

# The Future of London's Past revisited and expanded -- a conference review

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ON THE 6th December 1997 the Standing Conference on London Archaeology (SCOLA) held a conference at the Museum of London to reconsider *The Future of London's Past* (FLP) 25 years on. This report stated that 'antiquities dug from the soil of London have attracted the interest and enthusiasm of antiquaries for several centuries. About seventy years ago a conscious effort began to extract from such finds and from the observation of buried structures, some connected account of the origins and early development of the City. This work, prosecuted with renewed vigour in the aftermath of World War 2, has never kept pace with the destruction of the very evidence being sought, by the necessary but relentless erection of modern buildings ... Although one quarter of the City's area has already been destroyed in archaeological terms, and over a half at least partially damaged, major problems still remain relating to the City's Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval past. Many of these problems can still be solved -- by unprecedented effort and expenditure -- but only twenty years at the most remain in which this work can be done. By then, and more likely by the late 1980s, the remaining archaeological deposits will have been almost entirely destroyed by the increasing tempo and intensity of development<sup>1</sup>. This report recommended the establishment of an archaeological unit to excavate threatened archaeological sites and in response to this recommendation in December 1973 the DUA (Department of Urban Archaeology) was formed, it was originally attached to the City of London Guildhall Museum, but later was transferred to the Museum of London. In 1991 the DUA was amalgamated with the DGLA (Department of Greater London Archaeology) to form MOLAS (Museum of London Archaeology Service).

1. M. Biddle, D. Hudson with C. Heighway *The Future of London's Past; a survey of the archaeological implications of planning and development in the nation's capital* Rescue Pub. no 4 (1973) 3.
2. M. O. H. Carver (ed.) *Medieval Worcester an archaeological framework* *Trans Worcs Archaeol Soc* 7 (1980).
3. *Op cit* fn 1, 30-1.

**The Scope of *The Future of London's Past***  
In many respects FLP still reads like a modern document, as it includes a deposit survival survey, a period by period review or a resource assessment in modern parlance, and a list of research questions that a programme of rescue excavations should address. The style of FLP has inspired other urban surveys, such as one produced for medieval Worcester in 1980<sup>2</sup>. The FLP deposit survey concluded that by 1970 nearly 25% of the area of the City's archaeology had been destroyed and a further 58% partially damaged or truncated<sup>3</sup>. How much more of the City of London's archaeology has been either excavated or destroyed since 1973 is uncertain, but it was estimated in 1990 that since 1973 a further 20% of the capital's archaeology had been destroyed or excavated<sup>4</sup>. What is certain is that there are still archaeological deposits left in the City of London and there is partial survival of deposits on more sites than was realised when FLP was written.

The conference started with one of FLP's authors Professor Biddle discussing the report. He reflected that they should have considered the capital's prehistoric and post-medieval archaeological potential. For the Roman period, FLP highlighted three areas of high archaeological potential. First, the Cornhill area which was thought to be an early area of planned settlement or possibly a military supply base (Fig. 1). Second, the area of the port and bridgehead was identified and last, the importance of the cemeteries was stressed (Fig. 2). For the Saxon period there was insufficient data to make any definite conclusions (Figs. 3 & 4). It was not realised at that time that the 7-9th century settlement of *Lundenwic* lay upstream at Westminster<sup>5</sup>. For the medieval period (1066-1500) the key objectives were seen as the investigation of the harbour,

4. Figure cited by John Maloney at Archaeology in the City of London Day-school at MoL 10/2/90.
5. *Op cit* fn 1, 16.
6. *Op cit* fn 1, 19-20; R. Cowie and R. Whytehead 'Lundenwic: the archaeological evidence for middle Saxon London' *Antiquity* 63 (1989) 706-18; A. Vince *Saxon London: an Archaeological Investigation* (1990) 13-17.

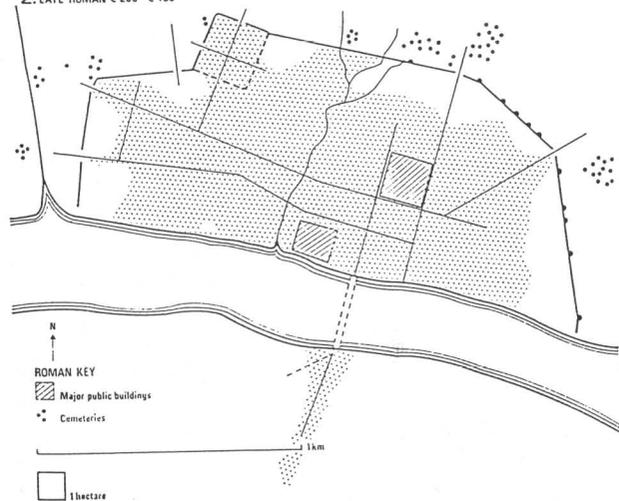
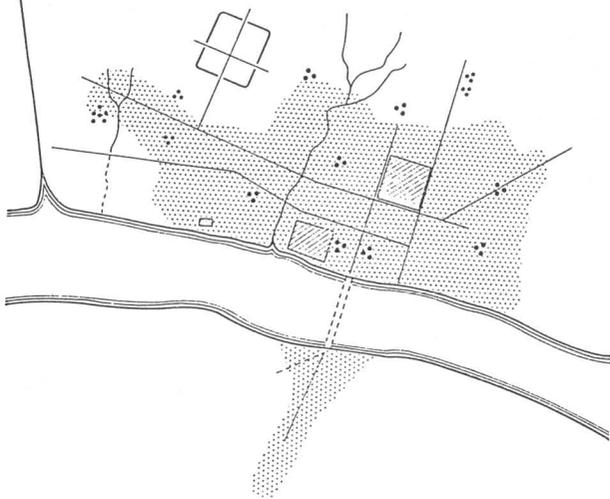


