

elsewhere. More usually these have very angular handles, as examples in Leicester Museum⁸ show. The other feature of metal cooking pots of this type is a tripod foot.⁹ This too is found on pottery skeuomorphs of this style, of which examples may be instanced from London¹⁰ and Leicester.¹¹

Although rather different to the cooking pot in shape another vessel type deserves mention in this context. Among the pottery from Horne Lane, Bedford, found in 1888¹² is a sherd of a handle and foot of a pottery tripod foot skillet.¹³ This vessel, again probably thirteenth century in date, is a pottery version of the better known metal skillets of the period. Clearly there is much work to be done on pottery and its relations with metal vessels in the medieval period. The two Bedford cooking pots are merely one aspect of the complex inter-relationships of the potter's craft and the metal trades.¹⁴

The Pottery

- 1 Cooking pot, rim sherd, hard sandy fabric, shiny surface light grey. Rim diameter 80mm. Bedford, no details known. (Bedford Museum, not catalogued).
- 2 Cooking pot, complete except for small hole in side, dark grey metallic ware with sparse grits, hard surface has flaked badly in places. Rim diameter 128mm, height 165mm. Bedford, no details known. (Bedford Museum, not catalogued).

NOTES

- 1 For the limited work on St Neots ware cooking pots at Bedford see D H Kennett, 'St Neots Ware at Bedford' (unpublished undergraduate thesis, University College, Cardiff, 1966 - copy in Bedford Museum).
- 2 G C Dunning, 'Late Saxon Pottery', *Med Arch* 3, 1959, fig 15.2, from Bedford. This vessel is atypical: most cooking pots have only one neck groove.
- 3 Bedford Museum, accession number 3723, from St Peter's Street Bedford (unpublished).
- 4 Bedford Museum, unpublished material, limited in quantity and quality.
- 5 T McKenny Hughes, *P Camb Ant Soc* 8, 1893, 268, pl 13.1 (no scale given for figure, I owe this reference to Dr G C Dunning).
- 6 *London Museum Medieval Catalogue*, 1967, 202-207.
- 7 An example from Les Loges, Seine Inférieure, France, illustrated *London Museum Medieval Catalogue*, 1967, pl 39, top left, may be instanced.
- 8 Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester.
- 9 *London Museum Medieval Catalogue*, 1967, 205, fig 68, pl 56.
- 10 *Ibid* 224, fig 74.
- 11 G C Dunning, 'The Medieval Pottery' in K M Kenyon *Excavations at Jewry Wall, Leicester*, 1948, 235, fig 67.
- 12 *P S A* 12, 1888, 115-116.
- 13 Bedford Museum, accession number 3953, see S Linger and D H Kennett 'Medieval Jugs from Bedford' above p 72 and fig 2.24 for a discussion of this piece and its parallels, both ceramic and metal.
- 14 This note owes much to the encouragement of Dr G C Dunning who first discussed the pieces with me. I am grateful to Mr F W Kuhlicke for access to the museum's collections.

A Palimpsest Brass at Cople.

F.W. KUHLICKE

In June 1970 Mr B.S.H. Egan, a member of the Council of the Monumental Brass Society, was repairing the sword of the brass of John Launcelyn in Cople church, when he realised that the brass was a palimpsest. He consequently took up the whole brass and made a silicon-rubber impression of it from which he made a cast which is now in Bedford Museum. The original has been replaced in its matrix.

