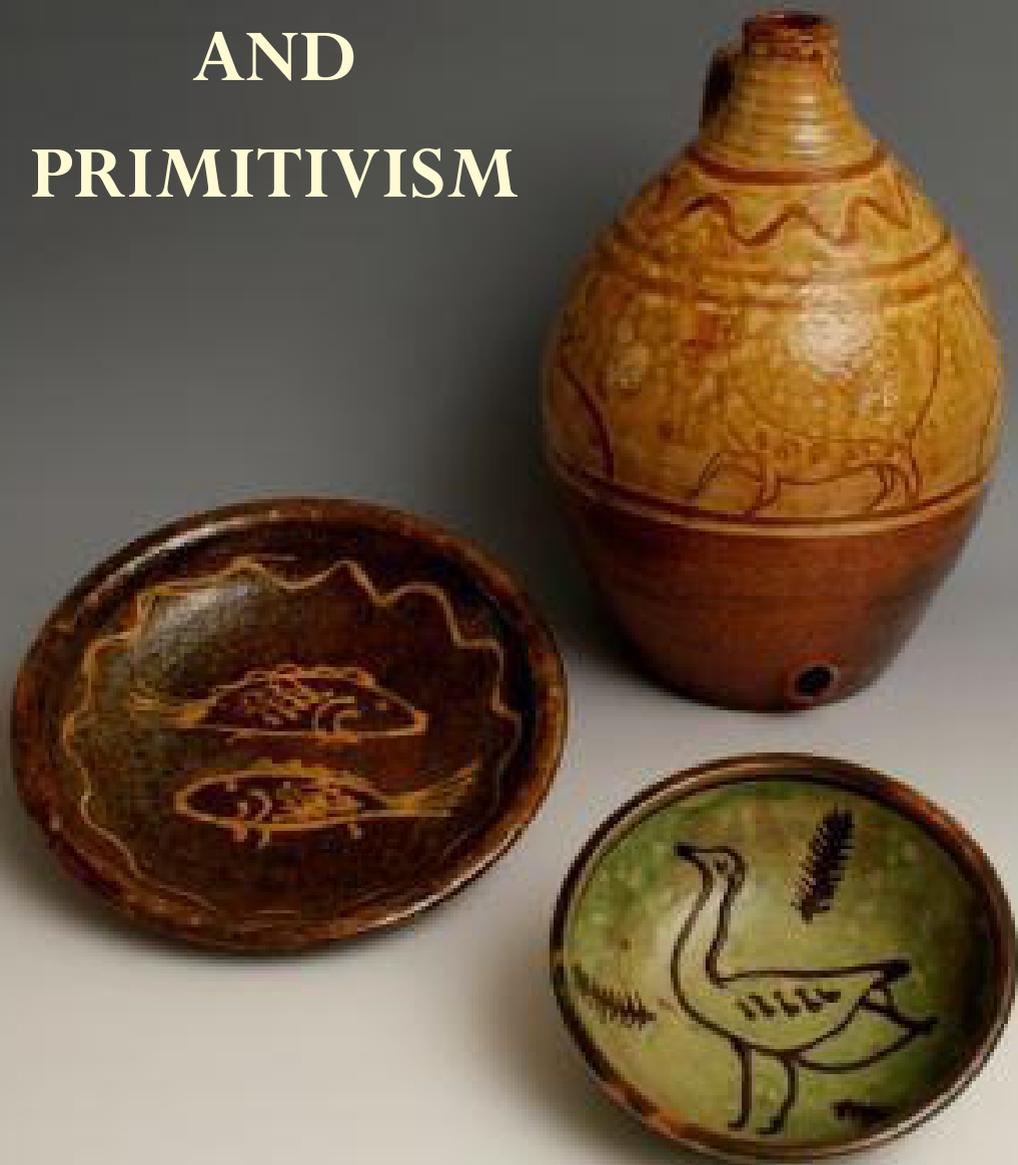


# POTTERY AND PRIMITIVISM



**A selling show of early slipware  
by Michael Cardew and Ray Finch**

Long Room Gallery High Street Winchcombe

24th November to 1st December 2012

TEL: 01242 602 319 E MAIL: [Info@cotswoldsliving.co.uk](mailto:Info@cotswoldsliving.co.uk)

