

post-Roman Britain, such as African Red Slipware (ARS, formerly Radford type Aii), and Phocaean Red Slipware (PRS, formerly part of Radford's type Ai) made in western Turkey. The typology of Mediterranean finewares published by Hayes (1972, 1980) permitted researchers in Britain to apply dates to the shallow PRS bowls and dishes imported from about the mid-5th to mid-6th century, and smaller quantities of ARS thought to have been imported during the 6th century. Most archaeologists will be aware of the range of these late forms identified at sites such as Tintagel (illustrated in Fig. 1) and Dinas Powys; this handbook sets these wares into a wider perspective, outlining the development of the industries from the late 1st century, and the gradual ousting of competitors until, for a period during the 4th century, African products were without rivals.

Turning to amphorae, some of the forms are long lived, and sherds of Mediterranean amphorae (B-ware) continue to be found on post-Roman sites in the west of Britain, such as the recently excavated sites of Whithorn (Galloway), Llandough and Briton Ferry (Glamorgan, South Wales). Excavations at Carthage (Tunisia) have shed light on the export of eastern Mediterranean amphorae to the west, possibly accompanying PRS, during the late 5th and early 6th century. Illustrations include a 6th- to 7th-century Palestinian ring-handled vessel (LR Amphora Carthage 5), which is contrasted with a baggy Spanish oil amphora (derivative of Dressel 20) of the late 3rd and 4th century, and a colour plate of a baggy 4th- or 5th-century Cilician or Cypriot amphora with *dipinto* and familiar horizontal ribbing. After about AD 400 much of the diversity in amphora forms disappears, as a result of the development of a few large centres, possibly officially sponsored. Because of the huge quantities of amphorae occurring on Mediterranean sites, the percentage of finewares always appears less (a third as common) in relative terms, than is the case in Britain.

The handbook also includes short sections on Italian and western Terra Sigillata, eastern and miscellaneous sigillata wares, late Roman finewares, lead- and alkaline-glazed wares, thin-walled wares and other 'fine' wares, coarse wares (buff wares, cooking wares, mortaria, local Egyptian wares), and vessels with special functions (*unguentaria*, ritual vessels, religious souvenirs, toys). An appendix provides a brief history of the British Museum's collection, and there is a select bibliography.

This is a useful 'handbook' which can be slipped into a large pocket. In some respects the format echoes that of the valuable earlier British Museum introductory booklets. It is well illustrated (colour and black/white, many previously unpublished), although in my copy the Corinthian relief bowl in Fig. 30 had lost its right hand side and appears before Fig. 29, and some of the figure references appear to be incorrect. The text is informative, and while not exhaustive, the endnotes and bibliography will allow the interested reader to delve further.

Mark Redknapp

David Gaimster, *German Stoneware 1200-1900: Archaeology and Cultural History* British Museum Press, 1997. 276 x 219 mm, 430 pp., 425 pls. and figs., 5 maps and 32 colour plates. ISBN 0714105716. Price: £45.00 hardback.

There have been many catalogues of German stoneware, both general and of specific types, but this is not a

conventional catalogue, it is the first handbook on German stoneware as an archaeological artefact. In contrast to the more traditional decorative arts approach, the emphasis of this book is on the value of stoneware as a primary source of historical evidence in its own right. Gaimster shows that stoneware in museum collections, along with the rich archaeological evidence for its use and milieu, offers new and illuminating perspectives on fundamental aspects of cultural life in later medieval and early modern Europe: from living standards and dining habits to the social emulation process, from trade and cultural exchange to developments in artistic, political and religious life.

