

The formation of the second generation: a documented version of the origin and early history of the MPRG

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SUMMARY

John Hurst's evening classes at Goldsmiths' and the Post-Medieval Ceramic Research Group were precedents for the MPRG, although the Medieval Pottery Seminar at the University of London was the catalyst and the Study Group for Romano-British Coarse Pottery the model. The Group was founded to aid a new cadre of specialists process large quantities of pottery from urban excavations. Its first task, now complete, was to produce guidelines under government aegis. Its modus operandi was the annual meeting or conference, and later the Bulletin, the newsletter and the co-ordination of regional groups. To ensure succession it is suggested that we consider returning to our academic roots.

PREAMBLE

Memory is a fickle business and, even if recall is accurate, represents a partial view of the past. Although more weight should be placed on contemporary records, they too reflect one facet or strand of a story. The account of any single actor should not be regarded as definitive. The perspective of those, for example, then working at Southampton University or in the Museum of London's Department of Urban Archaeology would be different. In this spirit I offer a note towards a genealogy and early history of our Group fuller than the summaries provided in more general statements about our subject (Moorhouse 1978, 1–2; 1983, 103; McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 1). As this is not a review of the development of our field (which may be sought via the Bibliography and Hurst's paper in this volume, 23–30), many who made significant contributions will not be mentioned. The appended documents indicate the stage our discipline had reached and some of the personalities involved, as well as conveying a flavour of the period (and our levels of literacy and typing skills — correcting stencils was a pain). *Égohistoire* will intrude in my version, as do personal reminiscences in other contributions to this celebratory number, which could be justified by the post-processualist tenet urging the presencing of the author.

PROTOTYPES

Hurst's magisterium

The participants in John Hurst's evening classes at Goldsmiths' College in south-east London constituted *de facto* a group of practising archaeologists interested in post-classical pottery. As many came back year after year, Hurst would vary the time span and area covered in the syllabus or put more weight on the practical side (see **Documents 1–3**). I frequented the 1967 Spring term course on the *Saxon and Medieval Pottery of South-East England* and a year later that on the *Post-Medieval Pottery of South-East England 1450–1750*. Thereafter I would drop in on a session to listen and sometimes to report on my own research in Italy. It was, together with the direct advice of Stephen Moorhouse (whom I had met earlier on Philip Mayes' excavation at South Witham in Lincolnshire), the couple of months as Hurst's first personal assistant in the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, and a practice run in Baghdad drawing and describing an Islamic group from Julian Reade's excavation at Tell Taya, the only research training I received and the only informed support in England whilst a research student. As the promised textbooks were not published,¹ the only way to learn was in the medieval scholastic tradition of verbal transfer of knowledge from the master. Or perhaps a better analogy for Hurst's classes is what I imagine to be a standing seminar at the Sorbonne.

The PMCRG

Another forum, and example for our Group, was the *Post-Medieval Ceramic Research Group*, which published four card-covered, cyclostyled *Broad-sheets*, numbered 1 to 4, between 1964 and 1966 (Barton 1967; Butler 1967). The first issue records its inauguration at Bristol in November 1963 at a meeting attended by 102 people, who determined that the focus should be on earthenwares from 1500 to 1750. The prime mover was Kenneth Barton (**Document 4**); Mayes was the Meetings Secretary and Hurst Advisor. By the second issue Barton was also the Treasurer, Robert Charleston the President, and Hugh Tait an additional Advisor. In the third over 185 members are listed. By the last issue Mayes had become Secretary, John Ashdown Treasurer and Barton remained Editor. When the Group was wound up in 1966 in favour of the nascent Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology, it had 223 members. Although one of the biannual meetings of the Society was for some time devoted to pottery,² we have become its effective heir as well as adopting its informal and inexpensive character.

At the classes, PMCRG meetings and at other extra-mural weekend schools and conferences samizdat lists would be distributed; for example, of *Saxon and Medieval Imports into Britain* compiled by Hurst, Gerald Dunning and Barton, and of *Post-Roman Imports in West and North-West* by Charles Thomas (both dated January 1968). These occasions provided contexts for the free exchange of knowledge and for initiation into an esoteric field, as well as opportunities to mingle with the names. The study of post-classical pottery was thereby established on an archaeological (*i.e.* 'below ground') rather than on an art-historical or fanciful basis. Despite the letter from Ivor Noël Hume in *Broadsheet 2* (1965, 27) extolling the matching of ceramics to 'individuals and their inventories' and thus 'their owners' social and economic positions', the principal aim in that phase was it seems 'the study of pot for its own sake' (Le Patourel 1975, 9). It was dominated by a few autodidacts, who had their own firmly held views about terminology and methodology.

The Study Group for Romano-British Coarse Pottery

It was, however, the organisational structure of an earlier period which inspired our founder, Michael McCarthy (in this volume, p. 5–7; **Document 13**). Roman archaeologists had, since the start of the century, provided a model for systematic pottery description and representation (Tyers 1996, 9–15). In 1964 the Council for British Archaeology published a *Student's Guide*, comprising an illustrated

glossary of terms, a list of stratified sites, and a guide to drawing pottery with three pages of examples (Webster 1964). Second and third editions of this popular booklet were published in 1969 and 1975. The Study Group 'came into being in 1971' during the organisation of a conference on *Current Research* held the following year, whose prompt publication was a milestone in the field (Webster 1975, 11; Tyers 1996, 21). This informal Group soon had about 40 members and met annually at a different place to examine the locality's wares. Its more general aims were the listing of kiln groups, better description methods (to which end they published a colour chart), and a multilingual glossary (published in 1986 in the first issue of their *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies*, 58–79). Presumably it was the clearer practical focus and more professional membership of the Group which appealed to McCarthy. Its separate history has since mirrored ours — including some unnecessary duplication — with a Department of the Environment *Guidelines* in 1980 and an English Heritage review a decade later (Young 1980; Fulford and Huddleston 1991). Their Group was a smaller association (membership reached around 100 in 1986, half of whom were full-time pottery specialists: *Journal of Roman Pottery Studies* 1 (1986), 4). The journal, after appearing annually from 1989 to 1994, has since become an occasional monograph series. This may in part reflect the Roman Group's peripheral regional status (seen in its name) in the more unified and wider field of Roman pottery, whose products were traded extensively and are studied even more internationally (*e.g.* Comfort 1979).

