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pots, and an elaborate Winchester-ware sherd. A date around the middle of the 11th century is likely for this latter group. As the street-system seems to have been laid out towards the end of the 9th century the sandy-ware vessel is probably in this case of 10th-century date.

MARTIN BIDDLE AND JOHN COLLIS

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2 Martin Biddle and Katherine Barclay, 'Winchester Ware', in Medieval Pottery from Excavations: Studies presented to Gerald Clough Dunning (London, 1974), 137–65.

3 Ibid., pl. v, t.

4 We should like to thank Dr D. P. S. Peacock for reporting on the sherd from Frederick Place, and S. A. Mackenna, for preparing the thin section. The drawings are the work of Nicholas Griffiths, Winchester Research Unit, and Eric Wayman. Miss Katherine Barclay read and commented on the text.

LOW COUNTRIES BLACKWARE

K. J. Barton has recently written on the blackwares of N. France. When this was read by continental scholars it seemed to cause confusion in three ways over the problems of terminology, distribution and production.

Terminology is the most difficult as an examination of the literature shows that what Barton calls blackware is termed grey or blue-grey in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. Here a further confusion arises over the use of blue-grey, for this type which is reserved in Germany for the earlier wares of Paffrath and other Rhenish centres. We think that this needs clarifying and that these terms should be defined and, if possible, a single name given to each type. Discussions are in progress between Belgian, Dutch, French and German colleagues and it is hoped to present a further note in a future volume of Medieval Archaeology. Throughout this note the term blackware is used without prejudice to a hoped for future agreement on a joint terminology.

On the matters of distribution and production STEFAN VANDENBERGHE of Mechelen (Malines) writes:

1) Distribution. Barton names a very few towns round Lille and then suddenly refers to Mechelen and Brussels. Between these centres there is a large area with important medieval towns where a great deal of blackware pottery is found. Why not mention Bruges, Ghent, Oudenaarde and Courtrai which provide better parallels to the French material? Indeed it is illogical to speak about blackware pottery from N. France when it covers a much wider area of distribution.

2) Production. In Belgium as far as I know no blackware kilns have been found in Ath, although their presence may be possible. At Mechelen too this is a little previous. There were medieval potters as is clear from the documentary evidence but no blackware kilns have been found there. In this connexion Barton refers to two jugs from Bedford published by Kennett, but these have no parallels at Mechelen. In any case Ath, Mechelen and Aardenburg were not the only pottery centres in the Low Countries. This has been confirmed for oxidized wares by the recent kiln discoveries at Haarlem, Utrecht and Bergen op Zoom. Also compared to the very important stoneware production centres at Siegburg, Langerwehe and Raeren, it is unlikely that there was a large export as these Low Countries kilns manufactured mainly kitchen utensils for the local market. If we want to progress in the study of blackware, then all the smaller and larger workshops between France and Denmark must be studied fully. This must occur in close association with the red oxidized pottery dating from the same period.
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FRANS VERHAEGHE of Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research, writes from Ghent:

1) **Distribution.** The area of Flanders, and the southern part of the Netherlands, must have had a large number of pottery kilns. The general characteristics of their products show them to be very closely related to the French pottery discussed by Barton as was indicated by the finds from the excavations at Lampernisse and their comparison with the Lille finds. It may very well be possible that the N. France area, with several important medieval towns, shows the same pattern. Most of these kilns were located in or near the towns. This is certain for Aardenburg, Bruges, Ghent and Mechelen, and very probable for towns like Antwerp, Ypres, Furnes (Veurne) and Nieuwpoort. These kilns probably worked for a more local market and, with time and a lot of work, it should be possible to determine the specific characteristics and the normal distribution area of each centre. There are certainly minor but detectable differences between the pottery of each centre, but it is clear that they all belong to what could be called one ceramic-province, which extends further N. than the map published by Barton suggests.

