

NOTES

¹ Excavations funded by the Ancient Monuments Branch of the Welsh Office and the Manpower Services Commission. Report forthcoming.

² Context numbers from the site archive are shown in brackets.

³ Radiocarbon date supplied by Dr P. Q. Dresser, Department of Plant Science, University College, Cardiff. CAR-565, 480 ± 55 b.p., c. a.d. 1470. Dr Dresser notes that using calibration data given in R. M. Clark, 'A Calibration Curve for Radiocarbon Dates', *Antiquity*, 49 (1975), 251-66, provides a mean date of A.D. 1428, with a +2 sigma value of A.D. 1380, and a -2 sigma value of A.D. 1485. This is close to the recalibration derived from data published more recently in M. Stuiver, 'High Precision Calibration of the AD Radiocarbon Time Scale', *Radiocarbon*, 24, no. 1 (1982), 1-26, which provides a mean date of A.D. 1430, a +1 sigma value of A.D. 1410 and a -1 sigma value of A.D. 1445.

⁴ The dated sample, no. C135 was not itself identified, but a further charcoal sample, C157, from the same layer (3818), was examined by Mr Graham Morgan, Department of Archaeology, University of Leicester. It consisted of hazel, oak, ash and hawthorn, which are estimated to have been 15 to 25 years old. A fuller report on these identifications is housed with the site archive.

⁵ Department of Archaeology, University of Cambridge, and Department of Archaeology, University College, Cardiff, respectively.

⁶ A full species list is housed with the site archive. Thirty-one cereal grains and one rachis internode were recovered from the two litres of soil floated.

⁷ See footnote 4.

⁸ Cf. M. A. Monk, 'Post-Roman Drying Kilns and the Problem of Function: a Preliminary Statement', 216-30 in D. Ó Corráin (ed.), *Irish Antiquity* (Cork, 1983).

⁹ The Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff.

¹⁰ Cf. E. Wiliam, *Melin Bompren Corn Mill* (The National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, 1977).

¹¹ F. S. Price, *History of Llansawel* (1898).

¹² Edward Lhuyd's correspondent for Llanboidy in 1696 noted it thus: '*marchpren odyn*: a kil beam' (F. V. Emery, 'A new reply to Lhuyd's *Queries* (1696): Llanboidy, Carmarthenshire', *Archaeol. Cambrensis*, 124 (1975), 105), while D. Parry Jones (*My Own Folk* (1972), 20), from the same general area, describes it as 'across the middle of this was placed a pole (called the *March*) on which rested the ends of the stakes . . .'

¹³ E.g. G. Beresford, 'Three Deserted Medieval Settlements on Dartmoor', *Medieval Archaeol.*, 23 (1979), 140-42; E. E. Evans, *Irish Folkways* (London, 1957), 121-23.

¹⁴ The material has been examined by Mr Jeremy Knight, Ancient Monuments Branch, Welsh Office, and will be considered in greater detail in the publication of the remainder of the site.

¹⁵ The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, 7a Church Street, Welshpool, Powys. Prepared with assistance from Jenny Britnell.

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LATE MEDIEVAL POTTERY PLANT-HOLDERS FROM EASTERN YORKSHIRE (Figs. 8-10; Pl. xvii)

This note describes and discusses four late medieval pottery plant-holders from eastern Yorkshire.

Descriptions

Beverley (Fig. 8, no. 1). The Beverley vessel came from excavations in Dyer Lane in 1982, where several sherds from the upper part of a large open-mouthed vessel were recovered from late medieval garden soil to the rear of a medieval tenement fronting Walkergate.¹

The fabric of the Beverley vessel is fine and sandy with the surface dull pink where unglazed. The core is oxidized on the lower part but reduced to a uniform dark grey colour in the bowl. Internally the bowl is glazed a glossy deep khaki green and covered externally with a glossy deep purple glaze. The vessel is made in two parts. The bowl was thrown separately and then luted on to the lower part while this was still on the wheel. The junction between the two parts has been blended together and is only evident where sherds have broken along it. As it was necessary to form the pot in two parts, it is possible that the lower part was considerably deeper than as reconstructed. Four equally spaced handles, of which the scars of two survive, divide the pot into zones. Between the handles lay apparently repeated applied faces flanked on either side by punched bosses. The only surviving face is hand moulded with a pinched nose and cheeks which are smoothed into the body of the pot. The eyes are formed by the same implement which made the depressions in the flanking bosses. The mouth is a single horizontal incised line beneath the nose and the hairs on the free-standing beard are made by similar vertical parallel

