

resource and one that would never be published in a general site report. Therefore, the presence of a digital report must be seen as a positive step, almost allowing Cotter to produce a monograph on the pottery from the site. The remainder of the report duplicates that published in the printed report, with the addition of a discussion of the madder stained dyepots and a short characterisation of Winchester Ware by Alan Vince, adding to an increasing corpus of scientific data on late Saxon glazed wares. The text is followed by a series of data tables and graphs referenced in the text. One niggle is that these are only available in PDF format, meaning that the data will be difficult to extract for future scholars, however the benefits of its publication far outweigh this.

In summary, this report is a major contribution both to our understanding of the archaeology of Winchester and of its medieval pottery. It is unfortunate that the pottery (and other finds) are not as well incorporated in general discussion as they might have been. This complaint should not however be directly targeted at the authors of this monograph. This is a problem which is present in much medieval archaeology and will remain prevalent for as long as archaeological briefs and research agendas focus on the reconstruction of topography and the interpretation of structural remains on their own terms. It is down to finds specialists to push the interpretive value of their research and to demonstrate that urban archaeology is about more than buildings and roads, but about understanding the multiple experiences of life in medieval towns, which can only be fully understood through the integrated study of space and the things (both artefactual and environmental) which inhabited them.

The pottery report itself is a masterful presentation of data and the appendix in particular will be a valuable resource for specialists working in the city, particularly without any other definitive statement on the pottery being present. Whilst one gets the impression that the need to provide interpretation within the project design somewhat stretched the current potential of the evidence, Cotter's insights provide a basis for future research designs and crucially are backed up by the presence of a strong and accessible data set. As the first modern, integrated report on large scale medieval excavation in Winchester, one senses a missed opportunity to fully integrate the findings of finds and environmental specialists with the stratigraphic evidence. As stand alone pieces of work however the report is exemplary, providing a solid basis on which our understanding of medieval Winchester can only flourish.

Reference

Holmes, K and Matthews, C Forthcoming. *All This of Pot and Potter: 1500 Years of Winchester Pottery, Excavations 1971–86*, English Heritage/Winchester Museums Service.

Ben Jervis

Bridget Ann Henisch

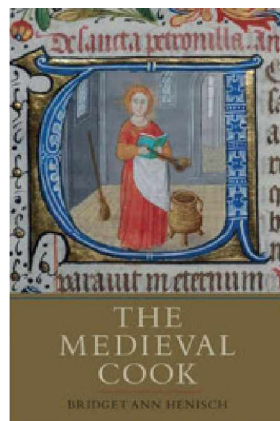
The medieval cook

2013 (first published 2009)

Boydell Press, Woodbridge

Softback, 245 pages, 19 figures

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Food preparation and eating were an important part of medieval life, yet there is surprisingly little evidence that survives from the Middle Ages about cooks and their techniques. Many medieval writers simply assumed their readers already knew how to prepare certain dishes and considered details of everyday life too

mundane to record. To rectify this, Bridget Henisch has gathered together a range of sources, including manuscript illustrations, inventories and letters between husbands and wives, to reanimate the kitchens of both the humblest cottage and in the feasting halls of kings. The result is an engaging read about the organisation and production of food across social classes in northern Europe during the Middle Ages.

The role of food in society has changed little over the millennia; not just for sustenance, it has been one of the main components of hospitality and displays of wealth and power. In this volume, the author illustrates the complex role food can play with a host of paradoxes created by medieval society for consumption. The sin of gluttony, for example, was pitted against the desire of hosts to outdo one another in both food and entertainment. Feasts were planned despite church rules governing the consumption of meat and dairy products on fast days, with cooks creating clever alternative dishes. As people, cooks were both appreciated and reviled by society – occasionally they were portrayed as agents of the devil or as the character representations of the uncouth, yet sources also record instances of cooks being treated as family in wealthier households, sometimes receiving a pension and place to live in their old age in appreciation of their years of service.