PROGENITOR: THE MEDIEVAL POTTERY SEMINAR

On my return from Italy in 1973, my school friend Jeremy Haslam (whom I had met again four years earlier on the Church Street and Greyfriars excavation at Oxford) and I organised a seminar on medieval pottery at the London University Institute of Archaeology, at the expense of its Students' Union (**Documents 5–9**). It brought together an emerging second generation of archaeologists specialising in pottery who sought a methodology and standards instead of semantic arguments. In the academic sphere, particularly at Southampton and at The British School at Rome, artefact research was extended from Roman to later pottery. The scale of rescue archaeology had led to full-time work in the field and a division of labour. As Peter Addyman put it, in his cyclostyled paper circulated at the York meeting, there were two main problems: 'the establishment of a methodology for the study of the large amounts of ceramics which come from any large urban excavation in Britain [and] of a detailed

ceramic sequence for [the city] and its area'. He went on to tell us how the York Archaeological Trust was investigating a computerised retrieval system, because the quantity of data and the variety of heads made searches through multiple record card indices impractical; but he balked at petrological and mineralogical analyses on the grounds of cost and time (Addyman 1974).

ORIGINS AND FIRST QUINQUENNIUM

I do not remember the circumstances in which the baton passed to McCarthy (**Documents 10–12**). It may have been prompted by my appointment at Lancaster or by the consideration that the field-work units rather than the universities were the more appropriate arena. The Hurst imprimatur had throughout validated our actions; and the change may have fitted the shift from voluntarism to state patronage, which his office could bring to the sector it financed (**Document 11**).

Knuston Hall

Towards the end of 1974 McCarthy announced the formation of the Group and organised the first meeting at Knuston Hall in Northamptonshire on *The Analysis and Publication of Pottery* (**Document 13**). In the first afternoon we heard the problems of those in the field. The second day was devoted to analytical techniques. On the final morning Graham Webster (1975) informed the 47 participants still present of the experience of the Romano-British *Study Group*. Then, to counterbalance the emphasis on recognition and analysis, Jean Le Patourel (1975) outlined the possible 'ends' which the study of pottery may serve.

The Guidelines

The abstracts circulated afterwards recorded the main outcome, the decision to set up a working party under the auspices of the DoE (justified as aiming to produce 'one of [its] manuals of instruction and advice', Hurst letter 14/10/76) 'to give detailed consideration to ways in which pottery analysis could be improved [with] the aim to produce guidelines which archaeologists working especially on Saxon and later material can be recommended to follow when preparing pottery for publication' (MPRG 1975, 1). As John Wilcock put it 'word descriptions have been at best vague, and at worst meaningless because of a lack of agreed terminology'. Since it was no longer possible to handle different data sets directly, the 'more effective communication of pottery finds will only become possible when terminology is agreed nationally'; and 'there is no room for ambiguity at any stage [in] the

preparation of material for computerisation' (Wilcock 1975, 27–8). Peter Davey's experience editing the papers of over 25 contributors to the 1975 Chester conference confirmed that 'there seems little agreement among practising medievalists about such fundamentals as the language of pottery description, methods of quantification, the use of scientific aids, the handling of comparative material and in some cases the purpose of medieval pottery study itself' (Davey 1977, 4). We imagined that guidance could be promulgated quickly. However, the *Guidelines* appeared eight years later (Blake and Davey 1983, 2), the *Glossary* had to be started from scratch again, resulting in a simulacrum published only recently by the Group (MPRG 1998), and the unified *National Bibliography of Medieval Ceramics* came on-line in March 2001 (<http://ntserver002.liv.ac.uk/mprg/>). Although Maureen Mellor's review of our field concluded that problems of nomenclature consistency and of data comparability were in 1991 still unresolved (Mellor 1994, 5), we have progressed far since the pre-MPRG days when the first generation would happily and heatedly argue about which of fabric, body or paste was correct and whose descriptions and drawings could not be relied on as accurate records.

First officers and *Medieval Ceramics*

The second meeting held a year later at Horncastle in Lincolnshire — also backed indirectly by the DoE — was on *Late Saxon Pottery in Eastern England* and on the *Guidelines*, a draft of which had been circulated beforehand. The £156 profit from this conference allowed McCarthy to print **Document 14** for insertion in *Current Archaeology* (McCarthy 27/4/76). At or after that meeting the officers of the Group emerged, eventually to be confirmed and constituted at the third meeting, at Exeter (**Document 15**): Hurst as President, McCarthy as Secretary, and Margaret Wood as Treasurer. Richard Hodges, on account of his appointment at Sheffield, 'agreed to be Editor [of the Bulletin] as a last resort' and was only persuaded once I had proposed Davey as co-editor (McCarthy 1977; 1/4/76; 11/5/76). The latter pipped the first issue of *Medieval Ceramics* to the post by producing a more handsome volume on medieval pottery from north Wales and north-west England (Davey 1977).

