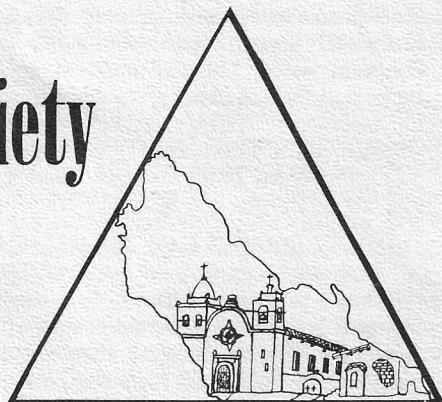


# Monterey County Archaeological Society Quarterly



Volume III, Number 4

July, 1974

## Mexican Majolica at the Presidio of Monterey

*A Tool for Dating Certain Stratigraphy*

By RONALD V. MAY

In 1972, a plea was sent out to all archaeologists working on Spanish and Mexican Period sites in California for information regarding the types of Majolica being recovered. Among the numerous scholars responding to the plea was Donald M. Howard, president of the Monterey County Archaeological Society. Following an exchange of correspondence, a sample of Majolica from the Monterey Presidio was sent for analysis. This report concerns the conclusions of that analysis and a review of that line of research as it exists today in California.

The sherds were first studied for the attributes which isolate them into discrete types. The types were placed on a table which displayed the presence of types in corresponding levels, ranging from surface to Level IV. Puebla Phases as previously suggested by this author (May, 1972) were arranged opposite the Majolica types. Finally, based upon the tabulations, the arbitrary levels were assigned dates. This will be discussed in detail in later parts of this report.

### WHAT IS MAJOLICA?

Majolica is a "fairly soft earthenware covered with a glaze of lead made opaque with ashes or oxides of tin. On this white absorbent surface, the decorator paints his pattern or picture swiftly and irrevocably, as though he were working a watercolor. The technique calls for a sure instinct and in this form it gives a result totally different from the tight work of a porcelain painter." (Bedford, 1968.)

The ceramic, Mexican Majolica, was officially the only ware sold in the frontiers of northern Mexico. Therefore, this ceramic is an excellent indicator of the presence or lack of such historic colonization in California.

This author has been researching the distribution of colonial types of Majolica in regions of North America and Mexico since 1968. To date, 51 sites have been reported in Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuilla, Mexico; California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Alabama, Florida and Georgia. It has been well estab-

lished that the same types were consumed at the same time in these places.

Since most of these colonial sites have historically known establishment and abandonment dates, the existence of certain types and lack of others has allowed for a chronological typology to be established (Barber, 1908; Cervantes, 1939; Caywood, 1950; Plowden, 1958; Goggin, 1968; Gerald, 1968; Barnes and May, 1972).

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOLICA

The ware originated somewhere in Southeast Asia and diffused as a craft to Babylon and Susa in the fifth century B.C. (Lister, 1969). Marauding Arabs spread early forms of the ware from the Near East to Africa by the seventh century A.D. (Frothingham, 1936). Husband (1970: 11) notes that a Berber military commander named Tarik invaded Spain as early as 711 A.D. and set the stage for the eventual diffusion of the craft in the 12th Century (Frothingham, 1936: 1). Gaily colored, the ceramic became a popular trade item in the Mediterranean area and was being made in Italy by 1500 A.D.

It was during the same period that the ceramic received the label "Majolica." Italian merchants presumed that it was being made in Majorrca, Spain, because it was shipped from that port (Lister, 1969; Barnes, 1972; Barnes and May, 1972). "Loza de Majorrca" became corrupted to Majolic (pronounced *ma yol' ika*).

In Spain, the Majolica artisans blended traditional peasant wares with traditional Moslem layouts (many derived from Southeast Asian origins). Goggin (1968) has distinguished those types which belong to the Medieval (peasant-ware) Tradition and to the Chinese-Popular (Southeast Asian-Moslem) Tradition.

