

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Charles Murray

Mark Leah, Grimston, Norfolk. *The Late Saxon and Medieval Pottery Industry: Excavations 1962-92*. 1994, *East Anglian Archaeology*, 64, 133 pp., 7 plates, 77 figures. ISBN 0 905594 11 8. Price £27.50.

Vast exports of Grimston wares out of King's Lynn to Bergen and Trondheim and elsewhere in Scandinavia give Grimston a North-West European significance. This volume is particularly welcome because it brings together for the first time all the unpublished excavated material from the parish of Grimston. Excavations were carried out from the 1960s to the 1990s. Only one excavation, carried out in 1964 had previously been published (Clarke 1970), despite the frequent references to Grimston ware in site reports.

The major report in the volume is by Mark Leah, Andrew Rogerson and Phil Andrews, on Vong Lane, Pott Row (Chapters 4-6). These were the largest excavations in Norfolk since North Elmham Park. The report includes the publication of two kilns. Parts of the associated settlement were also discovered, with evidence of Saxo-Norman to late medieval domestic occupation.

The discovery of a pottery industry in Grimston parish was largely the result of fieldwork by J O H Nicholls. Keith Wade has written up Mr. Nicholls' small-scale excavations undertaken in the 1960s (Chapter 2). Wade's account of his own excavations at Pott Row, site 1016 (Chapter 3) reveals buildings, a well and a kiln, of the late period of the Grimston industry.

Sarah Jennings' and Andrew Rogerson's survey of the distribution of Grimston ware in East Anglia and beyond is of great value, as are their comments on the distribution of the wares. As the authors point out in their postscript, it is an interim statement and they invite further information about new find spots.

Alan Davison's analysis of the documents reveals that surprisingly little information on the industry has so far come to light. Apart from the name of the settlement (Pott Row), and the name 'Tyle Kiln Close', there is no evidence whatever of the pottery industry.

This is a high quality publication with excellent illustrations of the wares. The bright cover is very attractive with a photo of my favourite type of Grimston ware vessel - the face from a face jug. The illustrated summary of the development of vessel types between the 11th and 16th centuries (Fig 63) is very useful.

This volume is not a corpus of Grimston wares and anyone who expects that will be disappointed. A full corpus of the whole production range is indeed highly desirable, but, as Andrew Rogerson points out in his introduction, further excavation is needed in Grimston to reveal more of the Saxo-Norman industry and the decorated phase of the High Medieval period. Once these gaps are filled, a definitive account of the history and the product range of the Grimston pottery industry can be published. There is much potential here for further research.

The book is to be warmly recommended, being the most

comprehensive account of the Grimston pottery industry to date. The authors are to be congratulated on the way the reports by different contributors are drawn together into a coherent whole by Andrew Rogerson's introduction and Mark Leah's conclusions, with an assessment of the significance of the industry so far discovered.

Bill Milligan

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clarke, H. 1970, 'Excavations on a kiln site at Grimston, Pott Row, Norfolk'. *Norfolk Archaeol.*, XXXV, pt. 1, 79-95.

A.J. Mainman, Pottery from 46-54 Fishergate. *The Archaeology of York The Pottery 16/6*. 125 pp. including 36 figures and 2 plates, 1993. York Archaeological Trust, ISBN 1 872414 31 1. Price £20.00.

Excavations at Fishergate by the York Archaeological Trust in 1985-86 revealed the best evidence yet for the settlement identified as Anglian, or pre-Viking, York. The finds included the first stratified group of Anglian pottery excavated in the city. Understandably, therefore, the bulk of this latest fascicule in the *Archaeology of York* series comprises a description and discussion of the 7th to 9th century material. It is not a substantial group, numbering 2,534 sherds, of which 1,817 seem to be residual (mainly Roman) or later intrusive types. Nevertheless, the range of Anglian wares represented, which includes local as well as imported English and Continental types, is significant in giving an insight into the status and function of the settlement.

There are a few preliminaries to be dealt with first however, including a useful account, by R.L. Kemp, of the structural evidence from the site. It is vital that pottery reports should be linked in with the stratigraphic evidence, and it is good to see this addressed in such a concise and lucid fashion here. The next section introduces finds of Anglian pottery from elsewhere in York, setting the scene for the discussion to come. The catalogue follows a brief section on methodology, from which arises one small criticism. Quantities throughout the report have been based only on sherd count, although it is stated that weights were recorded and may be found in the archive. This is obviously a policy that has been followed throughout all the ceramic publications in this fascicule series, and it is easy to see why, in the interests of consistency, this has not changed. However, it is this reviewer's opinion that at least two quantitative methods, usually sherd weight as well as count, need to be presented, in order to balance any form of statistical enquiry. Actual quantities are presented throughout in tabular form, while relative amounts, given as percentages, are quoted in the text. It appears that Roman wares account for 85% of the total sherd number for the earliest Anglian phase, 3a. We are told that these sherds are small and abraded, but the presentation of weight would have made this clearer (if for instance the percentage of the Roman sherd weight for the same phase was shown to be considerably smaller).

