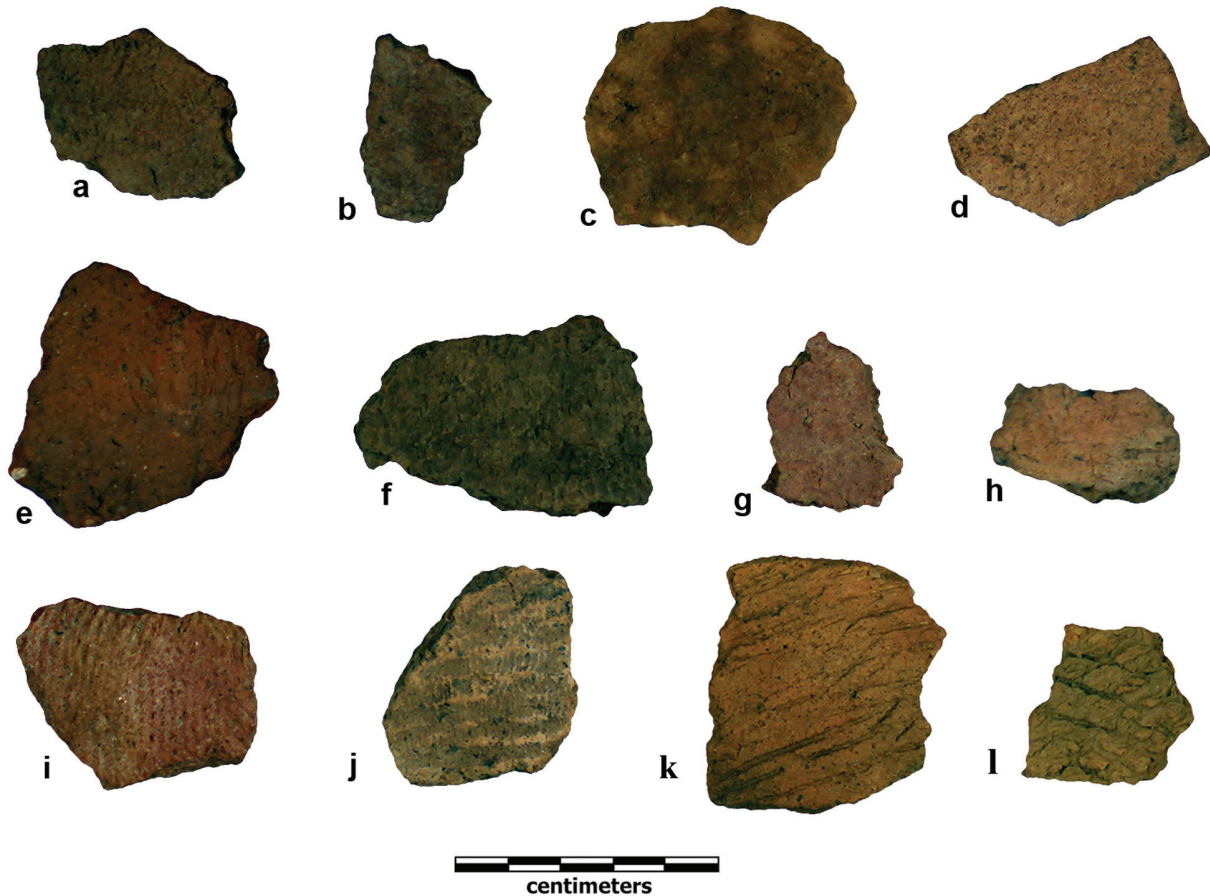


Figure 3.4. Pottery samples from Fort Bragg sites in the Lower Little drainage: (a) JMH001, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (b) JMH002, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (c) JMH003, Cape Fear III Fabric Impressed; (d) JMH004, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (e) JMH005, Hanover I Cord Marked; (f) JMH006, Yadkin Fabric Impressed; (g) JMH007, Hanover I Paddle-edge Overstamped; (h) JMH008, Mount Pleasant Cord Marked; (i) JMH009, Cape Fear Cord Marked; (j) JMH010, Hanover Fabric Impressed; (k) JMH017, New River Cord Marked; (l) JMH019, Hanover II Cord Marked.