When Spain began to establish Mexican colonies, the *only* ceramic supplied to New Spain was Majolica. This ceramic was not only an official ceramic for the Spanish Government in Spain, but also for the Provisional Government in Mexico.

Legend has it that the Dominican Order from Talavera de la Reina, Spain, carried the craft to the town of Puebla de Los Angeles, Mexico, by the middle of the 17th Century (Van de Velde, 1927; Lister, 1969; Goggin, 1968; Barnes and May, 1972). In

1653, the Potter's Guild Laws were decreed and the production of Majolica came under strict government supervision (Van de Velde, 1927). Three "grades" of Majolica were allowed (*ibid.*: 13):

1. Fine — elaborately decorated and expensive;
2. Common — simple decoration and low price; and
3. Yellow — little or no decoration and cheap.

It has become obvious in recent years that little of none of the fine grade Majolica was sold outside of Mexico City. Barber (1907, 1908, 1911, 1913, 1915a, 1915b, 1915c, 1918), Butler (1907), Cervantes (1939), Penafiel (1910) and Toussaint (1949) all missed this important point and disregarded the common and yellow grades.

Colonial Majolica, therefore, was the less expensive and less elaborate form. These have been recovered at many prehistoric sites (DiPeso, 1953; Goggin, 1950, 1952, 1968; Kidder, 1932; Larsen, 1958; Philips *et. al.*, 1951; Rogers, 1934) as well as historic sites (Ayres, 1970; Barnes, 1972; Barnes and May, 1972; Boyd, 1951; Caywood, 1950; DiPeso, 1953; Gerald, 1968; Goggin, 1952, 1968; May, 1970, 1973; Plowden, 1958; Scholes, 1930; Snow, 1965; Toulouse, 1949; Wendorf, 1952).

The Mexican Craftsmen blended the Medieval and Chinese-Popular Traditions with a mixture of Aztec and Italian motifs which resulted in the Italian-Talavera tradition (Goggins, 1968; May, 1972). Since this was almost a line of fine grade Majolica, the colonial ware developed either in the Puebla Tradition (blue on white) or Aranama Tradition (orange bands and polychromes).

#### TYOLOGICAL THEORY

That patterns of artifacts can correspond to cultural trends has been demonstrated in numerous archaeological situations. However, it was not until the 1950's that theoreticians attempted to understand the logic behind typology. For instance, one writer theorized that the the type concept is a tool that could:

*"enable the investigator to group specimens into bodies which have demon-*

*strable historical meaning in terms of behavioral patterns. Any group which may be called a type must embrace material which can be shown to consist of individual variations in the execution of a structural idea, likewise, the dividing lines between a series of types must be based upon demonstrable historical factors, not, as is often the case, upon the inclinations or the niceties of descriptive orderliness.*" (Ford, 1954: 43.)

James Deetz has demonstrated that artifact patterning (*i.e.*, types) is reflective of culturally conditioned patterning. Of typological change:

*"If culturally conditioned behavioral patterning is responsible for artifact patterning, then changes in the extent of behavioral patterning might reasonably be expected to affect the attribute patterning seen in resulting objects."*  
(Deetz, 1965: 2.)

Thus the term *type* refers to cultural as well as physical patterns. Changes in cultural and behavioral patterns are reflected by changes in manufacture, and physical patterns that are repeated can be said to be the type traditions. When historical stress factors affect behavioral patterns to the degree that those patterns change, it is logical to assume that material objects will also change.

The 51 historic sites with discrete Majolica types at each site provide the demonstrable historic factors, as demanded by Ford, to verify true Majolica types. Shifts of types and traditions in phases, or ceramic change, have been described as Puebla Phases (May, 1972). It is therefore logical that the ceramic changes reflect changes in the behavioral patterning of the colonists. That change can only have come from historical stress.

For example, the change of types from the Puebla Tradition to the Aranama Tradition between Puebla III and Puebla IV is likely to have been influenced by the trade and expansion treaties between England, Spain and Russia in 1790 (Bancroft, 1963) which led to the loss of the Mexican monopoly. The stress was mostly on the merchants and the Majolica industries, who frantically shifted traditions to retain the

elusive market. The colonial consumers were free to purchase any ware they wished, and only the choicest Majolica competed with the Oriental, Dutch and English wares.