Under their direction our journal has from the outset been international. From the second issue German as well as French summaries were appended to papers (it was not until 1984 that the monoglot English reader was provided with an abstract). That issue even carried a paper in French and a bibliography of north African pottery; 30% of the papers published in the first twelve volumes were foreign regional surveys or on foreign industries

(*Medieval Ceramics* 13 (1989), 1). This reflects not only the extent to which pottery travelled and Britons acquire *Studienraum* (Hoekstra 1991, 4), but also the desire to build relationships with continental colleagues.

Regional groups

Apart from the annual meeting (to which was added in 1978 an additional meeting in London) and the *Bulletin* (both of which followed previous models such as the *Medieval Village Research Group*), McCarthy wanted to 'encourage the setting up of informal regional groups to bring locals together' (26/4/76). Two years later at the fourth meeting, at Durham, 'a number of members expressed an interest in attending occasional regional meetings to discuss local problems in processing and interpreting excavated medieval and post-medieval material'. So Davey invited those involved in this field in the north-west to a first meeting at Carlisle, hosted by McCarthy in June 1978 (Davey circular 18/4/78). But, as Moorhouse, who succeeded McCarthy as Secretary at the Durham meeting, noted in our inaugural annual newsletter (October 1979) 'the first regional group devoted to the study of medieval pottery was established in 1972 to cover Scotland' and subsequently a number of others were set up independently of the MPRG in the south-west, the north-west, Wales, the north-east, and Yorkshire and Humberside (ordered here according to his chronology of their foundation).

The WMPRG may have had the longest continuous history, starting from its own informal seminars in 1977–8, producing its own journal *Medieval and Later Pottery in Wales* (which faltered in the last decade through lack of contributions), and publishing a survey of later medieval material in the Welsh Principality (1 (1978), i; Papazian and Campbell 1992). Although autonomous, it held meetings with the MPRG (our fifth annual at Cardiff) and the North-West Region MPRG (1981). Nor has this precluded us from publishing papers on Wales or from having a Welsh president. The London Kiln Study Group, established in 1975 and based in south London, apparently served a different function with a more amateur membership.

We owe much to the Group's officers — in particular to our first Secretary — for establishing and promoting these activities, of which *Medieval Ceramics*, the occasional publications sponsored by DoE and its successor English Heritage, and the papers derived from our Hull conference (Davey and Hodges 1983) are enduring monuments. The MPRG they nurtured has provided a framework within which we have been able to exchange information, socialise and articulate our professional

concerns. But it is unlikely we would have been founded without the example, teaching, liaison and support of Hurst, the mentor if not the creator of the second generation (Le Patourel 1992).

THE THIRD GENERATION?

If Barton, Dunning, Hurst, Martyn Jope, Le Patourel and their contemporaries who may have devoted a smaller proportion of their archaeological time to post-classical ceramics were the first generation, and the finds specialists who were formed in the late 1960s and 70s the second, where is the third? The contrast in age profiles of those participating in a MPRG conference and, for example, the one promoted in February 2001 by the Societies for Medieval and Post-Medieval Archaeology on the *Archaeology of the Reformation* is striking. So are the theoretical concerns and subject matter of the papers, with few at the latter occasion apparently incorporating information derived from the study of portable artefacts.

Alejandra Gutiérrez, at the October 2000 meeting of the London Area Group, suggested that we should engage more with recent theory to make our subject more attractive to university students. This is hardly the task for ceramic specialists employed in effect on piecework, who have to take a holiday or unpaid leave to attend conferences in their own discipline. Their principal concern, after securing their contracts, has been to maintain the standards acquired in the 1970s and 80s (Mellor 1994, 30–1). It is surprising that under 'late capitalistic imperatives' (Frans Verhaeghe, this volume, 10) innovation occurs in this sector (*e.g.* Cumberpatch and Blinkhorn 1997).

Perhaps it is time to widen our appeal by shifting the emphasis of the Group from an organisation mainly concerned with creating or maintaining standards under the aegis of the English state controller — that job may be for the Institute of Field Archaeologists (*Medieval Ceramics* 14 (1990), 1) and be undertaken in collaboration with our Roman colleagues — to one that is more interested in 'ends' (*i.e.* synthesis and interpretation: Le Patourel 1975, 9). Thereby we may create a Group to which the museum curator not involved in fieldwork, the academic and the potter feel they belong rather than one where they make guest appearances. Perhaps we should hold meetings in universities involving graduate students; or together with the Finds Research Group showcase our role in medieval studies at the annual Leeds International Medieval Congress; or seek support from the Arts and Humanities Research Board or foundations such as the Getty for joint projects in order to spend periods or part of our time undertaking research under the aegis of an academic institution. On the

other hand, university departments of archaeology and history could engage more with the portable material culture of the last millennium and involve museum and fieldwork personnel in their teaching (e.g. www.rhul.ac.uk/History/for-students/postgrad/ma/material01/).

Discarding the agenda of Knuston Hall may sound like putting the clock back a quarter of a century, but we should be confident of no longer being stamp collectors (*pace* Davey 1988, 13). We now have a methodology, tools, and a structure, however imperfect, and work together in a way unthinkable to the first generation. We are well placed to provide the know-how and evidence to ground the exciting ideas which seem to orbit in academic space. We need to build a bridge to a third generation as Hurst did from the first to us.

