

the pots for the inclusions. The simplicity of classification is compensated by using it as a basis for intra-site comparisons, both here and in Southampton, where Brown has some very interesting observations on the nature and function of imports. Cumberpatch stresses the importance of the perceived aspects of pottery, particularly colour and texture, in relation to its setting within households and against other materials. The lesson is to think about what we record, and why, and to resist the temptation to do certain things just because we can.

Overall, this book, and even some contributions, are a very mixed bag. There are many interesting ideas, although sometimes you do have to hunt for them through the verbiage, and some may not be quite as new as the authors would like to think. A slightly careless treatment of data and their presentation or analysis is worrying, especially if it represents an attitude that data are secondary to ideas — theory needs data, and *good* data, every bit as much as data needs theory.

Clive Orton  
UCL Institute of Archaeology

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Whallon, R. 1987, 'Simple Statistics' in Aldenderfer, M. S. (ed.) *Quantitative Research in Archaeology Progress and Prospects*. Sage Publications, Newbury Park, 135–50.

**John Cotter, *A Twelfth Century Pottery Kiln at Pound Lane, Canterbury. Evidence for an Immigrant Potter in the Late Norman Period***, Canterbury Archaeological Trust Occasional Paper No. 1, 1997. 114 pp, 69 figures. ISBN 1 870545 07 9. Price: £9.95 paperback.

I've never been much of a one for historical whodunits; who is usually obvious and what they've done frequently mundane, but this case is more intriguing. John Cotter, in his 'Pound Lane' report, works with precision and clarity to unravel a mystery that, although apparently less than dull, he has rendered fascinating. There are two good reasons for the quality of this work. The first is the excellence of the archaeology; the second is the sure hand of the author. Cotter has produced a well-organised and thorough piece of research. He writes clearly and without frills and he guides us through a story of the discovery, recovery, analysis and interpretation of a pottery kiln and its products with faultless attention to detail. He also has an expert understanding, not only of his material, but also of the separate requirements of both the discipline and the reader.

Ian Riddler sets out the facts in the introduction. The unexpected find of the base of a pottery kiln and associated wasters was revealed at Pound Lane, Canterbury in 1986. A date between 1145 and 1175 is based on typological comparison of the kiln products with other local types, although it is suggested that the kiln was in operation only for a short time. There follows a summary of the excavation, by Mark Houlston, and a useful commentary on the form of the kiln from John Musty. The bulk of the volume is taken up by Chapter 2, John Cotter's description and analysis of the pottery. He describes the fabric (hard, sandy, coarse-textured, brown to grey), the glaze and methods of manufacture before launching into the typology of the rims,

vessels, handles, spouts, bases and decoration. This takes over 40 pages, including drawings and photographs, of meticulous description and quantification and thoroughly establishes the character of the assemblage. Chapter 3 considers the date of the kiln, using on- and off-site evidence in a comprehensive discussion that reaches a convincing conclusion. Chapter 4 is headed 'The English Context: Continental Influence on English Pottery c. 1000–1200' and broadens the base of this study with a look at material from Castle Neroche, the London area and other English potting traditions, as well as the local Tyler Hill types. The conclusion here is that Pound Lane pottery was made by an immigrant potter from continental Europe and Chapter 5, 'The European Context', develops this theme. In one of the most interesting passages of the book, Cotter compares the techniques and forms of the Pound Lane products with western, eastern and southern European parallels before finally homing in on Upper Normandy as the potter's place of origin. Chapter 6, 'The Historical Background: Potter and Patron' considers the possible reasons for a potter moving, or being moved, from Normandy to Canterbury in the mid 12th century. Chapter 7 briefly examines the impact of the Pound Lane pottery on other local products (hardly any) before Chapter 8 offers a general summary with conclusions.

Even those with no more than a passing interest in the local potting traditions of early medieval Kent will get something from this book. Chapter 2 is necessarily the most specific and tedious in detail; if it were not so then the author would be guilty of failing to set out all his evidence. This section remains an excellent example of how such catalogues should be prepared and presented and I would recommend it to all students of the discipline of ceramic analysis. There are pages of rim and vessel profiles, histograms, venn diagrams, pie charts and tables, all used with purpose in a thoroughly clear and comprehensive manner. This is important, for it shows that the discussions that follow are based on sound data collected to exacting standards.

Having established the complete nature of the act, Cotter embarks on his investigations into the identity and background of the perpetrator. He does so, once again, with a clarity that makes his writings very readable. If there is a weakness in his analysis it is his willingness to succumb to obvious red herrings. The potter's signature is a distinctive collared rim and it is fairly clear from the outset, at least to me, that all along it was the French wot dunnit (oops, I've given it away). It therefore seems unnecessarily dramatic to extend his search for this rim over half of Europe, including Iberia and the Mediterranean, Poland and Bohemia. Those sections are, admittedly, very short, but are perhaps all the more uninteresting for that and seem to show only that Cotter will follow every possible lead in his single-minded quest for that confounded, characteristic, conclusive collared rim. Once one starts looking, of course, there are collared rims everywhere and Cotter runs the risk of undermining his own conclusion by throwing up too many possibilities. He is quick to dispel any doubts with his skilful handling of the historical background in Chapter 6. Here, we are offered two possibilities for the identity of 'Mr. Big', the power that brought a potter to Kent and set up the Pound Lane manufactory; an individual or an (ecclesiastical) institution. There is, unfortunately, insufficient evidence fully to resolve this question; but the discussion, however inconclusive, is interesting and well presented and enhances the analysis and interpretation. Cotter is undoubtedly sure in his understanding of context, and more importantly, of the need to establish any context for the reader. These last pages, chapters 6 and 7, are crucial