Fig. 1: (top) early Roman London (c AD 43-200) as reconstructed in FLP. The stippled area shows the probable extent of the settlement. The three monumental or public buildings shown as the second basilica; the palatial complex (under Cannon Street Station) is the eastern block on the waterfront; the Huggin Hill bathhouse is the western block on the waterfront. The amphitheatre to the south-east of the fort was only discovered in 1987. Work since 1973 has established the position of the Roman bridge over the Thames is correct and that Southwark has an indented shoreline.

Fig. 2: (bottom) late Roman London (c AD 200-450). The 3rd-century riverwall is not shown as it was not discovered until 1974. By AD 350 the main focus of settlement was probably restricted to the area around the northern bridgehead.

parish churches, houses and linking this work with the vast amount of documentary evidence (Figs. 5 & 6)?

Biddle concluded that the three most serious current problems facing London's archaeology are first, the general lack of research and synthesis utilising the large volume of new data; second, the general lack of publication of recent work; and last the plight of the Museum of London's archaeological archive. Since April 1996 due to lack of funding the archive has not accepted any new material and public access has been severely restricted.

The future role of the Museum of London in the capital's archaeology was outlined by the museum's new director Simon Thurley. He wishes to develop the role of archaeology in the museum. Recent excavations have already contributed to the new prehistoric and Roman galleries (the latter opened in February 1996) and a temporary exhibition on *Death and burial in London* is planned for September 1998. It is proposed to create a new long-term archaeological archive for finds and site records at the Eagle Wharf Road premises. To make the archive more usable, various catalogues of past and present archaeological sites are being produced<sup>8</sup>. Also a full bibliography of City of London archaeological publications is being compiled, which will be very useful as there is no single publication series, the material is hidden away in a diverse range of periodicals, monographs and books.

The vast amount of archaeological work carried out in London since 1946 has resulted in a large backlog of unpublished material of national and international importance. Aspects of this problem are being tackled by the Museum of London and MOLAS staff. The 1984-91 DUA publication programme of excavations which took place during 1973-82 is

7. *Op cit fn 1*, 25-26.
8. J. Schofield *Museum of London Archive Guide to Guildhall Museum Sites 1924-1973* (1994).
9. J. Schofield 'Archaeology in the City of London: archive and publication' *Archaeol J* 144 (1987) 423-33; the main results of this publication programme have been a series of HMSO books, CBA Res. Reps and London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Paps and articles in TLAMAS.
10. G. Milne *St Bride's church London: archaeological research 1952-60 and 1992-5* English Heritage Archaeol Rep. II (1997); J. Shepherd forthcoming *The temple of Mithras: excavations by W. F. Grimes and A. Williams at the Walbrook*, London English Heritage Archaeol Rep; two volumes on the Grimes excavations within the Cripplegate Roman fort are being produced.
11. T. Bringham, D. Goodburn and I. Tyers with J. Dillon 'A Roman timber building on the Southwark waterfront, London' *Archaeol J* 152 (1995) 1-72; P. Mills 'Excavations at the dorter undercroft, Westminster Abbey' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 46 (1995) 69-124; C. Thomas, B. Sloane and C. Phillpotts *Excavations at the Priory and Hospital of St Mary Spital*, London MoLAS monograph 1 (1997); B. Watson with T. Dyson 'London Bridge is broken down' *Papers of the Medieval Europe Conference Brugge 1997* vol. 1 - Urbanism (1997) 311-327.

sadly unfinished<sup>9</sup>, but is still ongoing. English Heritage is funding the publication of the late Professor Grimes' 1946-68 programme of rescue excavations in the City<sup>10</sup>. There is also an ongoing English Heritage funded backlog programme of archaeological sites in the Greater London area. The results of this latter programme are now being published<sup>11</sup>. In November 1997 MOLAS launched the first volume of a new monograph series<sup>12</sup>.