The book is organised into three main elements: six substantial and important text chapters, the catalogue and appendices. To take the catalogue first, its 180 pages deal with 22 individual German stoneware and daughter industries, each with an introductory essay providing a chronological overview of the development, principal output and distribution of its products. The 193 catalogue entries include 330 vessels, drawn from the British Museum with its large number of dated and signed pieces, the Victoria & Albert Museum's more artistic wares, and the Museum of London with its holdings of provenanced archaeological finds of German stoneware from the London area, important because the metropolis was the principal port of entry for stoneware traded to southern Britain between the 13th and 17th centuries. No one collection can do justice to the subject on its own, so each complements the other to provide a representative selection of stoneware industries and products most likely to be encountered by the researcher. Each catalogue entry comprises a basic description and date, brief physical details, acquisition history, publication references, general literature and comparable objects.

The introductory essays to each industry, usually of two to three pages, provide a basic survey of all types of German stoneware and daughter industries abroad. Other books contain similar material, but nowhere else is it set out so clearly, completely, or in English. Researchers will no longer have to plough through often obscure German texts. The only previous surveys in English were by Solon in 1892 and Hannover in 1924; a great deal of new research since then has changed the picture out of all recognition.

Each entry includes a photograph, which is essential for any catalogue: to adapt what Donald Harden said in the 1987 *Glass of the Caesars* catalogue, no item is, surely, worth including in a catalogue if it is downgraded by not being illustrated. In addition there are, uniquely for a catalogue of German stoneware, 19 pages of section drawings, giving in effect a type series of 113 of the main types produced at the 22 production centres. Twenty-five colour plates show 49 individual vessels: it is deeply disappointing that many of these are so dark that it is hard to see the detail of the decoration, or even the shape, where the vessels merge into the dark background. The worst are Pls. 24 and 27. The original photographs are quite clear so this darkening, as well as the odd colours of Pls. 20 and 21, must be the result of poor printing. This is really most unfortunate, as the whole point of colour plates is to show the characteristic colours.

Two-thirds of the catalogue is allocated to the six main Rhenish centres, Siegburg, Langerwehe, Cologne, Frechen, Raeren and the Westerwald; for each we are given a wealth of new information. Of particular value is the discussion of the intricate maze of Duchies, Electorates and Bishoprics which so confusingly merge or split up over time. Langerwehe has a most comprehensive three-page summary, but the three museums can provide only two jugs to represent this much neglected industry, many examples of which are

found in Britain. Other centres are doubly represented, by drawings in the main text as well as the catalogue photographs, but not Langerwehe.

Of great significance in understanding the overall picture, which has been so biased towards the Rhineland, are the 12 surveys of central European German stonewares which, although they rarely occur on British sites, are crucial to the understanding of the development and distribution of stoneware, and make the volume even more useful throughout Europe. Again it is a pity that there are so few examples of each type illustrated: perhaps the author should have ventured beyond the three London museums to fill such lacunae in an otherwise comprehensive work, and cater for the international and not just the British market. Finally, there are important surveys of Belgian, Northern French, Czech and English stoneware production centres to complete the picture. The whole is brought up to date by discussions on Historicism, Jugendstil 19th- and 20th-century wares, and the problem of reproductions and forgeries.

The catalogue is a major achievement in itself, but it is the main text of the volume which makes this the most significant publication ever produced on German stoneware. The outline of the history of collecting and research in the 19th century, as part of the Historicist movement, provides an introduction to the description of how the study of stoneware was placed on a sound archaeological footing during the last 50 years. The chapter on stoneware production includes discussion of the clay, throwing, decoration, firing and glazing; of especial interest is the process of making moulds for the relief decoration, a procedure whose complexity is belied by Gaimster's clear and simple explanation.

An account of the international trade in stoneware shows that it was an index of commercial contact between regionally influenced local markets and industries, and was a medium of cultural exchange. The comprehensive survey covers the Rhineland, Low Countries, Central Europe, the area of the Hanse in north Germany, Scandinavia and the Baltic, spreading out to Britain, the Mediterranean, the Americas and throughout the world by colonisation. Of the very greatest interest is Gaimster's discussion of the eastern Baltic, which has only recently been open for scrutiny and of which he has made a special study in the last few years. There is a useful section on wrecks, which are crucial for providing the absolute dates that are so elusive in many contexts; a list shows the stoneware types found on each wreck.