Endnotes

1. Only Hurst's and Musty's chapters were drafted for the medieval volume before the publishing house folded, which event also scuppered the post-medieval books (*ex inf.* Hurst; see **Documents 1, 3**).
2. As promised to the members of the PMCRG on its dissolution, but reneged in the subsequent publicity announcing the SPMA's mission.

DOCUMENTS

Document 1 (cyclostyled — reproduced here in correct page order and with some minor editing)

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
 Department of Extra-Mural Studies
 Syllabus of a course of twelve University Extension
 lectures and two field meetings on
**MEDIEVAL ARCHAEOLOGY:
 THE EVIDENCE OF POTTERY**
 by J. G. Hurst, MA, FSA

1. *General Introduction and the Manufacture of Medieval Pottery*
 The development and study of Medieval pottery. Preparation of the clay and grogging. Hand-made and wheel-thrown shapes. Decoration, slips and glazes. Kiln types and methods of firing. Oxidization and reduction.

2. *The Development of Medieval Pottery*
 The breakdown of the Roman pottery industry as a result of the Saxon invasions. Hand-made Saxon pottery. The re-introduction of wheel-thrown pottery in Eastern England in the Middle Saxon period. The Early Medieval re-emergence of Saxon types. Medieval coarse wares. The fine decorated jugs of the 13th and 14th centuries. Mass production and industrialisation in the late medieval period. Different types of pottery.

3. *The Dating of Medieval Pottery*
 Methods of dating by coins, by documentary and architectural evidence, by comparison with dated examples elsewhere, by typology. The long life of many pottery types, archaism and rubbish survival.

4. *Description and Illustration of Medieval Pottery*
 Sorting into fabrics, glazes and types. The reconstruction of profiles. Description of form, fabric and glaze. Illustration of pottery. Publication.

5. *The Regional Character of Medieval Pottery I*
 The development of medieval pottery is very complex. There are very many regional variations. East Anglia, Home Counties, Southern England.

6. *The Regional Character of Medieval Pottery II*
 The Oxford Region, Midlands and the North.

7. *The Distribution of Medieval Pottery*
 Coarse wares were usually distributed within 20 miles of each kiln. Finer wares were traded up to 100 miles either overland in all directions or by sea or rivers. Some towns drew on one kiln while others obtained pottery from many sources.

8. *Foreign Medieval Pottery and Imports*
 The different pottery types of Europe. The continuity of good quality pottery in the Rhineland and the development of stoneware. The coarse pottery of the Slav areas. The North Sea continuum of decorated jugs. The fine wares of France. The Mediterranean development of Sgraffito and Maiolica. The shift in trade from the Rhineland to France.

9. *Post-Medieval Pottery I*
 The difference between Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery. The fine ungrogged wares usually oxidized. The prevalence of thick double glazes. The multiplication of shapes. The coarse wares of the south, trailed slip and sgraffito wares.

10. *Post-Medieval Pottery II*
 Regional variation in post-Medieval pottery. The hard purple wares of the Midlands, the survival of green glazes in the north. The development of Staffordshire. Cistercian ware and tygs. Slipwares. The development of delftware and stoneware.

11. *Post-Medieval Imported Pottery I*
 The importance of imported pottery. Blue and white porcelain from the Far East. Middle Eastern wares from Persia and Turkey. Spanish Hispano-Moresque lustre. Coarse olive jars and red wares. Italian Maiolica and coarse sgraffito. Southern French tin-glazed wares and Saintonge polychrome.

12. *Post-Medieval Imported Pottery II*
 Central and northern France. Loire flagons, green glazed wares. Beauvais sgraffito and stoneware. German stoneware and slipwares. Low Countries maiolica, delft and coarse wares.

PRACTICAL WORK

VISIT 1. To either the Guildhall or London Museum, to examine the collections and handle different types of pottery.

VISIT 2. To the Southwark excavations warehouse to see and handle excavated groups of pottery, mainly post-medieval.

In addition at each lecture it will be possible to handle the various types of pottery being discussed. Members of the class are also urged to bring along any examples they may have to use for demonstrations and discussion purposes.

THE FORMATION OF THE SECOND GENERATION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MEDIEVAL POTTERY

There is unfortunately as yet no text book on Medieval pottery. One is now being written but it will not be published before this course ends.

J. W. G. Musty Ed. with contributions by G. C. Dunning, J. G. Hurst and E. M. Jope — *The Medieval Ceramics of the British Isles* - to be published by Cory Adams and Mackay in 1966.

The only other general work is: — B. Rackham — *Medieval English Pottery* (Faber 1948). This is a useful picture book but it is written from an art historical point of view ignoring the coarse wares and not taking into account the archaeological background.

Meanwhile the evidence is scattered in numerous archaeological journals both national and in those of local societies. Some of the most important papers for each region are listed below.

SAXON BACKGROUND

Dunning-Hurst-Myres & Tischler — *Anglo-Saxon Pottery*, *Med. Arch.* III (1959), pp. 1-78.

DATING

J. G. Hurst — *White Castle and the dating of Medieval pottery*, *Med. Arch.* VI-VIII (1962-3), pp. 135-155.

REGIONAL SURVEYS

[28 items under nine regional headings, some forthcoming, and occasional comments]

POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY

For the Post-Medieval period the position is much worse though two general text books are in preparation they will not appear till 1967.

K. J. Barton — *The Post-Medieval Ceramics of the British Isles*

J. G. Hurst — *The Post-Medieval Imported Ceramics of the British Isles*

Both these will be published by Cory Adams and Mackay in the same format and as successors to the Medieval volume.