### Changes in knowledge since 1970 -- prehistory

The second part of the conference consisted of a series of period-by-period reviews. The prehistory of Greater London was discussed by John Lewis (Wessex Archaeology). He observed that during the prehistoric period London did not exist, it was simply part of the Thames Valley. There have been a number of significant advances in prehistoric archaeology since 1970. First, work at Three Ways Wharf, Uxbridge has revealed a sequence of late Devensian and early Flandrian (c 10,000 BP) sediments containing scatters of later Upper Palaeolithic flints and animals bones. Archaeologically this period of climatic transition at the end of the last ice age is poorly understood in England, so the Uxbridge site is very important<sup>13</sup>. Second, work on the west London gravels has identified a complex history of prehistoric land-use, including a Neolithic cursus, middle Bronze Age enclosures, plus Iron Age round houses and associated field systems<sup>14</sup>. Third, in Bermondsey and east London archaeological work has demonstrated that much of London's early prehistory lies under or within fluvial or estuarine marsh deposits<sup>15</sup>. In some places wooden trackways were constructed across these

marshes during the middle of the second millennium BC<sup>16</sup>.

### The Roman period

The last 28 years have seen great progress in all aspects of London's Roman archaeology, some aspects of which were highlighted by Dominic Perring (formerly of AOC London) in a short round-up (Figs. 1 & 2). In terms of 'stamp collecting' monuments he cited important work on the late-3rd-century river wall, discovered in 1974<sup>17</sup>; the unfinished palatial complex in the south-west quarter of the City constructed during AD 294<sup>18</sup>. There has been a great deal of the work on the second basilica and the earlier buildings on its site<sup>19</sup>. London's amphitheatre was only discovered in 1987 and has since been extensively excavated<sup>20</sup>. Further work has been done on the Huggin Hill bathhouse<sup>21</sup>. In 1992 a possible late-4th-century cathedral was found on Tower Hill<sup>22</sup>. Extensive excavation of the Roman port has taken place since 1970 and the development of dendrochronology has allowed the oak timbers of the waterlogged quays and revetments of the port to be dated precisely<sup>23</sup>.

Open-area excavation of Roman sites has provided ground plans of vernacular-style buildings, which have demonstrated for the first time the rapid growth of the Roman city between AD 70 and 120. From open-area excavations large finds assemblages have also been recovered. Study of early and late Roman ceramics from London have already produced two important type-series<sup>24</sup>. Excavation of waterlogged deposits have also produced well-preserved timber structures, such as the South-

12. C. Thomas *et al op cit fn 11*.

13. J. C. S. Lewis, P. E. J. Wiltshire and R. I. Macphail 'A late Devensian/early Flandrian site at Three Ways Wharf, Uxbridge: environmental implications' in S. Needham and M. G. Macklin (eds) *Alluvial Archaeology in Britain* Oxbow monograph 27 (1992) 235-47.

14. A monograph on the archaeology of the west London gravels is being produced as part of the English Heritage funded Greater London publication programme.

15. N. Merriman 'Predicting the unexpected: prehistoric sites recently discovered under alluvium in Central London' in S. Needham and M. G. Macklin (eds) *Alluvial Archaeology in Britain* Oxbow monograph 27 (1992) 261-67.

16. F. M. Meddens 'Sites from the Thames estuary wetlands, England and their Bronze Age use' *Antiquity* 70 (1996) 325-34; C. Thomas and J. Rackham (ed) 'Bramcote Green, Bermondsey: A Bronze Age trackway and palaeo-environmental sequence' *Proc Prehist Soc* 62 (1996) 221-253.

17. C. Hill, M. Millett and T. Blagg *The Roman riverside wall and monumental arch in London* London Middlesex Spec. Pap. 3 (1980); H. Sheldon and I. Tyers 'Recent dendrochronological work in Southwark and its implications' *London Archaeol* 4 (1983) 355-61.

18. T. Williams *Public buildings in the south-west quarter of Roman London* CBA Res. Rep 88 (1993).

19. G. Milne (ed) *From Roman Basilica to medieval market* (1992); G. Milne and A. Wardle 'Early Roman development at Leadenhall Court, London and related research' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 44 (1993) 23-169.

20. N. C. W. Bateman 'The London amphitheatre excavations 1987-1996' *Britannia* 28 (1997) 51-85.

21. P. Rowsome forthcoming 'The Huggin Hill Baths and baths buildings in Roman London - barometers of the town's changing circumstances?' *J Roman Archaeol*.

22. D. Sankey 'Cathedrals grain stores and urban vitality in late Roman London' in *Roman London: recent archaeological work* J Roman Archaeol Monograph 24 (1998) 78-82.

23. G. Milne *The port of Roman London* (1985); T. Brigham 'The port of Roman London' in *Roman London: recent archaeological work* J Roman Archaeol Monograph 24 (1998) 23-34.

24. B. J. Davis, B. Richardson and R. S. Tomber *A dated corpus of early Roman pottery from the City of London* CBA Res Rep. 98 (1995); R. P. Symonds and R. S. Tomber 'Late Roman London: an assessment of the ceramic evidence from the City of London' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 42 (1991 pub. 1994) 59-99.

work warehouse<sup>25</sup>, and vast amounts of well-preserved metal work<sup>26</sup>. Perring noted that finds studies can tell us much about changing trade patterns. With the present volume of data from London and Southwark there is tremendous scope for comparison with the finds assemblages from farmsteads and small towns such *Pontes* (Staines) within London's hinterland<sup>27</sup>. The potential for studying Roman demography, food supply and diet in London has yet to be fully realised.

