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"What'll Thou Have": Quakers and the Characterization of Tavern Sites in Colonial Philadelphia

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In 1766, Ebenezer Robinson, an active Quaker and middle-class tradesman, was one of the first to develop the land just north of Independence Hall, then at the edge of urban Philadelphia. Recent work on Independence Mall sponsored jointly by the National Park Service and the National Constitution Center has uncovered several features on this property, but analysis and historical documentation has suggested that a low-class tavern occupied the spot while Robinson owned it. This paper examines artifacts from a privy associated with this period of the site and compares the finds with several other sites to characterize this tavern, explore the different roles taverns played in colonial communities, and clarify the relationship of the tavern with its Quaker landlord. The study is further contextualized with a discussion of Quakerism and attitudes towards alcohol in the colonial period.

En 1766, un membre actif de la communauté Quaker et marchand de la classe moyenne nommé Ebenezer Robinson fut l'un des premiers à développer la terre au nord de l'édifice Independance Hall qui se trouvait à cette époque en bordure du centre urbain de Philadelphie. Des travaux récents, organisés par le National Park Service et le National Constitution Center, ont été menés sur la place Independence Mall. Ces travaux ont révélé plusieurs éléments architecturaux sur cette propriété. Les analyses et la documentation historique suggèrent que l'emplacement ait appartenu à Robinson et qu'une taverne populaire s'y trouvait. Cet article examine les artefacts des latrines associés à cette période d'occupation du site et offre une comparaison entre les découvertes faites sur ce site et celles d'autres sites dans le but de caractériser cette taverne, d'explorer les différents rôles joués par les tavernes dans les communautés coloniales et de clarifier la relation entre la taverne et le propriétaire Quaker. L'étude est de plus mise en contexte à l'aide d'une discussion sur les Quakers et les attitudes sur l'alcool à l'époque coloniale.

Introduction

Modern views of colonial taverns are colored by reconstructions such as those in Philadelphia and Colonial Williamsburg, which are expensive and elegant dining places for upper-class tourists. Members of the Religious Society of Friends—better known as Quakers—are often perceived as being somber and—literally—sober, plainly dressed and mild mannered, disapproving of alcohol and other entertainments. Given this, the discovery of a low-class colonial alehouse on Quaker-owned land might come as a bit of a surprise. In fact, Quaker morals (past and present) cannot be so easily summed up, and taverns served many vital and sometimes conflicting roles in colonial society. This discovery not only offers the opportunity to study the small, ephemeral taverns that represented the vast majority of colonial drinking establishments, but also invites us to problematize popular conceptions of Quakerism.

Background

In 1766, Ebenezer Robinson purchased an empty lot of ground at the corner of Fifth Street and Cherry Alley, then at the edge of urban Philadelphia (FIG. 1), from the Cresson brothers, land developers and fellow Quakers. Robinson was one of the first to buy and to build in the area, just three blocks north of Independence Hall. He erected a one-story house, insured it in May of 1768, and rented it to various tenants until he and his family moved there in 1781.

In 1999, this site was chosen for the construction of the National Constitution Center. Figure 2 shows the National Constitution Center in 2005; Robinson's plot of land would have been partly under and partly just in front of the furthest right-hand corner of the building as pictured. Archaeological investigations took place in advance of the construction. Sponsored jointly by the National Park Service (NPS) and the National Constitution Center, this work was conducted by the CRM firm
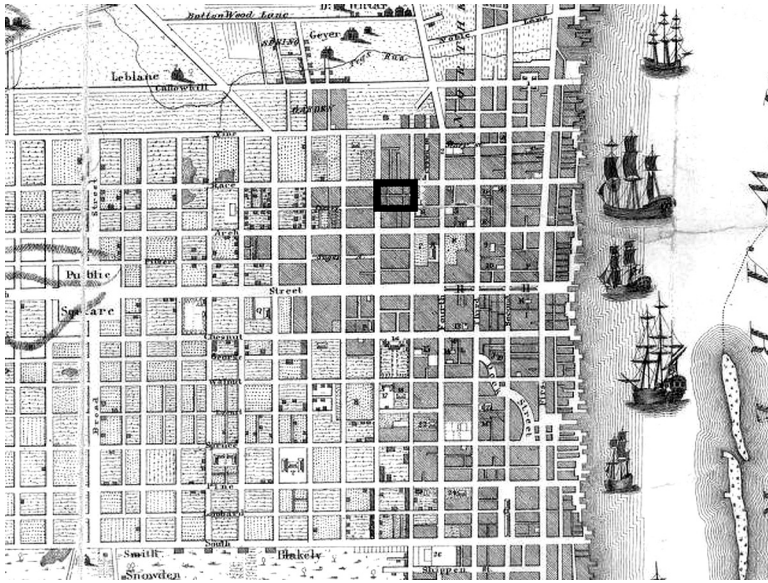
Figure 1. Map of Philadelphia in 1775 with 5th and Cherry block highlighted. Robinson owned part of the southeast (bottom right) corner of this block (Varte 1875, Library of Congress, Map Collection).


Figure 2. The National Constitution Center in 2005. Robinson's land is under and in front of the right-hand corner of the building (photo by the author).

Kise, Straw and Kolodner (KSK) and recovered over one million artifacts in hundreds of features. The NPS and KSK kindly allowed me access to these materials, and this paper presents the findings from one feature on this site—Feature 209—coupled with archival and historical research. The analysis suggests that this feature is associated with a low-class tavern, present on Robinson's land while he owned it, but before he himself moved there. I compare this site to others in order to characterize this tavern, explore the different roles taverns played in colonial communities, and clarify the relationship this tavern may have had with its Quaker landlord.

