catalogue either to London or the Continent. Considering the sizeable number of lobed dish biscuit sherds from Platform Wharf and from the vicinity of the Pickleherring pottery, an attribution to London seems more likely. Recent assessment work on sites in the proximity of the Pickleherring kiln have also revealed parallels for the moulded cat jug (No. 716).

The windmill charger (No. 164) is thought by Austin to be 'apparently unique subject matter'. However, this is not so — a near-complete charger depicting a windmill, a miller and his horse, was excavated from a cess pit dating to the 1660s on a site in Tabard Street, Southwark (Museum of London site code CH75). Needless to say, Austin could not have known this, since this vessel is unpublished and forms part of an extensive Museum of London Archaeology Service back-log publication programme. However, a windmill plate in the Bristol Collection was illustrated by Frank Britton (1987, No. 150).

Within the catalogue, a number of attributions are made on the grounds of the colour or appearance of the glaze; for instance, No. 18, a posset pot attributed to London because of the 'pink runny glaze'. These are characteristics I would be unwilling to employ, on account of the degrees of variability in colour, texture and depth of glaze so often found among delft fragments on production sites.

In conclusion, this volume is an important contribution to the study of delftware, and will be of great value to curators, collectors, and archaeologists, both in Europe and North America. However, just a little more about the archaeology would not have gone amiss.

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Roy Stephenson

P. Kleij, Oosterhouts Aardewerk, Assembled Articles 2, Antwerpen/Nijmegen, 1996, 101–128.

Oosterhout, situated in North Brabant near the well-known pottery-making centre of Bergen op Zoom, has also been an important centre for the production of earthenware for several centuries. Production started in Oosterhout most probably in the late middle ages, and from the seventeenth century onwards, evidence of the importance of Oosterhout can be found in written sources. In 1684, for example, Oosterhout has, after a period of decline, 30 potteries, while Bergen op Zoom, at its height in 1669, featured only 22 potteries. Although the size of the potteries in both cities can hardly be compared, it appears that the role of Oosterhout should not be underestimated. In 1813 Oosterhout had the largest number of potteries within its city limits in the Netherlands, namely 16. The nineteenth century saw a general decline in pottery production, including Oosterhout; the last pottery closed in 1935. Oosterhout's importance as a production centre is very rarely known to researchers of late- and post-medieval pottery. Until now, only a few publications have appeared, and these largely focus on the written sources and hardly on the actual products (Omen 1982, Meulen *et al.* 1989). Van der Meulen and Smeele focus on some marked pieces of Oosterhout's ceramics preserved in private and public collections. Kleij, in his contribution, focuses for the first time on pottery wasters from a pottery in the Rulstraat in Oosterhout, dating from the second half of the eighteenth century. This site was recorded in the written sources, and from this it can be concluded that a pottery already existed on this location prior to 1706, while the pottery was demolished in 1886. The dating, therefore, is based on the typochronology of the forms, technical aspects and the association with imported goods found near the wasters. The forms that were produced consisted mainly of plates, colanders, lids, ashpots, bowls, jugs or pitchers, cups and skillets. Other utensils were a spouted pot, a storage pot, a vase, a bird whistle, a miniature pan, a coffee-pot, and an oil lamp. This diversity corresponds to the products mentioned in nineteenth century documents about Oosterhout's ceramics. As the pottery wasters come from one or a few kiln loads by the same potter, it is not possible to characterise the Oosterhout production from this find-complex alone. Nevertheless, Kleij, although he himself points to the risks involved, makes a first attempt to specify characteristic forms and decorations from Oosterhout, or even specific products such as the "kooltjespan" (a kind of brazier). A first step towards a better understanding of Oosterhout's earthenware has been taken: Kleij's publication forms a welcome supplement to recent works concerning the production of post-medieval ceramics in theNetherlands on the basis of production waste (Mars, 1991; Groenewog, 1992; Bitter, 1995).

S. Ostkamp (translation: R. P. van Wilgen)

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This book deals with the archaeological excavation of a site at the Wortelsteeg in the centre of the town of Alkmaar in the Netherlands, under the direction of the municipal archeologist Peter Bitter, who is also the principal author of this report.

Between 1475/1500 and 1880, six periods of occupation

can be distinguished. The pottery on this site operated between about 1550 and 1620. The most important finds were wasters and second-quality ware of red- and white-fired clay, generally covered with a lead glaze: these rightly constitute the main part of the book. A few years before this excavation, in 1987, the traces of a round, updraught kiln were found, quite near the site of the 1991 excavation, but it was not possible to excavate. Wasters and sherds of the same material as found at the Wortelsteeg-site were, however, collected.

The pottery was made of a red-firing clay dug locally and, to a lesser degree, of an imported white-firing clay. The products made of the latter clay were, in the opinion of the author, possibly meant to compete with ceramics imported from the German Rhineland. The plates were similar to those produced at the same time in the large pottery-producing centre of Bergen op Zoom. No examples were found of North Holland slipware. The most richly decorated objects were two charming, miniature firecovers. The production, minus the firing, of a frying pan, a dish and a pipkin is reconstructed and photographically documented.