incisions. At least three bands of incised wavy line decoration were made either side of and below the face after the four handles had been applied, while the unevenly applied horizontal strip on the midriff goes all the way round and must have been applied before the handles. Thus the sequence of manufacture is evident: the two parts were thrown separately; the base of the upper part was removed and the remaining bowl luted to the lower pedestal while it was still on the wheel; the horizontal strip was then applied around the junction, forming a dual role as an additional strengthener to the join and as a decorative feature; the four handles were then applied by smoothing them on to the surface of the pot (no rivet, as might be expected in a vessel of this size, was present in the only complete handle scar); the faces and supporting bosses were then moulded; and finally the horizontal incised wavy line decoration was made. As already stated the reconstruction of the lower part is far from certain. Whatever the true profile and depth, its function as a plant-holder (see below) would suggest a central hole in the base and a series of smaller holes piercing the base and lower walls, allowing the soil to breathe as in modern plant pots. The reconstruction is based on a series of mid 17th-century urn-shaped plant-holders from Basing House, Hampshire (Pl. xvii).²

Hull (Fig. 8, no. 2). The second vessel was recovered from excavations carried out in 1964 when a section was cut across the assumed line of the medieval town wall along Humber Street.³ This revealed a series of 16th- and 17th-century rubbish deposits cut into by a late 17th-century interval tower. The vessel, originally interpreted as a firecover,⁴ came from the 17th-century deposits, although its fabric and character would suggest a late medieval origin. Significantly a map of Hull drawn probably in 1538/39 shows that the 1964 excavations lay across garden plots laid out along the back of the town wall.⁵

The vessel is represented by two joining sherds forming about quarter of the circumference of an inward-sloping straight-sided bowl. The fabric and its colour is identical to the Beverley vessel, even down to the grey reduced core to the upper half of the surviving profile. Externally the pot is covered with a glossy slightly streaky khaki-green and light brown glaze, and covered internally with a patchy glossy speckled olive green glaze below the rim. A single scar from the top of a vertical handle survives; the reconstruction shows at least two handles. Sufficient survives to show that the raised edges and a central raised ridge down the back of the handle were decorated with lightly pressed triple-pronged combing. The edge of the rim is thumbed horizontally to give a pie-crust effect, as on the Beverley vessel. Sufficient survives to show that the lower horizontal fracture was the junction between a two-part vessel. An applied overlapping thumbed strip masking the join has broken away leaving only its scar. Different decorative motifs appear either side of the handle. To the left a fragmentary horizontal thumbed applied strip has a single vertical incision within each depression. This is flanked above and below by a broad six-pronged incised wavy line. To the right of the handle a well-executed vertical strip has triple-pronged combed incisions along the top with single deep incisions to the right. This appears to be the boundary of a panelled area to the right containing a cut-out near the rim, deep ring-and-dot stamps on the lower part and the scar of an indeterminate applied (?) strip. The surviving evidence suggests an identical method and sequence of manufacture and decoration to that of the Beverley vessel. No reconstruction is attempted but it is assumed that the form was similar to those suggested for the Beverley and the first York vessels (no. 3). A pedestal base is suggested by the curvature of the lower part of the interior of the bowl. The vessel is a waster, or more correctly a second, for the fracture between the cut-out and the rim is covered with glaze.

York (Fig. 9, nos. 3 and 4). The remaining two vessels were found in the same pit fill during the excavation of the site of the Bedern, the residence of the Vicar's Choral in York. The pit, containing mainly broken roofing tiles, formed part of a garden plot which may have formed part of the Bedern complex.⁶

The third vessel survives as ten sherds forming three large but separate pieces. The fabric is similar to nos. 1 and 2, a fine sandy fabric with a dark grey reduced core and light grey well-defined inner and outer margins, the surfaces coloured a light salmon pink where unglazed. The surviving sherds are covered all over internally with a glossy light khaki-green glaze above the angle between the bowl and pedestal, and externally all over with a glossy mottled greeny-brown glaze. Only one handle survives, giving no indication of the original number; at least two have been reconstructed in the drawing. The broad strap, deeply thumbed either side at the top as with nos. 1 and 2, has three deep grooves down the back and is the most complete handle from all four vessels. Like nos. 1 and 2 the vessel is clearly made in two parts. The body has fractured along the junction, showing that the top of the lower part had a raised ledge on the inside. The thrown triangular-sectioned rim appears to have had a piece added to the sloping outer edge, where regular fingernail impressions have apparently formed a bond for the fillet forming the outer rim profile (as reconstructed). A fragmentary surviving piece shows that the complete