Ebenezer Robinson and his Community

Ebenezer Robinson was an active member of the Philadelphia Quaker congregation or "Monthly Meeting" from his arrival in the city in 1745, bearing a letter of recommendation from the Burlington Meeting which stated that he "behaved himself orderly whilst amongst us Was [*sic*.] pretty diligent in attending our Religious Meetings" (Certificates and Removals of the Philadelphia Monthly meeting, 4th day of 3rd month, 1745). He remained in Philadelphia for much of the next 65 years, living for brief periods in Morristown, Burlington, and Bristol, dying in the latter town in 1810 probably about the impressive age of 85. He married twice and had at least four children, two of whom—daughters Sarah and Mary—survived to adulthood. From 1748 until his death, he was a landowner and a successful landlord. Although his occupation is listed as "mason" and "bricklayer" in the early years, and "brushmaker" later in life, he owned at least five houses simultaneously, and several others in both Philadelphia and Bristol over the course of his long life. This was in an era when only about 20 percent of Philadelphians owned the house

Figure 3. Robinson's percentile in taxes paid in his tax ward, calculated from tax records.
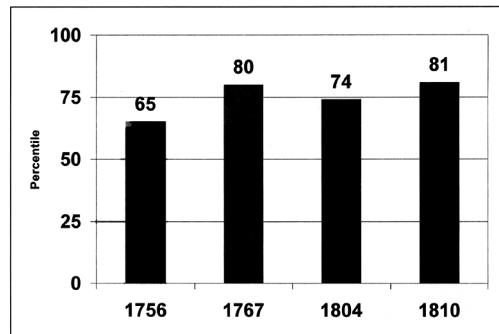
they themselves lived in, let alone others (Toogood 2004).

Tax records reveal him to be in the upper percentiles in his tax ward in terms of tax paid for much of his life (FIG. 3), and late in life he stopped calling himself a "brushmaker" and is listed as a "gentleman," indicating that he had attained a level of stability and success. At his death in 1810, his will reveals a picture of a man who is at least upper-middle class: besides his considerable real estate holdings, his probate inventory and the accounts of his executors list household goods, debts owed to him, and cash in the bank worth $1,819.72 $^{1}/_{2}$.

Ebenezer Robinson's success was more than financial, however, and his standing within the Quaker community was evident. Each time he moved to a new area and began attending a new Meeting for Worship, a certificate of removal—always favorable—went with him and was formally entered into the receiving Meeting's records. Lacking a hierarchical power structure by design, Quaker Meetings made many decisions and performed many actions in committees of their trusted and respected members. It is considered a duty to serve on a committee, but it also represents a level of confidence and trust on the part of the community (Philadelphia Yearly Meeting [PYM] 1997: 177–8), and so committee involvement can be used to assess a Quaker's social standing (Brown 1987: 251).

In years following, the minutes of the Monthly Meeting show that Robinson was asked to help "preserve order and quiet among our Youth during the term of Worship," to visit and "treat with" other members in "melancholy and disorder'd" states, and to help those "laboring in distress and want in this time of close tryal and deep suffering [the Revolutionary War]." He traveled as far as Burlington, New Jersey, to give recommendations on behalf of other Quakers and was even asked to see to the whitewashing and repair of the meetinghouse itself. Perhaps his greatest honor was to be elected six times as one of the four representatives to the Quarterly Meeting. In all, Robinson was given an assignment from the Meeting a total of 50 times in the 17-year period between 1781 and 1798. Clearly he was, and continued to be, an important and trusted member of the community throughout the period.

The Excavation and Finds

Feature 209 is a round, 4 ft (1.2 m) diameter, brick-lined shaft feature, approximately 5 1/2 ft (1.67 m) of which remained when the area was excavated in June 2001. The firm of Kise, Straw and Kolodner conducted the work under contract to the National Park Service. KSK also cleaned and cataloged the artifacts, and pieced some vessels back together before this analysis began. The feature was excavated in four natural levels, defined in the forthcoming report as Strata I through IV, and artifacts from this feature were assigned a "Field Specimen" or "FS" number which either corresponded to one of these strata, represented an area of interface between two strata, or—in two cases—represented an arbitrary bisect of a single stratum to facilitate collection and storage (FIG. 4). Most of the artifacts were recovered from a dense, 4 in (10 cm) layer at the bottom of the excavation. Feature 209 yielded 7,350 artifacts, mostly bottle and window glass and ceramic sherds along with