#### THE MONTEREY SAMPLE

The five Puebla phases of Spanish and Mexican colonial Majolica are all represented in the sample of sherds analyzed from the Monterey Presidio. Eight types of the ware were identified without question. The types range in time from 1700 to 1900. However, it is likely that the early sherds were old when brought to the site and later sherds were broken in the mid-19th Century. Therefore, the range as represented by the sample from this site represents a 1750-1850 time span.

The analysis will begin with the earliest types and their corresponding levels. The small size of the sample, only 20 sherds in all, must be taken into consideration with respect to the suggested dates of the levels. Furthermore, the various proveniences of each specimen might represent entirely different areas which were subjected to differing rates of midden deposition. Similarly, the methods of arbitrary level recovery seems to differ between six-inch, twelve-inch, eight-inch and Roman Numeral coded levels. However, as best as is possible, these arbitrary increments of measurement were arranged from what appears to be surface down to level.

The material will be discussed with regards to the earliest and deepest first and the successive deposits later. Conclusions will be drawn from this discussion and the table.

*Puebla I.* The Puebla I period, 1700 to 1750, is represented by three sherds of two types. Those types are Puebla Blue-on-white and Wavy Rim Blue-on-white. However, it might be interjected that the latter type has been suspected (Barnes and May, 1972) to actually be a late 18th Century variation of Huejotzingo Blue-on-white, which is conspicuously absent in this sample. In addition, Puebla Blue-on-white may have been used well into the 18th Century. Further suggestion of the late cultural association is the presence of San Elizario Polychrome in Level IV of S-4, where the other two sherds were found. This type is

an indicator of the 1750-1800 period. Therefore, the sample would tend to indicate that Level IV is also in this time period and most likely dates in the last half of the 18th Century.

*Puebla II and III.* The aforementioned San Elizario Polychrome sherd represents the Puebla II period from 1750 to 1800. However, the presence of Green Phase Majolica indicates a later time, perhaps 1780 to 1800. It is interesting to note that this latter material was in the 0-12" level, of F-2, twice in Level II, in a 12-18" level, in a 12-20" level, and twice in Level III. There are three possibilities:

1. That the deposition of midden differs from provenience to provenience.

2. That Level II and Level III date around the 1780-1800 period.

3. That Green Phase was in use much longer in Monterey than in other presidios.

Based upon the association of Monterey Polychrome and Tucson Polychrome, the lower part of Level III is probably representative of the period around 1800-1820. The upper part dates somewhere between 1830 and 1850.

*Puebla IV.* As has been demonstrated above, this phase is well represented in Levels II and III. A paradox in the existing data is presented when Tucson Polychrome is found from Level II to the surface. This type was previously thought to date only from 1850 to 1900. It now appears to have been in vogue as early as 1830, the tail end of this phase. The presence of Mexican Polychromes in this region of the midden indicates the beginning of a trend which has already been demonstrated to be the end of the Majolica trade in Mexican sites. Based upon the trailing off of Green Phase and beginning of Tucson Polychrome in the Level II and 12-18" level, it would seem that these levels were deposited around 1830.

*Puebla V.* The upper part of Level II and the 0-12" level yield the last of the Green Phase material and an abundance of Tucson Polychrome and Mexican Polychromes. These latter types are excellent indicators of the 1850 period. The last six inches of midden and the surface probably represent deposition in the last half of the 19th Century. Therefore, Level I dates between 1850 and 1900.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Twenty specimens of Mexican Majolica were recovered from the site of the Monterey Presidio and sent to this researcher for identification and analysis. The sherds were subjected to a typological analysis and then ordered according to sub-surface levels.

The chronology has previously been established by numerous authors, including this researcher. Fifty-one sites have provided evidence as to when the sherds were broken. A model was employed to interpret Puebla (ceramic) Phases in the stratum. The model suggests that ceramic change occurred as a side effect of historical stress upon the colonial markets.

