

## Reviews

**J. R. Timby 'The Middle Saxon Pottery' in P. Andrews (ed) *Southampton Finds, Volume 1: The Coins and Pottery from Hamwic* Southampton City Museums 1988. ISBN 0 901723 12 6. Price £15.**

Southampton Finds, Volume 1 includes two major studies: a catalogue, description and discussion of the Saxon coin evidence from Southampton (p. 17–72), and a study of the Middle Saxon pottery recovered between 1946 and 1984 from the settlement of Hamwic, (p. 73–125). It is the latter which is the subject of this review.

Three pages of introduction which review previous studies, methodology and the nature of archaeological deposits, are followed by a description of the fabrics. One hundred and fourteen fabrics have been recognised and placed into more general fabric groups (organic, chalky, sandy etc.) designated by Roman numerals (Group I, II etc.). The relative importance of these groups at Hamwic is summarized in a table (Table 4) which gives absolute quantifications and percentages for weight, sherd count and EVEs. This is invaluable as it shows for the first time the proportion of imported pottery from Hamwic and allows (or will allow) comparison to be made with London, Ipswich, York etc. It is unfortunate that editorial control did not notice that there were two Group II categories and no Group III given in the table but it is clear from the following discussion of the fabrics that this is a simple error. It is also initially a little confusing to find that Group XII is discussed before Group IX in the text which follows. This is presumably because Group XII needs to be discussed with the local wares but perhaps re-numbering of the Groups might have been considered.

These quibbles apart, the discussion of Local and Other Coarsewares (p. 77–90) goes a long way towards redressing the imbalance between the attention received in the past by the imported and the local pottery. Each of the forty-seven local fabrics is described and, with the exception of Group VII, all fabric groups are illustrated. The imported wares (Group IX, p. 90–104) are dealt with in a similar way. Group IX is discussed according to its sixty-six fabrics; each is given its common name (e.g. Tating wares) where appropriate, and the equivalent 'class' number assigned by Richard Hodges in his earlier study of the imports (Hodges 1981). Most fabric types are illustrated. Several vessels which appeared in Hodges' book have been re-drawn and illustrated again here. This is helpful as the reader can assess the whole group including any new material recovered since Hodges' study. Some of Hodges' thirty classes of imported material have been split (for example Class 14 is now covered by Timby's Fabrics 130–139) and a number of new types have been recognised. The discussion of each fabric includes such information as coin associations, previous research on provenance — both by Hodges and subsequent researchers — and parallels from other Middle Saxon sites. Timby states that her classification relies heavily on Hodges' work and that it is beyond the scope of her report to appraise Hodges' definitions (p. 74), and indeed there is little by way of a review of his provenances or conclusions. While this is disappointing, it is also understandable. With one or two notable exceptions, there are still few well stratified, well dated and well researched groups of contemporary pottery in key areas of northern France, the Low Countries and Germany with which to make

meaningful comparisons. Studies of the Middle Saxon pottery from London, Ipswich and York confirm the picture revealed by the Southampton assemblage — that these sites were receiving pottery from a wide range of sources. Defining these sources, except very broadly, is a daunting task.

The last part of Jane Timby's report includes sections on Technology (p. 104–109), the Organisation of Production (p. 109–110) and Chronology (p. 111–116). The latter attempts to establish a chronology by looking at the trends in pottery fabrics by analysis of the pit assemblages. This is done with some success and will be a useful benchmark for future studies in the region. The final section, the Distribution of Wares in Hamwic (p. 116–120), includes diagrams showing the distribution of some of the fabric groups across the excavated areas. These are of considerable interest, showing, for example, a concentration of imported pottery along the waterfront.

There are five Appendices: 1. a petrological study of the local clays, 2. a report on organic residues by J. Evans, 3. a concordance of decorated local wares, 4. a list of contexts with Tating ware and 5. a list of contexts with Beauvais ware. There is also a note on the pot dies from Southampton by I. Riddler. Microfiche sheets give references for illustrated sherds and pottery quantifications by site and feature.

This report is a useful statement on the state of research into Middle Saxon pottery in Southampton. It will be of value in studying subsequent groups of local pottery and, as a complete account of the imported pottery, will be a great aid for comparative studies of other Middle Saxon assemblages. When the material from London, Ipswich and York is published it should be possible to make considerable progress towards understanding the nature of long-distance trading contacts in the 7th–9th centuries.