#### *The Breece Site (31Cd8)*

The Breece site is located about 200 m north of the former site of the McLean burial mound on a high terrace overlooking the broad alluvial floodplain of the Cape Fear River near Fayetteville (MacCord 1966:39–44, 62–66; Figure 3.1). Testing of the site by volunteer members of the North Carolina Archaeological Society in 1962 consisted of the excavation of 13 1.5 m (5 ft) squares dug in three arbitrary 20 cm (8 in) levels. Sherds recovered in the plow zone (from which the current sample came) comprised mostly fabric-impressed (63%) with some cord-marked (17%) types in association with small triangular projectile points. Assemblages from the lower levels were characterized by more cord-marked pottery than fabric impressed and medium-sized triangular points. Although Breece is adjacent to the McLean Mound, it was evident to the original excavators that the diversity of pottery represented many occupational components over several hundred years. Radiocarbon dates for charcoal from the mound (including one date for soot from a fabric-impressed sherd) indicate that burials were interred



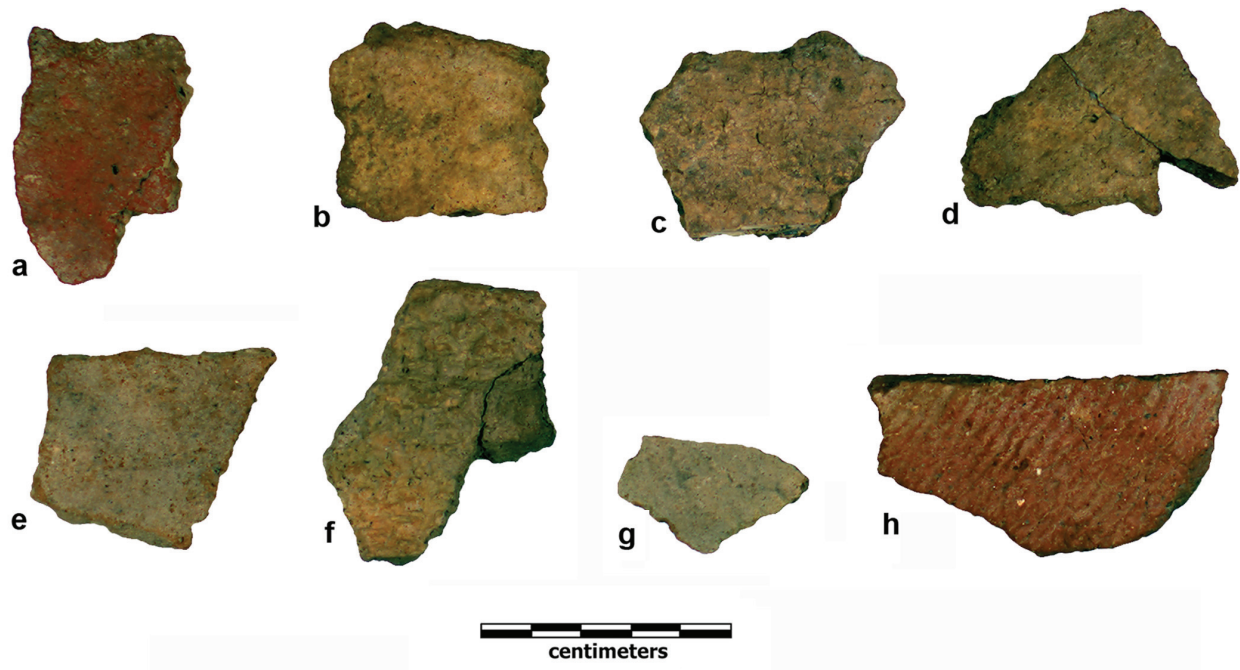


Figure 3.5. Pottery samples from Fort Bragg sites in the Drowning Creek drainage: (a) JMH011, Hanover I Cord Marked; (b) JMH012, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (c) JMH013, Deptford Linear Check; (d) JMH014, Yadkin Fabric Impressed; (e) JMH015, Sand-tempered Plain; (f) JMH016, New River Paddle-edge Overstamped; (g) JMH018, Deptford Check Stamped; (h) JMH020, New River Cord Marked.

here from about AD 750–1300 (MacCord 1966:17; Herbert et al. 2002:105). This is just the time when, given regional trends, we might expect to see a shift in pottery-making technology from sand tempering to grog tempering (Irwin et al. 1999:63–71).

The pottery sample from the Breece site consisted of one Early Woodland New River Fabric-Impressed sherd, one Middle Woodland Cape Fear Cord-Marked sherd, three Middle Woodland Hanover I Fabric-Impressed sherds, and five Late Woodland Hanover Fabric-Impressed sherds (Table 3.2; Figure 3.6). It is likely that the Hanover specimens from the Breece site sample date to the period when the McLean Mound was in use.

#### *The Waccamaw Site (31Cb5)*

The Waccamaw site is located on a low rise occupying the northern bank of Lake Waccamaw, a large pocosin lake or Carolina Bay in Columbus County, North Carolina (Figure 3.1). The collection from the site from which our pottery samples were drawn consisted of materials collected from the surface and donated to the Research Laboratories of Archaeology (RLA) at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The pottery sample from the Waccamaw site consisted of one Early Woodland Thom's Creek Punctate specimen (with a simple, random punctation pattern); seven sherds from the Middle Woodland period, including five Cape Fear Fabric Impressed and two Hanover I Fabric Impressed; and two Middle-to-Late Woodland period Hanover II Fabric-Impressed specimens (Table 3.2; Figure 3.7).

