

the shape of the blade is more appropriate to a flat dagger than to any of the Wessex type or Middle Bronze Age daggers which possess ribs. It may well be the work of a smith accustomed to the production of the older type of dagger adopting some of the features of the more advanced Wessex craftsmen.

The writer wishes to record his indebtedness to Mr. H. R. Singleton, Director of the Sheffield City Museum, for facilities to study and permission to publish these two daggers.

AN UNRECORDED DERBYSHIRE POTTERY.

By A. L. THORPE.

TO discover an apparently unrecorded 18th century pottery site in the county is unusual; to find that this factory, small though it was, made fine quality cream-coloured earthenware is indeed remarkable. In December 1957, Mr. W. H. Bailey of Sheffield, who was working on the site of some early blast furnaces at Furnace Farm about one mile south-west of Melbourne (SK 379240), sent to the Derby Museum through Mr. Francis Fisher a miscellaneous selection of pieces of earthenware which he had found adjacent to one of the blast furnaces. In addition to very coarse earthenware, some of which were parts of saggers, etc., and fragments of brown glazed "cottage" earthenware very common in the Midlands in the 18th century, there were some pieces of fine quality white unglazed pottery. With the kind approval of Mr. Bailey, my colleague Mr. R. G. Hughes, Mr. F. A. Barratt and myself between Easter and August 1958 investigated the site, which is approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east of the generally assumed location of the Ticknall pottery.

The ground adjoining the blast furnace, which had presumably later been used as a kiln, had been artificially built up largely with wasters, ashes, etc. to a height of 6 or 7 ft. above the river now called New Brook to which

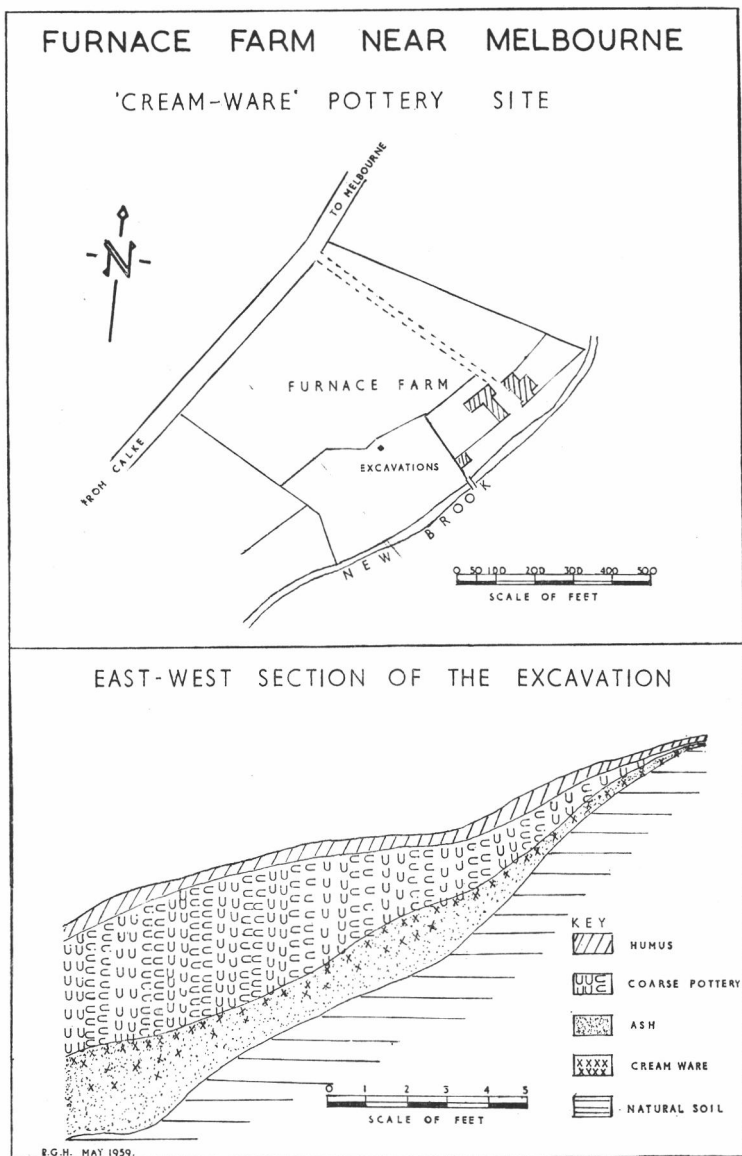


FIG. 10. Melbourne Pottery. Site and section.