to the success of this book as a discussion, especially in terms of making it a worthwhile read for those with interests outside Canterbury. Although they are, perhaps, curiously brief (it would probably be possible to marshal a more exhaustive examination of the historical evidence and the archaeological impact, but that might require a second volume), these chapters lend breadth and weight to what is already an outstanding work of description and analysis. He has taken what to many might seem to be a discovery of no more than local significance and shown its true worth, and he has done so through an exemplary use of analytical and quantitative methods that should put many of his peers to shame. The MPRG is supposed to be producing a set of minimum standards for the recording and publication of pottery assemblages — and not before time, for I sometimes find it very hard work trying to extract from printed sources information that will allow me to conduct comparative studies (I'm not going to give examples — there are too many to choose from). I reckon John Cotter should be in on those standards, for everything one needs to know about the Pound Lane pottery is presented here. Cotter comes across very clearly as a purposeful, conscientious and entertaining unraveller of mysteries and, as with all good writing, I can't wait for the sequel. Mr Big had better watch out.

Duncan Brown

**Pat Miller and Roy Stephenson, *A 14th-century pottery site in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey*, Museum of London Archaeology Service Archaeology Studies Series 1, 1999. 54 pp., 51 figures, 15 tables. ISBN 1 901992 07 1. Price £7.95 paperback.**

The Surrey whiteware pottery industry was a major source of glazed pottery in medieval London, as well as supplying a sizeable area either side of the Thames, stretching to Berkshire in the west and the Thames Estuary in the east. From the middle of the 13th until the end of the 14th century Kingston upon Thames was the main centre for this industry, after which the focus moved to the Farnham area and the Hampshire border.

The production site at Eden Street has been known since the 1960s, but was the subject of a full excavation only in 1995. Unfortunately, contemporary ground level did not survive, but the truncated remains of four kilns (two of which were definitely consecutive) and one large waster pit were excavated.

Both kilns 1 and 2 were dated, using archaeomagnetism, to the first half of the 14th century, and the absence of distinctive mid to late 13th-century Kingston-type ware vessels, which were present at Trig Lane *c.* 1290 (Pearce and Vince 1988, 16–17), indicates that production on this particular site did not start until *c.* 1300. Lobed and plain cups, however, first occur in quantity in the City in the second half of the 14th century, for example, at Trig Lane G10 (*c.* 1360; *ibid.*, 17). The preceding Trig Lane revetment assemblage, G7, is dated only by typology to *c.* 1340 and the best potential parallel comes from Ludgate Hill, where the city ditch was filled later than *c.* 1310 and earlier than 1340 (*ibid.*, 17). It is quite likely that a search through the Ludgate Hill assemblage would produce close parallels for some of the Eden Street vessels and perhaps allow an estimate to be made of the contribution of this kiln site to the supply of Kingston-type ware in London. A similar

exercise carried out for the late 14th-century Knapp-Drewett kiln site in the 1980s (unpublished) showed that even at a time when the proportion of Kingston-type ware in London was much lower than at the height of the industry, the Knapp-Drewett kiln site itself supplied only a small proportion of the products reaching London. This indicates the large size of the industry and it is therefore very likely to be true for Eden Street too.

This publication is commendably quick and thorough and includes a detailed description of the range of products and the methods used to produce them, with many of the illustrations in colour and printed in a visually pleasing, well-designed format. As such it forms a model of how print publication could be, given the funds, and C&A are to be congratulated on their sponsorship, without which, undoubtedly, the monograph would have been far too expensive to produce and publish.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Pearce, J. and Vince, A.** 1988, *A Dated Type-Series of London Medieval Pottery Part 4: Surrey Whitewares*, London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Pap 10.

Alan Vince

**Michael Archer, *Delftware: The Tin-Glazed Earthenware of the British Isles, a Catalogue of the Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum***, London: The Stationery Office, 1997. 642 pp. ISBN 0 11 290499 8. Price: £125, hardback in slipcase.

The long-awaited catalogue by Michael Archer documents tin-glazed earthenware holdings at the Victoria and Albert Museum and admirably lives up to expectations. This large volume focuses on over 1250 pieces of English, Irish, and Scottish delftware and illustrates virtually all the objects in black and white, sometimes in more than one view. Many of the items are also reproduced in the 346 color plates. The volume is slip-jacketed and in a case.

The text of the book is broken down into several sections. In the 60 pages of introductory material, the author focuses in depth on the social history of delftware, its manufacture and distribution, and ceramic and other design influences. The inclusion of early illustrations as well as quotations from and references to period documents makes these sections particularly useful. This material is followed by a discussion of the history of English and Scottish tin-glazed tiles and, finally, the history of the museum's collection of delftware.

The 'Catalogue of Wares' forms the bulk of the text and is organized primarily by shape and usage of the objects. To a lesser extent, the pieces are divided into groups based on their decorative motifs. The larger groups of entries in the catalogue are each introduced in single to multi-page discussions, variously focusing on production methods, design sources, social history, and other relevant material. These introductions are often punctuated with illustrations drawn from prints, maps, or paintings. The first portion of the catalogue treats dishes and plates, some of them moulded. The author then moves on to discussions of various types of drinking vessels, followed by other table