Environmental Archaeology in London 1995-1998, part 3

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THIS ARTICLE continues the discussion of environmental work undertaken on a range of projects in London[1], concentrating on projects dating to the Saxon and medieval periods.

Saxon *Lundenwic* and the Royal Opera House

Nine sites within the area of Saxon *Lundenwic*, centred around Covent Garden and the Aldwych, produced almost 500 environmental samples. A further 400 samples came from recent excavations at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (Fig. 1)[2]. Charred grains of barley and bread wheat were common on all these sites, and smaller amounts of rye and oats were also seen. Large leguminous seeds, most of them probably Celtic beans or peas, were present in many samples from 67-8 Long Acre, and in several from the Opera House. Occasional charred remains of other food plants were found such as hazelnut shells, sloe stones, and apple/pear pips. Most samples also contained a few charred weed seeds, and occasionally burnt straw fragments were abundant, possibly representing thatch or flooring materials.

The same sites produced a very large quantity of animal bones, in particular from the Royal Opera House, with almost two metric tonnes and close to 60,000 fragments, and 26-27 Southampton Street with 260 kg (about 12,000 fragments). Another three sites produced in excess of 100 kg. The extensive sampling added similarly large quantities to these totals. The study of these bones will aim to reveal any spatial and, possibly, temporal differences in animal usage within the Saxon settlement. Non-food species are particularly poorly represented, their relative abundance clearly in indirect proportion to their size. A settlement this size must have used a considerable number of horses, yet very few bones were found. It can be conjectured that, as noticed in earlier times regarding the concentration of horses situated outside the Roman city, all dead horses were disposed of (buried or just dumped) beyond the limits of the Saxon town. While evidence from the Anglo-Scandinavian settlement in York[3] conveys some idea of the likely unsanitary state of a concentrated occupation area during this period, it would seem unlikely that the inhabitants would have put up with bloated horse carcasses.

Queenhithe

Excavations on the city waterfront at Thames Court[4] yielded large concentrations of animal bones in late Saxon contexts, corresponding, from the lowest to the highest levels, to foreshore deposits followed by a series of revetments, which were then partially sealed by timber buildings. Within the lower two horizons, the bones were found in dump/levelling deposits, while the upper levels were taken from various occupation deposits (including floors) intermingled with external dumps. The general characteristics of these assemblages were similar to those described for the *Lundenwic* bones, i.e. representing mixed food waste largely composed of a severely limited species range (the major mammalian domesticates). Small quantities of fishbone was found in a large proportion of the samples, these clearly forming the greater part of the wild species component of the meat diet. There is some indication that one of the buildings may have been a butcher's shop, as shown by a concentration of head and foot parts (primary waste) within a floor deposit and an adjacent dump. A small whale vertebra (Fig. 2) from an occupation level may signify a local catch (possibly beached). Whales have been known occasionally to swim up

1. See J. Sidell, J. Giorgi and A. Pipe 'Environmental Archaeology in London 1995-98, part 1' *London Archaeol* 9, no. 3 (1999) 67-71; J. Sidell (ed.) 'Environmental Archaeology in London 1995-98, part 2' *London Archaeol* 9, no. 4 (2000) 95-101.
2. G. Malcolm and D. Bowsher, with R. Cowie, in prep. *Excavations at the Royal Opera House, London, 1989-97.* MoLAS Monograph Series.
3. A. R. Hall, H. K. Kenward, D. Williams and J. R. A. Greig. Environment and living conditions at two Anglo-Scandinavian sites. The Archaeology of York. *The past environment of York.* Vol 14, Fascicule 4 (1983).
4. J. Ayre and R. Wroe-Brown, in prep. *Queenhithe: Excavations at Thames Court, City of London 1989-1997.* Molas Monograph Series.

the River Thames. Otherwise it may represent the remains of a trade item from Norway, where apparently a whaling industry had been in operation from at least the time of King Alfred[5].