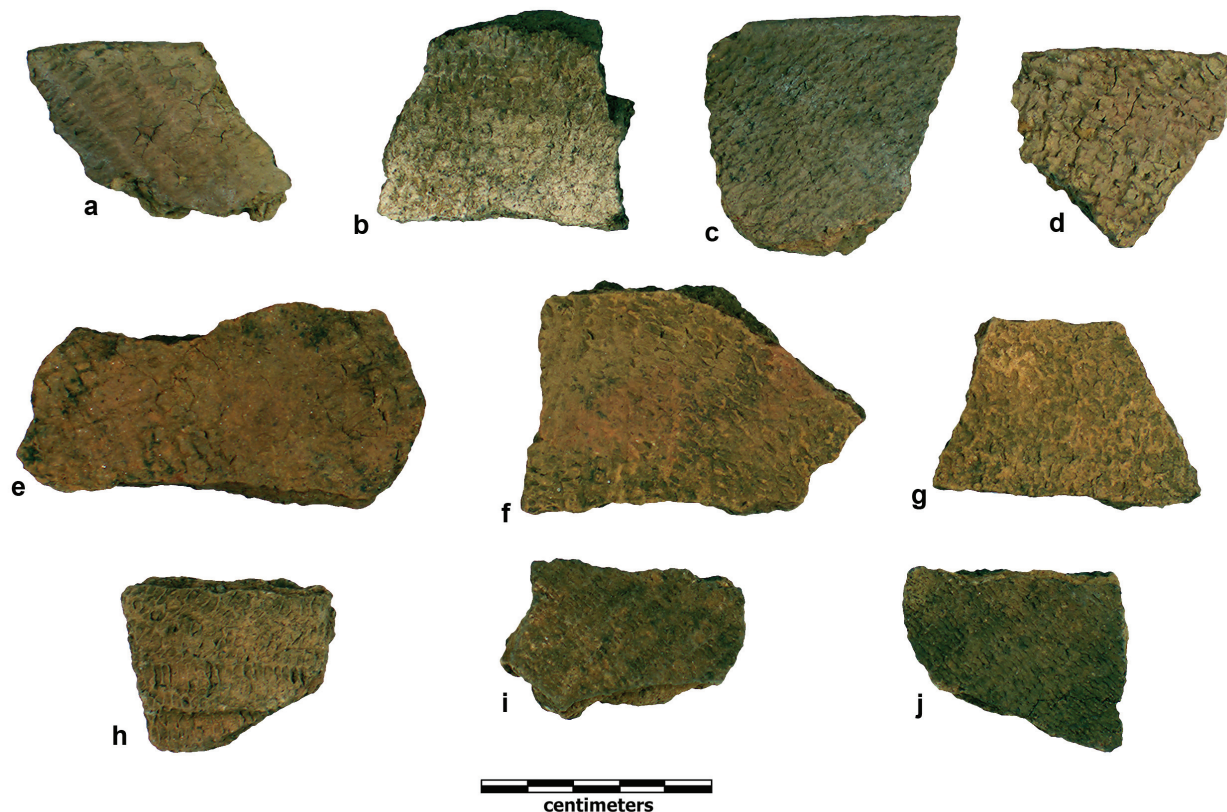


Figure 3.6. Pottery samples from the Breece site (31Cd8): (a) JMHO21, Hanover II Paddle-edge Overstamped; (b) JMHO22, New River Fabric Impressed; (c) JMHO23, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (d) JMHO24, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (e) JMHO25, Cape Fear Cord Marked; (f) JMHO26, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (g) JMHO27, Hanover I Fabric Impressed; (h) JMHO28, Hanover I Fabric Impressed; (i) JMHO29, Hanover I Fabric Impressed; (j) JMHO30, Hanover II Fabric Impressed.

### *The Kolb Site (38Da75)*

The Johannes Kolb site lies on a relict channel of the Great Pee Dee River in Darlington County, South Carolina (Figure 3.1). Documents record the fact that this ancient meander was artfully cut off by an enterprising landowner in the 1870s, and consequently we assume that the Woodland period habitations on the site would have occupied the first terrace of the active river channel. The site was found and recorded in 1973 and obtained by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Heritage Trust Program (HTP) in 1992. In 1997 historical and archaeological investigations began in earnest at the Kolb site, and they continue to this day under the sponsorship of the HTP and the Diachronic Research Foundation.

A sample of nine pottery sherds from the Kolb site was generously donated by the Diachronic Research Foundation, and one sherd (JMHO57) was collected near the Kolb site on the surface of a sandy bluff overlooking the Pee Dee River (Table 3.3; Figure 3.8). Six of the nine sherds from the Kolb site are from Feature 99-32 in Unit 60E55N, and two are from Feature 02-22 in Unit 45E47N.

Steen (2008:123) describes Feature 99-32 as a deep pit containing “a thick deposit of shell and what seems to be most of a poorly fired fabric impressed vessel.” Shell from the base of this

