

Fig. 1: site location plan, showing areas of excavation.

# Excavations on the site of Norfolk House, Lambeth Road, SE1

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Trial excavations, directed by Sophie Jackson, were carried out at 113-127 Lambeth Road by the Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology in 1988-9. The results of this work led to full-scale excavation between January and July 1990, in advance of redevelopment (Fig. 1).

The site was selected for archaeological evaluation because early maps and documentary references indicated that buildings forming part of the Duke of Norfolk's London residence once occupied the site, providing the opportunity to examine the home of one of the most important personalities of the Tudor court, and to map the decline of the area as the property was divided, becoming the site of industrial manufactories and slums.

By combining excavation results with documentary evidence discovered by Ray Sinclair, a preliminary picture of the site's history has been drawn. As work continues interpretations may change, and a great deal more work is necessary before a definitive report can be produced.

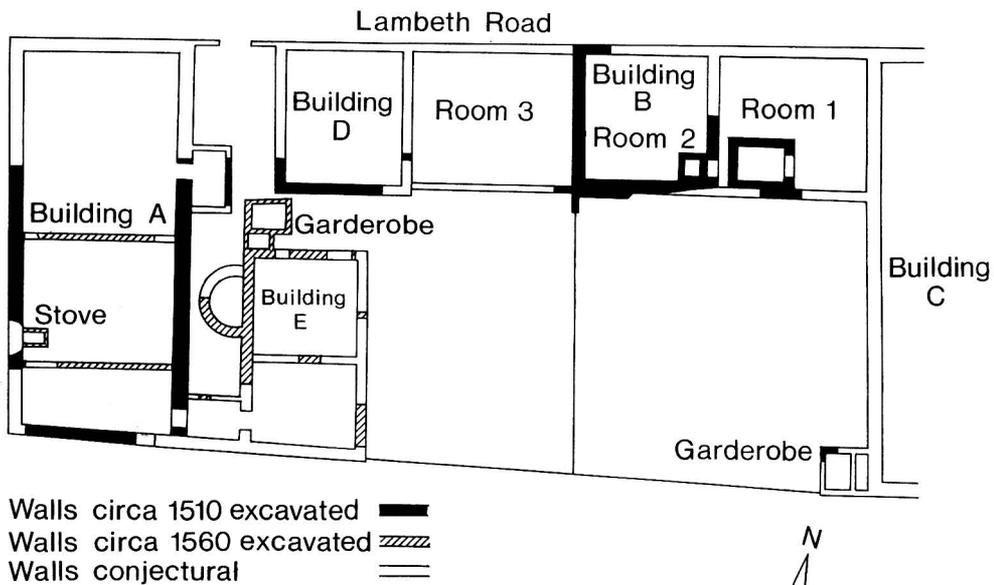
## Archaeological and historical background

The site lies on Thames floodplain gravels laid down since the last glaciation 10,000 years ago<sup>1</sup>. Pits containing prehistoric flint implements have been excavated in and around the grounds of Lambeth Palace<sup>2</sup> and on other nearby sites, and a number of flint tools were discovered on this site.

1. R. Densem and A. Doidge 'The topography of North Lambeth' *London Archaeol* 3 (1979) 265-9.  
2. SLAEC (1986) *Archaeological Excavations in Lambeth July 1973-1986*. SLAEC, privately circulated.

3. B. F. Davis 'The Roman Road from West Wickham to London' *Surrey Archaeological Collect* 43 (1935) 75-83; D. Seeley (1986) *Excavations in Lambeth Palace North Garden*. Unpublished Museum of London archive report.