Perring suggested that many of the archaeological investigations undertaken within London lacked a research input. This is a fair criticism of some 1970s and 1980s excavations, but not of recent ones, for which detailed research designs have been produced. Perring concluded that the most important single archaeological Roman find made in London since 1970 was the wooden writing tablet found at Throgmorton Avenue in 1986. It was written on the 14th March AD 118 and concerns the purchase of a piece of woodland in Kent<sup>28</sup>.

### The Saxon period (AD 450-1066)

Bob Cowie (MOLAS) reviewed the dramatic progress in Saxon archaeology over the last 28 years, highlighting a number of important discoveries (Fig. 3 & 4). First, since 1985 there has been the discovery of the 7th-9th century trading settlement of *Lundenwic* at Westminster<sup>29</sup>. Work on *Lundenwic* culminated in 1996 with the excavation of a large area of the middle Saxon settlement at the Royal Opera House. Here excavations revealed the buildings and streets of a planned urban settlement<sup>30</sup>. *Lundenwic* was abandoned during the late 9th century after being raided by the Vikings several times.

25. T. Brigham *et al op cit* fn 11.

26. A. Wardle 'Roman London: recent finds and research' in *Roman London: recent archaeological work* J Roman Archaeol Monograph 24 (1998) 83-9.

27. K. P. Crouch and S. A. Shanks *Excavations in Staines 1975-76, the friends' burial ground site* London Middlesex Archaeol Soc, Surrey Archaeol Soc Joint Pub. 2 (1984) 9-18.

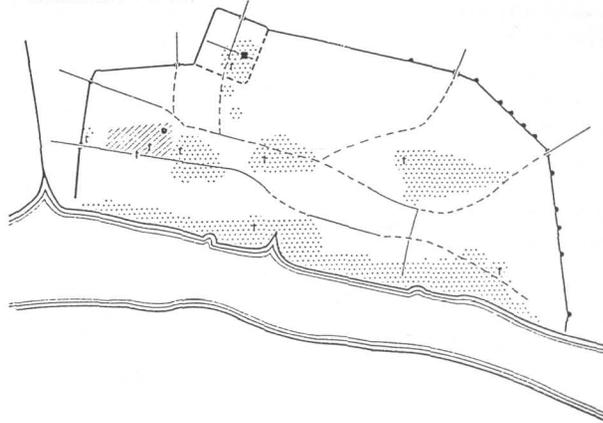
28. R. S. O. Tomlin 'A five-acre wood in Roman Kent' in (ed) J. Bird, M. Hassall and H. Sheldon *Interpreting Roman London* Oxbow monograph 58 (1996) 209-215.

29. L. Blackmore 'From beach to burh: new clues to entity and identity in 7th - 9th century London' *Papers of the Medieval Europe Conference Brugge 1997* vol. 1 - Urbanism (1997) 122-132; R. Cowie 'A gazetteer of middle Saxon sites and finds in the Strand/Westminster area' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 39 (1988) 37-46; R. Cowie and R. Whytehead *op cit* fn 6.

30. L. Blackmore *op cit* fn 28, p. 124-7. The analysis stage of the Royal Opera House post-excavation project will be finished during 1998 and its planned to publish a monograph on the site during 1999.

31. J. Ayre and R. Wroe-Brown with R. Malt 'Aethelred's Hythe to Queenhithe: the origins of a London dock' *Medieval Life* 5 (1996) 14-25. A monograph on the Queenhithe excavations is forthcoming.

3. EARLY SAXON c AD 450 - c 800



4. LATE SAXON c AD 800-1066

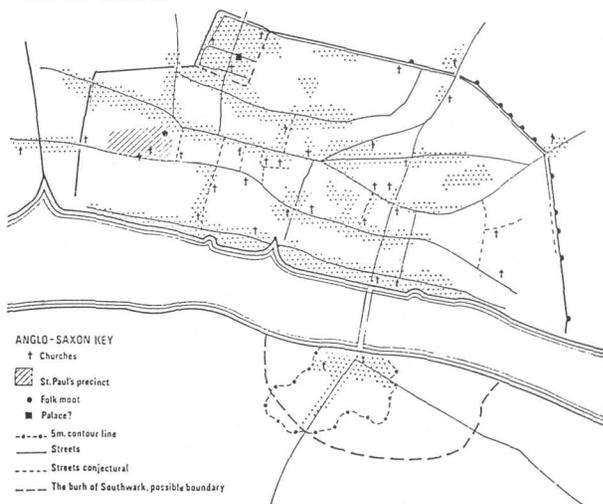


Fig. 3: (top) early Saxon London (c AD 450-800) as reconstructed in FLP. The stippled area shows a hypothetical area of settlement. Subsequent research suggests that apart from around St Paul's precinct the rest of the walled city was virtually uninhabited. The Thames was not bridged until c AD 1000.

