

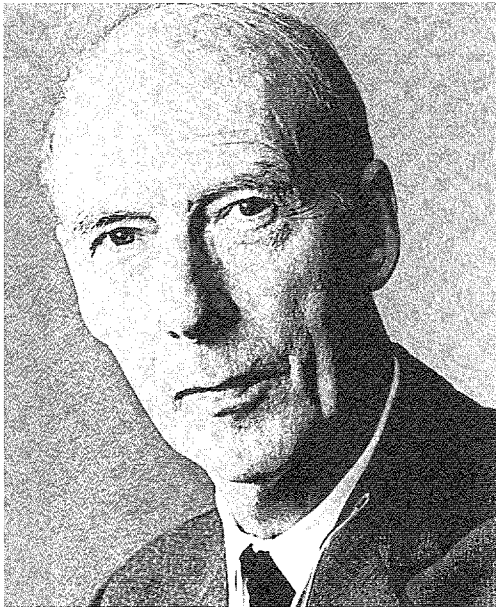
supported by the traditional practical exploration of this aspect of culture.

A session on taphonomy, and the implications of site formation for the study of pot activities was extremely stimulating. It was good to see that with careful thought and adequate resources, it is possible to study site activities despite the wholesale movement of material from site to site, demonstrated by the Shapwick project, and from toft to toft, as shown at Burton Dassett. At Raunds, by contrast, it was possible to reveal the function of a building complex, and confirm the economic strategy of the settlement, through a study of material from midden deposits.

The conference was treated to a guided tour and tea by the Royal Worcester Porcelain Company, and saw displays of local medieval and post-medieval pottery by Worcester Cathedral and Hereford and Worcester County Archaeology Unit.

Alan Vince

OBITUARIES



GROUP CAPTAIN ALAN FRANCIS BRITTON
17 AUGUST 1908–11 JANUARY 1996

The death of Frank Britton will be deeply felt in the world of London post-medieval archaeology and in the field of English delftware studies, where he was appreciated as a delightful colleague, an indefatigable author and a master of documentary research. He was born at Stony Stratford in Buckinghamshire and went to school at Haileybury in 1922, transferring to Blundell's on his father's death two years later. Having worked for a short while as a clerk in a stockbroker's office (1926–27) he joined the R.A.F. to train as a pilot, but soon moved over to the engineering side, for which he had an outstanding aptitude. After a period in this country he was posted to Egypt and the Sudan where he married Nancy Pence, daughter of Professor W. D. Pence of Evanston, Illinois in Khartoum Cathedral on 21 December 1936. In 1938 he returned to Britain and was then promoted to the post of Director of Aeronautical Engineering at the Headquarters of the R.C.A.F. in Ottawa in 1941. He spent the latter part of the war in North Africa and then in Italy where he flew Hurricanes. In *Some*

Recollections of Travels with a Hurricane Frank graphically describes this period of his life. He had an aircraft for his own use and was able "to fly down and visit the temples at Paestum". He recalls "sitting under an almond tree cracking the nuts between two stones" while staying under canvas in Sicily and hearing, for the first time over the radio, the strains of "Lily Marlene" and a German news bulletin to the Afrika Corps. After the war he was posted back to England, later going out to Singapore and ending up in 1953 as Deputy Director N.A.T.O. Affairs at the Air Ministry.

