

## XII.—A WANFRIED DISH FROM NEWCASTLE

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Bottom part\* of a dish in dull red-brown fine sandy fabric. Clear brown glaze inside with concentric circles of pale-green slip enclosing a horse, with floral decoration behind, in dark and pale-green slip outlined by sgraffito. The fragment is dated 1611.

This fabric and decoration in green slip and sgraffito is typical of wares made at Wanfried-an-der-Werra, a tributary of the Weser, in Hesse, now on the borders of West and East Germany. The dish has been restored with a hammer-headed rim typical of this type (Fig. 1).

Wanfried ware is the earliest slipware in north-west Europe and has a date range from c. 1575-1635 based on dated examples. The earliest date is 1584<sup>1</sup> but the most common dates fall between 1604 and 1632. The date is shown on either side of the decoration in the upper half of the design on the base.<sup>2</sup> The two vertical strips of slip above the horse's tail on the Newcastle dish clearly form the last part of 1611. There is a wide repertoire of decorative motifs ranging from anthropomorphic and animal designs to floral and geometric patterns. No exact parallel has so far been located for the Newcastle horse.

Wanfried ware was first identified at the beginning of

\* The part of a dish discussed in this note was found by Mr. R. A. S. Cowper during the clearance of the site of what is now the Pilgrim Street roundabout, Newcastle upon Tyne.

<sup>1</sup> In the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, cf. *Burlington Magazine*, XXXIII (1918), 190. There is also a fragment dated 1584 in the London Museum and one dated 1590 in the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge. cf. B. Rackham, *Catalogue of the Glaisher Collection of Pottery & Porcelain* (Cambridge, 1935), I, p. 234 no. 1852 and II, Pl. 138a.

<sup>2</sup> See complete dish in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, dated 1615, W. B. Honey, *European Ceramic Art* (London, 1949), pl. 121B.

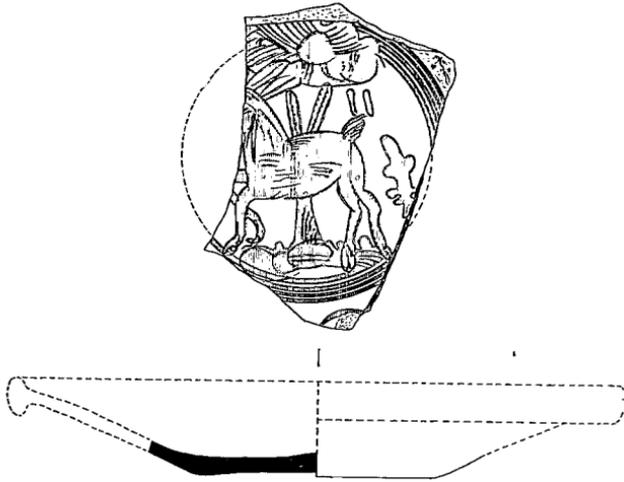


FIG. 1. A WANFRIED DISH FROM NEWCASTLE ( $\frac{1}{2}$ )

this century when many fragments were found in Wanfried with a date range from 1610-1627.<sup>3</sup> No work has been done since but the site is known and there are many fragments in the Städtisches Heimat Museum.<sup>4</sup> Wanfried ware was traded in large quantities down the Weser to Bremen where there are many examples in the Focke Museum.<sup>5</sup> The trade then extended along the Dutch coast to Leeuwarden<sup>6</sup> and Rotterdam which has the largest collection of fragments, many of large size, with a date range between 1604 and 1632.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> J. Bochlau, *Eine niederhessische Töpferei des 17. Jahrhunderts*, (Marburg, 1903); K. Schaefer, "Eine niederhessische Töpferei aus der Zeit der Renaissance", *Mitteilungen des Gewerbe-museums zu Bremen*, XIX (1904), 1-5, and K. Strauss *Alte Deutsche Kunsttöpfereien*, (Berlin, 1923), 56.

<sup>4</sup> I am greatly indebted to Mr. Ernst Holzapfel for showing me the site and the finds in the museum.

