



Round the Table = Fine Dining



china (noun)

A fine porcelain made of clay originally imported from China.

Meals were an occasion in the 1800s. Victorians took pride in setting a fine table and had the dishes and flatware to do it. White ironstone was the most popular and serviceable dishware while blue was the color of choice for decorative china.

Dishes are frequently dug, though most are found broken. Silverware is not often found as metal deteriorates quickly underground. As with many digs, there are often unanswered questions that surface. For instance, why would someone discard a complete set of china, including the soup tureen pictured here, down the privy? Food for thought.



Right: The corrosion on the flatware indicates they are not gold or silver, but common metal.

Left: Salt and pepper shakers are always found as "orphans," never as pairs.



Right: Handleless cups predate those with finger holds. Tea or coffee would be poured from the cup into the saucer to cool for drinking.



Above: China platter - a silent puzzle with forever missing pieces.



Above: Elegant privy survivor.



Right: Variations on the color blue.

Ask Tom:

Can china be used to date a hole?



Toothpick holder.



LOOKS LIKE ALL MY FANCY COUSINS HAVE A CHINA CONNECTION.



Above: Unusually large double-handled sugar bowls. Found without lids.

Tom Says:

No. China could be kept for generations before being discarded and is thus not reliable for dating.