When he left the R.A.F., he joined Bristol Aero Engines Ltd and stayed with the company after the take-over of Bristol Siddeley by Rolls Royce. It was during this period, when he was living at Pucklechurch in Gloucestershire, not far from the aircraft works at Filton, that he first got to know the ceramic collections at the Bristol City Museum and acquired his particular affection for delftware. He began to collect and was already very knowledgeable by the time he retired in 1973, a year after his wife's death (he remarried, to Emma, in October 1986). In the autumn of 1973 he began work on his catalogue of the Bristol delftware collection which was published by Sotheby's in 1982. In a number of ways this book broke new ground. It had long been realised that the types of decoration used on the backs of plates were of relevance for attribution, but Frank was the first to classify them in a methodical manner. In 1977 he gave a paper to the English Ceramic Circle on these "under-rim marks", as he called them, and went on to use his findings in greater detail in the Bristol catalogue. He also applied this analytical approach, which perhaps reflected his training as an engineer, to the technical aspects of the manufacture of delftware. This was to bear further fruit in his quest for the origin of the clay used in England. Not content with identifying the precise clay-pit at Boyton in Suffolk and the dock from which the clay was shipped to London, he also visited the site, brought away samples, had them analysed and persuaded Alan Caiger-Smith to make some pots out of them. His discovery of this site and others from which the potteries obtained their raw material was largely due to Frank's exceptional skill in documentary research. Anyone who has seen his notes in a very small precise hand, most of which are now deposited at the Museum of London, will be aware of the sheer quantity of material he examined and sifted. His tenacity and flair for knowing where to look achieved spectacular results in the records of the "Hand in Hand" Insurance Company at the Guildhall Library. Here he found a treasure trove of information on London potters which he deployed in his second book *London Delftware*, based on the delftware collection at the Museum of London and published by Jonathan Horne in 1987.

Frank's interest in manuscript records and his skill in using them was far greater than any work he did on attribution, to which he was comparatively indifferent. He also applied his archival sleuthing to remarkable effect in the field of genealogy. It is not uncommon to find English delftware pieces bearing dates and the initials of the husband and wife for whom they were made. Frank was able to identify many of these owners, their occupations, where they lived and other personal details, thus supplying a social historical context for the items they had commissioned. In some cases he was even able to associate individual objects with particular potteries, a remarkable achievement in a field where precise connections are extremely difficult to make. Unlike some scholars, Frank was always generous in sharing his discoveries and I owe him a personal debt of gratitude for the genealogical research he carried out on all the inscribed delftware in the

collections of the V&A and made freely available for my catalogue.

On first acquaintance Frank could seem somewhat shy and reserved but his delightful smile and infectious enthusiasm made him an easy man to like. Unusually tall (he was known to some of his older friends as "Shorty") he was slightly stooping with an almost alarmingly spare frame. He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1993 and took particular pleasure in being asked to be President of the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society in 1987. He died after a short illness on 11 January 1996 and is survived by his second wife Emma.

Michael Archer



LADY TERESA BRISCOE
1918–1996

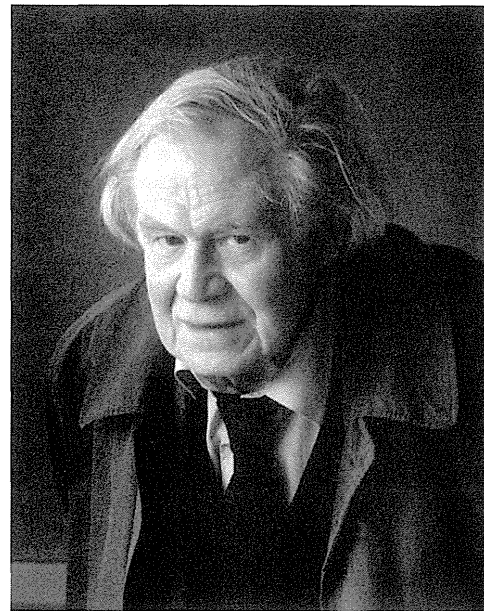
Teresa Briscoe was a well-known figure in the world of early medieval pottery studies. With an already established interest in prehistory, and encouraged by the likes of Tom Lethbridge and, later, J. N. L. Myres, she began to study in detail the Anglo-Saxon stamped pottery unearthed at the cremation cemetery at Lackford, which she helped to excavate in 1947 (and where she met her future husband). Some years later, she established the first and only Archive of early medieval pottery stamp motifs in western Europe. This led to her publication in 1983 of 'A classification of Anglo-Saxon pot stamp motifs and proposed terminology' in *Studien zur Sachsenforschung*, a classification scheme which remains in wide use.