JOHN EDGELEER & ROGER LITTLE PRESENT

A SELLING EXHIBITION

# POTTERY AND PRIMITIVISM

THE MODERN MOVEMENT SLIPWARES OF  
MICHAEL CARDEW AND FOLLOWERS



24th November to 1st December 2012 inclusive  
9.30am to 5.00pm (from midday on first day)

Long Room Gallery, Queen Anne House, High Street,  
Winchcombe, Gloucestershire, GL54 5LJ

Telephone: 01242 602319

**Website: [www.cotswoldsliving.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldsliving.co.uk)**

## Show terms and conditions

**Condition:** Due to their low fired nature, slipwares are prone to chipping and flaking, and all the pots for sale were originally wood fired in traditional bottle or round kilns, with all the faults and delightful imperfections entailed. We have endeavoured to be as accurate as possible in our descriptions, and comment is made on condition where this is materially more than the normal wear and tear of 80 to 100 years. For the avoidance of any doubt, purchasers are recommended to inspect pots in person.

**Payment:** Payment must be made in full on purchase, and pots will normally be available for collection at the close of the show, in this case on Saturday 1st December 2012. Settlement may be made in cash or by cheque, although a clearance period of five working days is required in the latter case. Overseas buyers are recommended to use PayPal as a medium, for the avoidance of credit card charges.

**Postal delivery:** we are unable to provide insured delivery for overseas purchasers, although there are a number of shipping firms that buyers may choose to commission. Every possible care will be taken in the packaging of pots for onward transit, but subsequently this must at all times be at the purchasers risk.

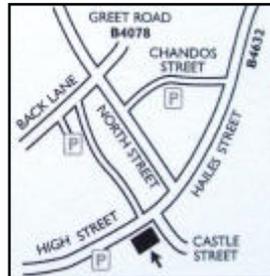
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**Commencement of sales:** no pots will be for sale in advance of the start of the exhibition at 12.00 midday on Saturday 24th November 2012.

**Future sales:** it is our intention to hold similar annual sales every November.

**Selling terms:** whilst all the ceramics in this exhibition are the personal or joint property of the organisers, we welcome applications from collectors and dealers to sell items on their behalf on competitive commission terms. We are also interested in purchasing outright both individual items and collections throughout the period in between shows.

### Map directions and location of Long Room Gallery:



# POTTERY AND PRIMITIVISM

featuring the early slip trailed wares of Michael Cardew  
and his followers together with St Ives pottery from the 1920s

## Introduction

To mark the long awaited publication of Tanya Harrod's biography of Michael Cardew (1901-1982) this autumn, our November selling show this year has a deliberate focus on Michael's early career, and in particular the inspiration that he took from the slip trailed dish tradition of the Midlands and the North of England, the subject of a companion Long Room Gallery Study for publication this autumn 2012. This was a source of inspiration that also had a strong impact on the early career of Ray Finch (1914-2012) and some excellent examples of his with abstract and figural decoration also feature in this, our fourth annual exhibition. As a complete contrast, we have some very fine examples of sgraffito decorated St Ives jugs, both bearing the hand of Bernard Leach (1887-1979) and dating to the mid-1920s and a particularly fine and rare Cardew tankard celebrating the silver jubilee of George V (1910-1935). Lastly and more modestly, we have on offer an unusual group of milk jugs from the 1930s, made by Ray and by Sid Tustin (1913-2005) using a variety of different decoration: intended for doorstep use in the days of delivery by churn, these are comparatively rare survivals.

The co-organisers of this event, John Edgeler and Roger Little, have both been lifelong collectors of and dealers in English and European ceramics. Since 2004, John has also become a writer/publisher of books primarily focusing on the Cardew tradition and its West Country roots, and has also curated well received retrospective shows on the latter, held both at public museums and at his Long Room Gallery of Winchcombe, the venue for this show. He continues to give talks, both in the Cotswolds and the West Country, and is currently working on a major transatlantic-themed project for 2013-2014 together with a joint publication with the Crafts Study Centre, Farnham.