The analysis revealed five Puebla phases. The associations of chronologically dated Majolica types indicated that five time stratum are involved. The earliest centers around 1780 and it is represented by Level IV. The lower portions of Level II in Units I-2 and C-7, as well as Level III, represent the end of the 18th Century, around 1800. Most of Level II was deposited between 1800 and 1830. However, the top portion of Level II in Units S-2 and Q-4 seem to be associated with the lower part of the first twelve inches and seem to have been deposited between 1830 and 1850. The top part of the 0-12" level to surface must have been deposited in the last half of the 19th Century.

In retrospect, some comments come to mind regarding this analysis. It would have been far better had all units been excavated in uniform levels. It also would have aided this interpretation if some data regarding the proveniences of the units were provided. It is quite possible that the levels mean different things in different situations.

However, it is felt by this researcher that the analysis does reflect the period of known occupation of the Presidio and is, therefore, relatively accurate. There is no reason to suspect that the types from Monterey date any differently than the samples from the other 51 known Majolica sites in northern New Spain.

With regards to the two specimens of Puebla I Majolica, it is likely that they represent the earliest supplies shipped to the area. These vessels probably were rela-

tive antiques in their time and transferred from some Baja California mission. On the other hand, both types were known in the last part of the 18th Century.

It seems that by 1850, Majolica was not a common item in California markets. The studies in San Diego indicate that its replacement by other wares occurred some 20 years earlier.

In conclusion, this study should be considered a valuable exercise in the application of Majolica to interpret stratum chronology and historical change in historic archaeology. The interpretation is likely to be of significant aid in interpreting archaeological data recovered in the excavations at Monterey.

Archaeological Provenience	Ceramic Types														
	Pueblo Blue-on-white	Huejolzingo Blue-on white	Wavy rim Blue-on-white	San Elizario Polychrome	Green Phase	Quiburi Polychrome	San Diego Polychrome	Monterey Polychrome	Orange line Polychrome	Tucson Polychrome	Tucumcari I Polychrome	Tucumcari II Polychrome	Tucumcari III Polychrome		Mexican polychrome
Area C Surface										×				×	1850 to 1900
Area I Surface										×				×	
E-9, 0-6"										×				×	
D-1, 0-12"										×				×	
Trench 2, 0-12"							×							×	
G-5, 0-12"			×							×				×	1850
E-7, 0-12"										×				×	
F-2, 0-12"					×										
Q-4, Level II					×					×				×	
S-2, Level II										×				×	
S-4, Level II								×							1830
R-1, Level II					×					×					
S-1, Level II							×			×					
C-6, Level 12-18"										×				×	
J-1, 12-18"					×										
I-2, 12-18"										×					1800
C-7, 12-20"					×			×			×				
R-1, Level III					×										
S-1, Level III					×					×				×	
S-4, Level IV	×		×	×							×			×	
	1700-1750 Puebla I			1750-1800 Puebla II III				1800-1830 Puebla IV				1830-1900 Puebla V			

TABLE I STRATIGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF MAJOLICA

Note: Archaeological units Q-R-S were excavated in IV levels, following natural stratigraphy. USO property.  
 Units C-D-E-F-G-I-J, in 6 inch and 12 inch levels, for lack of stratigraphy.  
 All units, 5 x 5 feet. Trench 2, 30" wide. Diocese of Monterey property.