While Lady Briscoe's scholarly contribution was not restricted to pottery, as her articles on 'S'-shaped brooches show, her heart was in pottery studies and she was a stalwart of the Early Anglo-Saxon Pottery Group, even hosting one of its meetings in her home. Energy and generosity were apparent in equal measure in her approach to archaeology — few museums or field units with early Anglo-Saxon pottery in their stores were not visited by Teresa or her daughter Diana in their quest to take casts of stamps for the Archive of Anglo-Saxon Pottery Stamps. She was invariably kind and helpful to colleagues and assiduous in maintaining contact with them. My own first encounter with her, when as a student I wrote to ask whether I might consult the Archive (then based in her home), was typical.

She immediately invited me to come and stay, included me in family meals and spent many hours helping me find my way through the Archive.

Lady Briscoe's interests were not restricted to England and she was well known to colleagues from the Anglo-Saxon *Kemgebiete* on the Continent. She continued to attend meetings of the international 'Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Sachsenforschung' when ill health would have grounded most of us. Her dedication to the Archive and to Anglo-Saxon studies was tireless and put many professional archaeologists to shame. She will be greatly missed.

Helena Hamerow



PROFESSOR MARTYN JOPE
(1910–1996)

E. M. Jope is a name familiar to medieval archaeologists everywhere. He was one of the founders of their discipline. His name surfaces all the time in their bibliographies.

For those fortunate enough to have met him, however, the name they know him by is much more likely to have been Martyn, for he rapidly made friends with kindred spirits everywhere, flattering them with a quick and acute appreciation of what they themselves were about, and giving the impression he had known them for years.

People who really knew him, though, thought not of Martyn, but Martyn and Margaret. That remarkable partnership survived more than half a century. It worked in archaeology. It worked in biochemistry. They produced joint papers in both subjects. It worked especially well in the ordinary joys and challenges of everyday life.

The record of Martyn's distinguished career brings nothing but a sense of delight and gratitude. He was a scientist. Coming up to Oriel from Kingswood School, Bath, on an Open Scholarship to read chemistry he later went on to take a Bachelor of Science by thesis. Like so many other great 20th-century archaeologists he also received a parallel education in archaeology as Secretary, then President, of the University Archaeology Society and he became deeply involved in local excavation, not the least with his near contemporary, Rupert Bruce-Mitford. He did try a brief spell of employment with the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments for Wales, but throughout the 1940s

his professional life was as a research biochemist working on Nuffield or Medical Research Council projects. This produced a flow of seminal papers in such places as the *British Medical Journal*, the *Journal of Physiology*, *Biochemical Journal*, *The Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* and *Spectrochemica Acta*. Among many contributions on the study of haemoglobins he produced highly significant work on the dynamics of red cell destruction. Clearly Martyn, had he so wished, could have had an extremely distinguished career in biochemistry and he seemed to be heading for it.

The 1940s, however, saw another, parallel, flow of different, but no less brilliant papers on archaeology. Already by 1939 he had, with Ian Threlfall, excavated one of the first medieval peasant houses ever recorded in England at Beere near North Tawton in Devon. Regarding excavation much as he would have a scientific experiment (but with the important difference that this kind of experiment was unrepeatable) he applied the then new techniques of stratigraphic archaeology to medieval subjects everywhere.

There were excavations at Ascot Doilly Castle; Deddington; Brill medieval pottery kilns; and a roll call of sites in Oxford: Merton; Oriel; St Johns; and most famously the Mound of Oxford Castle where he first demonstrated the pre-conquest dating of late Saxon pottery. He was the original Oxford rescue archaeologist. The regional literature of Oxfordshire in particular, and southern Britain in general, became peppered with his papers on medieval ceramics. They still form the basis for medieval pottery studies in southern Britain.

In 1949 Martyn was tempted to return to archaeology full time by the creation of a lectureship in archaeology at the Queen's University of Belfast. He was to set up a new Department there — offering courses from the start in both the Science and the Arts Faculties. He ran the new Department — perhaps one might more accurately say caused to run — for the next 32 years, his chair being created in 1963.