Fig. 4: (bottom) late Saxon London (c AD 800-1066). Subsequent research has proven that by c 1000 the north-south road network was more extensive. The defended area of the Southwark burh in the 11th century was probably a small area around the southern bridgehead, but its territory would have been larger.

Second, in 886 King Alfred ordered the reoccupation of the walled Roman city to help defend the area against future Viking raids. In c 890 a beach market or trading centre was established on the foreshore at Queenhithe, within the walled Roman city, an event which marks the re-establishment of the port of London<sup>31</sup>. Finds of 9th-10th century Carolingian and Scandinavian metalwork, quernstones from the Rhineland and imported pottery show that the Saxon port was involved in international trade. From c 1000 large areas of the walled city

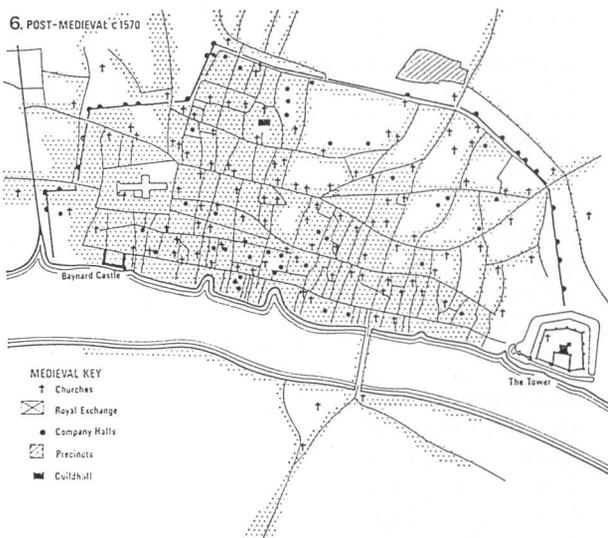
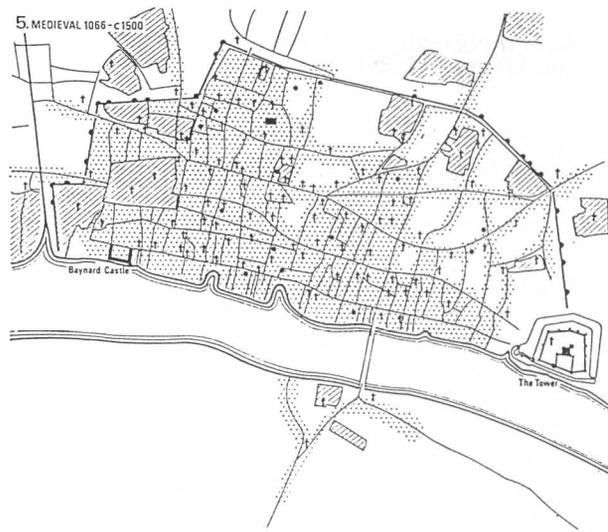
were reoccupied and a new street grid established to link the port with the rest of the city<sup>32</sup>. Excavations within the City of London have revealed two main types of Saxon timber buildings. Generally, along the street-frontage surface-laid rectangular houses or shops were constructed, while further back from the streets sunken-floored buildings were constructed, they are interpreted as workshops and storerooms<sup>33</sup>.

Third, within the area of Greater London, a number of new early Saxon sites have been identified since 1970, such as Battersea, Clapham and Hammersmith<sup>34</sup>. One of the oldest Saxon monastic foundations in the London area – Barking Abbey (established by c 666) has been extensively excavated<sup>35</sup>.

### The Medieval period (1066-1500)

Derek Keene (Institute of Historical Research, University of London) discussed how both our knowledge and perception of London as a capital city has changed since 1970. It was during the medieval period that London was transformed from a provincial city into a great European capital, packed with shops, houses, parish churches and monasteries (Fig. 5). It is believed that by 1300 the population of London was c 100,000, making it one of the largest north European cities<sup>36</sup>. A city of this size provided a vast market for commodities such as livestock, firewood or grain<sup>37</sup>.

Since 1970 there has been considerable historical research on the changing density of London's properties during the medieval period. Study of the Cheapside area properties has shown how wealthy merchants could acquire large mansions, which were of ten sub-divided within two or three



32. K. Steedman, T. Dyson and J. Schofield *The bridgehead and Billingsgate to 1200, Aspects of Saxo-Norman London*: 3 London and Middlesex Archaeol. Soc. Spec. Pap. 14 (1992) 122-131.
33. V. Horman, C. Milne and G. Milne with P. Allen *Buildings and street development, Aspects of Saxo-Norman London*: 1 London and Middlesex Archaeol. Soc. Spec. Pap. 11 (1988).
34. R. Densum and D. Sealey 'Excavations at Rectory Grove, Clapham, 1980-81' *London Archaeol* 4 (1982) 177-84. The early Saxon sites at Battersea, Clapham and Hammersmith are to be published as part of the English Heritage funded Greater London publication programme.
35. K. MacGowan 'Barking Abbey' *Current Archaeol* no 149 (1996) 172-8.
36. D. Keene 'A new study of London before the Great Fire' *Urban History Yearbook* (1984) 11-21.
37. B. M. S. Campbell, J. A. Galloway, D. Keene and M. Murphy *A medieval capital and its grain supply, agrarian production and distribution in the London region c. 1300* Hist. Geog. Res. Series no 30 (1993).
38. D. Keene and V. Harding *A survey of the documentary sources for property holding in London before the Great Fire* London Record Soc 22 (1985).