Figure 4. Schematic cross section of Feature 209, with strata and FS labeled (by the author after Kise, Straw and Kolodner forthcoming, and Douglas Mooney, personal communication 2005).
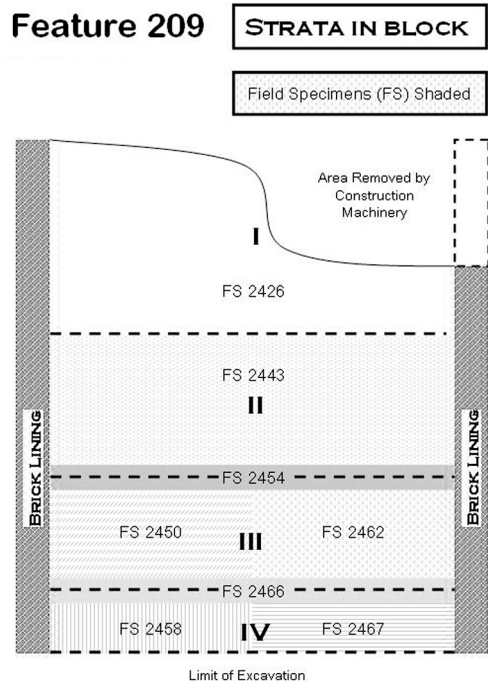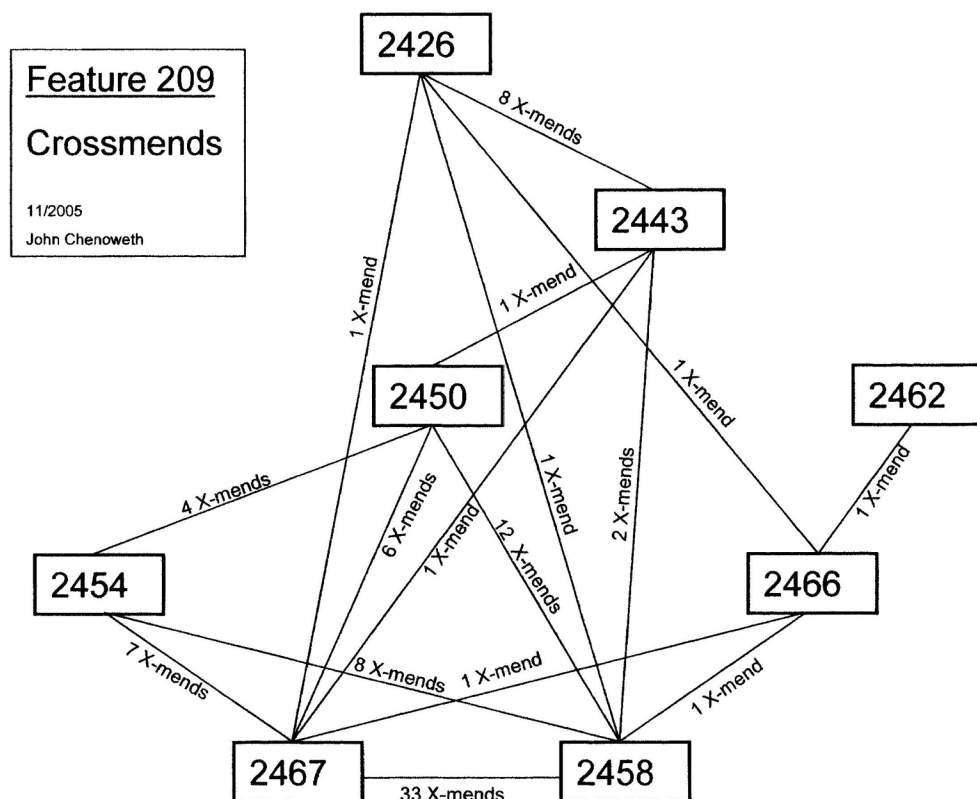
Figure 5. Diagram of crossmends between Feature 209 contexts.

dense areas of brick and gravelly construction debris overlaying and intermixing with the artifacts. The deposits of the feature seem to date from a short time frame. The *terminus post quem* for the feature is 1762 in all levels, and the mean ceramic dates have been calculated by KSK as ranging between 1743 and 1771 (all data in this paragraph from Kise, Straw and Kolodner forthcoming, and Douglas Mooney personal communication 2005).

Notable in the analysis of this feature was the high number of crossmends that could be made between contexts ("FS" numbers), including one vessel reassembled out of pieces found in all eight divisions of the feature (FIG. 5). Out of the 138 vessels identifiable by form, 50 (36%) were reconstructed from sherds found in more than one FS (although the most impressive number of mends—the 33 found between FS 2458 and FS 2467—are the result of an arbitrary division of a stratum as described above). Several items were whole or almost

completely reconstructable, suggesting that they were deposited whole and not broken beforehand. This coupled with the high number of crossmends makes it possible that the entire deposit represents a single cleanout event.

In general, the artifactual assemblage is characterized by a high proportion of simple red-bodied earthenwares, which comprise 67% of the entire ceramic collection of almost 2,500 sherds (FIG. 6). Most have a simple lead glaze, often only on the inside, and this sloppily applied. Many items, such as the porringers and mugs, are highly uniform in size and appearance (FIG. 7), suggesting that they were made at the same time and purchased from the same source. Several pieces, mostly rough platters or pie-plates, have simple yellow and brown slip-glaze, all only on the inside. At first glance, this modest assemblage is in keeping with a pious Quaker intent on living a simple, plain life. However, neither the assemblage nor Quaker morals are so easily explained.
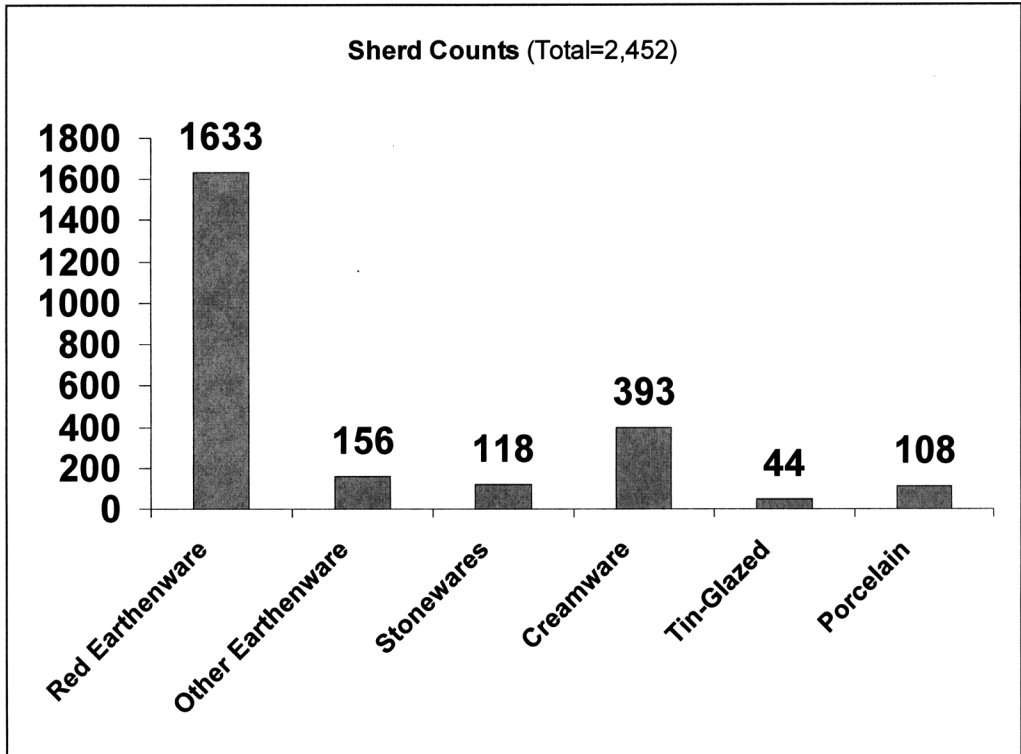
Sherd Counts (Total=2,452)

Figure 6. Sherd counts by type for Feature 209 (Kise, Straw and Kolodner forthcoming).