Archaeology, and information from the municipal archives, in particular deeds concerning immovables, made an important contribution to dating and attributing the occupational and industrial traces. The archives showed that the potter was well-to-do and belonged to the society of the town. This was confirmed by the finds of household items from the cesspit, such as kraak-porcelain and expensive glassware.

Finds from this excavation were shown in the municipal museum of Alkmaar in 1992 in the exhibition "Uit de Alkmaarse bodem", accompanied by a publication with the same title.

The book is recommended to all who are interested in post-medieval red- and white-firing lead-glazed pottery from the Netherlands in considering this pottery as the source of their own material. The description of the wasters and the second-quality ware in the catalogue offers an important resource.

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Leiker á Íslandi. Pottery found in excavations in Iceland. Guðrún Sveinbjarnardóttir. Rit Hins íslenska fornleifafélags og Þjóðminjasafns Íslands, Reykjavík, 1996. ISBN 9979-54-134-2. No Price.

It is now over a decade since John Hurst and colleagues (1986) published the first survey of medieval and later pottery traded in North-West Europe, with a special focus on the cross-Channel region. The extent and complexity of the North Sea pottery market has recently been exposed by Ian Reed in a detailed study of the Trondheim sequence (1990). Current work by the writer and others in South Scandinavia, Germany, Poland and the Baltic States confirms the scale and intensity of the neighbouring Baltic ceramic trade between the 13th and 17th centuries. This new survey by the London-based Icelandic archaeologist, Guðrún Sveinbjarnardóttir, extends our knowledge of the long-distance pottery trade of the late Middle Ages and early modern period into the as yet unchartered waters of the North Atlantic, and reveals much about the close commercial and cultural links between Iceland and the Nordic countries and regions along the North-West European littoral.

This survey includes all pottery of medieval to early modern date found in excavations in Iceland up to the end of 1991, and stored in the National Museum and in the Árbær Museum in Reykjavík. The principal aim of this project was to establish a fully comprehensive type-series of ceramics imported into Iceland during this period — the (relatively young) geology of the island being unsuitable for native pottery manufacture — and to investigate the geographical and social distribution of the wares. This handbook of ceramics found in Iceland, including quantified data from each site, is prefaced by a discussion of methodology and data collection, and concludes with a series of discussions on inter-site varability and the ceramic evidence for Iceland's import trade during the medieval to later period. The appendices at the rear include the results of neutron activation analysis on the elusive sources of North German/South Scandinavian redware(a contribution by Dr.Michael Hughes of the British Museum, Department of Scientific Research). The book is attractively produced with high quality photographs and line-drawings of key types. In all there are eight pages of colour, but most importantly, the volume is divided into two halves, the first in Icelandic, the second in English. The bilingual approach is essential if the results of this research are to be disseminated internationally, and fellow pottery researchers in Scandinavia, Germany and the Low Countries would do well to follow this model.

A cursory glance at the information presented here is enough to gain an impression of the diversity, intensity and longevity of the Icelandic pottery market during the medieval to later period. From the 14th to 19th centuries the island imported a wide range of household ceramics from northern Europe and beyond, from Grimston and Scarborough ware at the beginning of the sequence to North German stoneware pharmaceutical bottles and English creamware at the end. As a regional type-series it bears close comparison to the Nordic and Baltic ceramic profiles of the late medieval to early modern periods. This relationship illustrates the close commercial and cultural ties which bound Iceland to Scandinavia and the Continental littoral at this time. Indeed, the close correspondence of ceramics excavated in Iceland and Denmark emphasises the colonial nature of Icelandic material culture during the pre-industrial period. The ceramics are the clearest evidence for the adoption of 'Hanseatic' lifestyles in Iceland during the period when German merchants dominated North Sea trade. The pottery markets of both Iceland and the Continental coastal regions can be characterised, for instance, by the wide distribution of the same fineware imports from Germany, the use of similar redware kitchen products and the introduction of ceramic tile-stoves for interior heating.

A number of individual categories of North Sea trade ceramics immediately catch the eye, particularly as they significantly extend the known distribution of these wares. In addition to the full spectrum of Rhenish stoneware the author has identified a substantial assemblage of Lower Saxony and North Hesse stoneware (section 4.4.7). These wares did not penetrate the stranglehold of Rhenish stoneware on the mainland British market but seem to have enjoyed some popularity in the North Atlantic where the Northern Isles off Scotland have also produced notable groups. Of principal importance, however, is the sherd of late medieval Saxon stoneware with rouletted chequer-board decoration found at the BergÞórshvoll farm-site (section 4.4.6). This ware, known most commonly as the 'Falke Group' after Otto von Falke's original 1907