J. G. HURST writes:

1) **Distribution.** Barton should not be criticized for dealing with a limited group of blackware, since the text makes clear that this is only a sample he has dealt with as his other important *corpora* published in the last ten years. On the other hand it is reasonable comment that without a closer definition of terms it might be thought that the pottery described was the complete distribution of a type of reduced fabric which he calls blackware. Other continental scholars have asked me the same question. Finally I see no reason why Barton should not jump from France to Mechelen and Brussels if he thinks these provide better parallels than other nearer sites in S. Belgium.

2) **Production.** Vandenberghe says that there have not been any kilns found at Ath. This may be correct but there are quantities of blackware wasters from the town in a private collection. With regard to the supposed Mechelen blackware kilns I regret that I am responsible for the misunderstanding here. When I visited Mechelen in the early 1960s, with Professor Van De Walle, I thought that he showed me blackware kiln wasters in the museum. On my return I informed both Barton and Kennett of this so am responsible for their statements. I have since revisited the museum with Vandenberghe and he pointed out to me that the blackware pots, I thought were referred to by the museum label, were in fact normal occupation finds and that the kiln material was post-medieval on the other side of the label. This confusion was therefore partly due to an ambiguously placed museum label between two groups and my lack of knowledge of Flemish.

Nevertheless, in view of the presence of blackware in the town and the clear documentary evidence for medieval potters, I still consider it was quite reasonable in the 1960s to call these blackwares Malines ware in the same way that Trimpe Burger at the same time was calling the oxidized Flemish wares Aardenburg ware despite the lack of kiln evidence for highly decorated wares. It was the general type of the Bedford jugs I was referring to rather than the exact shape, which I agree is not closely paralleled at Mechelen. As it is now clear that blackwares were made in many centres, as were the oxidized wares which Verhaeghe suggests should be called highly decorated Flemish wares rather than Aardenburg, it might be preferable to call these reduced wares Low Countries blackware until we know more about the kiln sources and types. I fully agree that more work is required on these kilns and the distribution of both the oxidized and reduced wares in the area, but English scholars can hardly be blamed for lack of work on this important subject.

I agree also that these blackwares were not made for the international market as were the oxidized Flemish highly decorated wares and the Rhenish stonewares. In addition to the Bedford finds and a jug in the British Museum, there is only an odd cup in the Ipswich Museum which is hard to parallel and a few scattered finds up the E.
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coast of England. There may well be other unidentified jug sherds but the cooking pots are easier to identify because of their collared rims. Barton has done us a service here in England in drawing this type more formally to our attention so that they may be looked for further in English museum collections and excavations.

J. G. HURST, ST. VANDENBERGHE, F. VERHAEGHE

A CERAMIQUE ONCTUEUSE VESSEL FROM DOVER: A BRETON SOUVENIR? (FIGS. 5-6)

Professor P.-R. Giot’s recent study of the ceramique onctueuse of Brittany has drawn attention to an important medieval pottery industry which is characterized by its oily texture, its softness (Mohs scale: 1–2) and the talc inclusions in the fabric. Giot has shown that this very distinctive ware was made of clays located near outcrops of talc found in a small region of W. Finistere. As a result of Giot’s publication it became clear that a dish from Snargate Street, Dover, published as probably of Cornish origin in fact bears similarities to the ceramique onctueuse (FIG. 5). Dr G. C. Dunning’s conclusions on this pot in the report on the find were based largely on a petrological report by Dr P. A. Sabine which can be usefully reiterated here: “The brownish-red pottery is composed of abundant mineral fragments, some up to 5 mm. in length, set in a matrix of crypto-crystalline material. A high proportion of the larger fragments and a considerable number of the smaller ones are composed of fibrous masses of talc, the fragments being elongate in the direction of foliation. Monoclinic amphibole is present in idiomorphic grains and sheared fragments occasionally up to 2 mm. in length. Scarcely grains and wisps of goethite and grains of limonite are also found, whilst granules of opaque iron ore up to 0.3 mm. grain size are common. The matrix contains abundant small fragments of minerals, set in deep reddish-brown lowly birefringent material.” Dr D. P. S. Peacock has confirmed that these grains are microscopically identical to green serpentine which has been experimentally fired. Professor Giot made available samples of ceramique