Ailsa Mainman

**J. Pearce, A. Vince, with A. Jenner, M. Cowell and J. Haslam. *A Dated Type-series of London Medieval Pottery Part 4: Surrey Whitewares*. Museum of London and London & Middlesex Archaeological Society, 1988 192pp, price not stated.**

As has become customary from the DUA pottery team, and most especially Alan Vince, Anne Jenner, and Jackie Pearce, this part-work on London ceramics is as well-researched and clearly presented as the previous three. Earlier studies in the T.L.A.M.A.S. series were of Mill Green and London-type wares and of a Hertfordshire glazed ware, and there is another paper in preparation, on the reduced wares of Middlesex and south Hertfordshire. When that is published, details of all the common wares of the City, from the 12th century to the end of the medieval period, will have been made available in the same format, except for late medieval redwares. A useful synthesis of earlier late Saxon and Saxo-Norman pottery traditions has also been published in *Medieval Archaeology* (1985).

The major part of the book describes vessel forms and their details, and these are illustrated in 80 pages of drawings, with 19 colour and 68 black and white photographs. The reserve

collections of the major London museums have again been trawled, and it is fortunate that these vessels have not previously been published, since it has been possible to present them together with well-dated material from recent City excavations. It was also good fortune that the task of drawing most of the pottery fell to Jackie Pearce. The illustrations are superb, as are the photographs by John Edwards and Jon Bailey. All the form types are divided in accordance with Clive Orton's 1982 typology, but with some name changes and an addition, into those of Kingston-type and Coarse Border ware, Cheam whiteware, and 'Tudor Green' ware.

Inevitably, given the nature of the reserve collection, much account is given of the jugs, especially the decorated ones, but there is also a large catalogue of the less common kitchen-ware forms which should prove to be almost as useful. It is also pleasing that a good few cooking-pots are illustrated, including fifteen full profiles. Unlike London, where jugs seem always to have been more common than cooking-pots (Fig. 132a), in Surrey it is usually the reverse, except in rare circumstances. A Surrey perspective allows me to correct the assertion that all bifid-rim jars with or without handles were cooking-pots (p. 62); a complete bung-hole cistern found in a 15th-century town context at Staines, c.30km west of London, has the same rim form and a broad strap handle.

'Tudor Green ware' is afforded equivalent status in the corpus of forms, even though it is freely admitted in the introduction that this ware is 'more problematic' in relation to the three main 'industries' (Introduction). There are a few drawings and photographs of complete or unusual vessels, but there is little else that is new about Tudor Green in this book except, of course, its general date of introduction. Even this, however, does not seem to have been satisfactorily resolved. Rare sherds are found in groups of the late 13th/14th century, but of these it is said to have been ... 'impossible to be certain that they belonged to the assemblages in which they were found, since a small number of post-medieval intrusive sherds is to be expected in most groups' (p. 17). Which groups are contaminated, and how? On this same general point, according to Fig. 132b (p. 190) the earliest groups with whiteware in London are of the period c.1200, despite an assertion on p.13 that they first appear in groups of c.1230-50. The explanation given to me when I saw one of the c.1200 groups was that the few whiteware sherds, here also, were intrusive. These and any other instances of 'intrusion' in these key London groups must be fully discussed elsewhere, but here at least, the presence of early whiteware surely warrants more than a small inclusion in a histogram in the final appendix of the book. A last point concerning 'Tudor Green ware' is that it should perhaps have been stressed earlier than in the final Part 3 of the book, that these 'untempered thin-walled cups were made in all three main Surrey whiteware industries' (p. 88). Tudor Green is therefore, only a form and fabric style, albeit an important one, but there is more in this quoted statement, in the recognition that Surrey potters could and did interchange methods of form and fabric preparation (unless it is supposed that those who produced Tudor Green fineware were itinerant).

All details other than of form, such as methods of manufacture, fabric typology, sources, distribution and dating evidence, are in Part 1, but this amounts to only six pages of text. There are in addition, however, two valuable appendices of fabric analyses. It is admitted that the distribution maps for each of the three main fabric types (Figs. 2-4) are far from comprehensive, and there are two mistaken site-plottings that may sow confusion. No Kingston-type or Coarse Border ware is shown along the Thames corridor between Abingdon and Kingston, although much has been found in several towns along this stretch of the river. Many of the Cheam find-spots are not included in the Catalogue appendix, and the kilns are not clearly shown on the relevant map. More serious is the misplacing of

Farnborough Hill (close to Guildford), the River Wey (c.10km further north-west and next to the River Blackwater), and the Kingston kilns (shown as if they were immediately adjacent to those of Cheam rather than being almost directly on the Thames).