Roger is a leading expert nationally on historic English slipwares and early ceramics, as well as on Delft in both the English and European traditions. There follows two short introductory essays by these Principals, giving a flavour of the core themes they have identified in their respective areas of expertise to help place in context the leitmotifs behind this exhibition.

Further information on this and future shows, including sale and purchase terms, may be found on page 2 of this catalogue.

## Pottery and Primitivism

The period in between the world wars was a time of considerable and unique convergence in between the mediums of art, sculpture and ceramics. In setting up rural workshops in Cornwall and Gloucestershire, Leach and Cardew were in tune with a post-WWI revulsion against industry and mass manufacture, choosing instead the countryside and comparatively hair-shirt approaches to making in the establishment of their respective operations. Clay was to be obtained locally and refined on site, and the materials utilised similarly sourced in the creation of wares that were at least initially well-bedded in the provincial pottery traditions of the West Country and elsewhere. Where the two differed in ethos was both in the breadth of forms created, the manner of their decorating style, and, ultimately in their to slipware as a medium.

Leach, the artist manqué, had throughout his life a more formalised approach to design, with decoration well considered aforethought, even before a form was created: whilst Cardew was much more intuitive and unconscious in his approach to his medium, responding to the form that he had created instinctively rather than intellectually to freely embellish the forms before him. Where moulded dishes were employed at St Ives – primarily to provide a medium for decoration – techniques used quoted directly from the originals of the Midlands and the North of England, areas of traditional dominance of moulded and slip trailed dishes for the dresser and table. Indeed the bulk of output in this medium from the Leach Pottery in the 1930s had the look of the replica rather than of reinvention.

Conversely, whilst the forms developed by Cardew at Winchcombe were materially different from those of the North, the method and style of decoration was clearly rooted in that ethos albeit subtly changed and reinvented in approach and form. So instead of the typical shallowly-round or large oblong forms of earlier centuries, robust Winchcombe forms of the 1920s and 1930s in a similar 'kitcheney' vein were typically ovalled using a North Devon technique. It was only much later in 1936 that Ray Finch was to adapt techniques of throwing and moulding on the wheel or in distinctive and small oblong forms, albeit ones not seen historically in the style of Staffordshire and the wider Midlands although decorated in a similar spirit.

Figural motifs chosen by Michael, where occasionally utilised, were similarly subtly different from his forbears. Fish feature – an echo of a motif seen on Chinese Cizhou pottery whose form and aesthetics were much admired by Cardew – and also a stag, frequently paired with emblematic depictions of fir trees to suggest a forest environment. The wild stag is an ancient symbol of virility and longevity, and such beasts would have been seen by Cardew in his walks in the hills above Winchcombe. His method of depiction of this subject has a naïve yet bold character, and this emblem appears on significant work primarily in the late 1920s. Fish also make an early appearance; both in sgraffito on three handled tygs, in finger wipe on large storage jars and, finally, slip trailed on large dish forms, sometimes embellished with feathering. His uses of abstraction typically took the form of very freely achieved and fluid slip-combing of which he was a master, and sometimes slip trailing to create designs that at times have an almost aboriginal character.

As to the exhibition itself, we are particularly honoured to offer for sale a truly magnificent Cider Jar by Michael (1), probably one of his earliest from around 1930 and bearing stick and finger wipe decoration of a stag and a turkey. This is a masterpiece of the English vernacular tradition and a true statement of his principles and passions in establishing his own workshop, its subtle and soft colouration exquisite and the form and proportions of its neck and handle in perfect harmony. Equally strong graphically and of similar date are two large thrown serving

dishes of contrasting style both with fish motifs in slip trailing: one **(2)** very much inspired by the wider Midlands in colouration, and using feathering to suggest scales; the other **(3)** highly stylised and abstract in approach with fish motifs surrounding a wave motif suggesting water. The figural theme is picked up by two lovely examples of ovalled dishes by Cardew employing slip trailing to depict a charmingly naïve stag and highly stylised bird.

