

SOME COMMON INCLUSIONS IN MOUNDVILLE POTTERY
(as viewed under the petrographic microscope)

QUARTZ: Grains are rounded or irregular in shape, grey in color. This mineral occurs naturally in the local clays.



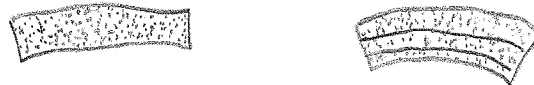
MICA: Thin, elongated grains that tend to be small in size. Typical colors are bright green, purple, or yellow. Grains often have a "layered" look, with dark lines of cleavage running parallel to the long axis.



HEMATITE: Rounded lumps, reddish-brown or maroon in color. The lumps are dark in color even when the polarizer is taken out. Sometimes the lumps have small pieces of quartz or mica inside.



SHELL: Fragments, often relatively big, that have a grainy or "cellular" internal structure. Color is usually a dull off-white or brownish yellow, with tinges of green and/or purple. Crushed shell was added by the potters as temper.



Some rarer inclusions that you may or may not see:

GROG: Fragments of sherd temper tend to appear darker than the surrounding clay--usually will contain pieces of shell.



FELDSPAR: Irregular grains, grey in color. Feldspar can be distinguished from quartz because the grain will characteristically exhibit a crosshatched pattern of dark lines (called "twinning").