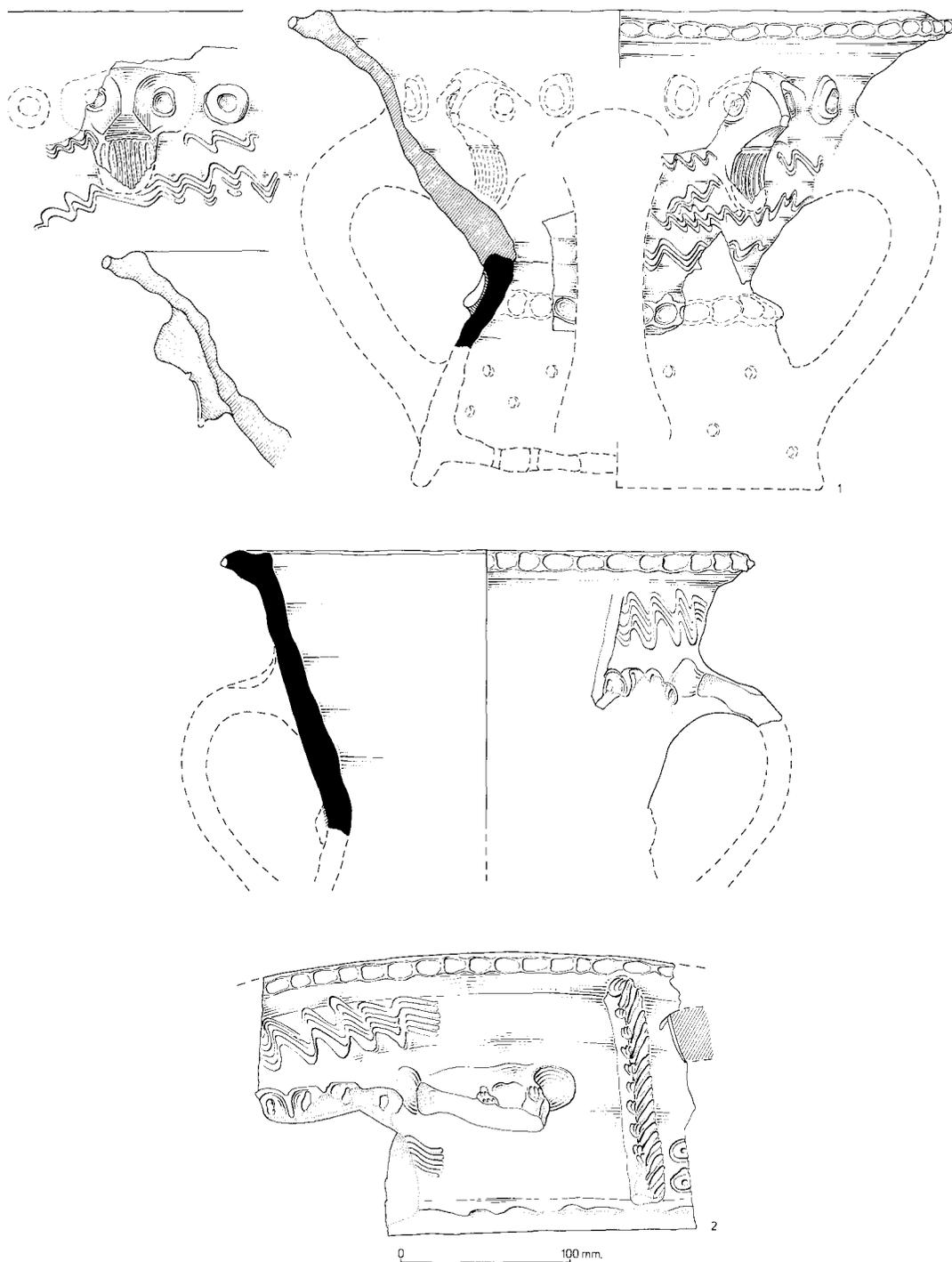


FIG. 8

Late medieval pottery plant-holders from Beverley (no. 1) and Hull (no. 2). Scale 1:4