Fig. 5: (top) medieval London (c 1066-1500) as reconstructed in FLP. This map actually shows London c 1300, after the south-western extension of the city wall in c 1282. The wall-line was extended at the request of the Dominicans, who were building a friary here on the site of two disused Norman castles – Montfichet's tower and the first Baynard's Castle. Notice the large areas occupied by friary and monastic precincts.

Fig. 6: (bottom) post-medieval London (c 1570), after the dissolution of the monasteries. The only remaining precinct is that of the Hospital and Priory of St Mary of Bethlehem, which was refounded in 1547 by the City of London as a lunatic asylum or 'Bedlam'.

generations<sup>38</sup>. Archaeologically the study of the Cheapside area properties has shown that from the mid-12th-century onward large stone-built cellars were being constructed, above which would have

been shops on the ground storey and living accommodation in the timber-framed upper storeys<sup>39</sup>.

Derek Keene omitted to mention some important developments in London's medieval archaeology. First, the publication in 1989 of detailed maps showing the topography of the City of London in c 1270 and 1520<sup>40</sup>. Second, the excavation of the waterlogged dumps of soil and domestic rubbish behind a succession of medieval waterfront revetments since 1970 has revealed a vast number of finds including shoes, scabbards, leather waste, cloth, metalwork and pottery. The recovery of large groups of stratified medieval pottery from the waterfront dumps, dating from the mid-12th to the mid-15th-century, which could be independently dated, by dendrochronology and numismatic evidence, has led to the establishment of a new chronological framework for London's medieval ceramics<sup>41</sup>. This work has led to the production of a number of new closely-dated type series<sup>42</sup>.

### The post-medieval period (1500-1800)

John Schofield (MOLAS) reviewed the development of post-medieval archaeology in Greater London since 1970. This period was not considered in FLP and until recently it was low archaeological priority, because of the wealth of other sources of information, such as standing buildings, objects, maps, engravings, paintings, plus a vast amount of documentary evidence. Royal palaces have been excavated, including Bridewell (constructed 1515-23) in the south-west corner of the City<sup>43</sup>.

In September 1666 four-fifths of the walled medieval City was destroyed by the Great Fire. Excavations close to where the fire started in Pudding Lane on the 2nd September 1666 have identified brick-built cellared buildings which were destroyed by the fire<sup>44</sup>. The Great Fire also destroyed London's cathedral and 86 of its 106 parish churches of which only St Pauls cathedral and 51 parish churches were rebuilt under the architectural direction of Sir Christopher Wren (Fig. 6). A number of Wren's churches have been investigated archaeologically<sup>45</sup>.

39. J. Schofield, P. Allen and C. Taylor 'Medieval buildings and property development in the area of Cheapside' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 41 (1990) 39-237.

40. M. Carlin and V. Belcher 'Gazetteer and notes' in M. D. Lobell (ed) *The City of London, British Atlas of Historic Towns* vol. 3 (1989) 63-99.

41. A. G. Vince 'The Saxon and medieval pottery of London: a review' *Medieval Archaeol* 29 (1985) 25-93.

42. For example, J. Pearce and A. Vince *A dated type series of London Medieval Pottery, part 4: Surrey whitewares* London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Pap 10 (1988) 16-17.

43. D. Gadd and T. Dyson 'Bridewell Palace: excavations at 9-11 Bridewell Place and 1-3 Tudor Street, City of London 1978'

In 1996 the excavation of a tunnel through part of the foundations of Wren's cathedral revealed re-used fragments of the Inigo Jones west portico (built 1634-42)<sup>46</sup>. Several post-medieval London skeletal assemblages have been studied in detail, the best known example being Christ Church, Spitalfields<sup>47</sup>. In 1991-92 St Bride's Lower Churchyard in Farringdon Street (dating from 1770-1849) was investigated<sup>48</sup>.

Archaeological work has revealed evidence of the post-dissolution use of monastic sites. For instance, from 1560 until 1748, the site of the abbey of St Mary Grace, Tower Hill was a naval victualling yard<sup>49</sup>. Recent archaeological work on former industrial sites has included tanneries in Bermondsey<sup>50</sup> and a 17th-century ship yard at Rotherhithe<sup>51</sup>. Excavations at Bankside, Southwark have revealed the foundations of two 16th century playhouses — the Globe and the Rose<sup>52</sup>.

Finds works on excavated London material has included a group of late 15th or 16th century continental stove tiles from the abbey of St Mary Grace<sup>53</sup> and the study of imported 18th-century Chinese porcelain<sup>54</sup>. A corpus of the 16th- and 17th-century redwares manufactured at Kingston, Woolwich and other sites in the London area is being prepared for publication.