A hope of many working in adjacent regions, I suspect, is that the book will enable a more objective differentiation of whiteware types. The problem has even been felt in Surrey, which is why the aspect of Part 1 which interested me most was the descriptions of the fabric types, and the assertion that they each represent separate 'industries'. However, one might have expected better proof that they could be described as such, or evidence that their manufacture had always been as geographically separated as is implied by their common names. From the fabric descriptions and more empirical analyses, their separateness and status as 'industries' remain unproven, and have perhaps, to a certain extent, even been disproven. Of Kingston, Cheam, and Coarse Border ware fabrics it is said that ... 'there are considerable variations within each group, and it is not possible to assign every sherd of Surrey whiteware to a group on the basis of fabric alone without taking into account form and decoration (p. 9). The method recommended for the collection of data about the distribution of these whitewares outside the City is that ... 'only sherds which combine the appropriate fabric characteristics with a distinctive form or decoration can be used to plot the distribution of the different wares' (p. 11). In the petrological analyses ... 'there proved to be no clear-cut division between the three groups, and a wide textural range within the groups.'; 'there was no apparent link between fabric and kiln site, nor between fabric and date of material', and 'there are many examples of sherds from Kingston-type ware production sites with coarser inclusions than normal and some which have a much finer texture, akin to that found in Cheam whiteware' (Appendix 5). Finally, the discussion of the neutron activation analyses says of the samples from the Bankside, Kingston, Cheam 14th-century and Cheam 15th-century kilns that they were only 'incompletely separated except for the 15th-century Cheam whiteware', and that in a 'blind' analysis of sherds from the known kilns ... 'only 33% of Bankside, Kingston and 14th-century Cheam material were correctly classified, which is marginally better than chance'. The summary of the analysis also admits that 'It has been found impossible using either discriminant analysis or cluster analysis to distinguish between most of the groups of kiln products except those of 15th century Cheam', and that 'the analysis did not find groups (from London excavations) corresponding precisely with the London kilns' (which here, rather confusingly, means those of Bankside, Kingston and Cheam).

Is there proof of the separateness of three 'industries' in the forms, decoration, or manufacturing methods if not in fabric? Very few forms, form elements or methods described in this volume seem to have been characteristic of only one of the fabric types, and these are mostly jugs or details of them. The unique types would include some baluster variants and the use of certain stamped bosses in 'Kingston-type' ware; the combed decoration and a method of handle attachment found on 'Coarse Border ware' (bifid-rimmed cooking-pots that are apparently only of this ware in London, are found in Staines and Chertsey in the less coarse 'Kingston-type'); and the measures, cooking-pot forms, flat bases, small rounded jugs, and many other details of Cheam whiteware (which may qualify this production site, at least, as that of a separate industry). There would appear to be no other significant differences in the assemblages of forms of the two main 'industries', only minor variations and absences, mostly of the more specialised jug forms.

One consistently different characteristic of the four fabric types is not given the emphasis it deserves in the fabric descriptions of this book, and that is the size grading of the quartz sand temper with 'Coarse Border ware' the coarsest at up

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to 1mm, 'Kingston-type' to 0.5mm, Cheam to 0.25mm, and 'Tudor Green' with fine or no added temper. Such a simple division must be the method by which most sherds from London excavations are sorted, and will continue to be the best way of sorting Surrey whitewares anywhere else. Even at x 20 magnification however, many sherds will seem intermediate because of the range of variability in the temper grading at different kilns and at different times. The division into three fabric types need not necessarily correspond with three separate 'industries' however, despite 'Kingston-type' being made at Kingston, Cheam-type at Cheam, and 'Coarse Border ware' at Farnborough Hill and elsewhere in the west Surrey/Hampshire district. According to the neutron activation analyses, even two sherds of 'London-type wares' (here again referring to Cheam or Kingston whiteware rather than the major sandy ware of the 11th–13th centuries) were found to be so similar to 'Coarse Border ware' as to... 'suggest that they were manufactured outside the London area' (p. 185), with the implication that this was perhaps in the Border district.

Few whiteware kilns have been excavated, and none were of the first century of production. Documentary and implied evidence from excavated collections suggest that there were probably other whiteware production sites (Clandon, perhaps Staines or Egham, possibly Chertsey, and of course, Bankside), even during the late 14th- to 15th-century floruit of the Kingston and Border kilns. It is still possible that there were 'Kingston-type' producers in the Borders, 'Coarse Border ware' potters close to the Thames and elsewhere other than the Borders, and more 'Cheam ware' kilns at Cheam and perhaps also elsewhere. Whiteware production could have begun in west Surrey with 'Kingston-type' fabric as only a variant of 'Coarse Border-type', and both may have developed from the pale-fired 'Early Surrey wares' and other more grey/brown sandy wares of the district during the second quarter of the 13th century. Outlying potteries could have been established during the late 13th and early 14th century, perhaps even by members of the same families, close-by, or within towns along the Surrey littoral of the Thames and perhaps at other places. The extra costs of clay having to be carted-in would have been more than outweighed by the ready access to the City market.