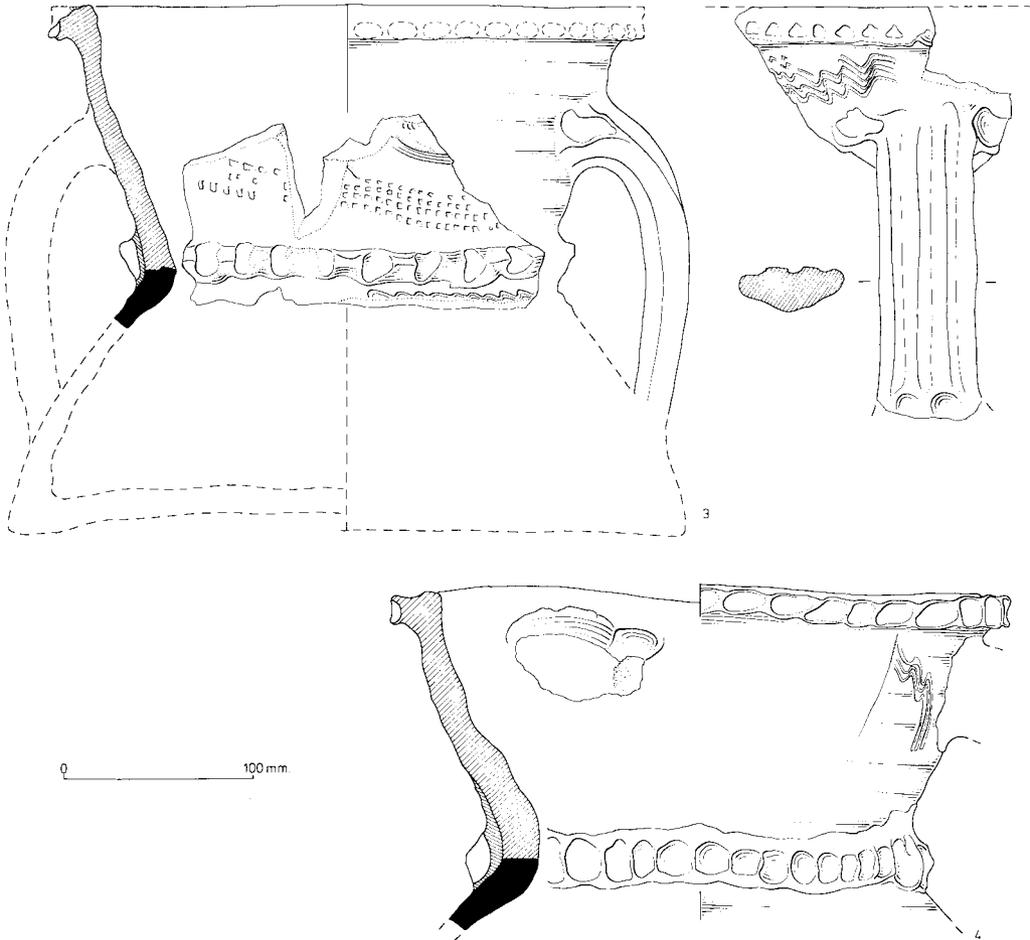


FIG. 9

Late medieval pottery plant-holders from York (nos. 3 and 4). Scale 1:4

rim had thumb impressions as on the other three vessels. As on nos. 1 and 2, the junction between both parts of the vessel is obscured by a dual functional and decorative strip applied around the midriff before the handles were secured. The section is regular in profile, the lower part has been heavily, but neatly, smoothed into the body and deep thumb impressions neatly executed along the front. The larger of the two body pieces (drawn) has a broad rouletted design of four rows of square notches, together with part of a large raised (?) boss with what appears to be a stabbed impression of at least three prongs on its flaked surface. At least two lines of an incised wavy line decoration appear below the applied midriff strip. The combing does not appear to go all the way round for it is not present on the second body piece (not illustrated) which has more of the pedestal wall surviving.

The second York vessel (Fig. 9, no. 4) survives as thirteen joining sherds forming about three-quarters of the circumference of the profile as drawn. The fabric is coarse and sandy with small irregular calcareous inclusions, reduced to a uniform grey. Unglazed surfaces and the fabric interior below the midriff are oxidized dull pink. It is covered all over internally with a glossy dark khaki-green glaze and externally in a glossy deep purple glaze with khaki-green streaks. The crudely applied complete upper stubs of two handles survive, and the side scar of a third, showing that the vessel had three handles when complete. The only body decoration is in the form of a four-pronged incised wavy line, between two of

the handles; it is possible that this forms part of a more elaborate design on pieces which have not survived. Although badly abraded around most of the surviving circumference, the edge of the rim appears to be only partially covered in oblique side-of-thumb impressions. The midrift is surrounded with a heavy crudely executed deeply thumbed strip, applied before the handles. Unlike the other three examples, the two-part construction is not as clear on this vessel. The applied midrift strip, similar surface treatment just below the narrow waste of the pedestal (as on the other three vessels) and the fact that the only evidence for two-part construction is that two of the sherds have fractured along the join suggest that no. 4 was also made in two parts and has been shown as such on the drawing. In contrast to the other three vessels this one is extremely crudely made. The bowl is badly distorted and is almost oval in plan, with the result that the profile varies around the circumference; an average between the two extremes has been shown in the drawing.

Source and dating (Fig. 10)

Apart from being made in the Humber ware tradition, all four vessels have a number of similarities: fabric, colouring, glaze, decorative style and the method of sequence of manufacture. Although each is different in detail, particularly in the decorative motifs, the first three are sufficiently similar to suggest that they come from the same centre, if not from the hands of the same potter. Many of the characteristics of nos. 1–3 are found in the Cowick products and it is likely that they were made there (Fig. 10). Although no. 4 has similarities with the other three vessels the fabric is coarser, with larger sand grains and calcareous inclusions, and the quality of the potting is not as high, giving the vessel a much cruder appearance. Another Humber ware centre may be suggested, and possibly a slightly later date.