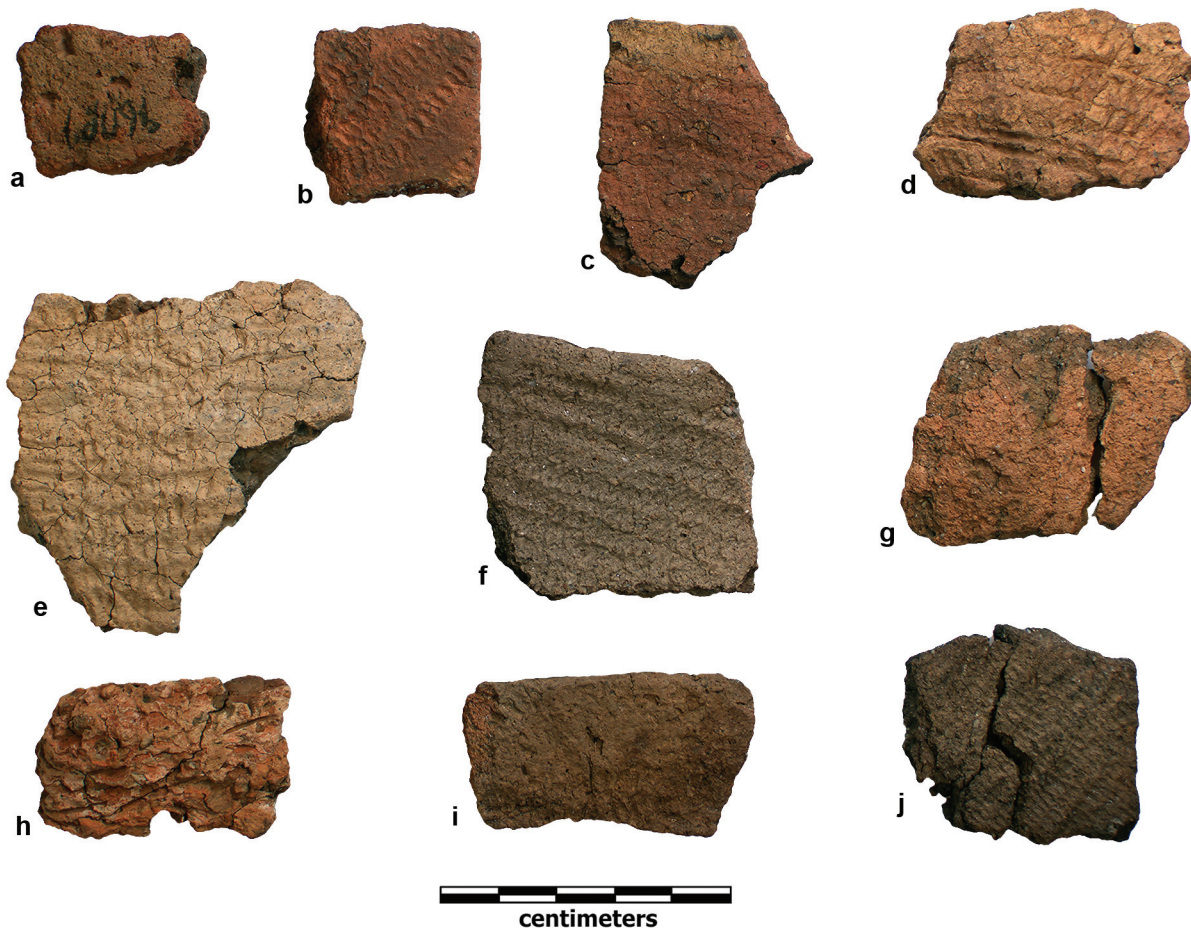


Figure 3.7. Pottery samples from the Waccamaw site (31Cb5): (a) JMH061, Thom's Creek Punctate (random); (b) JMH062, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (c) JMH063, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (d) JMH064, Hanover II Fabric Impressed; (e) JMH065, Hanover I Fabric Impressed; (f) JMH066, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (g) JMH067, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (h) JMH068, Hanover eroded; (i) JMH069, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (j) JMH070, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed.

feature was radiocarbon dated  $1440 \pm 40$  BP (UGA-013302, mussel shell,  $\delta^{13}\text{C} = -10.84\text{‰}$ ) cal AD 872–1041 ( $p = .95$ ).<sup>1</sup>

