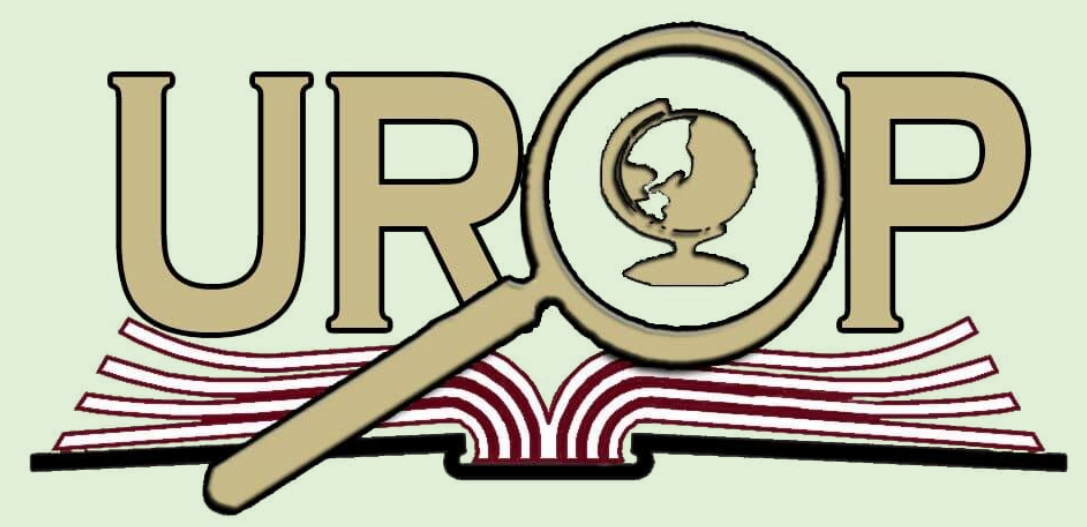




Analyzing Historic Glass from Evergreen Plantation

Alyssa Duarte, Dr. Jayur Mehta, Florida State University,



Department of Anthropology

Background

- Evergreen Plantation is one of the most well-preserved plantations in the United States, marking it as an important historical site
- African Americans worked and lived on the plantation for nearly 200 years, first as slaves and later as freedmen, with 54 living on the plantation in 1835 (Evergreen Plantation)
- Previous ceramic analysis suggests materials were primarily kitchenware's and dates the site between the early 19th century and mid-20th century (Johnson 2023)
- Aim: To analyze the recovered historic glass to further establish a working chronology for the site and determine its usage in daily life



Fig 1. Evergreen complex, photograph by William Guion, evergreenplantation.org
Fig 2. Slave Cabins and oaks, upriver (east) side of quarters, evergreenplantation.org



Methods

- Cleaning, sorting, and inventorying all artifacts, recording their position, count, composition, and form, before inputting such data into an Excel spreadsheet
- Sorting all artifacts into separate collections, labeling where each artifact was found, its characteristics, and preliminary dates of origin
- Photographing each artifact or artifact batch and creating a photo label
- Analyzing glass artifacts with partial or complete maker's marks and other identifying markers, deducing their origins referencing historical glass literature
- Creating a preliminary chronology based on the date ranges provided by the glassware analysis

The next step of this research is to analyze the glass through portable X-ray fluorescence analyzers (PXRF), which can reveal the chemical composition of historical glass



Fig 3. & 4. clear pharmaceutical bottle, body, and base intact, marked "ANTISEPTIC" and "TICHHNOR'S", circa 1890-1900 (Fig 3. "ANTISEPTIC" side, Fig 4. "TICHHNOR'S" side)



Fig 5. milk glass, pharmaceutical bottle, "MENTHOLATUM 1 REG. TRADE MARK" embossing, 1889-1915



Fig 6. clear liquor bottle, woman playing cello and "FEDERAL LAW FORBIDS SALE OR RE-USE OF THIS BOTTLE." embossing, 1935-1964



Fig 7. brown bottle, makers mark, Owens-Illinois Glass Company, 1940-1954, possibly 1944



Fig 8. clear container base, makers mark, Owens-Illinois Glass Company, 1929-1983, possibly 1941



Fig 9. & 10. uranium milk glass teacup, manufacturer unidentified, likely 1830-1942 (Fig 9. in natural light, Fig. 10 under black light)



Results

- Data collected suggests that most artifacts date between the early 19th century and mid-20th century
- Presence of uranium glass suggests the site was in use between 1830 and 1942, 1942 being the date uranium glass production was halted due to World War Two
- Maker's mark analysis suggests the site was in use between 1885 and 1964
- Most bottles identified by maker's mark and embossing appear to be for pharmaceutical/medicinal purposes