Most of the literature deals with pottery from the Art Historical aspect and ignores the common kitchen wares. [List of Faber monographs on pottery and porcelain by Garner, Honey, Jenyns, Lane and Rackham, with the concluding observation:] There are as yet no up to date text-books on Spanish, French or German pottery.

2.7.65

Document 2 (cyclostyled)

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Department of Extra-Mural Studies

Syllabus of a course of 10 University Extension lectures and 2 visits

on

SAXON AND MEDIEVAL POTTERY OF SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND

by

J. G. Hurst, MA, FSA

1. *Manufacture of Saxon and Medieval Pottery*

Preparation of the clay and different forms of tempering. The results of different types of firing in reducing or oxidizing atmospheres.

2. **PRACTICAL:** *The Sorting of Saxon and Medieval Fabrics*
The establishing of a fabric type series and methods of sorting pottery.

3. *Classifying of Saxon and Medieval Pottery Forms*
Terminology and classification of Saxon and Medieval pottery shapes.

4. **PRACTICAL:** *The Sorting of Saxon and Medieval Forms*
Methods of sorting and recording different forms.

5. *Saxon Pottery and Problems of Dating*
Hand-made Saxon pottery and the development of wheel-thrown pottery in South-East England. Methods of dating. Archaism and rubbish survival.

6. **PRACTICAL:** *Sorting and describing Saxon and Medieval pottery*
The description of Saxon and Medieval pottery for publication.

7. *Medieval Pottery and its Distribution*
The development of Medieval pottery in South-East England. The Early Medieval re-emergence of Saxon types. Fine decorated jugs. Mass production in the late Medieval period. The distribution of coarse and fine wares.

8. **PRACTICAL:** *The Drawing of Saxon and Medieval Pottery*
Methods of drawing pottery. Thickness of line and reduction.

9. *Imports and Trade*
The Saxon trade with the Rhineland and the Norman shift to France.

10. **PRACTICAL:** *The Publication of Saxon and Medieval Pottery*
The final stages, general comments and conclusions on the pottery, mounting of drawings. Proofs.

VISIT 1. *The London Museum* — to examine the Saxon and Medieval collections.

VISIT 2. *The Guildford Museum* — to study Surrey types of pottery.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[General: dating — Hurst 1962-3; Saxon — Dunning *et al.* 1959 (as 1); J. G. Hurst: SAXO-NORMAN POTTERY IN EAST ANGLIA, *Proc. Cambs. Ant. Soc.* XLIX, Pages 43-70, 1955; L, Pages 29-60, 1956; LI, Pages 37-65, 1957 [followed by 58 items listed by 14 counties, and concluding with Atkinson 1946 on *Field Archaeology* and Grinsell *et al.* 1966 on *The Preparation of Archaeological Reports.*]

22.11.66

Document 3 (cyclostyled)

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
 Department of Extra-Mural Studies
 Syllabus of a course of 12 University Extension lectures
 and 2 visits
 on
 POST-MEDIEVAL POTTERY OF SOUTH-EAST
 ENGLAND 1450-1750
 by
 J. G. Hurst, MA, FSA

1. *General Introduction to Post-Medieval Pottery*
 Differences between medieval and post-medieval fabrics. The multiplication of forms in the period 1450-1750. Cistercian ware, Tudor-green and yellow, Slip-ware, delft and stoneware.

2. *Post-Medieval Imports*
 The swing of the pottery trade back to Germany from France. Imports of maiolica from Italy, Spain and the Low countries. Sources of coarse ware imports. Increasing trade with the Far East. The influence of imports on English forms.

3. *Sorting and Classifying Pottery* [4. PRACTICAL]
 Establishment of a fabric and form type series. Choosing examples for publication. Presentation of site evidence for dating and function on stratified sites. Sorting of surface or museum collections.

5. *Pottery Drawing* [6. PRACTICAL]
 Drawing instruments and methods of drawing. Angle of the pot, diameter, profile and decoration. Styles of drawing.

7. *Describing Pottery* [8. PRACTICAL]
 Part of the pot, form, fabric, technique, decoration, glaze, site context, external. Card index of drawings and description.

9. *Form of the Pottery Report* [10. PRACTICAL]
 General introduction, basis of dating, list of type fabrics, description of illustrated pieces. Conclusions, tables and specialist reports.

11. *Exhibition and Description of the Pottery Brought by Students*

12. *Why Study Pottery?*
 Survival qualities of pottery overstress its importance. Pottery can tell us the function of buildings and the length of time they were used. It can help determine social distinctions, trade contacts and travelling relationships. Regional characteristics and cultural boundaries. Economics of marketing and communications. The aesthetic aspects.

VISIT 1. SOUTHWARK depot and processing centre to see groups of excavated material and the work being done on them.

VISIT 2. GUILDHALL MUSEUM to examine a large museum collection largely unassociated.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Two general textbooks [by Barton and Hurst, 1] are unlikely to appear for some time. [PMCRG *Broadsheets* and Faber monographs with comments.] The most important reports for different areas are listed [seventeen periodical articles in thirteen areas. Concludes with] GENERAL PAPERS, M. R. Holmes: *The Bellarmine Mask on Imported Rhenish Stoneware*, *Antiquities Journal*, 31 (1951), pp. 73-179; A. Oswald: *The Archaeology and Economic History of English*

Clay Tobacco Pipes, *Journ. Brit. Arch. Ass.* 3rd series, XXIII (1960), pp. 40-101.