None of the vessels was found in an independently dated deposit. The Beverley vessel came from a general late medieval garden deposit, the Hull vessel from 17th-century rubbish deposits over late medieval garden plots, while the two York vessels were associated with pottery dating generally to the first half of the 16th century. As it seems likely that nos. 1–3 were made by the same workshop, and if by the same potter within 15 to 20 years of their working life, then their date of manufacture must lie earlier than the earliest deposit in which

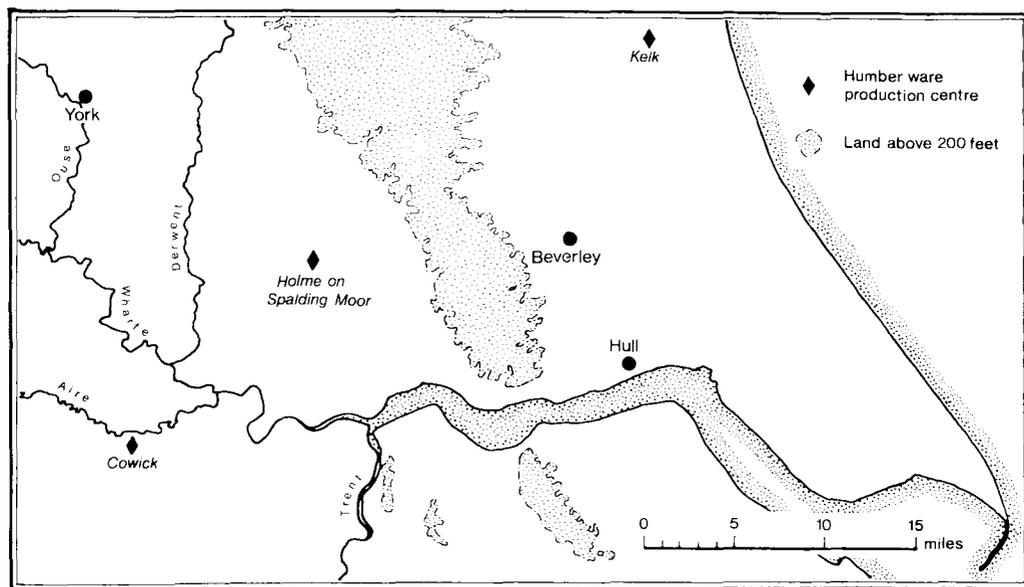


FIG. 10

Distribution of later medieval pottery plant-holders (circles) and known Humber ware production centres

they were found. Applying dates to the various stages in the development of Humber ware is at present hazardous. On present evidence a late medieval date for the vessels seems likely. Their occurrence in much later deposits could be explained by the redistribution of rubbish or the fact that, as ornamental vessels (see below), they had a long life.

Function

The surviving pieces from all four vessels show that they had not been sooted, heated or abraded in any way, yet their form and ornamentation suggests that they were both functional and decorative. Similarity to post-medieval forms suggests that the most likely use was as an ornamental plant-holder. Surviving ceramic garden furniture is not common before the 18th century, but a large collection of plant-holders of mid 17th-century date comes from Basing House (Hampshire). Two types are present (Pl. xvii), one cylindrical with corrugated sides, sometimes surmounting a flat collar-type base, and the other a classic urn shape, with a rounded hooked rim and a hemispherical bowl surmounting a deep footing.⁷ Some of the latter bear the motto and heraldic devise of the Paulet family, of whom Sir William Paulet built the house and laid out its extensive gardens during the period 1531–c. 1550. Originally thought to belong to this construction phase, it is now believed that the garden furniture belongs to the remodelling of the site and its gardens shortly after the capitulation of the house in 1645.⁸ The urn-shaped vessels from Basing have formed the basis for reconstructing the Beverley (no. 1) and York (no. 3) examples.

Discussion

Documentary evidence for gardens of various types in the Middle Ages shows that they were owned and worked by all classes of society in both towns and the countryside.⁹ While the style and function of gardens differed between social groups the common denominator was the growing of herbs and vegetables. The gardens of the wealthy would also have provided pleasure and entertainment, with ornamental features ranging from water fountains to summer houses. Pleasure gardens were often divided into separate areas by hedges or trellis work. The emphasis was on seclusion and beauty, with fragrant flowers, raised flower beds, built-in bench seats and paved walks. While they were not as lavish, gardens for both pleasure and produce were also enjoyed lower down the social scale by the seignorial classes and even by the wealthier freemen. Most of the ordinary tenants would have worked a kitchen garden attached either physically or tenurially to their holding, where they grew herbs and vegetables.

