

John W. Hayes 1938-2024

John W. Hayes died on February 27, 2024, at age 85. Few if any scholars of Roman (and some Hellenistic) pottery were either more memorable to their friends and colleagues or more impactful on the field. Many of you who read this have your own tattered copies of *Late Roman Pottery*, the pages darkened with a mixture of pottery grime, ink from drafting pens, and sweat of unventilated Mediterranean storerooms. Many of you knew John better than I did. I hope the following words give some comfort and, for those who did not know him so well, some sense of the character and accomplishments of John Hayes.

John traveled light and traveled widely in his pursuit of Roman pottery. A small, battered suitcase contained his drawing supplies, a few plastic bags carried his passport, some books and a roll of drawings. In a way it is hard to imagine him actually *en route* anywhere; he simply was there – Athens, Corinth, Isthmia, Stobi, Knossos, Gravina, Hvar, Carthage, Tocra, Beirut, Paphos, Istanbul, Troy, Alexandria. Everywhere. He pulled crates of pottery from the topmost shelves of the basement of the Stoa of Attalos, balanced high on a rickety ladder, muttering the lot number so as not to forget. He might find a new form or an old form in a new fabric; his mind remembered all the sherds from the past, so he knew this one was different. He made his pencil drawing, took his notes, wrote the description into the Agora's finds notebooks, and sent the piece upstairs to receive its due inventory number. When the storerooms closed for the day, he gathered up his papers, his passport, and his plastic bag, and walked off to his lodgings in his old cotton shirt and trousers covered in the dust and grime that only accumulates in the best archaeological storerooms. In the evening, in a room usually at one of the foreign schools or at the apartment of a friend, he converted sketches into inked drawings.

The formal parts of his career pale in comparison to the man himself. His Cambridge thesis on Late Roman pottery, completed in 1964, drew heavily on the results of the Agora excavations thanks to the encouragement of Henry Robinson and Homer Thompson. John took up a curatorship at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in 1968. The Book soon followed: *Late Roman Pottery* (1972). In 1991 he joined the Oxford Centre for Late Antiquity and in 1992 left the position at the ROM in favor of the life of the itinerant scholar of Roman Pottery. By then he was already a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and, in 1990, only age 52, winner of the Archaeological Institute of America's Gold Medal for Archaeological Achievement.

The AIA's citation lists *Late Roman Pottery* and John's comprehensive *Sigillate orientali* for the *Enciclopedia dell' arte antica* (1986), but by 1990 he had also already produced seven catalogues of Roman and Greek ceramics, glass and metalware for the ROM along with the CVA for the ROM collection. Two articles on Roman pottery at Knossos (*BSA* 1971 and 1983), one on the Roman pottery from the South Stoa at Corinth (*Hesperia* 1973), works on Syrian mortaria (*Hesperia* 1967), Cypriot Sigillata (*RDAC* 1967), and a supplementary volume to *Late Roman Pottery* (1980) all cemented his status as the leading authority on Roman pottery.