The Launcelyn brass consists of two figures sharing a foot inscription which records (in Latin) that John Launcelyn, Esquire, who died 7 May,

1435, and his wife Margaret are buried beneath it. John is depicted in plate armour and measures 641 by 178mm, and his lady, who wears a horned head-dress and long gown with pendant sleeves, measures 724 by 216mm; the whole brass is 723 by 648mm. The brass is illustrated and described by Saunderson¹ and a description of the Launcelyns, by the present writer, in the *Bedfordshire Magazine* also illustrates the brass,² of which a fine engraving was made by Thomas Fisher in the early nineteenth century.³

The reverse of the brass, when the female figure

is inverted and placed in close juxtaposition with the male, shows that they are cut from the middle part of an almost life-sized figure of a knight. The foot inscription, which had at some time been broken, is apparently complete and coincides in size with that of the Launcelyns' but the breach has rendered the interpretation of one word subject to some speculation. It is in 'black letter' type and well cut but the Old French words are abbreviated. It reads in two lines:—

Icy gyst Johan Veal orthier (?) q morust le V
Jour d'april l'an Milcccclxxv Vs q par cy passes
pur lalme de lui pez.

Here lies John Veal, orthier, who died April 5
1375. You who pass this way pray for his soul.

The difficult word is 'orthier'. The join of the plate passes through a letter after tye 't' which appears to be a scratched or mutilated 'h'. The join also passes through the 'r' of 'par cy' but offers no difficulty. What does 'orthier' mean? According to DuCange it could be 'ortoier' a word of doubtful import but apparently connected with gardening. Was this possibly an office of serjeanty? So far we have not traced John Veal. The old French of the inscription is typical of the period; thus on Sir John Cobham's brass, 1534, it reads 'Vous qe passey icy entour priez pur l'alme...' and on Sir Thomas Cobham's, 1367, 'Vous par icy passey pur l'alme...'.

The original brass was, of course, much larger and belongs to an early group of military brasses preceding the introduction of plate armour. It is fairly late for its group, which Macklin⁴ lists as the twenty oldest brasses in England. These include memorials to Sir John D'Abernoun, (1277), Sir Roger de Trumpington (1289), Sir Robert de Bures (1302) and Sir Robert de Septvans (1306). All these represent almost life-size figures dressed in complete suits of chain-mail with hauberk, coif de mailles, surcoat sometimes heraldic, and sword suspended upon a baldric. The pommel and hilt of the sword, as well as the scabbard, are in some cases decorated with a diaper patterning. The palimpsest, when re-assembled, reveals much of the centre part of a mail-clad knight in a linen hauberk. Part of the

right sleeve and two loosely hanging mittens are engraved with bands of interlaced crescents indicating steel links. What may be a metal or cuir-bouillit genouilliere is shown near the right thigh just visible through a gap in the opening surcoat. It has a double rose design, (possibly some reference to gardening or a canting reference to his coat of arms). There is indication of a cord drawing in the surcoat at the waist. The baldric swings freely below the hips with a long end draped from the buckle back over the main belt and there is an attachment, not clearly defined, from the buckle to the scabbard. Both the scabbard and the baldric are ornamented with six-petaled flowers, those on the latter are within circles, those on the scabbard are heraldically 'barbed'. The pommel of the sword is spherical with a pointed knob, the quillons are longish, slightly curved and plain. The hilt is diapered with a lozenge-shaped trellis enclosing small quatrefoils.

When we compare this fragment with more or less contemporary brasses we realise that some, if not all, came from a common designer. Thus the diaper on Veal's sword hilt is almost exactly the same as that on the scabbard of the Septvans brass (pl 7b) and the rosettes on Veal's baldric are remarkably like those on Sir Robert's, whilst the mail muffs or mittens depend from the wrists in the same way on each, (in the Veal brass they are just visible). There is one marked difference, namely the method by which the sword is suspended. Sir Robert's is attached to the end of the baldric by three inter-linked rings whereas Veal's as far as we can see, has a leather attachment better shown on the brasses of de Bures, Trumpington and d'Abernoun. The method of engraving the chain-mail on Veal's brass closely resembles that on Sir Robert's but is better executed.⁵

NOTES

- 1 *T Monumental Brass Soc* 2, 118 and 193.
- 2 *Beds Magazine* 7, 1961, 301-302.
- 3 T Fisher, *Collections... for Bedfordshire*, 1812.
- 4 H W Macklin, *The Brasses of England*, 1907.
- 5 M Morris, *Brass Rubbing*, 1965.

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