The importance of medieval gardens is reflected also in horticultural treatises¹⁰ and the much larger number of herbals.¹¹ The craft name 'le gardener' and other more specialized horticultural-type craft names are frequently recorded in medieval documents, particularly in those referring to rural areas.¹² Manuscript illustrations provide a much more vivid impression of the gardens of the wealthy than can ever be gained from the written sources, and in these garden furniture is occasionally seen.¹³

The humble ceramic watering-pot perhaps best reflects the popularity of gardens at all social levels, being referred to in documents and depicted in manuscript illustrations.¹⁴ Two pottery forms were produced during the Middle Ages.¹⁵ They have been found on many different types of site, including monastic houses,¹⁶ castles¹⁷ and urban tenements,¹⁸ complementing the documentary evidence for who worked gardens and where they were sited. The improvisation of the medieval mind is demonstrated by a further type of 'watering-pot' described by Friar Henry Daniel in his plant descriptions written c. 1375. When describing the growing of the Bottle Gourd he suggests that they can be watered by placing a feather in a small hole pierced in the base of an earthen pot which has been suspended over the gourd on a 'crooked stick'.¹⁹

Very few remains of medieval gardens have been recognized, for two principal reasons. Firstly, the more common kitchen or herb garden would leave little trace once abandoned and grassed over. Secondly, ornamental gardens would have been kept fashionable as long as

the house to which they were attached was occupied. Apart from formal pleasure gardens within abandoned manorial complexes and as part of monastic precincts, by far the most numerous type of abandoned garden is to be found on the hundreds of deserted medieval settlements. There is sufficient documentary evidence to suggest that detached enclosures in which a number of tenants held cultivated plots in severalty, in the same way as modern allotments are run, were common.²⁰ Recent fieldwork by investigators with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) has identified late medieval formal gardens in the eastern Midlands.²¹ In keeping with other new fieldwork discoveries, it will only be a matter of time before they are a commonly recognized feature of the medieval countryside. Even peasant gardens contained structures which could be as substantial as a large barn.²² It seems likely that some of these served the same function as modern garden sheds, containing the equipment used in the garden — including earthen pots. Few garden structures have been excavated. Indeed, the apparent rarity of medieval garden furniture, in contrast to the abundant documentary evidence for its existence,²³ is probably partly due to archaeological attention being focused on the buildings to which the gardens were attached. This, happily, is changing for over the past few decades a growing number of gardens associated with the houses of all ranks of society have been excavated.²⁴ As garden furniture is likely to be found within the gardens in which it was used, their excavation is likely to add considerably to our knowledge of medieval horticultural wares.

Pottery horticultural equipment was both functional and decorative. The documents record their many uses in the medieval garden. These include: watering garden produce; preserving a wide range of fruits; growing plants in; as animal traps; and as purpose-made bee-hives.²⁵ While some of these uses almost certainly involved the ubiquitous and multi-functional 'cooking-pot' form, others, such as the bee-hive and ornamental plant-holder, were specially made. Despite the documentary evidence, the four plant-holders form part of a very small group of pottery garden furniture known from the British Isles.²⁶ Although ornamental pottery garden furniture has not yet been noticed in the documentary evidence it is likely that many, if not most, pleasure gardens would have contained at least one ceramic plant-holder, as suggested by late medieval illustrations. Even if most of these were the ordinary 'cooking-pot' with pierced sides, these four vessels show that ornamental ones were specially made. While some vessels almost certainly lie awaiting proper identification in museum and other collections, their rarity is rather more apparent than real and is almost certainly caused by the lack of archaeological attention which has been paid to gardens in the past. It is more than coincidence that all four vessels are associated with gardens in medieval towns, complimenting the well documented existence of ornamental gardens in the medieval urban landscape.

Postscript

Since this note was completed a further eight plant-holders have been identified, seven of them in Humber ware, and a suggested source at Cowick has been confirmed. A nearly complete three-handled bowl from a plant-holder has come from 16th-century garden deposits at Coppergate (York). This vessel, the most complete one known, has all the characteristics of the known Humber ware pots. A neatly executed small face has been applied below the rim surrounded by incised combed wavy lines and set within an inverted horse-shoe shaped applied thumbed strip — perhaps a very debased characterisation of the medieval green man of folklore legends. Decoration is restricted to between one pair of handles, suggesting that the decorative reconstruction around the more fragmentary Beverley vessel (no. 1) may be incorrect.