it sloped (See section drawings, Fig. 10). The fragments of cream-ware were entirely confined to a thin sparsely filled band, never more than 4 to 6 ins. wide, and sloping steeply from a mere 2 or 3 ins. below the present ground level at the north-western end to over 3 ft. below at the river or south-eastern end. The cream-ware was found in an area approximately 20 ft. square (See sketch plan, Fig. 10). In the lower half of this area the cream-ware fragments were overlaid by many hundredweights of large coarse earthenware saggers and other kiln furniture as well as quantities of brown glazed earthenware pots, handled jars, etc. commonly used in farm and cottage in the 18th and 19th centuries. A small amount of brown salt-glaze ware comprising parts of jugs, posset pots, bowls, etc. similar in appearance to Belper or Brampton ware was also taken from the bed overlying the cream-ware. Partially intermixed with the cream-ware was a quantity of ashes, with a little charcoal and many lumps of white clay in its natural state.

Unfortunately not a single whole piece of any sort was uncovered; in most cases the fragments were very small and had little or no value for identification purposes. Nevertheless a sufficient number of sizeable pieces was taken out to be able to recognize with some certainty the kinds of ware made during the lifetime of this pottery (Figs. 11, 12). These included cups and saucers, teapots (and perhaps coffeepots), bowls or sucriers, dinner plates, sauce-boats and possibly vases of the simpler cylindrical shapes. The vast majority of fragments were unglazed and this would seem to establish that we have here a waster site alongside the kiln itself. The pieces had obviously been deliberately broken and not merely thrown on one side. Most of the fragments were of a fine texture and remarkable thinness; these qualities were too constant a factor to be explained as a cause of the pieces becoming wasters. There were no painted or transfer-printed fragments and all the decorated pieces had been made in moulds. The glazed pieces numbered hardly more than 2 per cent of the total and were uniformly of a pale cream colour. One cup (portion of) was of white salt-glaze ware of a fine quality and seems to indicate

that a certain amount of this ware was made as well as the cream-coloured. The question inevitably presents itself as to how this small country pottery works came to make cream-coloured earthenware, for this type of pottery was always a high class ware both technically and socially. It was never a country cottage and farmhouse ware and as far as is known was made only in a relatively few works throughout Britain and bought by the wealthier classes, at least during the second half of the 18th century. The variety of pieces made here indicates a capital outlay far beyond what might be considered possible for the owner of such a small factory; the entire output seems to have been made from moulds. This gives us a possible clue to an explanation, for in 1779 John Heath, the proprietor of the Cockpit Hill Potworks in Derby, went bankrupt and the pottery was closed. The whole of the stock in trade was sold and, although the auction advertisements announcing the sale mention only wares and not equipment or plant, it is possible that such things as moulds were to be purchased very cheaply. Perhaps it is not unreasonable to suppose that the owner of the Melbourne pottery thought he might succeed to some of the trade and profits hitherto accruing to the Derby Potworks. It should be remembered that it was the financier proprietor John Heath who went bankrupt, not the Potworks. It may well have been also that one or two of the Derby workmen were taken on at Melbourne. It is however possible that the Melbourne pottery did not get its equipment and workmen from Derby Potworks but from the china works on Nottingham Road, where a new section was set up in July 1798 but abandoned as unsuccessful 18 months later. Whatever the explanation it seems fairly certain that the pottery did not last very long and that all painted or transfer-printed decoration was carried out elsewhere. It will prove interesting to compare the moulded decorations found on the fragments with pieces of cream-ware in museums and private collections. Already has been noted a section of a dinner plate identical in decoration and size with one specimen in Derby Museum and one in Stoke Museum, each ascribed to the Leeds factory.