19.4.67

Document 4 (printed)

THE POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMIC
 RESEARCH GROUP

This group was formed in order to make the study of what is undoubtedly one of the most interesting and important periods in the history of English ceramics. The period in question is that which lies between c.1500 to c.1750 AD which is one of considerable change in the methods and types of pottery used and is also one in which considerable quantities of ceramics are imported into this country from the whole of western Europe and the Far East, furthermore, it is a period in which there was a large export trade of ceramics from England to the colonies and other newly formed nations. We need to know a great deal more about the ceramics of this period and it is the aim of the group not just to study a piece of pot for its artistic merit but to study it from every angle, to understand its manufacture, the growth and development of the industry, the export and import types and the various influences that were brought to bear from outside on this great period of English potting.

The group has amongst its ranks archaeologists, art historians and working potters. It meets twice yearly in various places in the British Isles and at these meetings it studies the local collections of post-medieval ceramics; those in museums or private hands, together with material recently found in excavations. Membership is open to all for a subscription of 10/- per annum and the group publishes a *Broadsheet*, in this publication the items published include, papers read at the conferences, extracts from old documents and up to date information on recent work. We welcome to our ranks all interested in the history of ceramics.

Applications for membership should be made to the secretary:

K. J. Barton, FSA, AMA,
 The County Museum,
 Hartlebury Castle,
 Nr. Kidderminster
 Worcestershire, England

Document 5 (carbon copy)

REPORT TO THE INSTITUTE OF
 ARCHAEOLOGY STUDENTS' UNION

The post-graduate research students in medieval archaeology (David Andrews, Hugo Blake, Jeremy Haslam and Claudia White) with Tim Tatton-Brown and Julian Munby arranged two seminars, the meetings of which during the session 1973-4 were attended by some 20 to 40 persons.

(1) *Medieval archaeology meetings*. November 15: Discussion meeting; November 27: 'Medieval Archaeology in the Institute' by D. Sturdy; December 11: 'Architecture and Archaeology' by R. Gem; January 22: 'Medieval Technology' by H. Hodges; January 29: 'The Evolution of Medieval Carpentry Joints' by C. Hewert; February 6: 'The Archaeology of the Book, 1st-7th centuries AD' by J. Brown; February 19: 'Recent Archaeological Research on Deserted Medieval Villages' [by J. Hurst]; February 26: 'Medieval Climate and Tree Rings' by J. Schove; March 12: 'The Origins of the Castle' by B. Davison.

THE FORMATION OF THE SECOND GENERATION

(2) *Medieval pottery seminar*. February 28: 'Quantitative methods of analysing large and small assemblages' by K. Barclay and P. Clarke; March 28: 'Recent work on Saxon pottery' by J. Hurst; April 18: 'Chinese influence on Islamic pottery in the ninth century' by D. Whitehouse; June 22: 'Excavated material from York' by York Archaeological Trust.

Account of expenses incurred in organisation of medieval archaeology meetings, 1973-4

Medieval pottery seminar circulars (3)	
envelopes (150)	0.42
postage (3½ × 150)	5.25
Phone calls to York (4)	0.55
Hire of lecture room (April 18 meeting)	1.00
Occasional postage and local calls	0.82½
	<u>£8.04½</u>

31st March, 1974
 Hugo Blake.
 Institute of Archaeology, 31-4 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY.
 cc. Hugh Toller, Treasurer
 Tim Tatton-Brown, President, Students' Union.

Document 6 (cyclostyled)

MEDIEVAL POTTERY SEMINAR

This circular is addressed to the increasing number of archaeologists who concern themselves mainly with pottery, either in excavation units or for research. As pottery from the medieval period is not as well catered for as that from either the Roman or post-medieval periods, we think that these archaeologists may be interested in occasional meetings where some of the broader aspects could be discussed, such as production, economic history, quantitative methods of study, as well as particular wares or foreign typologies.

The main benefit from such informal meetings will be to hear the unpublished views of specialists and to see material more amply illustrated than normally possible in publications. It is hoped also to invite specialists temporarily in England.

Encouraged by John Hurst, we propose to hold a seminar once a month in London. If you are interested in participating, please write to us and give us an idea of the days and times which would suit you, and your comments on our proposal. If there is enough interest expressed, we hope to hold the first meeting early next year, possibly at the Institute of Archaeology.

Please show this circular to other specialists who may be interested.

21st December, 1973
 Hugo Blake
 Jeremy Haslam

Institute of Archaeology, 31-4 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY.

Document 7 (typed on back of draft for 6)

Suggested mailing list (selected from Med Arch 1972 list)
 Addyman, Alcock, Ashdown, Barker, Barton, Biddle, Blake, Brears, Carter, Cherry, Coleman-Smith, Cramp, Dunning, Eames, Haslam, Hassall, Hebditch, Hinton, Hobley, Huggins, Hurst, Le Patourel, Moorhouse, Musty, Rahtz, Rigold, Wade-Martins, [in ink:] Mayes. Also Hurst's

assistant: Pamela [Clarke], Bloice, White, [in ink:] Mallet, Whitehouse.

Document 8 (cyclostyled)

MEDIEVAL POTTERY SEMINAR (2nd circular)

Sufficient interest has been expressed in our proposal to enable us, with the support of the Institute of Archaeology and its Students' Union, to draw up a programme. In accordance with preferences expressed in replies to the first circular, we have arranged to meet at 2.30 p.m. on Thursdays at the Institute of Archaeology in London. The April meeting will be held at the Extra-Mural Centre, 32 Tavistock Square, London WC1 and the May meeting at York.

