

## EDITORIAL

After seven years as editor of Medieval Ceramics I am led to ask how far our original objectives have been achieved and how many will be handed on to our successors. There is no doubt that the contents of Medieval Ceramics have been far reaching both in geography and subject matter. We have had papers on sites as far removed as a Welsh hafod (1977), Elgin (1983), Hull (1978), Wissant (1981), St Denis (1981) and Qsar es-Seghir, Morocco (1979), regional syntheses dealing with N.W. England (1977), N. African bibliography (1978), Late Saxon Oxfordshire (1980), Palestine and Transjordan (1981), Early to Middle Saxon Northampton (1981) and the Low Countries (1983) and a welcome development of studies by historians or using documentary evidence (Dyer 1982; Moorhouse 1978; 1983). There has been a good spread of technological and methodological articles. Subjects such as classification (Stamford, 1977), quantification (1977), pottery descriptions (1979), cataloguing (1979), manufacture (1980), and production (1982) have all been dealt with and there has also been a number of studies of particular ware types, such as Red-painted pottery (1977), Stamford (1977), Italian polychrome (1978) Tudor Green (1979), Saintonge polychrome (1980) and Scarborough Ware (1982). Kiln sites at Carrickfergus (1979), Trans (1978) and experimental kilns at Norton Priory (1978) have been discussed. The use of 'scientific' methods to further ceramic studies has also been touched upon with papers on neutron activation analysis (1977), petrology (1980 - three separate contributions) and archaeomagnetism (1981). Three papers have attempted to deal with wider theoretical issues - technology, supply or demand? (1980), research strategies for S.E. England (1982) and general research theory (1983). In addition the last two issues have seen the major input of the Gerald Dunning lectures.

Despite this impressive record our successors have a good deal to make up for. We never achieved a satisfactory or consistent standard of either editing or printing quality. There were reasons for this, but the inadequacies are glaring. Our readers deserve better.

Even though after volume 1 summaries have been printed in French and German for all the main papers, only one contribution has been published in one of these languages (1978) and the bulk of the papers dealing with pottery outside these off-shore islands have been written by Anglo-Saxons (e.g. Hodges 1977; Whitehouse 1978; 1980; Pringle 1981). Medieval Ceramics has still to become a truly international journal.

We have also been offered, and published, a majority of papers dealing with the 'high medieval' period. Early material is only rarely included (e.g. Warner 1979) and the post-medieval period still suffers from an arbitrary and illogical ban, even when it is clear that pots, potters, potteries and pottery research problems occupy a continuum often extending from the medieval period to the 19th century. A change of policy to bring the Group into line with the Welsh MPRG would remedy this.

Finally, to be relevant to fellow workers Medieval Ceramics needs an up to date bibliography and good representative reviews. Too often the latter has been left until the last minute for one of us (R. A. H.) to write under great pressure, while the former still awaits the completion of the national bibliography. The provision of a Group Who's Who in Number 7 is an attempt to make the journal of more immediate use to members.

In wishing the new editors every good wish and success in improving on our efforts, I should like to thank Richard Hodges for all his hard work and support over the years and Ailsa Mainman for the enormous help she has provided in the production of this volume. Peter Davey, Department of Arts and Humanities, University of Liverpool.