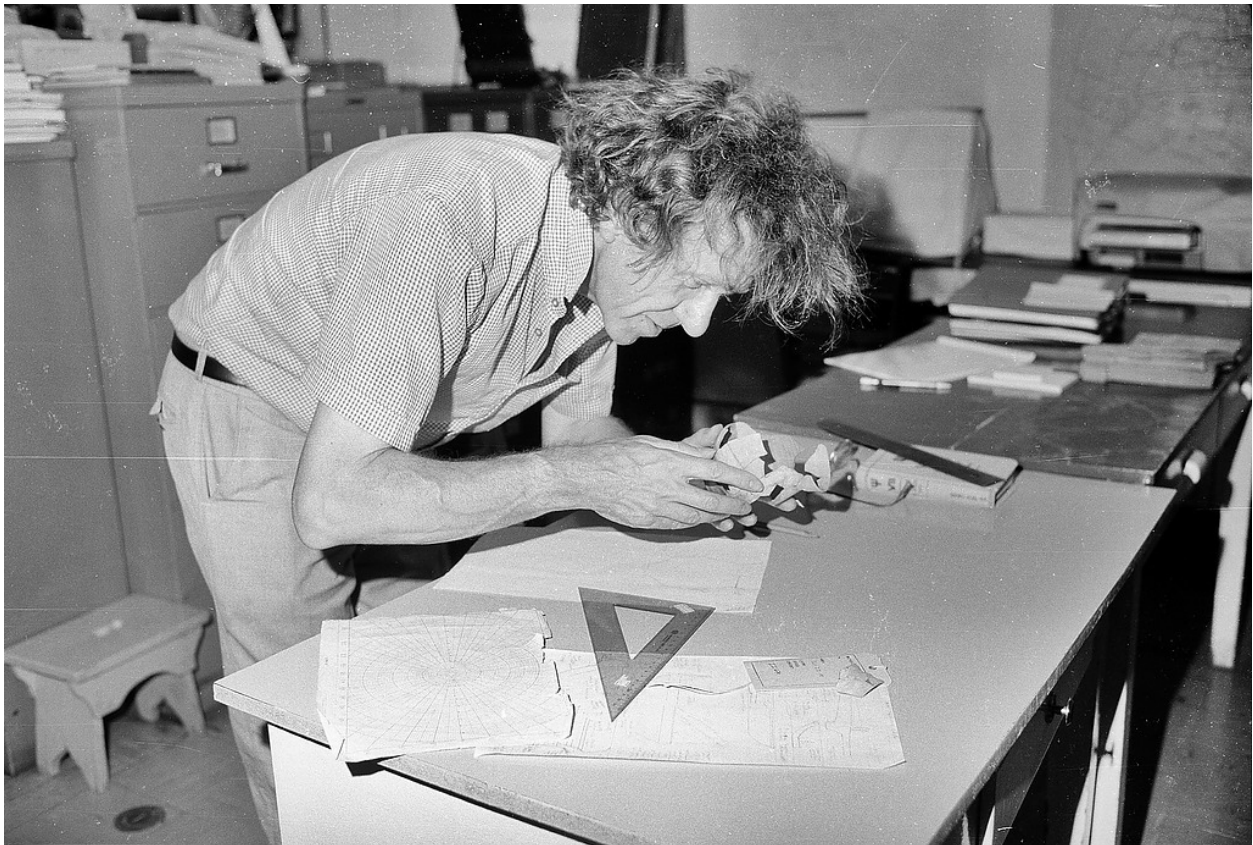
The decades following the early 1990s, freed from the schedule of curatorial duties, were exceptionally prolific. John's volume on the Hellenistic and Roman pottery from Paphos appeared in 1991 (with further material published in *BSA* 2003); Saraçhane in Istanbul followed in 1992. There were multiple reports from work in Hvar, Croatia; two articles on material from Post-Bronze Age Troy; and reports from the Liri Valley survey and Gravina in Italy. He returned his attention to Knossos with publication of Early Christian pottery there in 2001; and early

Byzantine pottery was also his focus for work at Kaukana, Sicily with three reports between 2009 and 2014. The imported Roman fine wares from the Athenian Agora were published as *Agora XXXII* in 2008; and thanks to Kathleen Slane, his volume on the Hellenistic and Roman pottery from the University of Chicago excavations at Isthmia appeared in 2022. Even this listing of his work is incomplete, but it gives the idea. There was another lifetime of achievement beyond the Gold Medal of 1990.

So many of us who worked anywhere in the former Roman Empire in the 1970s through early 2000s encountered John. As he moved from project to project, our faces and names must have blurred, but he seemed to enjoy the social comradery, having tea or a meal surrounded by fellow researchers. There are so many stories of encounters with John, and life became so much quieter and duller once he finally had to stop travelling and end his research.

With his passing, we remember all the stories, his open smile and unabashed laugh, but above all we can cherish our memories of the genius that could turn sherds into Forms, Forms into orderly groups, and piles of sherds into knowledge.

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John at the Athenian Agora in summer 1991 (photo by Craig Mauzy, from ascsa.net)