Plan of excavated 16th-century buildings



Plan of excavated 17th-century buildings

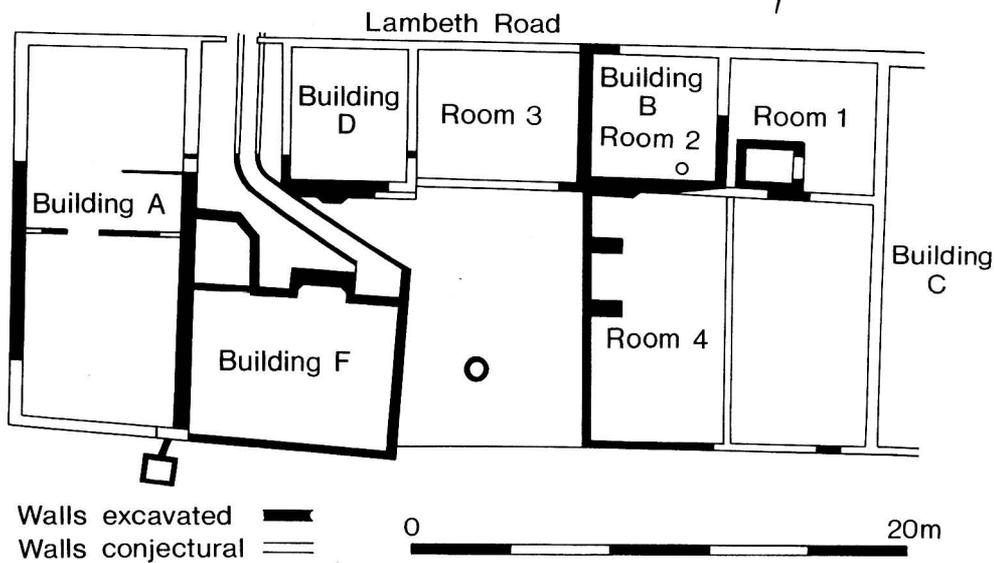


Fig. 2: plan of the excavated buildings.

Roman deposits including settlement remains, inhumations and what may have been a road have been found in Lambeth Palace garden<sup>3</sup>. Several sherds of 1st and 2nd-century pottery were found in secondary contexts at 113-127 Lambeth Road.

The name Lambeth, previously Lambehythe, is of Anglo-Saxon origin. The suffix “hythe” was most often associated with riverside landing places, usually of commercial importance<sup>4</sup>; “Lamb” could indicate the existence of a livestock market. Although no Saxon features survived, several sherds of pottery were recovered.

The Viking king of England, Harthacanute, died in Lambeth in 1042. The Church of St Mary’s was in existence by this time and, by the Norman Conquest, had become an important Minster Church. It is probably during this period that the medieval village of Water Lambeth originated.

### Medieval

1197 the king granted the manor of Lambeth to the Archbishop of Canterbury: Lambeth Palace was built by 1200.

Evidence for mid-12th-century occupation at 113-127 Lambeth Road was found in the form of pits, agricultural/horticultural deposits, and a small hearth. A pond, excavated in the south western area of the site, produced a complete wooden silt scoop, which had been repaired with a leather patch.

By the close of the 14th century the property was owned by another distinguished medieval courtier, Richard FitzAllen, Earl of Arundel<sup>5</sup>. The first excavated evidence of building in stone dates to this period, and consists of re-used greensand and ragstone window and door frames, pillars, capitals and drip mouldings, incorporated in later structures. Several fragments of decorated, glazed floor tile of similar date attest to the high status of the building which originally contained this material. Pits containing domestic refuse, including cooking vessels and several large stone mortars were also found, indicating the presence of a large kitchen close by.

In 1415 the property was left to the Arundel heiress Elizabeth FitzAllen and her husband Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. It later passed to Margaret Mowbray and her husband Robert Howard, whose marriage brought the land into the estates of the Howard family<sup>6</sup>. This was the first of a succession of carefully planned unions that were to make the Howard family, in the following centuries, one of the richest and most powerful dynasties in the country, second only to the Tudors.

In 1485 John Howard was killed at Bosworth Field. His son Thomas, Earl of Surrey survived, but on the accession of Henry VII was imprisoned in the Tower and his title revoked. In 1489 Thomas was released and his title restored, although his estates were not<sup>7</sup>.

4. Gelling, M. (1984) *Place-Names in the Landscape*.

5. PRO (Public Records Office) C66/347.

6. J. M. Robinson *The Dukes of Norfolk* 4 (1982).

### Tudor

A major upturn in the fortunes of the Howard family took place in 1513. While King Henry VIII was fighting in France, Thomas Howard and his son Thomas led the army to victory over the Scots at Flodden Field. In 1514 the recreated title of Duke of Norfolk was bestowed on Thomas, and his eldest son became Earl of Surrey. His estates and the financial benefits of office were restored<sup>8</sup>. This, together with his vast income from the Wealden iron industry, made the Duke one of the richest men in England.

Dating evidence, in the form of pottery, indicates that it was at about this time that the first buildings on the site were constructed. A linear development along the street frontage is apparent, preserving the orchard to the south.