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the assemblage is revealed by an analysis of the vessels by form. Prominent in the assemblage were the numbers of mugs, porringers, teawares and serving platters (TAB. 1). From the ceramic and bottle glass fragments recovered, 138 separate vessels could be identified. The largest single group was that of glass bottles (including wine/liquor and case bottles), which numbered 44, almost a third (32%) of the entire number of vessels identifiable by form.

As the analysis continued, it became clear that the assemblage was not representative of an ordinary home, even that of a person of extremely modest means or one intent on living a "plain" life. The presence of many cheap redware porringers and very few plates suggested a simple stew or porridge instead of formal dining, and the high number of bottles and rough redware mugs looked distinctly more like a tavern of modest means. This interpretation is supported by Bragdon's (1981) description of a six-part "tavern signature,"

although this "signature" is considered more below. This represents an interesting case where archaeological evidence actually determined the course of documentary research, and a search of the lists of tavern licenses issued during this time yielded the name of one of Robinson's known tenants: Melchior Neff was issued a "license to retail Liquors by small Measure" in July of 1780, while he was living at the Fifth and Cherry property.

The city's licensing laws (discussed in greater detail below) make it highly unlikely that Neff could have operated a tavern on the site without Robinson's knowledge and consent. At some point between July of 1780 and the following spring the historical record suggests that the tavern closed down, and Neff was explicitly denied when he tried to renew his license in 1781. The quick deposition of Feature 209 suggests that it is a cleanout as noted above, and its contents imply connection to the tavern on the site. This makes it possible that the cleanout may have been the result of Robinson's returning to live on the site in the

Figure 7. Reconstructed porringers (photo by the author).

Table 1. Minimum vessel counts by form in Feature 209.

Form	N	%
Drinking		
Mugs	10	7.2
Teacups	10	7.2
Saucers	10	7.2
Tumblers	7	5.1
Wine Glasses	1	0.7
Eating		
Porringers	11	8.0
Platters (Redware)	10	7.2
Bowls	4	2.9
Plates (Creamware)	3	2.2
Storage/Serving		
Storage Pots	14	10.1
Creamers	1	0.7
Round Bottles	36	26.1
Case Bottles	8	5.8
Decanters	1	0.7
Health/Hygiene		
Chamber Pots	6	4.3
Galley Pots	2	1.4
Medicine Bottles	2	1.4
Ointment Jars	1	0.7
Lids	1	0.7
Total vessels	138	

spring of 1781, and disposing of the last of the tavern equipment Neff left behind.

Like other colonial cities, Philadelphia hosted many—perhaps hundreds (Cotter et al. 1992: 162; Thompson 1999: 27)—of ephemeral, local, low-class taverns. These taverns are largely unrecorded because their clientele is largely unrecorded by history and because they do not survive long enough to be noted in and of themselves, unlike more famous, purpose-built establishments such as Philadelphia's "City Tavern," frequented by the founding fathers. Most of these ephemeral taverns would have been little more than private homes known to possess liquor licenses where a drink might be had, and this conflation with private homes, along with their short duration, means that tavern-related deposits for such sites are likely to become mixed with preceding and following occupation deposits. But here, the tightly packed nature of the deposit in Feature 209 suggests that the privy had been cleaned regularly during its use, and its short deposition period makes it possible that it contains artifacts almost exclusively from the tavern period of the Fifth and Cherry building, an extraordinarily narrow window. Therefore, this feature offers an opportunity to explore both the character of such taverns and how the existence of this one reflects on its landlord and Quaker culture during this time.

Quakers and Taverns

The suggestion that a pious, active Quaker was the landlord to a tavern certainly raises questions. Quakers were well known to disfavor strong drink, a position they adopted long before the rise of the "temperance" movement in the first half of the 19th century. For instance, Anthony Benezet, a prominent Friend, is primarily known to history as an

anti-slavery activist, but his famous "Potent Enemies of America Laid Open" (1774) referred to two equally (in his estimation) dangerous evils: slavery and "Distilled Spirituous Liquors."

As early as 1706, "advices" were issued to members of Quaker meetings that "none accustom themselves to…sipping or tippling of Drams and strong Drink" (PYM 1797: 86). These increased in Ebenezer's day, and an advice issued both in 1777 and 1781 discouraged any Friends from using spirits, distilling them for sale, encouraging distillation, or even selling grain to one who intended to use it for distillation into liquor (PYM 1797: 86–87). This trend continued in the last years of the century, to the point that Quakers insisting on distilling liquor were explicitly threatened with the church's highest punishment, disownment (removal from the Meeting), until such time as they repented (PYM 1797: 89).

All of these sentiments were felt strongly by the community in which Ebenezer Robinson lived. Just two months after Melchior Neff was approved for his license, the minutes of the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting, a body that Robinson was elected to join as a representative six times (although not at this particular Meeting), included the following statement about Friends' business and alcohol:

> The accounts also in general import, that Friends are nearly clear of keeping Houses of public entertainment—Distilling spirituous liquors from grain—Selling their Grain for that purpose, or purchasing spirits so made.—The few instances excepted are said to be under care (Minutes of the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting, 7th day of 8th Month, 1780).

Considering this, would Ebenezer Robinson not have been in violation of his community's standards? If owning a tavern, frequenting a tavern, and participating even tangentially in the manufacture of spirits are all disallowed, being a tavern landlord would appear to break the spirit of the law, even if it was not itself prohibited. Nonetheless, Ebenezer continued to receive assignments and to be trusted with responsibilities for his Meeting. No comments appear in the minutes of the meeting suggesting that Ebenezer's was a case "under care" for any transgression.