The final, and in many ways the most important sections, as most of this material is quite new, are the chapters on the functions, uses and social role of stoneware, illustrated from pictorial representations and documents: the growing status of stoneware in the household, amongst the emerging urban mercantile and artisan class of northern Europe, putting utilitarian vessels into a new social and symbolic sphere. The rise of relief decoration, made easier by copying woodcuts of the Little Masters, transformed the previously utilitarian vessels into a minor art, to be appreciated in its own right. There was ample opportunity for religious propaganda in the wake of the Lutheran revolution, with the use of moralising aphorisms urging piety and probity. These incidentally show that not only the mould cutters were literate, but also those who bought the vessels must have had at least a minimal standard of literacy.

In a seminal appendix John Goodall gives, for the first time in a study of European medieval and later ceramics, an Armory and Ordinary of the ubiquitous armorial designs on German stoneware, and discusses the significance of the national, civic, ecclesiastical and personal heraldry. Researchers have always been trying with little success to

identify Bartmann medallions; it is extraordinary that in Germany, where one would expect interest, there seems to be indifference. It is therefore a major breakthrough to have persuaded Goodall to interpret this most complex subject.

In another appendix Duncan Hook reports on the Neutron Activation Analysis which now enables the Rhenish wares to be provenanced to their production centres; earlier petrological studies did not work with stoneware. It will not be economic to test all pieces, but it will be crucial in the future for identifying problem examples, forgeries, and reproductions. Ian Freestone and Michael Tite discuss the technology of German stoneware glazes, but here there are still many problems to be solved. The volume ends with a comprehensive and invaluable 16-page bibliography.

In a book of this size it is remarkable that there are so few errors or infelicities. Only in one place has the careful editing slipped. On p.383, no.190 is oddly placed between 17 and 20, presumably mistaken for 19, or was it decided that 190 was genuine? My only overall criticism is the cross referencing, which is to chapter and section, not page. The complexity of adding and checking in a volume of this size is a problem but it is something which should be done. At the moment it takes ages to track down references in chapters or sections, which are often many pages long. On p. 305 it is a pity that my 1970 list of six Beauvais stoneware sites in England is quoted, when 40 sites at least are now known nearly 30 years later, while the earthenware finds have increased from 50 to more than 70. Admittedly recent lists have not been published. This is difficult as there are so many additions, but lists of sites are readily available for reference for all classes of import. Finally, mineral water bottles are a minefield of complexities, but it is not correct to say (p. 271) that the letters mark the spa where the bottle was filled. The spa is defined by the stamped mark of that spa. The letters denote the kiln where the bottle was made, though in the case of P it is thought more likely to refer to the area, in the same way as the stamp CUR TRIER does; in any case P is not the name of the spa, which is likely to have been Selters at this date in the 18th century.

'Dr Gaimster's book is the definitive work on the subject... This authoritative account is the most comprehensive single volume ever published on German stoneware'. So says the dustjacket. Such statements are often exaggerated, but in this case it is true.

John G.Hurst

Maureen Mellor, *Pots and People that have shaped the heritage of medieval and later England*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1997, 80pp., 92 figs. ISBN 1 85444 080 2. Price: £7.95.

The 'people' in the title of this attractive booklet are some of the collectors and archaeologists who have recovered and studied the ceramics excavated in Oxford that are now in the Ashmolean Museum. The way in which interest in medieval pottery has peaked and troughed, the random collection from workmen on building sites, and the first attempt at anything like a systematic retrieval system in the late 1930s are described. The vision of the young Rupert Bruce-Mitford being carried out of Oxford on the back of a lorry while he scabbled through its load is one that gives 'rescue archaeology' new meaning.

The first part of the booklet sets out to explain how the pottery came to be in Oxford — the medieval earthenwares made from the Oxfordshire clays first described by Dr Plot, Keeper of the Ashmolean in the seventeenth century; the