Thursday, 28 February, Institute of Archaeology (Room 410)
 'Quantitative methods of analysing large and small assemblages'
 Katherine Barclay (Winchester Research Unit) and Pamela Clarke (Department of Environment)
 Thursday, 28 March, Institute of Archaeology (Room 209)
 'Recent work on Saxon pottery'
 John Hurst (Department of Environment)
 Thursday, 18 April, 32 Tavistock Square, WC1
 'Chinese influence on Islamic pottery'
 David Whitehouse (British Institute of Afghan Studies)
 Saturday, 11 May, York
 'Excavated material from York'
 Peter Addyman (York Archaeological Trust)

The precise meeting place in York will depend on the number of people wanting to go. Information will be sent to those who let us know they are interested. (Enquiries after May 1 may be made direct to the Trust: 0904 59777.)

Saturday, 6 April, Southampton
 Jean Chapelot and John Hurst will give papers on medieval pottery at the Society for Medieval Archaeology's conference.

If you did not reply to our first circular and wish to be kept informed of future meetings, please let us know of your interest.

30th January, 1974
 Hugo Blake
 Jeremy Haslam

Institute of Archaeology, 31-4 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY.

Document 9 (cyclostyled)

MEDIEVAL POTTERY SEMINAR (3rd circular)

The purpose of this circular is to inform you of the change of date and venue of the York meeting, to give additional information on the April meeting, to publish Katherine Barclay's bibliography and to make suggestions concerning material brought to meetings.

The outstanding meetings are:

Thursday, 28th March, 2.30pm (as previous programme).
 Thursday, 18th April, 2.30pm, Extra-Mural Center, 32 Tavistock Square, WC1 (Rm 5).
 'Chinese influence on Islamic Pottery in the Ninth century'
 David Whitehouse (British Institute of Afghan Studies).
 Saturday, 22nd June, 1.30pm (material on view from

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10.00 am) York Archaeological Trust, St. Anthony's Hall
Annexe, 47 Alwark, York.

'Excavated Material from York'
York Archaeological Trust.

Introductory Bibliography relating to quantitative methods;
Katherine Barclay
[Six publications]

Display materia!.

We would like to suggest that material brought to the meetings for display should be limited to the types under discussion, and be arranged before the start of the meeting.

19th March 1974

Hugo Blake
Jeremy Haslam

Institute of Archaeology, 31-4 Gordon Square, London
WC1H 0PY

Document 10 (typed on printed DoE letterhead)

Department of the Environment, Room 335, Fortress House,
23 Saville Row, London W1X 2AA

Date: 11.2.74

Dear Hugo,

I have consulted John about the revised date of the York thing (one day or w/end?) and he suggests the 18th May as a day convenient for him, will it be possible to change it to this, for myself and other impecunious persons it will rather depend on the cost of the thing as fares up to that part of the world tend to be expensive, I would like to go with that reservation, it will be at least £10 as far as I can see.

Best wishes
Pamela

PS I enclose Johns replies to your other queries.
[Hand-written] PPS Had Mike McCarthy on the Phone (Northants Devt Corporate) wanting to know about a 'National Pottery Seminar' that was being organised — gulp — Still I put him on to you.

Document 11 (carbon copy of DoE letterhead - right hand edge off sheet)

[typed:] Hugo / To see present position / JGH

19.11.74

Dear Mike,

Sorry to be so long writing but things here are still a bit uncertain since all the Research Assts and Mus[*zum*] Technicians have not yet been appointed. I think it is however now reasonably certain that the Dept will be able [to] take a lead in trying to co-ordinate work on medieval potte[ry] reports.

I will report more definitely as soon as I can and I certainly hope before Christmas and hope that we wil[l] be able to take some of the work off your shoulders. In confidence we expect this to be Margaret Wood and I will ask her to contact you to discuss as soon as possible. I [will] still be prepared to act as Chairman for the Knuston meet[ing] and hope to

be able to use the occasion to press for uni[fi]cation. In this case we may want to revise the programme [I] suppose if we could finalise by Xmas this should be in time[.]

Yours

J. G. Hurst

Document 12 (carbon copy, presumably of Department of Classics and Archaeology, University of Lancaster, letterhead)

25 November, 1974

Dear Michael,

MEDIEVAL POTTERY SEMINAR

I was a bit concerned to hear no more of the seminar. John Hurst has recently reassured me that you have plans for a February conference where the participants will be able to express their wishes about the nature of future meetings. (I am glad to hear that some Dutch and Irish archaeologists want it.)

As you may imagine, I (and I presume Jeremy is too) am a bit worried that past participants may think we have launched and then abandoned the seminar. You will presumably be mailing archaeologists who you know are interested. Would you like a list of names and addresses of those we wrote to or who wrote to us? Also will you please mention that your February do is a follow on from last year's seminars?

Richard Hodges has just written asking what has become of the seminar. David Hinton and he propose that the seminar should, meet at University Departments in turn, at longer intervals, but each consisting of several lectures. As an example, their University, Southampton, offers an afternoon on the theme of 'petrology and medieval pottery'.

Whatever you do, can you keep Jeremy (19 Goodge Street, London, W1) and me informed? As I have to fix up a tutorial weekend in the Yorkshire pennines in February, early notice of the dates you have in mind would be of immediate use.

Best wishes,

[Hugo]

cc. Jeremy Haslam
Richard Hodges

Michael McCarthy, 20 Rillwood, Lumbertubs,
Northampton, NN3 4JA

Document 13 (cyclostyled)

20 Rillwood Court, Lumbertubs, Northampton, NN3 4JA
[<7/1/75]

Dear

MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

Following the success of the Medieval Pottery Seminars held at the Institute earlier this year, and in the view of the growth of long sequences of stratified pottery now becoming available from the work of Units and Museums, it has been decided to form a MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH

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GROUP. A Study Group for Romano-British Coarse Pottery was formed in 1972 and performs a valuable function in bringing together leading specialists who discuss current work at their annual meetings.