Quaker Attitudes toward Liquor Reexamined

For Quakers, as for others in colonial America, taverns and liquor were a much more complex issue than the last paragraph implied. Fundamentally, Quakerism is rooted in an individual relationship with the divine, and as such entails a strong element of individual conscience. Although Meeting organizations did exert considerable control over many aspects of their members' lives, Quaker beliefs are based in individual experience, and therefore rules of being a "good Quaker" cannot be seen as entirely prescriptive. For Friends, religious decisions—matters of conscience included—were not to be handed down from a hierarchical structure but were reserved for the small worship group and, ultimately, the individual (PYM 1997: i, 175). It may be that individual members of the Meeting, especially respected and trusted members like Ebenezer Robinson, would have been allowed a certain latitude, for instance to engage with the alcohol trade at arm's length. In certain cases, this would certainly have enabled Ebenezer to rent to a tavern without fear of reprisal from his community or his own conscience. The question is: what cases?

In and of themselves, early Friends had no particular animosity toward taverns or alcohol. The principle founder of the movement, George Fox, was himself known to stay at "alehouses" when traveling (Fox 1952: 306), and it was not uncommon for Friends to be innkeepers in the early days (Cadbury 1952: 744). In Ebenezer Robinson's time, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting even admits the necessity of occasionally visiting taverns on business (PYM 1797: 125). Thus Quakers' problems with taverns may be seen as more complicated than a simple distrust of liquor itself. Quaker priorities lay with family and community life, and spiritual and temporal security, which allowed them to practice their faith. It is only certain secondhand effects of involvement in the liquor trade and consumption of liquor that threaten these, namely damage done to Quakers' reputations and prospects for their financial security.

First, public perceptions of Quakers were directly tied to their safety and their continued

ability to act within their consciences because the renewal of laws of religious toleration was contingent on Friends being seen as "behaving as responsible subjects" (Frost 2003: 25). Raucous taverns were disapproved of even by the non-Quaker public which might easily blame "outsider" Quakers involved, but a respectable establishment posed no threat of public disapproval to anyone. Second, although Quakers are publicly imagined as rejecting of the world's wealth, several historical (Walvin 1997) and archaeological (Brown 1987; Cotter et al. 1992) studies have shown that Quakers had no fear of financial success. On the contrary, the pursuit of some degree of wealth was required by Quaker morals, for it was only with a certain level of financial security that one could provide adequately for one's family. "Excessive" spending was the problem, but this was very much a relative term—spending more than one was able while still providing for the family (Frost 2003: 27). In the same vein, even though alcohol was demonized as a waste of money, many Quakers saw drink in moderation by those who had plenty as perfectly acceptable.

Quaker Restrictions on Tavern Licensing

With all of these conditional problems with taverns and drink, Quakers sought not their elimination, but their regulation. In truth, they could not have eliminated taverns if they tried, for taverns have been widely acknowledged to be a fundamental part of life in the colonial world, frequented by all elements of society and serving a vital role for workmen, merchants, and travelers. Though originally tempted to forbid them from his colony altogether, Pennsylvania's Quaker proprietor William Penn soon realized their necessity as places of commerce, and for other functions (Thompson 1999: 21).

Beginning with Penn's 1701 "Charter of Privileges," taverns were carefully regulated, and only those owners judged to be of "appropriate" moral character were allowed to operate them. Since taverns were needed for accommodation and food for travelers, all taverns were required to provide these functions and so fill that need in the community. While a crooked tavern working against these rules

would bring vice, waste, sin, and the wrath of the community, it was hoped that a well-run, respectable tavern would counter all these forces. In this view, there would certainly have been opportunities for Quakers to protect their public image, avoid waste, and protect—even help to provide for—their families, and yet take part in the tavern trade on some level.

If Quakers had no inherent problems with taverns, then what was the situation of Melchior Neff? In July of 1781, only one year after being granted a tavern license, Neff was explicitly turned down for a renewal and the tavern seems to have closed. If Quaker rejection of taverns hinged on their irresponsible use, then their acceptance of them hinged on their being used well, moderately, by those who could afford it, and on their filling a vital community need. So, what sort of tavern was the house of Melchior Neff?

Characterizations of Taverns from Archaeological Remains

Archaeological considerations of taverns have used several statistical measures to shed light on the character of public houses in colonial America. Bragdon (1981) built on South's (1977) artifact pattern ideas and attempted to define an archaeological "tavern signature." Her comparison of taverns with domestic sites produced six characteristics one would expect to see in the archaeological assemblage of a tavern: 1) a large number of vessels; 2) a large percentage of drinking vessels; 3) a large percentage of those ceramic types most often used for making drinking vessels; 4) large numbers of wine glasses; 5) specialized glassware; and 6) large numbers of pipe stems.