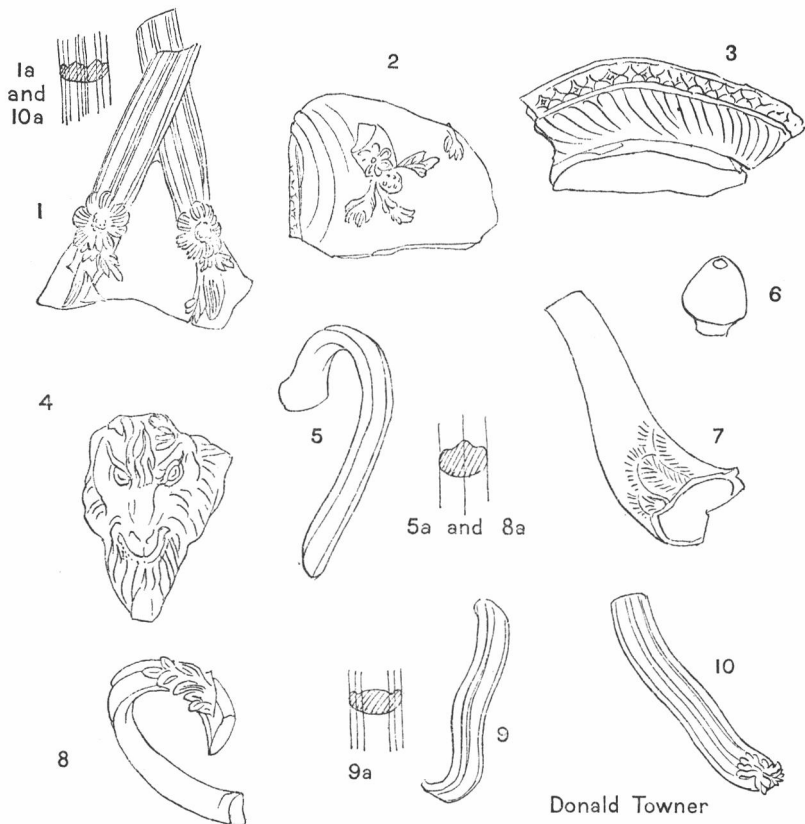
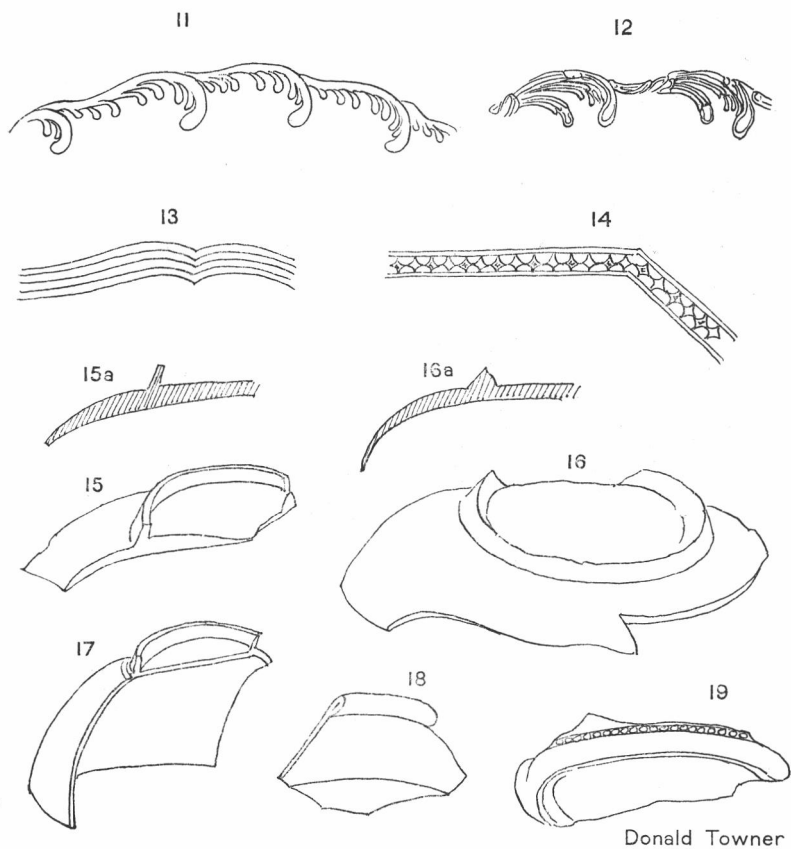


FIG. 11. Cream-ware Pieces from Melbourne Pottery.

- 1 Double intertwined handle and terminals (probably peculiar to this factory).
- 1a Section of 1.
- 2 Terminal to handle of sauce-boat.
- 3 Base of sauce-boat.
- 4 Goat's head "snip" to jug or coffee-pot.
- 5 Loop handle with central spine (probably peculiar to this factory).
- 5a Section through 5.
- 6 Pierced teapot knob.
- 7 Teapot spout.
- 8 Similar to 5 but with remains of terminal.
- 9 Indented curve handle.
- 10 Similar moulding to 1 but with part of a different terminal.



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FIG. 12. Cream-ware Pieces from Melbourne Pottery.

- 11 "Feather" edging to plate.
- 12 Moulded plate border.
- 13 " "
- 14 " "
- 15 Inverted piece of bowl showing foot-ring.
- 16 " " " " "
- 16a " " " " "
- 17 Inverted saltglaze cup.
- 18 Part of small vessel with flat base.
- 19 Base of mug showing "pearl" beading.