Chart by Mildred Waltrip

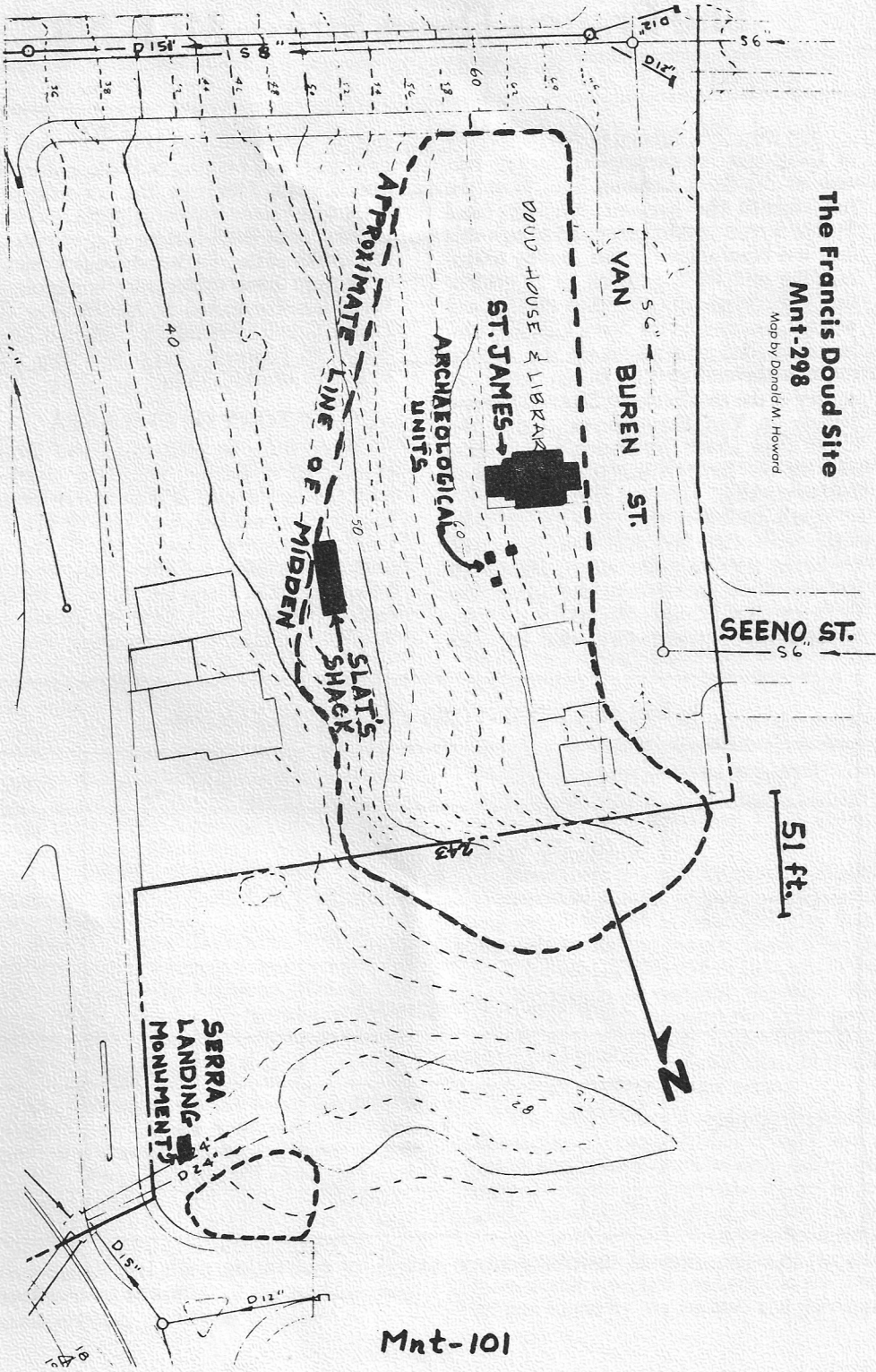
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# The Francis Doud Site

## Mnt-298

Map by Donald M. Howard



Mnt-101

# The Francis Doud Site — Mnt-298

By DONALD M. HOWARD

Site Mnt-298, defined in the University of California Archaeological Survey records as the Serra Landing Site, is at the junction of the present Artillery and Pacific Streets in Monterey. Although this area has been altered in the past by bridge building and fill operations, it is evident that it was originally an Indian midden and was not confined to the Serra Landing Site, but extended southwest up the arroyo towards the end of Van Buren Street. A survey of the area between Scott and Seeno Streets on Van Buren revealed that the entire slope where the Francis Doud home and the St. James Church are located is Indian midden.