Six vessels have been identified from the production site at Cowick, located on Fig. 10. One large piece from a bowl has come from a large collection of waster and domestic material dredged from Cowick Moat.²⁷ Fragments have been identified from five vessels amongst the large quantity of Cowick kiln material in Doncaster Museum, from the series of superimposed kilns excavated there by P. Mayes in 1964. Four are from rims and bowls, while the

fifth is the only known base from a plant holder. Two joining sherds come from a crude pedestal base 230 mm in diameter with the remains of a hole of unknown diameter 70 mm from the bottom. Most of the underside has been deliberately cut away leaving a ledge of 20 mm remaining attached to the base angle. Unfortunately no other sherds of this vessel survived. Form, manufacturing technique and style of decoration suggest that Cowick is the source of all the Humber ware plant holders so far identified.

A non-Humber ware plant holder has also been recognised. This comes from Thornholme Priory in northern Lincolnshire from a mid 14th-century deposit.²⁸ The vessel, in a local N. Lincolnshire medium sandy fabric, is different in form to the Humber ware pots. It is essentially a large bowl form, with straight sloping sides, flat base and a basket handle with human face terminals on the rim.²⁹

STEPHEN MOORHOUSE

NOTES

¹ The excavations were financed by Manpower Services Commission and directed by Peter Armstrong, to whom I am grateful for permission to publish the vessel in advance of his own report. I am also grateful to Gareth Watkins for making sure that all sherds had been identified from the excavated material.

² P. C. D. Brears, 'The horticultural wares', in S. Moorhouse, 'Finds from Basing House, Hampshire (c. 1540-1645): Part One', *Post-Medieval Archaeol.*, 4 (1970), 87, 89-90.

³ From excavations under the direction of John Bartlett; see J. Bartlett, 'The medieval walls of Hull', *Kingston Upon Hull Museums Bulletin*, 3 and 4 (1969-70, revised 1971), 3-6. The vessel is amongst the finds from the excavations in Hull Museum, acc. no. 40:64:31.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁵ G. De. Boer, 'The two earliest maps of Hull', *Post-Medieval Archaeol.*, 7 (1973), pl. X.

⁶ From excavations carried out for the York Archaeological Trust, acc. no. 77.13.5211. I am grateful to Miss C. M. Brooks for showing me the two vessels and for providing details about the finds, and to P. V. Addyman for permission to publish the vessels here in advance of the Trust's own publication.

⁷ Brears, *op. cit.* in note 2, 89 fig. 27, nos. 1-7.

⁸ I am grateful to R. T. Schadla-Hall for this information, the result of work which K. J. Barton and he have carried out on the site in recent years.

⁹ J. Harvey, *Medieval Gardens* (London, 1981); T. McLcan, *Medieval English Gardens* (London, 1981).

¹⁰ Harvey, *op. cit.* in note 9, 21-22, 115, 118-19.

¹¹ For extant Middle English herbals see R. H. Robbins, 'Medical manuscripts in Middle English', *Speculum*, 45 (1970), 401-02.

¹² B. Thuresson, *Middle English Occupational Terms*, Lund Stud. Engl., 19 (Lund, 1950), 42-44.

¹³ For example Harvey, *op. cit.* in note 9, pls. VIIb, 6, 16, 23, 56, 63, 66, 71, 74.

¹⁴ S. Moorhouse, 'Documentary evidence for the uses of medieval pottery: an interim statement', *Medieval Ceramics*, 2 (1978), 9-10.

¹⁵ G. Gwilt, [notes on medieval watering pots], *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 5 (1850), 343-46; E. Roberts, 'On watering pots', *J. Brit. Archaeol. Assoc.*, 30 (1874), 181-91; R. Quirk, 'Old English watering pots', *Reliquary and Illustrated Archaeol.*, new ser. 6 (1900), 198-200.

¹⁶ For example from Finchale Priory, County Durham (M. G. Jarrett and B. J. N. Edwards, 'Medieval and other pottery from Finchale Priory, County Durham', *Archaeol. Aeliana*, 4th ser. 39 (1961), 277 no. 127).

¹⁷ For example from Bramber Castle, West Sussex (K. J. Barton, *Medieval Sussex Pottery* (Chichester, 1979), 132, no. 26) and Sandal Castle, West Yorkshire (S. Moorhouse, 'The medieval pottery', in P. Mayes and L. A. S. Butler, *Sandal Castle Excavations 1964-1973* (Wakefield, 1983), 166 fig. 58 no. 676).

¹⁸ For example from Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear (M. G. Jarrett and B. J. N. Edwards, 'Medieval pottery in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne', *Archaeol. Aeliana*, 4th ser. 41 (1963), 95 no. 37) and London (P. Norman and F. W. Reader, 'Recent discoveries in connexion with Roman London', *Archaeol.*, 60 (1906), pl. XXVIII, nos. 12-14).

¹⁹ Harvey, *op. cit.* in note 9, 160.