Rockman and Rothschild (1984) built on Bragdon's work, recognizing that different taverns fill different functions within their communities and that they will therefore produce different archaeological deposits. In particular, they reasoned that rural taverns would primarily be places of accommodation for travelers, while urban taverns would be frequented by those who lived close by, and so would be more specialized and social in function. Since tobacco was an integral part of social activity throughout the colonial period, they hypothesized that the number of pipe stem fragments
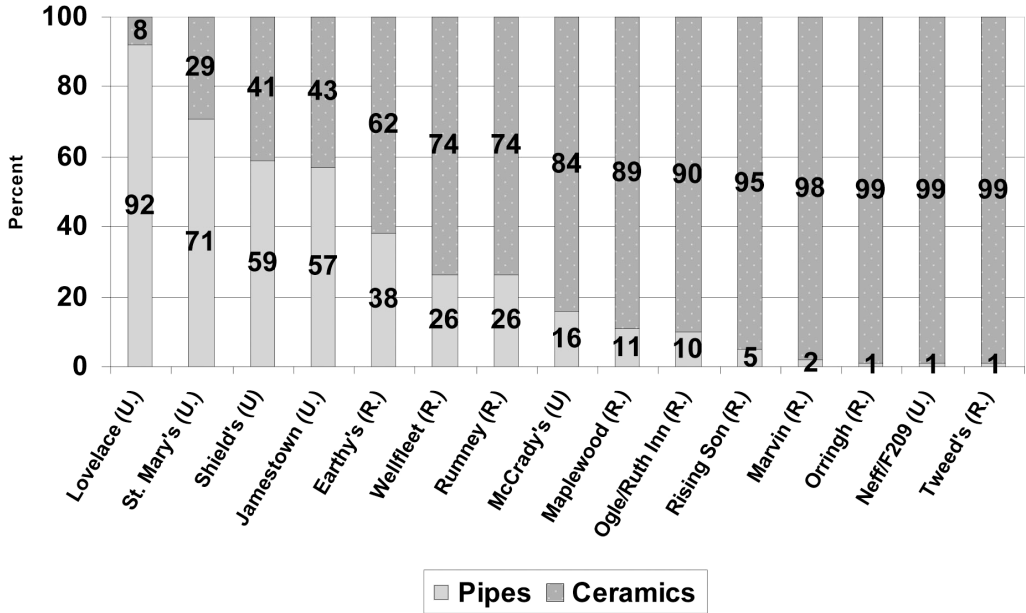
Figure 8. Ceramic sherds compared to pipe fragments (in percentage) for 15 taverns, marked "U" for urban and "R" for rural, as identified by each separate source's author (sources: Lovelace, Jamestown, Earthy's, and Wellfleet: Rockman and Rothschild 1984; St. Mary's ["Inn" occupation only]: King 1988; Shield's ["Early-" and "Transitional" layers only]: Brown et al. 1990; .McCrady's ["Tavern" occupation only]: Zierdan et al. 1982; Orringh: Hayes 1965; Marvin: Espenshade 1998; Maplewood: Rees et al. 1993; Ogle/John Ruth: Coleman et al. 1990; Rumney: Kerns-Nocerito 2004; Rising Son ["18th Century" occupation only]: Thompson 1987; Tweed's: Burrow et al. 2003).

would vary proportionally to the amount of social activity which occurred. On the other hand, ceramics, used in personal care and hygiene as well as cooking and eating—all aspects that had to occur at a traveler's inn but not as much or at all in a city tavern where people met only to socialize—would vary proportionally with the accommodation function of a tavern. Taken together, the two would vary inversely, and this variance should directly correlate to the distance from a city center with more pipe stems relative to ceramics being found in the more urban environments. Their analysis of four sites known to be taverns produced the anticipated inverse relationship, and the authors cautiously concluded that the analysis could separate specialized (usually urban) from generalized (usually rural) taverns.

Several other authors have repeated the Rockman and Rothschild analysis, and the results of some of these, along with additional sites, have been compiled into Figure 8 and

Table 2. Clearly, Rockman and Rothschild's method generally holds true, and separates most urban and rural taverns. However, it is notable that there is a great deal of variation.

Table 2. Pipe and ceramic data from comparative taverns (for sources see FIG 8.).

Tavern (Date Range)	Pipes	Ceramics	% Pipes
Lovelace (1677–1706)	4220	388	91.5
St. Mary's (1668–1690s)	1117	462	70.7
Shield's (1708–1751)	7764	5439	58.8
Jamestown (late 17th cen.)	543	411	56.9
Earthy's (late 17th cen.)	2863	4769	37.5
Wellfleet (1690–1740)	9090	26336	25.6
Rumney (1700–1780)	854	2382	23.3
McCrady's (1770's–1801)	144	739	12.9
Maplewood (1743–1754)	367	3014	10.8
Ogle/John Ruth (1730–1780)	1049	9137	10.3
Rising Son (18th cen.)	46	857	5.0
Marvin (1750–1850)	17	705	2.3
Orringh (1790–1830)	7	461	1.5
Neff/F209 (1780's)	33	2452	1.3
Tweed's (1802–1831)	37	4589	0.8

Sites range from 92 percent to 16 percent pipes for most urban taverns, and 38 percent to 1 percent pipes for rural sites. The position of Neff's tavern in Figure 8 is also surprising. This assemblage is dominated by ceramics over pipe fragments, indicating a rural tavern focused on accommodation and food preparation, but we know that this tavern is just two blocks from Independence Hall in thriving Philadelphia. Furthermore, the vessel assemblage as discussed above does not indicate an emphasis on food preparation and consumption, having few cooking and storage items, and little variety among the serving ones.

Other authors (Coleman et al. 1990, Coleman et al. 1993) have placed more emphasis on this variability, and their analysis combined with the historical discussion above and the wider sample shown here than previously published (the 15 sites shown in Figure 8) suggests that although Rockman and Rothschild's method is a valuable tool, since the variation between sites is so great, an analysis would benefit from a way of parsing out *which* functions a specialized tavern specialized in, and to what extent.

Tavern Function Analysis

As the preceding discussion suggests, while all colonial communities used taverns as a central part of life, different taverns served different functions for their communities. Therefore a method of analysis that is able to judge the relative importance of the primary functions taverns served would be beneficial to understanding the role each tavern played. In our present case of Ebenezer Robinson and Melchior Neff, it might also suggest an explanation for the tavern's short life span, and shed light on the character of small, ephemeral taverns of which Neff's is an example.

To this end, I propose to compare drinking, eating, and "living" (the latter including the hosting of travelers) as three of the principal functions taverns are known to have served. Taking cues from the previous literature, each of these activities may be associated with a category of artifact among ceramic and glass vessels identifiable by form, and the relative proportions of each can then be compared across sites. On one level this is an artifact pattern analysis, like South's or Bragdon's. However,

this does not attempt to be predictive, and there is no effort to establish a "tavern pattern." Indeed, the argument is that such a pattern cannot exist in a simple way. The connection of past action and present archaeological remains is usually more complex than we assume—this is one of the central critiques of processualism (Hodder 1986). For this study, an effort has been made to make the necessary "leap" from artifacts to actions as small as possible and, through the discussions above, to place these connections as much as possible within the cultural and historical context of their time. Does the lack of expected wine glasses (discussed below) call the pattern or site identification into question or offer a window into social perceptions of alcohol use? In this study of Philadelphia in the 18th century, I suggest it is more the latter, and so, while this analysis certainly may have application to other sites, it will not yield an equation into which any site may be plugged without consideration of cultural context.