In addition to examining the cooks themselves, *The Medieval Cook* also delves into misconceptions of food and the home. Contrary to what we might think today, even wealthy men were known to enjoy cooking from time to time, even passing on tips on food preparation and entertaining to their cooks or wives when they married. Even then, people understood the value of quality ingredients and suitable working conditions. Despite the reputation (due at least in part to films) of the Middle Ages as a dirty place, many recipes demanded clean tools, a clean counter and diligence in preparation. Additionally,

for those in urban areas or villages, not all food was made at home. Street food, even pies hot from the oven, was common. Most homes lacked an oven, so bread was either purchased from a baker or baked (for a fee) in a public oven.

Henisch, then, uses simple, straight-forward language to illustrate the culinary life of medieval people, and even includes some medieval recipes at the end of the book. However, there is one omission that readers of this journal might find particularly noticeable. Despite the wealth of sources used in this book, the one discipline that is missing is archaeology. There are only a couple of brief mentions of archaeological finds, such as the cooking implements found in the burial of a Viking woman at Peel on the Isle of Man. Even these instances are mere mentions that the author perhaps found referenced in other work, and lack contextualisation as to *why* these artefacts were chosen for placement in the grave, and what their significance might have been to their owners in life and death. This is a shame as the archaeological record is full of examples of kitchen tools and table wares – examples which could be used to physically illustrate the textual and pictorial sources. Pottery, one of the most common finds from medieval sites in Europe, is scarcely mentioned at all.

Henisch makes much better use of historical sources to provide colour, incorporating into her work details such as the names of well-known cooks, their shopping lists and even letters between friends that help to illustrate the different menus socially required for the public and private spheres. The scale of high-status feasts is emphasised by inventories of the dishes and kitchen equipment that had to be rented for the occasion, plus lists of temporary workers who would be needed for the big day to wash dishes, haul water and provide security for the event. On a smaller scale, we see housewives who were constantly working under pressure to make the family's food supply last the winter and spring, and to have hot food ready whenever necessary while also taking care of the other needs of the household.

Despite the lack of archaeological evidence, this book is a pleasure to read. The volume is well-researched yet does not get bogged down in academic prose. Henisch has an eye for interesting details that can be found in amongst information that was hardly considered to be of note in the Middle Ages. Most of the illustrations she uses as examples come from the margins of manuscripts. While cooking was the centre of domestic life in the average home, cooks and kitchens were hidden away in larger homes, out of sight of master and guests. Cooking may have been a hidden art in the Middle Ages, but Henisch succeeds in bringing these elements of everyday life to the forefront once again.

Elizabeth Pierce

Nina Linde Jaspers

with Paul Crucq (photography)

Harlinger gleiersgoed

('Harlingen tin-glazed pottery')

Pottery Foundation of Friesland, Leeuwarden, special No 1,

Autumn, 2013. *Terra Cotta Incognita*

2013 . Amsterdam

Softback, 81 pages, 143 figures (including colour illustrations, black and white drawings and maps, and coloured and black and white tables, appendix with 6 further tables. Dutch, no foreign language summaries

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Dr Jaspers, an expert in tin-glazed earthenware, has worked on excavated material from the Netherlands and overseas. Combined with the superb photography of Paul Crucq, she has produced a well illustrated and authoritative account of the industrial waste dug up from two tin-glazed

earthenware potteries in the northern Netherlands.

The material recovered is now housed in the care of Museum Conservator, Hugo ter Avest, at the Municipal Museum, Hannemahuis Centre for Harlingen Culture and History. A minor criticism of the illustrations is that the captions of some photographs are difficult to read as white print does not show up well on a pale background.

The technique for making maiolica was introduced to the northern Netherlands from the south of the country early in the 17th century. The number of potteries making tin-glazed earthenware soon superseded the number of other potteries that for 200 years had mainly been making roof tiles and domestic redware goods. Material from the first maiolica factory in Harlingen, Raamstraat (1610–1803), has now been fully examined, together with ceramic waste dumped in a meadow south of Harlingen. A second pottery, Buiten de Kerkpoort (Outside the Church Gate), was established south of Harlingen, after a fire in 1663 drove it out of its previous premises in the city. Finds from all of these sites are described.

This detailed and meticulous account only records and illustrates the shards that were uncovered. It would have been helpful, however, to those unfamiliar with the Friesland potteries, if a brief account had been included of the potters and whether there were any names to suggest that some of the maiolica painters were of Italian extraction. It would also have been of interest to know whether the products made were for local consumption only or if they were transported