### The 16th century: Norfolk House (Fig. 2)

The long walls of building A, on the western edge of the site, consisted of a chalk rubble core faced with re-used stone, supported on chalk rubble foundations. The gable walls were built on less substantial, brick foundations. The presence in the demolition deposits of a high percentage of glossy black vitrified bricks and various types of moulded and unmoulded red brick suggests that the northern wall facing the street had typical diaper patterning. Access was gained from the street by a passage leading to a timber-framed porch. The large room inside was floored in a chequerboard pattern of yellow and green-glazed tiles.

Building B (Fig. 2) contained at least three rooms and extended beyond the edge of the excavation to the east. The foundations were less substantial than those of Building A but were constructed of similar materials.

Room 1 had an elaborately patterned floor (formed of bricks laid on edge) and contained what appeared to be a brick-lined artesian well, covered by a barrel-vaulted roof with a small opening on the southern side.

Room 2 was semi-basemented, with a southern wall foundation which widened towards the west, presumably to support an internal feature on the ground floor, such as an oven. In this room a tile floor rested on a thick layer of clay, presumably laid to prevent water seeping down through the floor. The use of water in the cellar is also indicated by the presence of a small, brick-lined pit, with a glazed tile base. The pit had vertical brick walls on three sides which appear to have risen above floor level: the eastern wall was constructed of moulded bricks, forming a slope up through the wall of the cellar. This chute apparently opened out into the raised area above the well in Room 1, suggesting that the pit was filled from here.

Of Room 3, only the remains of its southern wall foundation and the impressions left by joists for a timber floor survived.

7. L. B. Smith *A Tudor Tragedy: the Life and Times of Catherine Howard* 4 (1961).

8. Robinson, *op. cit.*, 18.

In the south-east corner of the trench the remains of a rectangular, brick-lined pit (Fig. 2), apparently the soakaway for a garderobe, also dated to this phase.

Building D, which lay between buildings A and C, was a slightly later addition, possibly built after the completion of the Howard chapel in St Mary's Church in 1522. Like Building A, the side walls were supported on deep foundations.

In 1524 the Duke died: the palace passed to his wife, and his title to his son<sup>9</sup>. Thomas, now the 3rd Duke, was appointed to the Stewardship of Cambridge University and made Controller of Calais. As his power and duties at the royal court increased, the Duke spent an increasingly large amount of his time in London.

This was the high point of the palace's existence and there are records of important court and foreign officials being entertained here, including John Skelton, Poet Laureate<sup>10</sup>. The Duke's son, the Earl of Surrey, was himself an important character in the history of English literature. Having studied the literature of the Italian Renaissance, it is he who is credited with establishing what came to be known as the Elizabethan sonnet as a standard English poetic form. It was at this time that Catherine Howard, the Duke's niece and soon to be the fourth wife of Henry VIII, came to live here. The treasonous crimes attributed to Catherine at her beheading in 1542 included sexual acts reported to have taken place at Norfolk House<sup>11</sup>.



Fig. 3: the German stove tile (photo: Museum of London).

In 1547 the Duke was also executed for treason and his titles and estates once again attaindered. The many crimes of which the Howards were accused included the display of their (allegedly treasonous) coat of arms in the garden of the palace. His son regained the estates on the accession of Queen Mary; but in 1559 the Duke sold his Lambeth estate<sup>12</sup> and in 1565 purchased the Charterhouse in Clerkenwell. The Lambeth property was divided and the outlying land sold off. However, the palace buildings, with their gardens and orchards, remained a single unit<sup>13</sup>.

After the Duke's departure, a programme of alterations and additions to the buildings was undertaken (Fig. 2). Dividing walls were inserted into Building A and a covered passage was built to connect its southern room to the newly erected Building E. The middle room in Building A was supplied with a new, Continental-type, wood-burning stove. The foundation of the stove was found and several fragments of several German stove tiles were recovered (Fig. 3): this is the earliest excavated example of such a stove in England<sup>14</sup>.

Building E had two rooms on the ground floor and an upper storey served by a garderobe, the chute of which was carried in a projecting tower. A semi-circular structure was added between Buildings A and E, presumably to contain a newel stair. Several tin-glazed floor tiles produced at one of the Southwark factories provide further evidence for the continental influence on the interior decor at this time.