<sup>5</sup> E. Grohne, "Tongefässe in Bremen seit dem Mittelalter", *Jahresschrift des Focke-Museums Bremen*, (1940), 54.

<sup>6</sup> N. Ottema, "Het Aardewerk in de Noordelijke Nederlanden in Gebruik in het Laatske Kwart van de Zeistiende Eeuw", *Oude Kunst*, III (1918), 231-241.

<sup>7</sup> In the Boymans Van Beuningen Museum. I am greatly indebted to Miss B. R. M. De Neeve for allowing me to examine this material.

There are lesser finds from eight other sites in Holland<sup>8</sup> and the distribution extends south as far as Antwerp in Belgium and Lille and St. Omer in northern France. In England there are finds from twelve sites mostly in south-east England. Up the east coast there are finds at Norwich and Lincoln with a gap until this dish at Newcastle which greatly extends the distribution. Along the south coast finds extend to Southampton and Plymouth from which there is the largest group of Wanfried ware in England except for London.<sup>9</sup> This distribution, in which seven of the twelve find spots are found between Norwich<sup>10</sup> and Dover,<sup>11</sup> suggests that Wanfried ware was traded across from Holland, and then up and down the English coast. If it came direct from Bremen to Newcastle there should be far more finds in the north. The position seems to change in the second half of the seventeenth century when the pottery industry moved down to the middle Weser and made a much lighter pink ware.<sup>12</sup> This was also traded in large quantities to the Low Countries but of the nineteen English finds eight are north of the Humber.<sup>13</sup> It is dangerous to argue with such slight evidence since Weser slipware could have still come

<sup>8</sup> Aardenburg, Amsterdam, Bolsward, Delft, Groningen, Middleburg and Schokland.

<sup>9</sup> A. Oswald, "Hessian Ware" *Connoisseur*, CXXI (1948), 56.

<sup>10</sup> J. G. Hurst, "Excavations at St. Benedict's Gates Norwich, 1951 and 1953", *Norfolk Archaeol.* XXXI (1955), 68, where it was called Hesse ware, following Oswald *op. cit.* in note 9. For correction see J. G. Hurst "Excavations at Barn Road Norwich, 1954-1955", XXXIII (1963), 166 and for list of dated examples see J. G. Hurst in "Medieval and Later Pottery from Stockwell Street, Colchester", *Trans. Essex Archaeol. Soc.* 3rd series, I (1961), 45, but the actual bowl illustrated there is Weser ware so the pit group should be second half of the 17th century.

<sup>11</sup> D. C. Mynard, "A Group of Post-Medieval Pottery from Dover Castle", *Post-Med. Archaeol.*, III (1969), 42.

<sup>12</sup> J. G. Hurst, "The Post-Medieval Pottery" in B. Philp *Excavations at Faversham, 1965*, Res. Rep. Kent Archaeol. Res. Gp. Council, I (1968), 58 and Fig. 18, no. 155, and bowls from Colchester, *op. cit.* in note 9 and Dover *op. cit.* in note 11.

<sup>13</sup> For sherds from Newcastle see J. E. Parsons, "Post-Medieval Pottery" in B. Harbottle, "Excavations at the South Curtain wall of the Castle, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1960-61", *A.A.* 4, XLIV (1964), 136 and 138, no. 219, and J. E. Parsons, "Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery", in R. B. Harbottle, "Excavations at the Carmelite Friary, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1965 and 1967", *A.A.* 4, XLVI (1968), 212-3, no. 92; 215-7, no. 111 and 215, 218, no. 126.

into a single port and then been traded up and down the East coast. But, for what it is worth, the archaeological evidence suggests more direct trade, between Bremen or Holland and the north of England, in the late seventeenth century than in the first half. Finally Wanfried ware was also traded across to America and has been found at Jamestown in levels datable to the second quarter of the seventeenth century.<sup>14</sup> This was presumably coming from English ports.

<sup>14</sup> Information from Mr. I. Noël Hume.