Ray Finch had spent his formative years in the London area before joining Michael in 1936, attending training under Dora Billington at the Central School of Art at a time when contemporary art was dominated by themes of abstraction and the surreal. This wider aesthetic environment was reinforced at the Winchcombe workshop by the circle of friends and visitors known to Cardew, which included Ursula Mommens (nee Darwin) then the wife of the leading British Surrealist artist of the 1930s, Julian Trevelyan. So Ray's earliest creativity has a freedom and spontaneity about it, with simple repeat motifs suggesting abstracted nature that chime well with the robust and earthy medium of the oven dish forms used.

Flowing water features first, with the meander or 'river pattern' so associated with Cardew adapted and made more angular by his new apprentice to suggest a series of joined fountain motifs **(12)**. Slightly later and dating probably from Michael's sojourn with Copeland's in Stoke in 1938 are two richly coloured and strong round forms where lines of contrasting slip have been 'taken for a walk' to great effect **(11 & 14)**. These dish moulded examples are elegantly complemented by a lovely and impressive wheel thrown and ovalled fish platter employing an elegant reinvention of Cizhou style, with two fish chasing each-others tails inspired by Celtic themes of nature's longevity – a timeless classic **(7)**. Lastly on a figural theme, but without firm attribution as to the artist decorator, is a strongly graphic dish embellished with a bird (possibly a swan) taking flight, simply but evocatively achieved in a rich dark brown slip **(8)**.

Sgraffito decorated slipware, in itself a surprisingly rare technique at Winchcombe notwithstanding its wide use in the beloved North Devon pottery of Cardew's youth, also makes a strong appearance in a very fine one pint bulbous tankard **(20)** with a meticulously rendered crown and hatched lettering celebrating the Golden Jubilee of George V in 1935, probably made as a one-off commission. In addition to two well thrown tankards by Ray Finch bearing on one example **(21 & 22)**, fishes typical of the hand of Cardew, we also have for sale two very unusual St Ives rhyme beer mugs **(18 & 19)** of 1924-1925 probably both thrown by Cardew but in one instance bearing finely achieved figural decoration and lettering by Leach.

In the current uncertain market, people are looking increasingly for sound investments, and taking into account the poor rates of return available on savings, the idea of alternative investment has become increasingly fashionable. Partly in reflection of this general environment, and in the light of strong overseas interest in 18th and 19th century English pottery – notably from Japan – these ceramics have become less and less affordable. As a consequence, the best quality pioneering modern movement slipwares of Michael Cardew at Winchcombe and those of Leach at St Ives are increasingly in vogue, and have the added advantage of being attributable – at the very least by workshop and date, and frequently by artist maker. Conversely, the true age of country pottery and slipware is vexatious to discern and can often be deceptive to the amateur collector – and even to the general ceramics expert. In closing, the formal recognition now being given to creative forces like Cardew by leading commentators through studies and biographies can only underpin their importance and standing in the pantheon of 20th century art and aesthetics.

**John Edgeler, Long Room Gallery, Winchcombe  
Roger Little, Oxford**

**September 2012**

## Figural Slipwares



### **1) A massive decorated harvest flagon by Michael Cardew, Winchcombe 1930.**

This tour de force of wheel thrown slipware has had a contrasting white background slip applied to its belly and neck, the form then vigorously and freely decorated through to the contrasting red body using finger wipe and stick work techniques with loose chevrons and meandering and straight lines enclosing stag and turkey motifs under a delightfully mottled straw coloured glaze.

Largest MC and WP seals.

Dimensions: Height 19 inches (48cm); Width 12 inches (30cm).



**2) A large serving dish with slip trailed and feathered decoration by Michael Cardew, Winchcombe 1930-1931.**

This exhibition quality traditionally inspired and richly coloured wheel thrown dish with shallowly rounded rim bears slip trailed and feathered fishes in the broad Cizhou manner framed by a loosely meandering line, applied direct to the body under an iron-stained glaze. A turned foot rim has been applied into the base and the underside also bears evidence of refinement through trimming whilst on the wheel.

Impressed MC and WP seals. Paper label in Cardew's handwriting '13 Round Dish with Fish decoration...PRICE...M A Cardew'.

Dimensions: Width 14 inches (35cm); Depth 2.5 inches (6.5cm).