The six pottery specimens from Feature 99-32 are quite varied, indicating that multiple cultural components are represented and suggesting that the contents of the feature might be mixed (Table 3.3). Early Woodland components are represented by sand-tempered New River Cord-Marked and New River Fabric-Impressed sherds, elsewhere dating to the period 1200–400 BC. Four Yadkin sherds are distinguished by the presence of crushed quartz temper, and two of these also include some crushed ceramic or grog in the paste. Although the combination of these two temper types is not altogether unique, it is uncommon and at present can only be considered a minority variant of the Yadkin tradition that otherwise has been estimated to date to the period 1000 BC–AD 200 (Herbert et al. 2002:103). As grog tempering continued to be popular well into the Late Woodland Period, after AD 900, it is suspected that the Yadkin sherds containing grog probably date to the late end of the expected age range for this type.



**Table 3.3. Pottery Samples from the Kolb Site.**

Sample ID	Unit	Level	Feature	Period	Series	Type
JMH059	60E55N	8	Feat 99-32	Middle Woodland	Cape Fear	Fabric Impressed
JMH052	60E55N	3	Feat 99-32	Middle Woodland	Yadkin + grog	Fabric Impressed
JMH053	60E55N	3	Feat 99-32	Middle Woodland	Yadkin + grog	Cord Marked
JMH055	60E55N	3	Feat 99-32	Early-Middle Woodland	Yadkin	Cord Marked
JMH051	60E55N	3	Feat 99-32	Early-Middle Woodland	Yadkin	Fabric Impressed
JMH054	60E55N	3	Feat 99-32	Early Woodland	New River	Cord Marked
JMH056	60E55N	8	Feat 96-106	Early Woodland	New River	Fabric Impressed
JMH057	-	surface	-	Early Woodland	New River	Cord Marked
JMH060	45E47N	10	Feat 02-22	Middle Woodland	Hanover I	Fabric Impressed
JMH058	45E47N	18	Feat 02-22	Middle Woodland	Cape Fear	Fabric Impressed