Eating

Eating-related items include platters, plates, porringers, bowls, pans, colanders, and any other form most likely used for the preparation, storage, consumption, or presentation of food. Many previous analyses have separated "storage" verses "serving" items, but each points to the same event: a meal. All taverns in Philadelphia were required to provide food for travelers and workers, and it is part of Rockman and Rothschild's assumption that the extent to which a tavern filled this role would be indicated in the proportion of ceramics. However, this study attempts to delineate between ceramic vessels used for food and those used for drink, and also incorporates glasswares into these categories.

Living

This group covers most of the forms identified that do not fit either of the other categories, and includes chamber pots and other hygiene related forms, as well as inkwells, flowerpots, and similar items. The idea behind this seemingly haphazard category is that these forms are associated with activities that are not transient and therefore would be expected in quantity only at sites where at

least some people lived as well as ate and drank, such as an inn or boarding house, or a private home. It should be noted, of course, that some level of these items is to be expected from most taverns since most "publicans" lived at their taverns. Precisely because these artifacts have no inherent connection to taverns, they speak to the generalized character of (some) taverns which the authors of Philadelphia's licensing laws hoped to promote, as they hoped that such places would be more for the hosting of travelers than the drinking of rum.

Drinking

Although this final category is the most obvious, it is also the most telling. Drinking alcohol was almost universal in the 18th century, but the questions being examined here are ones of quantity, the exclusion of other activities, and social meanings. The drinking component was the one lawmakers hoped to keep in check, balanced by taverns' other roles. This category of artifacts would be associated, as Bragdon points out, with large numbers of drinking vessels. However, her suggestion that there would necessarily be a large number of wine glasses in particular at any tavern site is problematic. In Philadelphia, the sale of wine required a special license—one which cost more and Neff did not have—and many taverns sold no wine at all. The separation of higher-class wine consumption from lower-class beer and spirits in the law points to the attitude of those who wrote these laws towards different drinks and those who consumed them. Legal scrutiny might well have been more intense for the latter, and the poor were seen as less able to control their own drinking habits.

"Drinking" would also include any other items most likely related to beverages, such as bottles and jugs for their storage, decanters for presentation, and large, deep bowls for mixing and serving punches. Ideally, teawares would be excluded from this category on the grounds that they represent a different kind of drinking which lawmakers were not opposed to, and a different kind of social practice. The use of tea at tavern sites would be interesting to study in its own right. Although one rarely thinks of imported porcelain teawares in the smoky rooms of colonial taverns, they are found at virtually all tavern sites. However, at the present time separating teawares out is not practical as too few published reports include enough detail to separate the different kinds of drinking vessels. For the time being, teawares have been included in this category, except for saucers. Since saucers and teacups were intended for use as a set, counting each separately might skew this measure even further, so saucers have been excluded entirely. Lids of all sorts also have been excluded from all of these counts on the same grounds.

Results and Analysis

Few reports on taverns have included analysis of vessels by form. For this project, I was able to gather this information for five taverns for comparative purposes. The results, in percentage of vessels identifiable by form in each of the categories defined above, are presented in Table 3 and Figure 9. Numbers for Feature 209 and all comparative taverns were calculated the same way, and including all identifiable vessels regardless of material.

The most notable result is the wide range of figures in the "drinking" category. They

Table 3. Proportional categorization of tavern assemblages. The numbers in parenthesis give the actual vessel count for each category, excluding saucers and lids (see Figure 9 for sources).

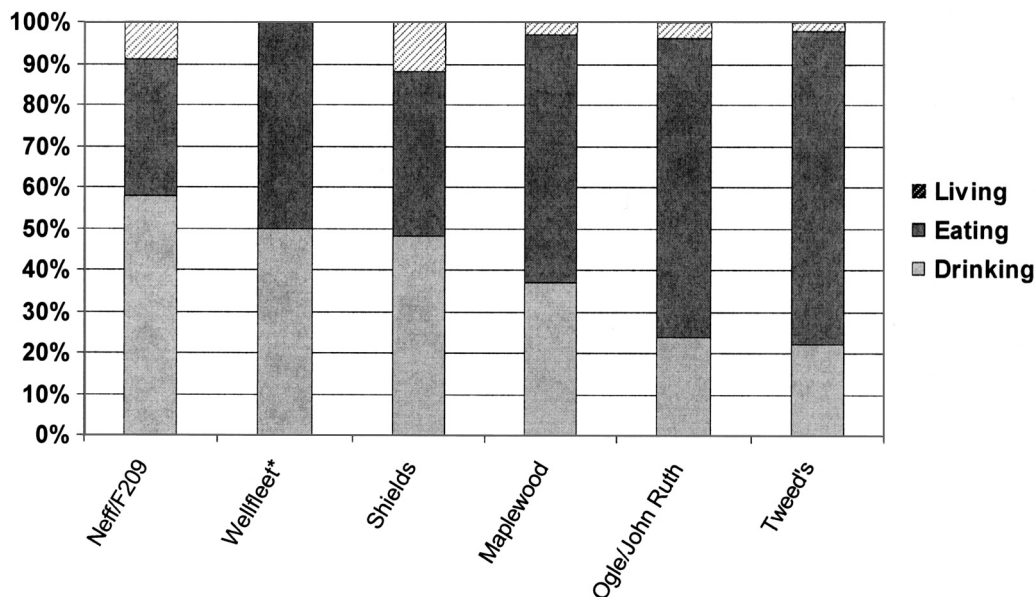| Site Name	Date	% Drinking (N)	% Eating (N)	% "Living" (N)
Neff's/ F209	1780s	58 (74)	33 (42)	9 (11)
Wellfleet Tavern*	1690–1740	50 (143)	50 (140)	(N/A)*
Shield's Tavern	1708–1800	48 (252)	40 (206)	12 (61)
Maplewood Ordinary	1743–1754	37 (30)	61 (50)	2 (2)
Ogle/John Ruth Inn	1730–1780	24 (106)	72 (317)	4 (20)
Tweed's Tavern	1790s–1831	22 (39)	76 (137)	2 (4)

*See note in caption for Figure 9.