²⁰ S. Moorhouse, 'The rural medieval landscape', in M. L. Faull and S. Moorhouse (eds.), *West Yorkshire: An Archaeological Survey to A.D. 1500* (Wakefield, 1981), 822-26.

²¹ C. Taylor, *The Archaeology of Gardens*, Shire Archaeology no. 30 (London, 1983), 33-40, and information from C. Dunn.

²² Moorhouse, *op. cit.* in note 20, 825.

²³ Medieval pottery garden furniture is to be discussed in S. Moorhouse, 'Documentary evidence for the uses of medieval pottery and its archaeological implications', Ph.D. thesis in preparation.

²⁴ For the growing awareness of gardens as archaeological features see the five-year accumulative indexes for *Medieval Archaeol.* covering volumes 11-15 (1967-71), 16-20 (1972-76) and 21-25 (1977-81) under 'gardens'. Most mentions occur in the 'Medieval Britain' section recording current work. It is noticeable that no references to archaeological work on medieval gardens is made in the first ten volumes (1957-66).

²⁵ Moorhouse, *op. cit.* in note 23.

²⁶ For late medieval plant-holders in the Netherlands see H. Janssen, 'Later medieval pottery production in the Netherlands', in P. Davey and R. Hodges (eds.), *Ceramics and Trade: The Production and Distribution of Later Medieval Pottery in North-West Europe* (Sheffield, 1983), 136, 157, 167; J.G.N. Renaud, 'Bloempotten en tuinvazen', *Mededelingsblad (van de) Vrienden van de Nederlandse Ceramiek*, 27 (1962), 1-7.

²⁷ C. Hayfield, 'Medieval pottery from north Lincolnshire', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Nottingham (1982), pl. 52, no. 12.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pl. 114, no. 15.

²⁹ The new plant pots will be published together as an appendix to the forthcoming report on the 1964 excavations at Cowick. I am grateful to Dr Ailsa Mainman for showing me the Coppergate vessel; to Dr C. Hayfield for showing me a draft copy of the Cowick kiln report and for loaning me a copy of his doctoral thesis on N. Lincolnshire medieval pottery, where the Cowick Moat and Thornholme Priory vessels are illustrated; and finally to Mr T. G. Manby for providing facilities to examine the large quantity of material from the Cowick kilns in Doncaster Museum.

THE WEST MIDLANDS POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

A group has been formed to study the medieval and post-medieval pottery of the West Midlands. Meetings will be held three times p.a. and it is hoped to publish a Newsletter and a bibliography, and to establish a library and a fabric series. Further information can be obtained from M. Rylatt and M. Stokes, c/o Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Jordan Well, Coventry, CV1 5RW.

THE WORKSHOP FOR ARCHAEOSTRATIGRAPHIC CLASSIFICATION

The first volume of an occasional review, *Stratigraphia Archaeologica* has been issued and can be obtained without charge from H. Gasche and Ö. Tunca, Editors-in-Charge, A.C.T. Workshop, Sint-Pietersplein 6, B-9000, Ghent, Belgium.

THE LANCASTER CONFERENCE 1984

The 27th Annual Conference of the Society was held in Lancaster from 13 to 16 April 1984 on the theme of 'Early Medieval Cumbria'. The opening lecture on Friday, 13 April was given by Rosemary Cramp under the title 'An introduction to early Cumbria' and the following lectures were held on Saturday: 'The end of Roman occupation in North-West England' (David Breeze), 'Some recently discovered early medieval sites' (Tom Clare), 'Early Christianity and fieldwork' (Deirdre O'Sullivan), 'Excavations at Dacre' (Roger Leech), 'Anglian and Viking sculpture in Cumbria' (Richard Bailey), 'The growth of Cumbrian towns' (Angus Winchester), 'Excavations in Carlisle' (Mike McCarthy), and 'The development of early medieval Carlisle' (Henry Summerson). The conference dinner was held in the evening.

The Sunday excursion visited Muncaster, Irton, Gosforth, St Bees and Dacre churches, the excavations at Dacre, and Dacre Castle (by kind permission of Mr and Mrs E. H. A. Stretton) under the guidance of Richard Bailey, Roger Leech, and Deirdre O'Sullivan. On Monday the members visited Penrith, Brougham castle, Carlisle and Bewcastle, the guides being Richard Bailey, Rosemary Cramp, Mike McCarthy and Rachel Newman.

The Society would like to express its thanks to the Department of Archaeology, University of Lancaster for kindly providing a reception for delegates on Friday evening and to the City of Carlisle for welcoming members to the city with a lunch-time sherry reception on Monday, 16 April. Mike McCarthy and Ross Trench-Jellicoe both helped with the organization of the conference and many thanks are due to them for its success.

HELEN CLARKE