The pottery dating from this phase accords with that of the stove tiles (first produced in 1561). The documents inform us that in 1562 the Norfolk House buildings were sold to Margaret Parker, wife of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury<sup>15</sup>. With the palace and extensive grounds just over the road, the purchase and development of this site might appear unnecessary.

An explanation may lie in the role of Archbishop Parker during this turbulent period in the Church's history. At this time the effects of the Renaissance in England were pronounced, and Archbishop Parker was in the forefront of the "new learning", founding Rochdale Grammar School as well as scholarships at Cambridge University. While the iconoclasts were burning or defacing all figurative ecclesiastical sculpture and paintings, the Archbishop set out to save as many medieval manuscripts as he could find. He also had an interest in the work of the early antiquarians, publishing books such as *Britannia* by William Campden and John Stow's *A Survey of London*. The archbishop himself wrote a history of the English Church and was responsible for the study, translation and editing of the many medieval chronicles that he had collected<sup>16</sup>. This work involved a large number of scholars, all of whom needed to be housed.

9. PRO Prob 11/12/176R-177R.

10. H. Casady *Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey* (1975) III.

11. Smith, *op. cit.*

12. CPR (Calendar Patent Rolls) Edward 6 1547-8, p. 169 (1, Edward 6 PT6 M14).

An indenture of 1608 describes the buildings<sup>17</sup>. The Duke's chapel had an "Entrance out of the Streete directly into the parte of said late Duke's house which in times past had bene a Chappell..." that had been "late divided and made into an Hall, Buttery, and parlour together with a new Chimney [Building A]... a Coalhouse, a kitchen [Building E] and a yard". Adjacent to these were "one kitchen paved, two other rooms by it... bordering onto the Streete [Buildings B and D]... ", and next to this "One Hall [Building C]".

### The 17th century (Fig. 2)

Towards the end of the 16th century, the property was divided into three. Further division took place during the first half of the 17th century. The list of owners/occupiers includes such prominent Church officials as Thomas Blague (Doctor of Divinity and Rector of Lambeth), John Whitgift (Archbishop of Canterbury), his secretary Abraham Hartwell, and biographer and Comptroller of his household Sir George Paule. Abraham Hartwell was a member of the Society of Antiquaries and wrote and translated many books on geographical and historical subjects. Archbishop Whitgift's will shows him to have been a patron of the arts, leaving his "vialle, recorders, virginalle, and regalle of the lesser sort" to his servant. Wills also exist for Hartwell and Paule, indicating that they too were affluent men quite capable of affording the considerable amount of new building and alterations evident in the archaeological record (Fig. 2).

In Building A, the original tiled floor had slumped into underlying pits. The dividing walls and stove were removed, the floor and threshold level raised with demolition material and the south door blocked. Timber walls, laid on clay sills, replaced the earlier dividing walls. The northern room was embellished with floor tiles re-used from the earlier floor, and timber panelling around the walls. The middle room, now floored in timber, was entered through a doorway in the centre of the dividing wall.

Building E was replaced by Building F, which butted against Building A. Access to the upper floor was provided by a stair turret. This stair also appears to have served Building A, suggesting that an upper floor was inserted at this time. A door or large window was let into the south eastern corner of the building, and to the south of this a brick-lined pit was constructed. This was fed from within Building E by a small drain.

A large, apparently semi-basemented, room (Room 4) was added to the rear of Room 2 in Building B. It is likely that this new building separated two now discrete properties.

One of the most interesting finds from this period is a delftware floor tile depicting a group of four cherubs

13. PRO C54/559 (26).

14. David Gaimster, *pers. comm.*

15. PRO CP 25/2/225/4/5/ELIZ/MICH.

16. A. L. Rowse *The England of Elizabeth* (1973).

17. PRO C 54/1943.

(Fig. 4). It is of unusual design and size (180mm, 7in, square) and appears to be of 17th-century continental manufacture; probably Portuguese. It has been suggested that the design shows cherubs (or *putti*) at play, although other interpretations have been made. Whatever is being represented, it is surprising to find a tile depicting such a blatantly secular subject in such a highly ecclesiastic context. Further study is necessary before a precise date, origin and interpretation of subject can be assigned to this piece. A potter's mark (representing a multi-tailed comet) on the back of the tile should be of help in this search.

By the late 17th century, the tiled floor in Building A was in a bad state of decay. The timber panelling and porch were removed and the area outside was paved with re-used tiles and vitrified brick. The floor was given a mortar skim and a timber screen erected to block the draught from the door.