Examination of the property immediately north of the St. James Church showed a concentration of shell midden, along with garbage debris dating from the occupation of the original Doud family to the present. Superficially, it was evident that the first

foot or so of soil had been disturbed by gardening and burying of trash within the last 20 years. However, the discovery of a black fused shale projectile point and blue transfer print Staffordshire ware sherds on the surface of the site was enough evidence to warrant some exploratory archaeology. Work was conducted at Mnt-298 by the Pacific Grove Community Centered High School in February, 1971, and later continued by the MCAS in July, 1971.

## HISTORY OF THE AREA

According to tradition, the Doud House, an attractive, shuttered wooden structure at the end of Van Buren Street just off Scott, was begun in 1849 by Francis Doud, sergeant-at-arms at the Constitutional Convention in Colton Hall. Born in Ireland in 1820, Doud left home at 16 and came to America. In 1838 he joined the Army and fought in the Seminole War in

Mnt 298 INVENTORY OF ARTIFACTS N40

Unit N40	ARTIFACTS	Depth		TOTAL	
		0 - 6"	6"- 12"		
PREHISTORIC	Workshop flakes	chert	8	7	15
		shale	3	4	7
		quartzite	1	1	2
	Beads				
	Olivella spire lopped	4	2	6	
	Bone (Abalone pry fragment)	1	--	1	
HISTORIC	Stoneware ceramics	9	2	11	
	Nails	square	59	14	73
		round	18	--	18
	Old glass	50	7	57	
Metal	26	1	27		

(All the contents of Unit N40 were saved by screening with 1/4 inch mesh)

Chart by Mildred Waltrip



TOTAL CONSTITUENT WEIGHT IN UNIT N40, Mnt-298 (Weight in grams)			
N40	0 - 6"	6" - 12"	TOTAL
STONE	62,789.8	44,224.0	107,013.8
BONE	582.5	492.0	1,074.5
SHELL	9,647.8	43,398.0	53,045.8
METAL	1,399.0	56.0	1,455.0
GLASS	1,300.0	532.0	1,832.0
WOOD	554.4	--	554.4

Chart by Mildred Waltrip

Florida, and in 1847 he fought in the Mexican War and was wounded twice. He was discharged from the Army and came to Monterey early in 1849. A retired sergeant, he became custodian of old Fort Mervine and was in charge of shipping Army supplies.

Doud built the first butcher shop on Alvarado Street of wood brought around the Horn from the East Coast. It is said that the present Doud House is built of some of the wood from the butcher shop. It was finished around 1860. Upon Doud's death in 1910, his widow continued to make her home here until her death, and the house was occupied by some family members until early 1966. Acquired from the Doud estate by the Monterey Urban Renewal Agency in 1967, the Doud House was sold to the Monterey History and Art Association for preservation.

The St. James Church on Van Buren Street, its second location, was first erected next to the Merritt Adobe in 1876. Before the church moved to its present site, the Indian midden was relatively undisturbed.

#### METHODOLOGY

At the rear of the St. James Church, a wooden datum stake was driven into the ground at the rear northeast corner of the church. From this point, three 5x5-foot test units were laid out in a magnetic north compass bearing, units N40, N55 and N40W15. Each unit was stripped in six-inch increments and screened with ¼-inch mesh. In unit N40 all of the midden constituents were saved and weighed.

#### CULTURAL REMAINS—*Prehistoric*

It was clearly evident upon excavation that the first 12 inches of midden had been badly disturbed in the past from the dumping of trash. However, near 12 inches an apparently undisturbed stratum of *Haliotis rufescens* was found in all three units tested. This phenomenon is relatively common in Monterey Peninsula sites and may represent a dietary preference at some particular time.

The only beads found in the midden were a few *Olivella biplicata* spire-lopped beads. They were abraded and broken, and have morphological affinities with *Olivella* beads found with burial no. 13 at Mnt-12 on Carmel Bay.

