

1850's portions survive precariously.

### **Tower Hamlets**

An emergency visit to the former RNLI repair workshops at Broomfield Street, E14, found evidence of past usage in the form of a small dock leading to the Limehouse Cut, and thence the Thames. During the last 40 years the premises had been used as a food depot, first by the CWS and then by a spice miller.

The massive goods shed at Commercial Road, surveyed 1975/6, has now been demolished, but not the engine house on Hooper Street, E1, which supplied hydraulic power for the many cranes, capstans and hoists. This building, with the accumulators remaining and sites of boilers and engines easily identified, has now also been surveyed, as has an adjacent warehouse which appears to predate the railway. This was used as part of the site's storage facilities, and contains an interesting use of cast iron for the floors and beams, as well as for the vertical columns.

Free Trade Wharf, The Highway, E1, has been given an appreciation survey, note being taken particularly of the former East India Company warehouses, still with original walls and roofs, although internally rebuilt.

### **Other Sites**

Vary in location from a brick works in Enfield to Aspdin's kiln at Northfleet, the oldest (1843) cement kiln in the country; work on the latter has been carried out by the Goldsmiths' Group.

### **Publications**

GLIAS is very much aware that surveys are of

no use unless findings are published. The past year has seen publication of three reports, two walks and a four-page leaflet.

**TOWER BRIDGE WORKSHOPS**, a report describing the workshops that were used for the maintenance of the machinery at Tower Bridge (50p\*)

**WALTON LODGE LAUNDRY, THE STORY OF AN ENTERPRISE**, which shows scenes from 1904/8 and gives the history of a firm which still flourishes in Coldharbour Lane, SW9. (50p\*)

**W. A. CRIPS & SONS, BERMONDSEY'S LAST CHAINSMITHS**, a surviving engineering and smiths workshop with belt driven machinery in SE16. (\*65p)

**INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY WALKS IN LONDON** (5p each\*)

No. 1 : Waterloo to London Bridge.

No. 2 : Blackfriars to Tower Bridge

**A HOP MERCHANT'S WAREHOUSE, 24 MELIOR STREET, SE1.** (12p\*)

\*When ordering, 15p p&p should be added for each report, and 8p for each walk or leaflet.

### **Contacts in GLIAS**

Copies of publications and general information : Adrian Tayler, Publicity Officer, 28 Tower Hamlets Road, E17.

Details of site and recording work : David G. Thomas, Recording Group Secretary, 4 Heyford Avenue, SW8.

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## **S. L. A. E. C. Excavations at Harper Row, Southwark.**

**TRIAL TRENCHES** were cut by machine to assess the archaeological potential of the area around Dickens Square and Ralph Street, off Harper Road. While important information regarding the earlier topography of the district was revealed only one area looked interesting enough archaeologically to warrant more detailed study. Because of limited room on the site an area only 27m by 2.5m was excavated and unfortunately the western end of this had been heavily disturbed by pits and drains dug during the 19th and 20th centuries, however earlier deposits survived to the east. The three main features found were a series of equally spaced 17th century gullies, a late Roman ditch, and a late Roman inhumation.

The thirteen gullies were either cut for some agricultural purpose, such as bedding trenches for salad vegetables or, more likely, as foundation trenches for wooden 'tenter' frames on which cloth was stretched and dried after the fulling process. Two 18th century maps of Southwark show fields marked "tenter grounds" at approximately the position of the excavation.

The ditch, which runs almost the whole length of the excavation, is provisionally dated to the 4th century on coin and pottery evidence. As there is no measurable slope along

the length of the ditch it is probably a land boundary rather than a drainage ditch. Immediately to the north, and on the same east-west alignment, was a skeleton of a young male, aged about 20 and about 5ft. 8ins. tall. The presence of a number of iron nails around the burial suggests that he was interred in a wooden coffin. A packing of chalk around the body, presumably in imitation of the plaster burials found elsewhere in Britain, suggests that this burial is also of 4th century date. This form of burial, together with the east-west alignment, could indicate a Christian interment. However the corroded hob nails under the one surviving foot probably signifies that the body was buried with his boots on, a trait not normally associated with Christian burials.

A number of Roman skeletons were noted to the north of the site during past building operations but none were scientifically excavated or examined. It is possible that the ditch is part of the southern boundary of a Roman cemetery, and so it is hoped to excavate in the near future an area to the north which at present is used as an allotment.

MARTIN DEAN