**3) A large Winchcombe serving dish with highly stylised slip trailed abstract fish and meander decoration by Michael Cardew, 1930-1931.**

This further example of a wheel thrown serving dish is strikingly modern and structured in its design, with stylised fish motifs surrounding a roundel bearing a repeat meander motif. This decoration has been thickly trailed using a dark brown slip over a contrasting white background under a rich mustard coloured glaze. In a reference back to the Midlands dish tradition, the thickened rim has been left unglazed but decorated with a deeply applied and rouletted running decoration of chevrons. The base has a turned foot rim and the underside also bears evidence of refinement through trimming whilst on the wheel.

Impressed MC and WP seals.

Dimensions: Width 14 inches (35cm); Depth 2.5 inches (6.5cm).



**4) A medium sized deep serving dish with goose and fir tree decoration by Michael Cardew, Winchcombe 1929-1931.**

A delightful and unusual wheel thrown dish with flattened rim and thickly applied dark brown trailed slip decoration of a goose and stylised fir trees over a white background slip under a green tinted overall glaze. The exterior bears slip trailed meander and banded horizontal lines, again over a contrasting background. A turned foot rim has been applied into the base and the underside also bears evidence of refinement through trimming whilst on the wheel.

Impressed MC and WP seals.

Dimensions: Width 9.5 inches (24cm);

Depth 3 inches (7.5cm).



**5) A stag and chevron deep ovalled baking dish by Michael Cardew, Winchcombe c 1928-1929.**

A wheel-thrown and ovalled dish with white slip trailed design of a spotted stag and chevrons direct to body under a honey coloured glaze. The dish is of an earlier type glazed all over, probably better to suit its intended purpose for oven use, and to reduce permeability. The form is listed by Michael as a Pie Dish in his kiln book of 1928-1937.

Unmarked.

Dimensions: 11 x 10 x 2.25 inches (28 x 25 x 5.5cm).



**6) A stylised bird and flower head ovalled baking dish by Michael Cardew and Elijah Comfort, Winchcombe c 1934-1936.**

A wheel-thrown and ovalled dish with highly stylised figural decoration of a bird in black slip over a white background slip under a luscious and rich green stained transparent glaze.

Small impressed WP seal only.

Dimensions: 9 x 8 x 1.25 inches (23 x 20 x 3cm).



**7) A large ovalled baking dish by Ray Finch (aqtrib) with a design of swimming fishes, Winchcombe c 1938-1939.**

A wheel-thrown and ovalled dish of unusually large size with white slip trailed design direct to the body of two fish chasing each-others tails and meandering lines to the sides under a clear green stained glaze.

WP seal only.

Dimensions: 15 x 13 x 2 inches (38 x 33 x 5cm).



**8) A small and unusual Winchcombe moulded dish with notched sides, decorated with a bird taking flight, mid to late 1930s.**

This dish, the first of a good variety of moulded forms that we have for sale this autumn, employs dark brown slip trailing over a white background to give a strong graphic quality.

WP seal and hand incised S.

Dimensions: 7.5 x 6 x 1.5 inches (19 x 15 x 4cm).

# Abstract Slipwares

*Water in motion*

**9) An ovalled baking dish with combed design by Michael Cardew, Winchcombe mid-1930s.**

A thrown and ovalled pie dish, probably made by Elijah Comfort, decorated with combing through a white background slip to the red body under a warm iron-tinted glaze.

WP seal only.

Dimensions: 11.5 x 10.5 x 2 inches  
(29 x 27 x 3cm).



**10) An unusually large oblong hump moulded dish with slip trailed design by Ray Finch, Winchcombe c. 1936-1937.**

This dish, probably made over a large fireclay former, has had a black background slip applied to the body to provide a strong contrast for its subsequent decoration with a bold and graphic repeat white slip trailed fountain design under a clear glaze. The deliberately unglazed edge bears deep and neatly applied hand notching.

Largest WP seal only.

Dimensions: 16 x 13 x 3 inches (40 x 33 x 8cm).



**11) A well-coloured thrown moulded pouring bowl by Ray Finch with abstract slip trailing, Winchcombe c. 1938.**

This moulded bowl was probably fabricated through the use of a round former attached to the wheel head, the form then decorated with freely applied white slip trailing over a black background slip under a rich yellow glaze.