### Prospects for London archaeology

The third part of the conference considered the future prospects for London archaeology. The session started with Tim Williams (English Heritage, Archaeology Division). He explained that English Heritage currently funded the publication of backlog excavations in Lincoln, London, Southampton and York. The advent of PPG 16 has changed English archaeology by promoting the preservation *in situ* of archaeological deposits and the developer funding of any excavations that do take place<sup>55</sup>. Two results of PPG 16 have been a lot more evaluations, but fewer large-scale excavations. English Heritage intends to use the funds

*Post-Medieval Archaeol* 15 (1981) 1-79.

44. G. Milne and C. Milne 'A building in Pudding Lane destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666: excavations on the Peninsular House site 1979-80' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 36 (1985) 169-182.

45. P. Jeffrey *The City Churches of Sir Christopher Wren* (1996).

46. J. Summerson *Inigo Jones* (1966) 97-106.

47. J. Reeve and M. Adams *The Spitalfields Project vol. 1: the Archaeology* CBA Res Rep 85 (1993).

48. J. Conheaney and A. Miles forthcoming 'Excavations at 75-82 Farringdon Street'.

49. P. Mills 'Archaeology at the Royal Mint; the first naval victualling yard' *The Mariner's Mirror* 71 (1985) 349-54.

that were formerly spent on rescue excavations on publication and research instead.

It is English Heritage policy to increase the volume of archaeological dissemination (both popular and academic) with an emphasis on synthesis. It is also policy to encourage the greater use of archaeological archives for study and research purposes. The obvious way to develop the use of archaeological archives is the application of Information Technology. This offers the opportunity to undertake tasks such as duplicating plans or photographs by scanning for digital storage or publishing material on the Internet. Another ongoing English Heritage policy is the development of local, regional and national research frameworks (defined as the current state of knowledge on specific topics) and research agendas or strategies (defined as the proposals for future work on specific topics)<sup>56</sup>.

Martin Welch (University College London Institute of Archaeology) spoke next on the research requirements of London archaeology. He pointed out that thanks to PPG 16 a lot of evaluations were taking place within the London area, but as London has no up-to-date archaeological research framework, the research potential of these evaluations cannot be assessed<sup>57</sup>.

Welch argued that the selective excavation of sites with high research potential should be permitted by English Heritage. In 1995 the opportunity to excavate one such site with a high research potential – the early Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Croydon was prevented on the advice of English Heritage staff, who preferred a mitigation strategy so that during redevelopment the archaeological deposits would remain preserved *in situ*<sup>58</sup>. Welch felt very strongly that the research potential of the site plus uncertainty about the long-term effects of the mitigation strategy were sufficient to justify the site's excavation. Population change during the 4th–7th century and its DNA applications is an English Heritage research priority<sup>59</sup>.

50. J. Drummond-Murray, D. Saxby and B. Watson 'Recent archaeological work in the Bermondsey district of Southwark' *London Archaeol* 7 (1994) 256–7.

51. D. Saxby and D. Goodburn 'Recent maritime archaeological discoveries from the Thames waterfront, at Bellamy's Wharf, Rotherhithe, London SE16' *London Archaeol* 8, no. 8 (1998) 199–206.

52. J. Bowsher *The Rose Theatre an archaeological discovery* (1998) MoL publication. 53. D. Gaimster, R. Goffin and L. Blackmore 'The continental stove-tile fragments from St Mary Graces, London, in their British and European context' *Post-Medieval Archaeol* 24 (1990) 1–49.

54. J. Barry 'Eighteenth century Chinese export porcelain from three London sites' *London Archaeol* 7 (1994) 150–6.

Peter Addyman (York Archaeological Trust) concluded the day with his predictions for the next 25 years. He listed a number of potential new threats to London's archaeology. First, as part of the attempt to reduce road traffic pollution, more public transport projects infrastructure, such as current the Jubilee Line Extension or the Channel Tunnel Rail Link should be expected. Second, by 2022 it is planned to build some four million new homes in the UK, of which 630,000 are to be in the Greater London area. Many of these new houses may be built on brown-field sites in existing urban centres including Greater London, to help preserve the countryside. Third, the long term impact of climatic change should be considered. Prolonged drought could prompt the laying of new cross-country waterpipe-lines and any lowering of the watertable will cause waterlogged organic deposits to dry out and decay. This threat could jeopardise archaeological mitigation strategies, the validity of which is already being questioned<sup>60</sup>.

Addyman pointed out that London's archaeologists have failed to persuade the general public of the value of their work. He said the public profile of London archaeology has been very bad in recent years. There are few opportunities for the public to visit excavations and there are few informative reports on current work in the media. There is a great deal of public interest in archaeology and this is reflected by the fact that heritage tourism is an expanding global market.

### A personal viewpoint

Since 1970 London archaeology has enjoyed an unprecedented period of achievement and has realised much more than the authors of FLP ever envisaged. An important part of this achievement has been the development of excavation methodology to record deeply stratified urban sites<sup>61</sup>. Recently computer technology in the form of geographical mappings systems (GIS) and relational data bases has started to assist with the recording and analysis of archaeological data<sup>62</sup>.