Despite my disinclination to accept the theory of three separate industries, there is much of great value in this book. It contains the most comprehensive catalogue of medieval Surrey whiteware forms ever published, which should serve as the bedrock for comparative studies for many years to come. Of other aspects such as fabric typology, sources, and dating, the picture may not be as clear-cut as it is perceived to be in London. The City sequence may not, for example, be typical. I am confident that the book will be the stimulus for a renewal of interest in whitewares generally, and I hope that this will include much more fieldwork and a study of documentary sources.

All in all, this is a good read, and well worth the money!

Philip Jones

**P. Hinton (ed) *Excavations in Southwark 1973–76 Lambeth 1973–79 London and Middx Archaeol Soc and Surrey Archaeol Soc Joint Publication No 3.***

It would have been difficult to find two more extreme approaches to the publication of essentially similar 1970's urban excavations than those adopted by the twin field archaeology departments of the Museum of London. The DUA, excavating within the administrative boundary of the City of London, decided in 1982 to publish its backlog sites and their finds thematically. Previously each site had formed a separate report,

being placed within the Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society if small, and forming a separate monograph if large. The Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavations Committee, subsumed in 1983 into the DGLA, decided to publish its excavations in the order in which they were dug, and in groups within a monograph series. Unlike the DUA, it has stuck with its policy, of which the volume under review is the second fruit. The division between the DUA and DGLA goes even further than their method of publication; location maps for DUA sites normally omit Southwark (except for the southern end of London Bridge), while there is no map within this volume which shows the City. In the Saxon and later periods, however, Southwark and the City were intimately related and it is a fair assumption that the presence of the province's largest defended town immediately to the north was a major factor determining landuse and prosperity in Roman Southwark.

While it is, perhaps, legitimate for each field unit to ignore the presence of its twin, their publications must allow other workers to make comparisons. While I am not qualified to judge, I suspect that this is not true for the Roman pottery published here. Medieval and later pottery specialists are therefore extremely lucky that Clive Orton has made every attempt to make the pottery data published here compatible with that from the City. He has abandoned the fabric system used in the first volume of SLAEC excavation reports and adopted that used by the DUA. A short alpha-numeric code is used to denote a particular ware or fabric and this is used throughout the text, tables and figures, as well as the computer-based archive. There are minor differences in usage, such as the use of COLS for Cologne Stoneware in this report and KOLN in the DUA (where COLS denotes Colchester Slipped ware) and some inconsistency with codes within the volume. SWSG is the DUA code for English White Saltglazed Stoneware but in Southwark is Samian Ware South Gaulish. Coarse London-type ware is LOND C in the summary on p. 295 and description on p. 296 but LOND COAR on p. 349 (and, now, LCOAR in the DUA). Shelly/Sandy ware is SSW on pages 295 and 296 but SAND/SHEL on page 349. Cologne stoneware is COLS in the summary and COL on page 355. The codes used on Fig 126 to denote the glaze colour of Border wares: BORDY for yellow-glazed; BORDG for green-glazed, are not explained, nor are they used on Fig 130 which includes four Border ware vessels. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether any user would be seriously confused by these inconsistencies and since the full common name is given in Orton's report each time a ware code is used it might have been less obtrusive to keep the use of the codes to a minimum there.

The advantage of the coding system becomes clear when one turns to the site report section, since a complete list of wares present in every stratified context has been presented in tabular form. Since the codes are mnemonic there is no need to constantly turn back to the pottery report to remind oneself of the identity of a code. The editors could undoubtedly have reduced space by opting for lists in micro-type as opposed to the type-set tables which they use, but the tables are clear and easy to use and understand. There are codes used in the site report section tables, such as RRES, MRES, LCGR, EMSH, STAM, FTGW and STAR, which do not occur within Orton's pottery report. Most of these are probably self explanatory. It is also strange that instead of producing one long dating table for each major period on a site they are separated arbitrarily and surrounded by blocks of text. In some cases this seems to have been done because only certain contexts had biological data to be tabulated, thus allowing a wider table for the other contexts. In other cases there is no apparent logic, except to break up the text. Contexts from the same pit occur in different tables, which are arranged by context number rather than interpretative group, feature or stratigraphic sequence. You cannot therefore