This is a minor point, for as has already been stated, the Anglian assemblage is not large and the statistics presented will accrue greater meaning when other stratified groups are excavated. The importance of this work lies less with the amount of material and more with its character. In her

description of the Anglian wares Mainman demonstrates once again her aptitude for identifying fabrics and undertaking comparative research. The section on foreign imports discusses, in a clear and comprehensive manner, the origins and distribution of many of the types now recognised at Ipswich, London, Hamwic, Quentovic and beyond. The discussion presented here usefully summarises old and more recent work and adds to the debate with research prompted by the Fishergate material. Mainman discusses thin-section and neutron activation analysis on a range of black and grey wares from York, Ipswich and Quentovic and enters the debate on their origins with a vigour that reflects her broad knowledge of other English and Continental sources. The buff wares and Mayen ware have also been characterised using thin-sectioning, demonstrating a thoroughness that lends considerable weight to her discussion. The discussion section itself is also concise and thoughtful and adeptly places the Fishergate finds in context with other Anglian/Middle Saxon/Merovingian trading sites.

The remainder of the catalogue deals with the pottery of the Scandinavian, medieval and post-medieval periods with a brevity excused by the fact that these wares have already been characterised in previous York fascicules. The following section, *Interpretation of the Pottery*, relates the ceramics to the structural evidence from Fishergate. The Anglian phases are represented by pits and buildings, and the pottery is related mainly to their chronology. This evidence is used to demonstrate the development of ceramics in Anglian York, with an indication that imported wares occur less frequently in the later phases. This is of interest when one sees that the same observation was also made for Hamwic (Timby 1988, 111). The discussion of the later medieval pottery and structures is similarly comprehensive. In the 11th century a church was built on the site, and a Gilbertine priory established there in the late 12th century. Much of the pottery was recovered from deposits related to construction, while some was recovered from the grave fills, and very little can be related to the use of the buildings. Nevertheless, a full discussion and quantification is presented. Material from construction deposits in urban locations is often neglected in favour of the more productive pit groups and this work will provide a valuable comparison with similar groups in other towns. The post-Dissolution material is also of some interest and includes some fine Cistercian wares.

The final section, *General Discussion and Conclusions*, summarises the value of the entire assemblage. The Anglian material is obviously considered to be of greatest significance. The discussion brings in evidence from elsewhere in the city, as the nature and development of the settlement, together with its role as a trading centre are confidently considered. The material from the Gilbertine priory is also realistically summarised in a section which admirably winds up a thoroughly professional piece of work.

It is clear that the principal significance of this report lies in the presentation of the Anglian pottery, but it should be noted that the treatment of the later medieval material has not suffered as a result. This fascicule is a site-specific pottery report and it is good to see that the author has not forgotten that. Nevertheless, it is those early finds which will be of most interest to non-local readers, of which there should be many, and so there are some broader points to consider.

This material fills a gap in our understanding of pre-Viking England and considerably enhances our knowledge of the pottery of that period. Mainman's work on the imported wares seems to emphasise the need for an updating of the commonly accepted classification. The Fishergate group is not large enough to warrant a comprehensive re-

working of a subject which currently lacks discipline and cohesion. In England, Hodges' classification, based on his work in Southampton (Hodges 1981) represents, for all its failings, an attempt to characterise imported wares of the middle Saxon period. Timby refined his work further, re-examining his original assemblage and introducing new finds (Timby 1988). Unfortunately she had no access to comparative European material, and her classification is essentially internal. Mainman cheerily, and somewhat confusingly, quotes from both bodies of work and bases her discussion of attributions on her own research on the Continent. Her analysis of the black and grey burnished wares refers to examples from York, Ipswich, Hamwic, London, Douai, St. Denis, Quentovic, Ghent, Lampernisse, Oudenburg, Bruges and Antwerp. It is good to see such a thorough discussion resulting from such a relatively small body of material, but this surely emphasises the need for the publication of a more complete review of Merovingian ceramics in England. It was expected that this would be delivered with the analysis of the imported wares from Ipswich and this may yet prove to be the case. However, with discoveries of imported pottery now being made at an increasing number of sites in England, most notably London and York, the need for a consistent system of classification is pressing. Furthermore, research in the source areas is also revealing a wealth of new information. The Fishergate publication serves to emphasise the gaps in our knowledge, showing how much there is still to be achieved and understood. Hodges' classification is shaky, and it is likely that Timby's fabric series will soon need to be re-worked. There is a danger that the analysis of the Ipswich material will be out of date before it is published. Previous students of this period, Coutts, Hodges and Timby, have sadly all moved on. With Fishergate, Ailsa Mainman has now made an important contribution to the study of Anglian pottery. Her continuing involvement will surely benefit the subject even further.

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Duncan H. Brown

Clive Orton, Paul Tyers and Alan Vince, *Pottery in Archaeology*. Cambridge University Press, 1993. 270 pp., 66 figs. ISBN 0 521 25715 8 hardback (£40.00) ISBN 0 521 44597 3 paperback (£19.95).

This volume is one of the Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology which are 'reference handbooks designed for an international audience of professional archaeologists and archaeological scientists in universities, museums, research laboratories, field units, and the public service'. This particular book, the publishers claim, 'will be essential reading for students, field archaeologists and anyone interested in working with pottery'.

The book is divided into three sections. The first part, History and Potential, gives an interesting background to the history of pottery studies and introduces some of the