The plant remains came from waterfront dumps and occupation deposits. The exceptional preservation of organic remains within the Saxon buildings should allow investigation into the use of the different buildings, areas, and features, while the subsamples taken spatially across individual floor surfaces can be used to establish any variation of activities within each building. Few biological remains have been recovered from this part of the City, while most of the Saxon material recovered from *Lundenwic* further west has consisted of charred plant remains. The plant remains in the Saxon features included charred cereal assemblages, with the residues of a possible burnt storage deposit, dominated by rye plus bread wheat, oats, barley, chaff, horsebeans and weed seeds, and the waterlogged preservation of seeds of fruits and wild plants, monocot plant/stem fragments, cereal bran, mosses, and wood fragments. Some mineralised material was also present.

At present only limited information has been gathered about Saxon diet and economy. The

Fig. 1: excavating a pit fill at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (copyright MoLAS)

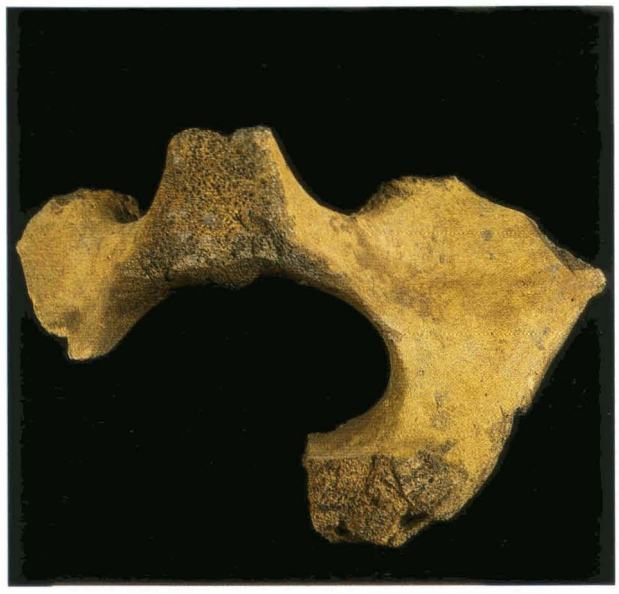

Fig. 2: sperm whale vertebra from Queenhithe. (Copyright Museum of London)

work proposed for the *Lundenwic* sites should provide detailed interpretations on these fundamental points. The City sites of Queenhithe, and shortly to be studied Guildhall Yard, will also be examined with the same aims in mind, which should lead to a much better understanding of pre- and post-Alfredian occupation across London.

Upper Tulse Hill, Lambeth

Soil samples were collected during excavations from early Saxon (5th to 6th centuries) features, and mainly from the fills of sunken-floor buildings[6]. Only very small assemblages of cereal grains and occasional weed seeds were recovered, consisting mainly of wheat (including free-threshing wheat) and six-row hulled barley. Two rye grains were also identified as were two possible grains of einkorn, a primitive glume wheat. This is rarely found in Britain and could represent residual material from prehistoric deposits. Four legume seeds included two large oval-shaped seeds that could be horse beans. Hazelnut was also identified. Charred weed seeds included plants of disturbed (including arable) ground and waste places, eg. stinking mayweed (an arable weed of heavy clay soils), brome and dock.

There are very few archaeobotanical results from early 5th to 6th-century sites, such as Upper Tulse Hill, and despite the poor representation of the

5. G. Jackson *The British Whaling Trade* (1978).

6. R. Cowie and L. Blackmore, in prep. *Early and Middle Saxon settlement sites in Greater London.* Molas Monograph Series.

Fig. 3: excavation of a body with accompanying paten and chalice from St. Mary Spital (copyright MoLAS)

plant remains in the samples, the value of this evidence must be viewed in the light of the paucity of archaeobotanical results from early Saxon sites in the greater London area.

Medieval

The expansion of the population in the medieval period up until the Black Death, combined with the expansion of trade boundaries, make this an exciting period for environmental study, and forms a great contrast to the preceding Saxon period. This can be seen through the greatly expanded species list of food plants, and also the very many more sites available for study.

Winchester Palace, Southwark

The late medieval phases from the palace of the Bishops of Winchester[7] contained animal bone displaying a similar array of wild animals and birds to that found in the early Roman assemblages, which in this case probably implies a high-status diet. All three deer species, as well as swan, heron, crane and sturgeon, were found amongst the Palace occupation deposits. The presence of peregrine falcon is indicative of a high-status pastime. It is conceivable that a number of these food species, in particular deer and rabbit, may have been imported from the Bishops' estates near Winchester. The major domesticates provided the greater part of the meat diet at the Palace; they may have been acquired ready dressed, as shown by the absence of heads and lower leg parts.