Identified Vessel Count

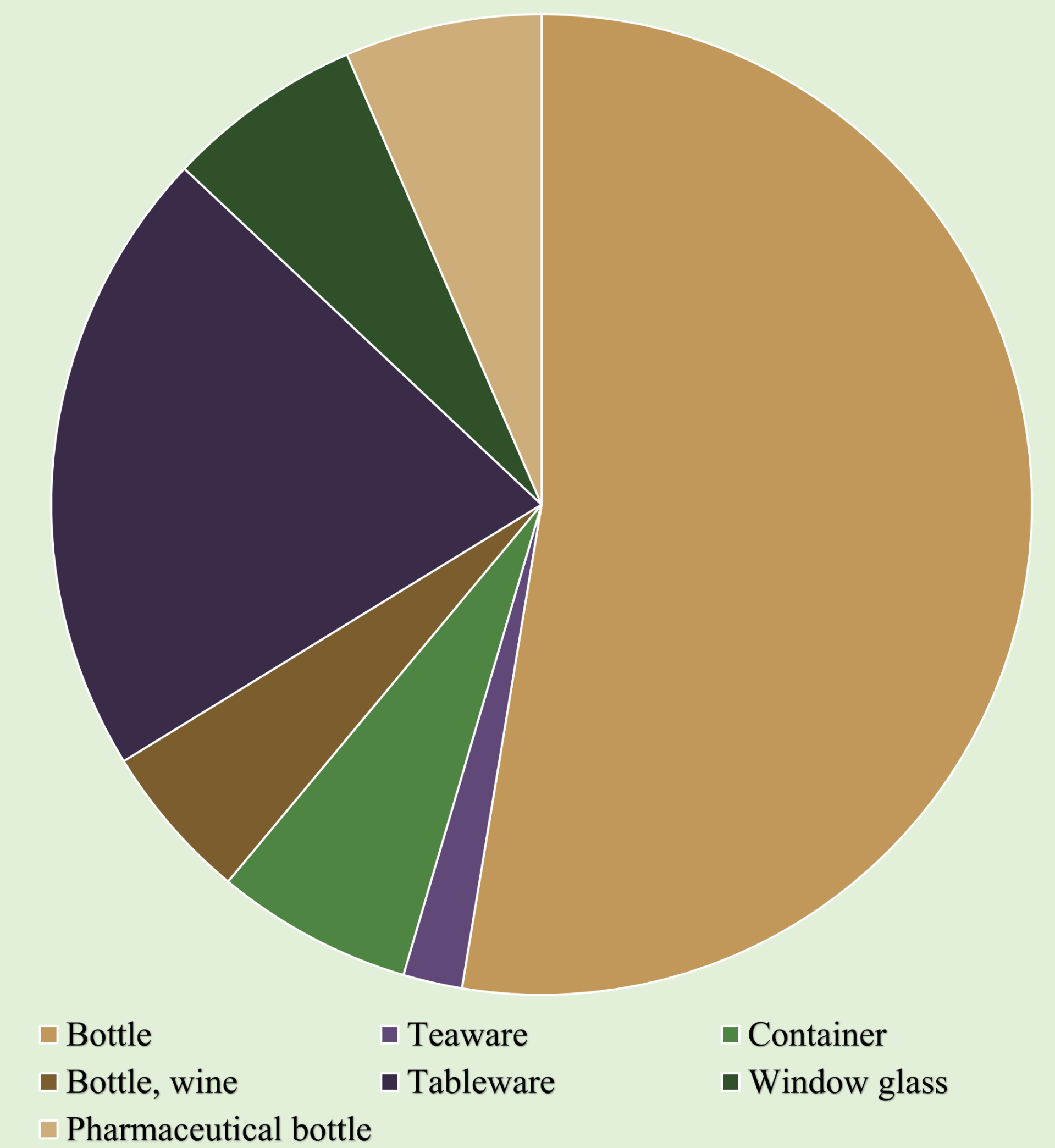


Fig 11. pie chart illustrating the distribution of identified vessel types

Discussion/Conclusion

- Most of the data collected dates to post-emancipation, providing details about what life was like for freedmen on the plantation
- The frequency of pharmaceutical bottles suggests that life on the plantation for freedmen remained physically demanding and required medical attention
- Most of the data collected comes from larger fragments or complete vessels and therefore is not an all-encompassing analysis of the historical glass of the site
- Additionally, data only represents a portion of the site, future excavation may provide new information
- Future analysis will investigate the chemical composition of smaller glass fragments and will compare that to the known glass-making recipes of the time in Louisiana

References