Building F, or at least its ground floor, appears to have been divorced from Building A by the construction of a wall blocking entry to the stair turret. In Building B, Room 2 was rebuilt and re-floored in brick, the square pit being replaced by a smaller, round one in the same position. Building D was underpinned and externally buttressed in order to insert a brick-floored cellar, similar to that in Room 2.

A fireplace or oven was inserted into the western wall of Room 4, the size of its foundations suggesting that the upper floor was provided with a similar feature. Building F was supplied with a large drain, which presumably emptied into a drainage ditch along the street front.

### The 18th century

By the beginning of the 18th century, the buildings had become run down and a complex series of documents show further division and multiple occupancy.

The floor was removed and pits were dug inside Building F, and the large drain serving it was dismantled and backfilled. In Building B, silt had begun to build up on the floor of Room 1 and plaster littered the floor in

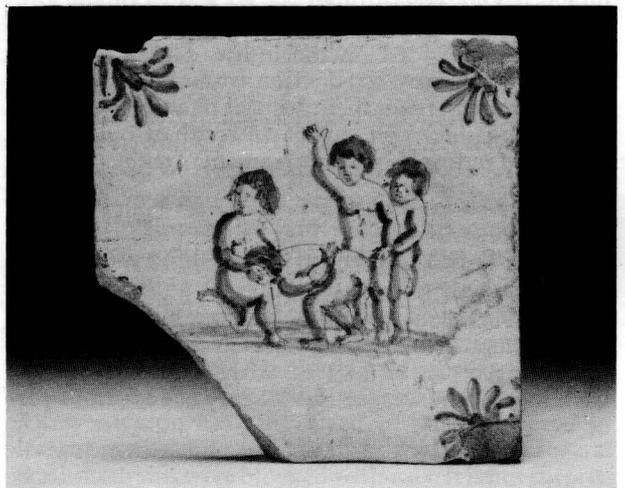


Fig. 4: the delftware "cherub" tile (photo: Museum of London)



**Fig. 5: 19th-century items from the kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. Kitchen utensils include pie dishes, mixing bowls, an icing bag, bottles for sauce, wine and ginger beer, and paste jars. Bathroom and bedroom items include chamber pots, perfume bottles, hair cream, a shaving mug, toothbrush holder and toothbrushes in adult and child sizes. Medical items, including a syringe, are also present.**

Room 3. Window glass was found in many contexts, the well was backfilled and a series of small brick and timber sheds were erected in the western yard.

It is possible that some of the Norfolk House buildings were being used for industrial purposes at this time. A hole was knocked through the back wall of the fireplace in Building F and two short lengths of wall and a sloping floor added on the inside. This produced a chamber too narrow to function as a fireplace and must represent some form of industrial oven, stoked from the yard outside. A pit, dug to the south of Building A, contained industrial slag and crucible fragments.

The area to the south of the buildings, previously the orchard, appears to have become wasteland. Several large rubbish pits contained vessels used in sugar refining.

### **Sugar refining**

A sugar merchant, William Watson, first appears in documents of 1692<sup>18</sup>. More research is required before the refinery can be located with certainty, but the buildings on the west of the site may have formed part of it.

Before the late 17th century, sugar was known only as a spice and a medicine. In 1660 the English took Jamaica, which became the centre for the rapid growth of the sugar industry. By 1700 sugar plantations, inexpensively worked with African slave labour, had become the predominant employer in the West Indies and the sugar trade had become a major part of the English economy.

Raw sugar is perishable and so it was milled to extract the juice and partly refined (by boiling) on the plantation. It was then shipped to England where the refining process was continued. This involved further boiling, during which the molasses turned from black to white. A fine white clay, several deposits of which were found on site, was used to aid this process. The molasses was then filtered into moulds and allowed to crystallize. Once the crystallization process was complete, the bung was removed from the bottom of the mould and the remaining molasses allowed to run out into large jars, to await further refining.

Many refining vessels were found. They are of red earthenware, in a fabric which differed from those

18. LAD (Lambeth Archives Department, Minet Library) 1/13, 620

19. B. Bloice 'Norfolk House, Lambeth: excavations at a delftwarekiln site, 1968' *Post-Medieval Archaeol* 5 (1971) 99-159.