55. Planning Policy Guidance note 16, Archaeology and Planning – PPG 16 (1990); English Heritage Archaeology Division – Research Agenda (draft) April 1997.

56. English Heritage *op cit* fn 57, p. 29–31.

57. C. Phillpotts 'London evaluations in the 1990s' *London Archaeol* 8 (1997) 137–9.

58. H. O'Sullivan '82–90 Park Lane, Croydon: a planning case-study' *London Archaeol* 7 (1996) 424–431.

59. English Heritage *op cit* fn 57, p. 49.

60. M. Biddle *What future for British Archaeology?* Oxbow lecture 1 (1994).

61. A. Westman (ed) *Archaeological Site Manual* MOLAS 3rd edition (1994).

The struggles of the early days of rescue archaeology: – to get access to sites; to get permission to excavate; to persuade developers to help fund excavations; to pay realistic staff wages, not a trifling subsistence allowance, have now all been won. However, London archaeology now faces a new set of problems and challenges. First, until recently there has often been a delay of ten years or more between the excavation and publication of London sites. In other English cities there is not always this delay. For instance, the 1993 excavation of the Canterbury cathedral nave was fully published in 1997<sup>63</sup>. Another problem is that the majority of the excavations carried out by the DUA in the City of London between 1983-90 are unpublished and there is not even any agreed plan on how and when the remaining sites might be published. The list of unpublished sites includes the 1988-89 excavations of the Roman bath-house at Huggin Hill and the work at Cannon Street Station on the site of a Roman palatial complex and its waterfronts.

Second, at the moment London lacks both an archaeological research framework and a strategy. It is unfortunate that the English Heritage funded *London Assessment Document*, which would have been the basis of a comprehensive research framework for Greater London has never been published and parts of it are already out of date<sup>64</sup>. Thus it is currently impossible to use the project designs for current excavations, or the analysis of backlog sites, to try and answer any regional research questions, as no-one has yet agreed what the questions should be. In this sense London is being left behind by other regions such as East Anglia, which has already published a good regional resource assessment<sup>65</sup>, and a second volume on the regional research strategy is being produced soon. Fortunately English Heritage is currently compiling an archaeological framework document for London and it is hoped that this will be published soon.

Third, archaeology in London is no longer seen as a public service. Thanks to competitive tendering archaeological units have been transformed into contractors. As the cheapest tender often wins the bid, London archaeology has in turn been transformed into a crazy Dutch auction without a sense of purpose. Competitive tendering has resulted in numerous archaeological contractors working in

London, some of whom know next to nothing about the archaeology of the sites they are investigating. This practice results in a very fragmentary pattern of fieldwork. For instance, on the site of the London Augustinian priory church choir (Austin Friars) between 1994-96 some five phases of evaluation, excavation and watching brief were carried out by three different contractors. Who is going to be responsible for analysing and publishing this work? Loss of work due to competitive tendering was one factor in the closure of the archaeology section of Newham Museum Service during 1997. This closure raises the question of what is going to happen to their unfinished post-excavation projects such as Barking Abbey. MOLAS currently has the largest share of the capital's archaeology, but its share of the current fieldwork is declining due to competition. However, MOLAS is being restructured during 1998 to adapt to these changing circumstances and hopefully as a result will regain its market share by being more competitive. As part of these changes it is envisaged that the MOLAS conservation staff, finds specialists and environmental archaeologists will transfer to the Eagle Wharf Road premises, where they will be an integral part of the new Museum of London archaeological resource centre and archive for London and south-east England. The future of the MOLAS field-team is less clear, but any erosion of the present terms/conditions of employment, which it took many years to obtain, in the hope of having a cut-price contract archaeology unit will be a retrograde step.

When all the talking and posturing is over there are really two options for the future of London's archaeology. The first is to build on the achievements of the last 25 years. The second is to throw away the achievements of the last 25 years and dissipate the skills and expertise we have acquired. Everyone knows that archaeological excavation is a destructive and unrepeatable experiment<sup>66</sup>. Yet few seem to realise that the management of London's archaeological heritage is also an unrepeatable and potentially destructive experiment.

## Acknowledgements

Figs. 1 to 6 are reproduced from *The Future of London's Past* by kind permission of Rescue.

62. P. Hinge 'Dealing with vague date ranges: a chronology for a Roman cemetery' in S. Roskams (ed) *Interpreting Stratigraphy* 8 (1996) 66-79.

63. K. Blockley, M. Sparks and T. Tatton-Brown *Canterbury Cathedral Nave, Archaeology, History and Architecture* The archaeology of Canterbury New Series vol. 1 (1997).

64. G. Andrew, P. Hinton and R. Thomas (eds), forthcoming *The London Assessment Document* English Heritage. It is not certain that this report will be published in its current form.

65. J. Glazebrook (ed) *Research and Archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties, 1. Resource Assessment* East Anglian Archaeol Occ Pap no 3 (1997).

66. P. Barker *The Techniques of Archaeological Excavation* (1977) 12.