Since there is a paucity of artifacts such as projectile points, *Olivella* saddle beads and abraded stone at Mnt-298, the functional aspects of the site are clearly different from the adjacent site, Mnt-101, which has an abundance of cultural remains. The latter site, which occupies the knoll north of Artillery Street, was apparently a large village, and it is probable that Mnt-298 represents a different time period.

The only artifact found which reflects the eating of acorns (balanophagy) was a siltstone acorn anvil. The only other site on the Monterey Peninsula where acorn anvils have been identified is Mnt-12, although at Mnt-107 an oval granitoid stone with a pecked channel around its circumference and a pecked concavity in the center was found by the author, and this con-

cavity may have been used as an acorn smashing pit in conjunction with the artifact's net sinker function.

#### CULTURAL REMAINS—*Historic*

Since the site was secondarily disturbed by the introduction of trash, a variety of metal, glass and ceramic elements was found. A few were significant in that they dated from the Doud occupation. Transfer print Staffordshire sherds, iron glass wine bottle pieces and machine cut square nails seem to date from the late 1800's. Only one hallmark was found on the bottom of a plate shard:

*Homer . . .*  
*Made in . . .*  
*C43*

#### MIDDEN CONSTITUENTS

*Shell*—Ten marine gastropod species were collected, representing the intertidal protected outer coast of Monterey Bay, plus one terrestrial snail (*Helix*) which, of course, was introduced in recent times. Two pelecypod species, two cirripedians and one chiton were identified.

Of all the forms in the invertebrate list which probably does not represent the entire Indian invertebrate diet, two are indigenous to the present Monterey Bay littoral zone near the Monterey breakwater—*Prothothaca* and *Acanthina*. The other species can be found in the rough outer coast zones in heavy surf.

It is interesting to note that the common sand facies inhabitants such as *Tresus* and *Saxidomus* are apparently lacking in the excavated midden. This same trend is found in the midden at Mnt-101, along with a paucity of the large gastropod *Polinices lewisii*, which is a common low tide sand flat dweller.

*Bone*—Bone was not abundant in the area excavated. Specimens retrieved represent pinniped, deer and teleost fish. An abalone pry fragment may have been derived from a whale rib or a large Steller sea lion. Butchered bone, found in the upper layer, must be garbage from the Doud House and adjacent buildings.

*Stone*—The most common lithic elements were angular pieces of Santa Lucia granodiorite which had been burned, al-



Mnt-298, Unit N55, 0-12"  
FEATURE # 1—*Haliotis rufescens* concentration

Photo by Toni Graham

though no hearths were found in situ. Monterey shale pieces which have been bored by the pelecypod *Pholadidea* are common, along with pieces of shale which appear to have been broken by percussion. Chert pieces are relatively rare, but those that were found probably came from the Monterey shales exposed in lenses on the Fish Ranch.

### CONCLUSIONS

Mnt-298 appears to have been deposited before or after—but not during—the occupation of Mnt-101 because characteristic artifacts of Mnt-101 are not found in Mnt-298, except a few spire-topped *Olivella* beads. A layer of *Haliotis rufescens* at 12 inches just above sterile soil shows a dietary preference at an instance in time, and the scarcity of sand flat mollusks in the

excavated units indicates a collecting locus in the rocky littoral zone.

Mnt-298 may have been occupied when Monterey was officially founded by Don Gaspar de Portola and Fr. Junipero Serra on June 3, 1770, and if so the Indians could have witnessed the original landing.

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The MCAS wishes to thank the Monterey Urban Renewal Agency for granting permission to test excavate Mnt-298, which is on their property, and for the use of their topographic map of the Doud House area.

#### Francis Doud Site

Mnt-298

#### CHECKLIST OF INVERTEBRATES

##### PHYLUM ANNELIDA

###### Class Polychaeta

Serpulid worm tubes

##### PHYLUM ARTHROPODA

###### Class Cirripedia

*Balanus* sp.

*Mitella polymerus* (Sowerby, 1833)

##### PHYLUM MOLLUSCA

###### Class Amphineura

*Ischinochiton* sp.

###### Class Gastropoda

*Acanthina spirata* (Blainville)

*Acmaea* sp.