WP and RF script seals.

Dimensions: 9.5 x 3 inches (24 x 7.5cm).

**13) A moulded oblong shallow tray with slip trailed decoration and rouletted edge attributed to Ray Finch, Winchcombe c. 1936.**

A thick and robustly made grogged fireclay tray with white slip trailed meander and dot decoration applied direct to the body under a clear glaze. WP seal only.

Dimensions: 7 x 5 x 1.5 inches (18 x 13 x 4cm).



**12) A group of three oblong moulded dishes by Ray Finch, all with abstract slip trailed fountain decoration, Winchcombe c. 1936-1938.**

They are shown in broadly chronological order. WVP seal only (a) and (b); WVP and RF script seal (c).

Dimensions: a) 9 x 7 x 2 inches (23 x 18 x 5cm); b) 9.5 x 6.5 x 2 inches (24 x 16 x 5cm); c) 10 x 7 x 2 inches (25 x 18 x 5cm) .



# Abstract slipwares

*Taking a line for a walk*



**14) A well coloured thrown moulded bowl by Ray Finch with abstract slip trailing, Winchcombe c. 1938.**

This moulded dish was probably fabricated through the use of a round former attached to the wheel head, the form then decorated with freely applied white slip trailing over a black background slip under a rich yellow glaze.

WVP and RF script seals.

Dimensions: 9.5 x 3 inches (24 x 7.5cm).

**15) A small moulded oblong dish with slip trailed decoration, Winchcombe (attrib.) c. 1936.**

The decorative impact of this dish relies on the application of a pale brown background slip to the body, to provide an aesthetic contrast to the line and dot slip trailed decoration subsequently applied under a clear glaze.

Unmarked.

Dimensions: 8 x 7 x 2 inches (20 x 18 x 5cm).





**16) A large slip trailed pudding basin form with flattened rim by Ray Finch, Winchcombe c. 1938.**

A very unusual and chunky wheel-thrown deep bowl with semi-circular, straight and dotted trailed decoration in black slip over a white background slip under a clear glaze.

WP and RF script seals.

Dimensions: Diameter 12 inches (30cm); Depth 4 inches (10cm).

**17) A strongly thrown and unusual water jug with slip trailed meander and banded decoration by Ray Finch, Winchcombe c. 1938-1942.**

A squat handled jug tapering to the pronounced rim and chamfered base from its prominent belly, with black slip trailing over a white background slip under a dark marmalade coloured glaze.

WP and RF script seals.

Dimensions:  
Height 7 inches (18cm);  
Width 6.5 inches (16cm).



**18) A Leach Pottery beer tankard with an inscribed rhyme and related figural motifs by Bernard Leach (attrib), St Ives c. 1924.**



A finely designed and wheel thrown form with thumb-piece handle, the body covered in a white background slip finely incised through to the red body with motifs of a top hatted man, seven wives and seven cats and the traditional rhyme 'As I was going to St Ives...'.  
Impressed St Ives seal only.

Dimensions: Height 4.5 inches (11cm); Width 3.5 inches (9cm).

**19) A Leach Pottery beer tankard with an inscribed rhyme and related figural motifs by Michael Cardew (attrib), St Ives c. 1925-1926.**



A very similar wheel thrown form with plain handle, the body covered in a white background slip incised through to the red body with motifs of a top hatted man and seven wives, and the traditional rhyme 'As I was going to St Ives...'.  
Impressed St Ives seal only.

Dimensions: Height 4.5 inches (11cm); Width 4 inches (10cm).



**20) A very unusual bulbous one pint beer tankard celebrating the Golden Jubilee of George V in 1935 by Michael Cardew, Winchcombe 1935.**

A wheel thrown and well-made tankard with thumb-piece handle, bearing very finely incised hatched lettering '1910...GR...1935' surrounding a precisely detailed crown on the full of the belly, applied through a white background slip to the red body. This generously proportioned form is further enhanced by a rich marmalade coloured glaze.

Impressed WP and MC seals.

Dimensions: 5 x 5 inches (13 x 13cm).