Figure 9. Proportion of vessels at six tavern sites associated with the living, eating, and drinking categories defined in the text (sources: Ogle/John Ruth: Coleman et al. 1990; Tweed's: Burrow et al. 2003; Shields Tavern ["Early-" and "Transitional" layers only]: Brown et al. 2001; Wellfleet: Bragdon 1981 [*Note: Bragdon gives vessel count only for food- and drink-related items, and it is unclear if this excludes other forms or if there were no other forms]; Maplewood: Rees et al. 1993).

range from 58 percent of vessels being drink-related to a mere 22 percent for Tweed's Tavern. Although one would assume drink to be the primary function of colonial taverns from a 21st-century perspective, it seems that other functions are dominant, except in the case of Neff's tavern. This only serves to highlight the diversity of their roles in colonial communities.

Melchior Neff's Tavern as Revealed through Feature 209

The archaeology suggests that Melchior Neff's tavern was not likely to have functioned predominantly as an inn or boarding house, although Neff himself is likely to have lived there as suggested by tax records and a moderate level of "living" items. Nor was it a place where one went and stayed for a great deal of time, chatting and debating with friends, indicated by the low proportion of pipe-stems. Food, as indicated by the proportion of food-related items to drink- and living-related items and lack of variety in the former, was not a

major focus of activity (compared to other taverns). The high number of drinking forms—primarily bottles (44) and tankards (10) as well as glass tumblers (7, all heavy bottomed and undecorated forms)—suggests that drink was the primary function of Neff's tavern. This appears to be unusual among colonial taverns, as most other assemblages are dominated by food-related items.

Epilogue: The Rise and Fall of Melchior Neff

Research conducted on Neff produced none of the solid, middle-class records so abundant for his landlord, Robinson. No will was ever registered for him in Pennsylvania, he shows up on none of the Pennsylvania census records which begin in 1790, and his name was not found in the records of any area church or Meeting. In the mid 1770s he had apparently owned some land in Westmoreland County, in rural Pennsylvania, but by 1780 this land is not taxed as his. He appears in two advertisements in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in

1778, hoping to reclaim a lost horse, and is referred to as a tavern keeper living on Market Street near Front Street. However, no record of his receiving a license to keep a tavern was found for those years, so it is likely that he worked in another keeper's tavern. It may well have been that Neff lost his land in Westmoreland and came to the city to get back on his feet. It appears that he had previous connections to tavern-keeping, and his move to Robinson's land may have been an effort to strike out on his own when he received permission to operate a tavern there in July of 1780.

But something went wrong, and Neff was rejected when he attempted to renew his tavern license in July of 1781. Historian Timothy Thompson (1999: 37) writes that "if a person broke the licensing law…he or she could expect to be barred from the trade, but unless or until a publican broke the law, he had a reasonable chance of keeping house for as long as he desired." The archaeology suggests that the patrons of Neff's tavern came for the rum, not accommodation or food or even to socialize. The tavern was not being used moderately if all its patrons did was drink, and the archaeology suggests a poor tavern which would likely have been frequented by those who were similarly poor and—according to Quaker morals—could ill afford to waste their money on alcohol. While there are many other potential causes for Neff's rejection, the archaeology suggests that Neff's tavern may not have been seen as serving the community, as defined by the contemporary tavern regulations. Whether this led to objections by Robinson himself or other members of the Quaker or non-Quaker community we will probably never know, but if anyone showed that Neff was neglecting his duties to offer other services and keep his patrons from drinking to excess this could easily have resulted in the cancellation of his license.

His particular position as the tenant of a Quaker made Neff more susceptible to critique, since Robinson would have been more sensitive than the average landlord to the effect such a tavern would have had on both his, and by extension his community's, public image. Furthermore, Robinson may well have considered the dangers of waste and disorder associated with such a tavern—without the benefits to the community it was required to serve—to be reason enough to turn Neff out of his building. The disposal of a nearly complete bar set, some items still in perfectly usable condition, might suggest that this cleanout was more than spring tidying-up or readying for a new tenant. Perhaps the cleanout event even represents more of an eviction, a forcible discard of the material remains of the offending establishment.

The only other mentions of Neff in the available records are in the notebook of William McMullin and George Smith, Esq., agents charged with the accounting for and sale of lands and possessions forfeited over debt in Philadelphia. These are two brief, cryptic notations about Neff's having fled from debts in the 1780s (Montgomery 1906, Vol. 12, 804, 806).

Conclusion

Research has shown the presence of a tavern on land owned by an active member of the Quaker community, and this paper has suggested some more complicated views on Quakers and alcohol that help to contextualize this tavern. Specifically, it has been suggested that despite popular perceptions of colonial Quakers as teetotalers, their concerns were not always incompatible with taverns, and Robinson would most likely have been allowed latitude to rent to a tavern in some cases. The conditions under which this could have occurred are reflected in tavern license regulations of the time—written by Quakers—which allowed for taverns in the city primarily in order to fulfill certain economic roles. They functioned as places where food and accommodation could be purchased, where people could meet for business and personal discussion, and last *and* least, where alcohol could be consumed. I have suggested a method of analyzing tavern assemblages that allows us to examine the extent to which each of these activities may have occurred at a particular site. A comparative analysis of six sites has suggested that for the most part (although to varying degrees) taverns abided by these mores and emphasized food and accommodation. The exception was the house of Melchior

Neff. Archaeologically, Feature 209 represents a unique opportunity to study small, ephemeral taverns in a closely-dated context with a significant historical record. The historical and archaeological analyses together contextualize and clarify the relationship of Quakers and taverns in colonial Philadelphia, and offer some possible explanations to the particular case of Ebenezer Robinson and Melchior Neff.

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