*Astrea inaequalis* (Martyn, 1784)

*Calliostoma costatum* (Martyn, 1784)

*Crepidula adunca* Sowerby, 1825

*Haliotis rufescens* Swainson, 1822

*Helix aspersa*

*Margarita* sp.

*Olivella biplicata* (Sowerby, 1825)

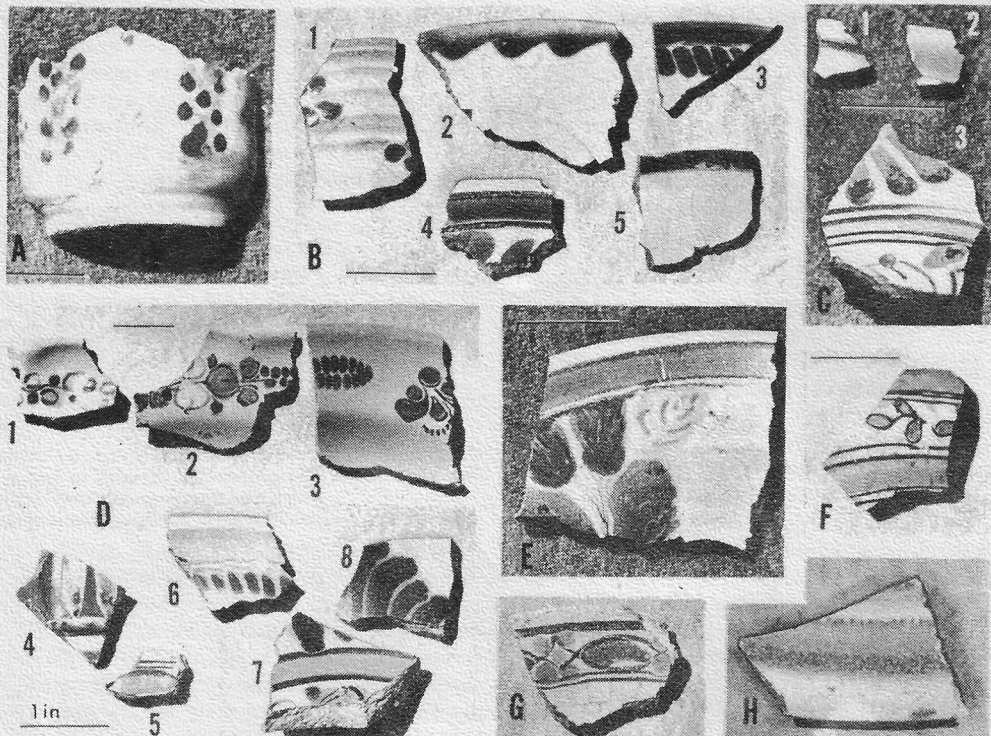
*Tegula funebris* (Adams, 1854)

*Thais canaliculata* (Duclos, 1832)

###### Class Pelecypoda

*Protothaca staminea* (Conrad)

*Mytilus californianus* Conrad, 1837



**MAJOLICA SHERDS FROM THE PRESIDIO OF MONTEREY.** A. Cup base fragment, San Agustin Blue-on-white. B-1. San Agustin Blue-on-white; 2. Wavy Rim Blue-on-white; 3 and 4. San Elizario Polychrome; 5. Huejotzingo Blue-on-white. C-1 and 2. Orange Lime Polychrome; 3. Mexican Polychrome. D-1. Tumacacori Polychrome II; 2 and 3. Tumacacori Polychrome III; 4 and 5. Mexican Polychrome; 6. Green Phase Puebla; 7 and 8. Mexican Polychromes. E. Tucson Polychrome. F. Mexican Polychrome. G. Puebla. H. Monterey Polychrome.

**MONTEREY COUNTY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**  
Box 4606  
Carmel, California 93921



*MAYO HAYES O'DONNELL LIB.  
MTRY HISTORY AND ART ASSOC.  
Box 805  
MONTEREY, CALI.  
93940*

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