Fig. 6: 19th-century table items, including “everyday” and “Sunday best” services, condiment sets, glasses, and cutlery.

found elsewhere, and were probably manufactured locally. Moulds and jars of a variety of sizes are present. The majority of moulds are internally slipped, presumably to aid the removal of the sugar “cone”, while the jars are generally glazed. Several large “plant pots” were found among these vessels and it is not yet clear whether they played some part in the refinery process or were merely used to decorate the refiner’s yard.

### Delftware pottery

The rubbish pits to the south of the buildings also contained large amounts of waste products from the Norfolk House delftware pottery which was to the east of the site towards the end of the 17th century<sup>19</sup>. The assemblages contain biscuit fired pottery and wasters, including wall tiles and many vessel forms. Finished vessels and tiles were also recovered, including a few sherds of the rare *bleu persan*, thought to have been produced in Lambeth alone. This collection adds substantially to the corpus already catalogued and includes some fine and previously unrecorded designs.

By the end of the 18th century all of the excavated buildings had been largely demolished. A row of tenements fronting on to Lambeth Road was built, in several cases incorporating the walls of the earlier buildings. Three of these buildings were supplied with large brick-lined cess pits at the bottom of their yards. At a

later date, drains were laid from the houses to these pits. Several 18th-century rubbish pits, dug in the yards around the cess pits, were also excavated, some producing delftware vessels.

Ducarel, in his *History and Antiquities of Lambeth* (1784), tells us that by this time the sugar house and pot house were “both now in ruins”. He also states that “several dwelling houses on Church Street [now Lambeth Road] and a malt house on Paradise row” had been built “about forty years ago upon part of the site of the said [Duke of Norfolk’s] palace”.

### The 19th century

In 1826 Hodges’ vinegar distillery was built on the site of the pottery, and soon after the candle factory in the southern part of 113-127 Lambeth Road was built<sup>20</sup>.

Trading under the name of Chas. Ogleby and Co. and later as J C and J Field, candles were not the only items produced. Wax-bleaching, palm oil-distilling and paraffin wax-refining also took place and, in 1851, the company won a gold medal at the World Fair for its refined spermaceti. Night-lights and soap were also manufactured, and a flysheet found during excavation shows that high quality floor polish was also produced. These processes would have produced an array of very unpleasant smells and excavation showed that on several occasions drains were blocked with wax. It is not surprising that complaints about the factory occur in the records of the Lambeth Vestry during this time.

20. LAD 1/13, 643.



**Fig. 7: 19th-century children's property, including christening cups, toy cups, saucers and plates, and other toys such as dice, whistles and marbles.**

In 1897 part of the site was purchased by Sir Henry Doulton of Doulton and Co.<sup>21</sup> Several dumps of Doulton factory waste were found, including kiln material and many and various examples of Royal Doulton's products. These ranged from urinals and brightly coloured architectural mouldings (produced for public lavatories all over the country) to bottles and the fine wares, for which they are perhaps most famous.

Lambeth was infamous for the appalling condition of its working class housing during the Victorian period. Despite the foundation of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers in 1848, the cholera epidemics continued, with over 14,000 people dying in London in 1849 alone. The Lambeth Vestry was slow to react, with open sewers still in use as late as 1867. Eventually, between 1856 and 1888, over 53 miles of sewers were constructed in Lambeth and from the beginning of the 1870s houses were being connected to them and new water closets installed<sup>22</sup>. Mary Anne Smith and Royal Doulton were both manufacturing new, ceramic pipes in Lambeth, examples of which were found on site.

In 1800, water was only supplied on three days a week and had to be stored in tanks and cisterns. It was not until 1865 that an all-day water supply was connected and as late as 1880 there was no form of refuse collection. A

21. LAD 1/13, 657.

22. J. Roebuck *Urban Development in 19th-Century London: Lambeth, Battersea and Wandsworth 1838-1888* (1979).

mass of brick-built drains and pits, representing frequent modernisation of the water supply and drainage system, were excavated.

Associated with these developments was the backfilling of the brick-lined cess pits. Rather than backfilling with soil, the pits were used to dispose of a vast amount of domestic rubbish. Almost every aspect of homelife is represented, and it is likely that the assemblage will form one of the largest collections of 19th-century household artefacts ever excavated, with over one thousand items present (Figs. 5-7). The group is particularly important since everyday objects used by the less-affluent majority of the population seldom survive in collections, and it therefore provides us with a unique insight into the life of Victorian working class or artisan household.

### **Acknowledgements**

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