

letter gothic, and an inscribed Italian tin-glaze albarello, as well as much Raeren stoneware.

The non-imported wares included a large quantity of tin-glazed wares and kiln furniture such as trivets, saggars and wasters. Much derived from the excavation of a small area adjoining the east side of Vine Lane, where there was a succession of burnt layers representing destruction phases of a pottery kiln. This had been observed during the 1986-88 programme, and has been identified as the delftware kiln set up by Christian Wilhelm in 1618.

The list of accessioned finds reads like an inventory of early post-medieval life — indeed the MoLAS specialist who has reported on them considers that they could form the basis of a catalogue of 16th century London artefacts.

Glass items included ornate drinking vessels, beakers, onion bottles bearing heraldic arms, decanters, bowls, salt cellars, bird feeders and window glass. The leatherwork was all late-15th/16th century, and comprised a profusion of shoes and pattens, a complete gauntlet, an almost complete jerkin, drawstring pouches, a scabbard, a wool card with well-preserved teeth, a finely-tooled book binding, and London's first codpiece! Textiles included silks, satin damask, velvet, knitted caps and stockings, and worsted, as well as goathair cloth.

Thanks to the use of a metal-detector, over 2,000 metal items were recovered. From the wardrobe there were buckles and buttons, chains, pins and needles, dress-hooks, lace-chapes and thimbles. From a domestic context there were coins, cloth seals, keys, knives, candleholders, finger-rings, bells, weights, a 16th century syringe, dishes and tankards, and the largest collections of 15-17th century pewter spoons and 16th century knives yet found in London.

Militaria comprised a sword, complete spurs, chainmail, lead shot, brigandine plates, a tiltyard manufer, and the first burgonet cheekpiece to be

found in England. Other metal objects included pieces from scientific instruments, Jews' harps, pilgrim badges, tools of many trades, horse and ox-shoes, stirrups, and an important collection of 17th century toy miniatures of furniture and domestic items.

There were wooden bowls, combs, counters and cartwheels; knife and cutlery handles of bone, antler and ivory; ceramic crucibles and spindle-whorls; a jet bead and finger-ring, and a cowrie shell.

Also recovered was an important collection of cloth-seals, including six from London dyers' guilds, suggesting that cloth colouring was practised close by. The 200 coins, jettons and tokens are almost all 16th/17th century and provide a unique opportunity to test the chronology of the jettons, which was based on artistic considerations and dates to the First World War!

An assessment report of the very considerable potential of this site for further research has been compiled according to the principles laid out in the English Heritage document *Management of Archaeological Projects* (2nd edition), and is available for consultation at MoLAS. The author welcomes all interpretative suggestions concerning the timber structures illustrated here.

It is hoped that eventually it will be possible to publish this site in conjunction with the results of the 1986-88 programme, as the totality of the London Bridge City Phase II sites represents a vital contribution to several research programmes on local, regional and national levels.

Grateful thanks are proffered to the developer of the site, St Martins Property Investments Ltd, who funded not only the excavation, but also the assessment report and the writing of this article. Also to the many MoLAS managers, specialists and field staff without whom this project could not have taken place.

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## Letter

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HAVING READ *Owls in the Basilica*, I should like to ask if we are now certain that the road from London Bridge went to the middle of the Basilica; look at the "kink" in the northern approach road. Aren't there grounds for thinking an early road

went along the east side?

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