The Group, which is supported by the Department of the Environment, will meet once a year, each time in a different place. It is aimed mainly at those members of Units and others who have a particular involvement with post-Roman pottery.

The first meeting will take place between Tuesday, 18th February and Thursday, 20th February 1975 at Knuston Hall, Irchester, Wellingborough, Northants. The theme will be the Analysis and Publication of Pottery.

Because of the restricted number of places available it is recommended that only one person per organisation/institution attends the meeting. It is also suggested that members of Units in receipt of DoE grants should claim expenses out of their annual grants.

The cost will be as follows:-

Residential	Meeting Fee £1	Accommodation £7
Non-residential	Meeting Fee £1	Meals £5 (excluding breakfast)

If you wish to attend you are urged to complete the slip below and return it to me together with the £1 Meeting Fee AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Yours sincerely,

Michael R. McCarthy

Document 14 (printed)

[<10/10/76]

THE MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

President: Mr J. G. Hurst, MA, FSA

The Medieval Pottery Research Group was founded at a meeting convened at Knuston Hall, Northamptonshire, in 1975 and formally constituted in 1976.

This new, nationally organised Group has as its chief aim the study of ceramic material from the Early Saxon to the early post-Medieval period. Annual conferences held at a different place each year provide a forum for contributions on a practical and theoretical level as well as stimulating discussion on the historical and economic aspects of pottery and allied crafts. The conferences also perform a valuable function in bringing together archaeologists who may not otherwise have the opportunity to meet and discuss recent work of developments in ceramic studies. The Group was instrumental in producing the DoE sponsored publication, **Medieval Pottery, Processing and Publication**, a set of guidelines of immediate concern to those working on the subject.

The group publishes an annual Bulletin in which members are invited to make contributions but which will also include summaries of papers given at annual meetings together with up-dated bibliography including scientific papers, and summaries of recent work on the continent.

The annual subscription is £1.50 which will entitle members to a copy of the Bulletin. Subscriptions should be sent to: Miss M. Wood, 69, Devonshire Road, Palmers Green, London N13 4QU.

Michael R. McCarthy (Hon. Sec.)

Document 15

Planning Department, 7th Floor,
Civic Centre, Carlisle, Cumbria

19th December 1977

Dear Member,

MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

At the Third Annual Meeting held in Exeter in March 1977 it was decided to draw up a Constitution and to appoint a Committee to regulate the Group's activities. A Committee (set out below) was nominated by delegates at the Exeter Meeting and a Draft Constitution subsequently drawn up and circulated to the Committee members. A copy of this is enclosed and will be discussed at the forthcoming Durham Meeting. If you wish to make any amendments you should let me have them in writing no later than 20th March, 1978.

As a result of a dramatic increase in the pressure of work I wish to retire as Hon. Secretary at the Durham Meeting. Nominations for this post are therefore requested in writing to me by 20th March, 1978.

Members of the Committee

President	Mr. J. G. Hurst (Principal Inspector, Department of the Environment)
Hon. Secretary	Mr. M. R. McCarthy (Archaeological Field Officer, City of Carlisle)
Hon. Treasurer	Miss M. Wood, Department of the Environment
Editor	Mr. P. Davey, University of Liverpool.
Editor	Dr. R. Hodges, University of Sheffield.
Ordinary Member	Miss J. Hassall, Bedford Museums.
Ordinary Member	Mr. S. Moorhouse, West Yorkshire Archaeological Unit.
Ordinary Member	Mr. T. Pearce, Leicester Museums.

Yours,

M. R. McCarthy
Hon. Secretary

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* Department of History, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX

Résumé

Les cours du soir de John Hurst présentés à l'université de Goldsmith et le groupe de recherche de céramique post-médiévale (the 'Post-Medieval Ceramic Research Group') ont précédé au MPRG, bien que le Séminaire de Poterie Médiévale à l'Université de Londres ait été le catalyseur et le Groupe d'Étude pour les Poteries grossières et Romano-britanniques ait été le modèle. Le Groupe a été fondé pour faciliter un nouveau cadre de spécialistes à traiter des grandes quantités de poteries provenant de fouilles urbaines. Sa première tâche, maintenant achevée, était de produire des directives sous l'égide du gouvernement. Son plan d'action fut une réunion annuelle ou un colloque et plus tard le Bulletin, la circulaire et la coordination des groupes régionaux. De telle manière à assurer la succession il est suggéré que nous considérons un retour à nos origines intellectuelles.

Zusammenfassung

Die Abendklassen von John Hurst in der Goldsmith Hall und die Post-Medieval Ceramic Research Group waren die Vorläufer der MPRG, während das Seminar für mittelalterliche Töpferwaren an der Universität London den Katalysator und die Studiengruppe für romano-britische Grobtöpferware das Vorbild bildeten. Die Gruppe wurde gegründet, um einem neuen Spezialistenkader behilflich zu sein, große Mengen Töpferware aus städtischen Ausgrabungen zu bearbeiten. Ihre erste und nun vollbrachte Aufgabe war es, unter der Schirmherrschaft der Regierung Richtlinien auszuarbeiten. Ihr *modus operandi* war die jährliche Versammlung oder Konferenz und später das Bulletin, Rundschreiben und die Koordination der regionalen Gruppen. Um die Nachfolge sicherzustellen, schlagen wir vor, die Rückkehr zu unseren akademischen Wurzeln in Betracht zu ziehen.