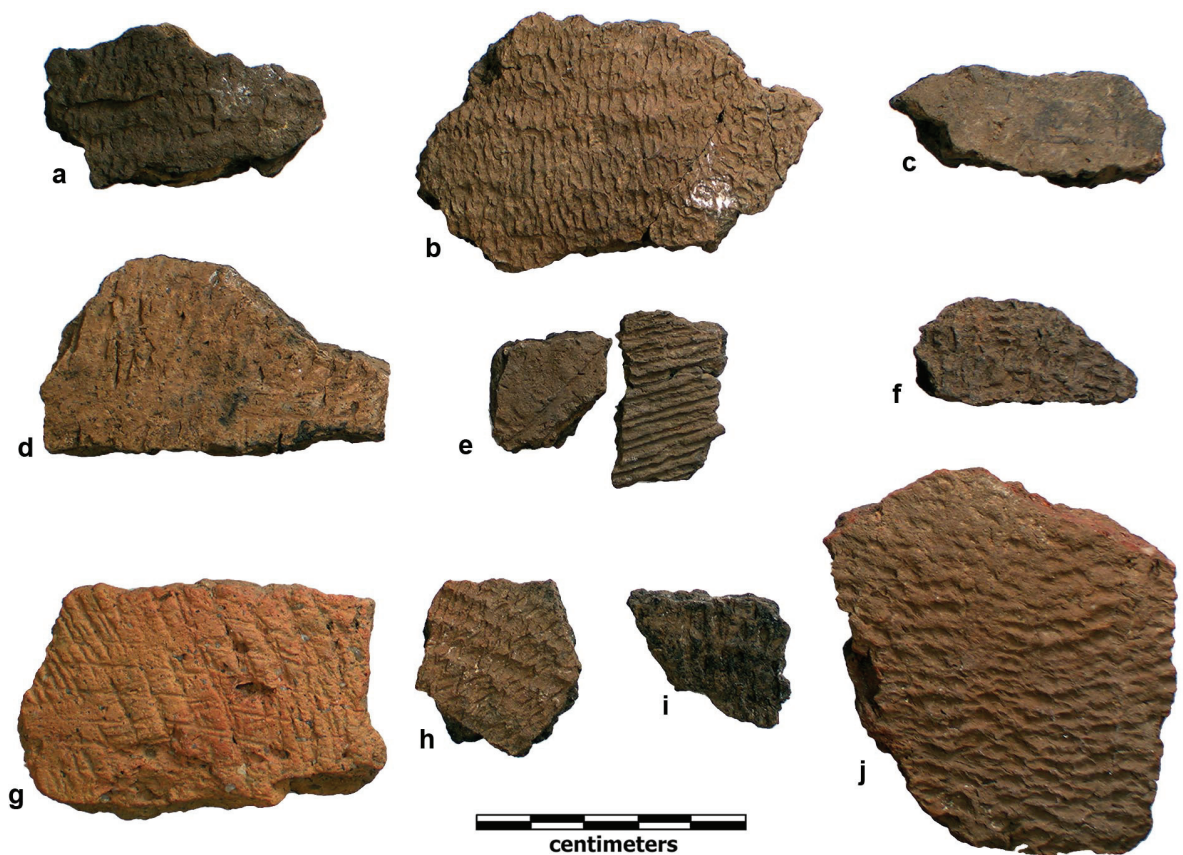


Figure 3.8. Pottery samples from the Kolb site (38Da75): (a) JMH051, Yadkin Fabric Impressed; (b) JMH052, Yadkin/Hanover Fabric Impressed; (c) JMH053, Yadkin/Hanover Cord Marked; (d) JMH054, New River Cord Marked; (e) JMH055, Yadkin Cord Marked; (f) JMH056, New River Fabric Impressed (flex warp); (g) JMH057, New River Cord Marked; (h) JMH058, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (i) JMH059, Cape Fear Fabric Impressed; (j) JMH060, Hanover I Fabric Impressed.

Encountered at a depth of 50 cm below the surface, Feature 02-22 was notable for a dense deposit of mussel shell that contained fish, turtle, and deer bone as well as fabric-impressed sherds (Steen 2008). The shell lens capped a deep pit that extended to a depth of 125 cm below surface. Although the pit was nearly empty below the shell lens, the two sherds studied here were found in the fill. A Hanover Fabric-Imprinted sherd was recovered at Level 10 about 60–65 cm below the surface, and a Cape Fear Fabric-Imprinted sherd was found in Level 18 roughly a meter below the surface. A radiocarbon date was obtained for shell from the capping lens:  $1400 \pm 40$  B.P. (UGA-013305, mussel shell,  $\delta^{13}\text{C} = -10.55\text{‰}$ ) cal AD 905–1068 ( $p = .95$ ).

### Notes

*Acknowledgments.* Vin Steponaitis and R. P. Stephen Davis facilitated access to collections housed at the RLA and provided pottery samples for this study. Dr. Davis also assisted in classifying materials from the Doerschuk and Haw River sites. Carl Steen, Diachronic Research Foundation, provided pottery samples, contextual information, and radiocarbon data from the Kolb site.

<sup>1</sup>The Kolb site radiocarbon dates (UGA-13302 and UGA-13305) for shell from Features 99-32 and 22-02 were calibrated with the Calib 4.3 program using INTCAL98 calibration curves (Stuiver and Reimer 1993). As these were lacustrine shell samples (freshwater mussels), they were calibrated with the marine data set to compensate for differences in availability of radiocarbon in aquatic reservoirs. The marine calibration incorporates a time-dependent global ocean reservoir correction of about 410 years. Local reservoir effects were corrected by applying the  $\Delta\text{-R}$  value derived from coral dates in the Bahamas ( $-5 \pm 20$ ), currently the closest analog for these samples (Stuiver and Braziunas 1993). Age estimates are reported as calibrated intercepts (BP) and minimum and maximum calibrated 2- $\delta$  (.95) ranges (AD).