**21) A squat straight sided half pint beer tankard with incised fish decoration by Ray Finch and Michael Cardew, Winchcombe c. 1938-1939.**

A wheel thrown and relatively plain tankard although typically well made by Finch, greatly lifted aesthetically by the application of Cizhou style fishes in sgraffito through the white background slip under a pale green glaze. There is a glaze kiss to the middle of this form caused by its close proximity to another piece during kiln firing.

RF script and WP seals.

Dimensions: 4.5 x 3.5 inches (12 x 9cm).



**22) An elegantly thrown and finely detailed beer tankard of tapering form with a repeat decoration of stylised sun motifs, Winchcombe c. 1939.**

A wheel thrown form with thumb-piece handle, the sgraffito decoration applied through a white background slip under a glaze with mottled marmalade and yellow tints.

RF script and WP seals.

Dimensions: Height 4.5 inches (12cm);  
Width 4 inches (10cm).



**23) A manganese glazed handled cup of post-medieval form with iron brushwork decoration by Michael Cardew (attrib), Winchcombe c. 1927.**

A wheel thrown and robustly shaped cup made from Fremington clay, wheel turned to the neck and chamfered base, with iron brushwork meander decoration applied to the body under a thick and glossy dark marmalade coloured glaze.

WP seal only.

Dimensions: 4.5 x 3.5 inches (12 x 9cm).



**24) A George V Silver Jubilee beer tankard by Sid Tustin, Winchcombe 1935.**

A slender cylindrical wheel-thrown mug with manganese slip trailed motifs of '1910, 1935, a crown and GR' over a white background slip under a darkish honey tinted clear glaze.

Impressed ST and WP seals.

Dimensions: 5 x 3.5 inches (13cm x 9cm [13cm max]).



**25) A delightful and early jug of broadly North Devon form by Sidney Tustin, Winchcombe c. 1929.**

This wheel thrown milk jug made from Fremington clay has been dipped in white slip to provide a contrast with its subsequent iron brushwork decoration of spirals and chevrons.

ST seal only.

Dimensions: Height 5 inches (13cm);  
Width 4.5 inches (11cm).



**26) A cylindrical 2-pint milk jug with abstract slip trailed decoration by Sid Tustin, Winchcombe post 1935.**

A wheel-thrown and stocky utilitarian form with abstract decoration in white slip over a black background slip, under a clear lead glaze.

Impressed ST and WP seals.

Dimensions: Height 6 inches (15cm);  
Width 5 inches (13cm).



**27) A cylindrical 1-pint milk jug with finger wipe decoration by Sid Tustin, Winchcombe post 1935.**

A wheel-thrown and stocky utilitarian form with abstract decoration of a bud and foliage through the white background slip under a clear lead glaze.

Impressed ST and WP seals.

Dimensions: 4 x 4 inches (10 x 10cm).



**28) A squat half-pint milk jug of cylindrical form with brushwork bud decoration by Ray Finch (attrib), Winchcombe post 1935.**

A wheel-thrown form with blue (cobalt) brushwork decoration of buds in between lateral bands over a thinned background slip.

WP seal only to base of handle.

Dimensions: 3.5 x 3.5 inches (9 x 9cm).

This is a form developed from the previous examples, but in this instance intended for the breakfast table. Similar blue brushwork appears on Winchcombe pottery of the mid-1930s (see *Sid Tustin Winchcombe Potter*, page 10).



**29) A finely thrown and bulbous harvest costrel in the broad West Country manner by Ray Finch, Winchcombe 1939.**

A plain wheel thrown and turned, loop handled bottle with slipped and glazed lip and upper handle.

WP and RF italic seals.

Dimensions: Height 10 inches (25cm);  
Width 6.5 inches (16cm).



**30) An early fruit bowl in the St Ives manner with removed slip and stick work decoration by Michael Cardew (attrib), Winchcombe c. 1928.**

A heavily thrown brick clay bowl with circular and semi-circular decoration to the interior, and Y motifs to the exterior highlighted by yellow brushwork.

WP seal only.

Dimensions: Diameter 9.5 inches (24cm);  
Depth 4 inches (10cm).

Condition: lime blows and related stress hairline to rim.

