

to abandon the area due to flooding before later ploughing could take place and remove the earlier evidence.

The closest parallels to the wooden structure within the east-west channel are medieval moated bridges. Such bridges used the same methods of framing and jointing as building on dry land. Since they preserve a much greater proportion of early material at their base than other classes of timber structure, their value for the history of carpentry is obvious. The foundations of a number of such bridges have been identified and excavated, and a classification system based on type of support has been developed¹⁹. The category into which the structure at Lafone Street falls is that of bridges with a rigid and self-stable support. Dendrochronological dates of AD 1276 and AD 1277 were obtained from two samples taken from the latest structure. These dates are broadly supported both by the carpentry techniques and by parallels with surviving remains of bridges dating from the 13th century. A number of parallels can be drawn with moat bridges excavated at several sites dating from the 12th and 13th centuries. One parallel to the earliest structure, prior to its modification, is found at Eynsford Castle, Kent, while the modified version is similar to a bridge at Lewmote, Elmers End, Kent. The final structure is closely paralleled at West Derby Castle, Liverpool.

Conclusions

The excavation at Lafone Street has added significantly to the archaeological record of the area. In particular, the discovery of a third group of ard

marks dating from the Bronze Age within a relatively small area of Bermondsey, shows that a large area of land was under cultivation at this time, and indicates the presence of a settlement site in the vicinity, which has yet to be located. Analysis of environmental samples taken during the excavation should add to our knowledge of the nature of prehistoric agriculture. In addition, study of the wooden bridge timbers will add to our knowledge of medieval carpentry techniques.

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19. S. E. Rigold 'Structural Aspects of Medieval Timber Bridges' *Medieval Archaeol* 19 (1975).

Excavations and post-excavation work

City of London. Museum of London Archaeology Service, Walker House, 87 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4AB (0171-410 2200).

Croydon & District, processing and cataloguing of excavated and museum collections every Tuesday throughout the year. Archaeological reference collection of fabric types, domestic animal bones, clay tobacco pipes and glass ware also available for comparative work. Enquiries to Jim Davison, 28 Blenheim Park Road, South Croydon, CR2 6BB.

Greater London (except north-east and south-east London), by Museum of London Archaeology Service. Excavations and processing in all areas. General enquiries to MOLAS, Walker House, 87 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4AB (0171-410 2200).

Borough of Greenwich. Cataloguing of excavated and other archaeological material, the majority from sites in the borough. For further information contact Greenwich Borough Museum, 232 Plumstead High Street, London SE18 1JT (0181-855 324.0).

Hammersmith & Fulham, by Fulham Archaeological Rescue Group. Processing of material from Fulham Palace. Tuesdays, 7.45 p.m.-10 p.m. at Fulham Palace, Bishop's Avenue, Fulham Palace Road, SW6. Contact Keith Whitehouse, 86 Clancarty Road, SW6 (0171-731 4498).

Kingston, by Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society. Rescue sites in the town centre. Enquiries to Kingston Heritage Centre, Fairfield Road, Kingston (0181-546 5386).

Surrey, by Surrey County Archaeological Unit. Enquiries to Rob Poulton, Archaeological Unit Manager, Old Library Headquarters, 25 West Street, Dorking, RH4 1DE (01306-886 466).

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