Though thousands of Belfast students have cause to be grateful for Martyn's work at Queen's, teaching was not his only contribution either to the University or to Irish archaeology. His first few years in Ulster saw a frenzy of activity quite the equal of his Oxfordshire work. He acquainted himself with the archaeology of the province in a remarkably quick time, began a stream of research papers on buildings, sites and ceramics, and he took on the responsibility for developing the Archaeological Survey of Northern Ireland for the Ministry of Finance. What he set up worked. He recruited Dudley Waterman and Pat Collins, old friends from England, and there ensued a remarkable decade of excavation and research. When *An Archaeological Survey of County Down* appeared in 1966, with general contributions by Martyn, it was clear that Ulster archaeology had been transformed — catapulted into the later 20th century.

Queen's provided Martyn the opportunity to harness the potentials of science to the cause of archaeology — which he was supremely well placed to do. The Nuffield Quaternary Research Unit brought together a varied team of natural scientists, Margaret included, to work on archaeological problems, an idea well ahead of its time. The Belfast Palaeoecology Laboratory, which he developed in the 1960s, brought new precision to archaeological chronology through its combination of dendrochronology with radiocarbon dating. These developments placed Queen's in these respects at the forefront of archaeological research in the nation and brought Martyn all the symbols of recognition of his part in it, the presidency of his section at the British Association, for example, and all the usual fellowships.

Martyn's work in Ireland earned him membership of the

Royal Irish Academy. His prominence in British medieval archaeology brought him his Fellowship of the British Academy, a rare combination of these two honours. At the British Academy his credentials as a scientist made him a natural link with the Royal Society. Several of the Joint Meetings between the two bodies in the 1970s owed much to his stimulus. He was also a voice for good in the deliberations that led to the establishment of the Science-based Archaeology Committee and the proper funding by government of archaeological science in Britain. His wise counsels were called upon by the University of Bradford, where as Visiting Professor he had a guiding and formative influence on the establishment of what is now arguably Britain's premier School of Archaeological Science. The University recognised this with its award of an Honorary Degree. And he sat on committees and commissions everywhere, from the Northern Ireland Ancient Monuments Advisory Council, to the Ancient Monuments Board for England and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments for Wales.

All this more than filled Martyn and Margaret's years. It probably explains Martyn's jealous protection of his own time. He did not bear administrators gladly; his ruthless priority was the pursuit of his own research or projects; and his colleagues inevitably suffered. However, he was an acute judge of character, and the teams he assembled were good enough — he certainly expected them to be — to succeed with the minimum of supervision. I remember being rescued by him from life as a Ministry of Works jobbing digger, transformed overnight into a research assistant, then told simply to 'get on with your research'. 'Have you a waste paper basket?' he asked. 'That is all you will need'. When I needed his input I had to resort to the strategy of ambushing him at the bus stop: but those bus rides — luckily we both lived in the same direction — produced insights that have stayed with me a lifetime. He had a whimsical, puckish sense of humour and a self-effacing manner that did much to protect him from the frustrations in others that his private lifestyle set up.

And so to the time when, on retirement, he returned to Oxford — though he and Margaret had never left it, by dint of heroic commuting, cats, plants and all, at the end of every Belfast term. Much of this productive retirement period was used in his enthusiastic support of national projects. Much of it was directed to his support of Margaret's own research on the study of amino acids in fossil brachiopods and the implications of this for phylogeny. As never before they spread their wings and revelled in international travel to meet like-minded scholars the world over. More of this time, too, was directed to the great work of completing *Early Celtic Art in the British Isles*. Martyn had always had an interest in the Iron Age and wrote some of his best papers on the subject. He never actually saw *Early Celtic Art* through the press, despite frequent reassurances to others that it was on its way; but I gather from the Oxford University Press that we shall all see it in 1998. And when we do, I have no doubt that we shall once again be reminded of a brilliant mind; a scientist who was as much at home in the humanities as anyone in his generation and an archaeologist who was by nature and instinct a scientist; we shall be reminded of that delightful sense of humour; that whimsical smile; that Oxford man through-and-through; and of a person it is a delight and privilege to have known.

Peter Addyman
York

This address was given at Oriel College on 26 November 1996.