Large assemblages of plant remains were also recovered from the medieval samples, including evidence for food plants, fodder crops and also the local vegetation. Food plants included bread wheat, barley, oat and rye, fig, grape, mulberry apple/pear, plum/bullace and cherry, whilst carrot, black mustard, coriander and dill seeds were also recovered. Other potential economic species included flax, hemp and dyers rocket, all of which may have been used in the textile and dyeing industries. The field and garden cultivation of many of the plants is confirmed by the documentary records; for example, cereals were grown on the estate until the mid-13th century and hay was collected throughout the medieval period. Also, wild plants such as reeds and nettles (used for their fibres), were well represented in the archaeobotanical record and are known to have been gathered and sold.

Elverton Street, Westminster

A series of large cut features containing a very unusual series of animal bone deposits was revealed here[8]. Apart from a very few fragments of chicken and pig, occasional incomplete cattle skeletons, and a few complete adult dog skeletons, the animal bone assemblage consisted entirely of dismembered, although apparently complete, horse skeletons, totalling approximately 800 kg of bone and representing a minimum of 76 individuals; the largest group of horse remains ever recovered from the London area. High-precision ^{14}C dating has provided calibrated dates of AD 1415-1450 and AD 1476-1636. The analysis has given a picture of disposal on a considerable scale of mainly adult and elderly horses. Many of these showed some incidence of pathological ?osteo-arthritic changes to the lumbar vertebrae, tarsals, metatarsals (feet), and phalanges (toes). Such changes may possibly be

7. D. Seeley, in prep. *Medieval mansions of Southwark: Winchester Palace.* Molas Monograph Series.

8. R. Cowie and A. Pipe 'A late medieval and Tudor horse burial ground: excavations at Elverton Street, Westminster' *Archaeol Journ* 155 (1998) 226-251.

induced by sustained hard work, perhaps on rough surfaces. Although archaeological horse bones in Britain very often show slaughter marks and cut and/or chop marks indicative of meat recovery, possibly to feed domestic carnivores, very few have so far been detected on this material. This, together with the very neat layout of the burial pits suggests a considerable level of organisation and expertise. Calculation of withers ('shoulder') heights from measurements of limb-bones gives a range of stature between 1.20 and 1.56 m with most animals in the range of 1.35 to 1.45 m. This implies the presence of animals ranging in stature from a small modern riding pony to the much larger Welsh cob, but with the bulk of the animals standing at around 13.2 'hands', the height of a modern riding pony; the typical height of a medieval horse[9]. The absence of detailed documentary evidence for the site prevents an accurate description of the reasons for the formation of this unusual group. The abundance and variety of horses in use during the medieval period are well known[10] and a great deal of effort was deployed in husbandry and selective breeding to produce characteristics suitable to fulfil particular functions. Disposal of injured, sick, or elderly horses must have provided a considerable problem, particularly in an urban situation where space was limited. The burial of one horse is no minor task, and to carry this out in an area of sandy, loose soil with no buildings in the immediate vicinity is logical. In a similarly practical way, carcass dismemberment would reduce the digging effort required.

The assemblage is only a fraction of the complete deposit that extended beyond the confines of the excavations; further analysis will provide a unique insight into the nature of the horse population of the time, and the manner in which it was managed for disposal in an urban setting.

Priory Hospital of St. Mary Spital (St. Mary without Bishopsgate)

The Augustinian Priory and Hospital of St. Mary Spital had a charter which directed the inmates to care for pregnant women and orphaned children in particular[11]. The analysis of 127 bodies found that there was a high proportion of adolescents present in the sample compared to other priory sites across England, although due to difficulties in sexing, it was not possible to say if they were representative of the females for whom the priory was instructed to care. There was also evidence of high prevalence and clustering of the pathological condition Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis (DISH) amongst burials in the chapel, which supports the observations that Waldron[12] has made regarding high-status ecclesiastical burials (Fig. 3). The most interesting finding, although somewhat controversial until further support is found, was the evidence for possible differences in status between burials in the chapel and those outside. Those buried in the chapel fell at the higher levels of the stature range found across the site; they also had more severe and widespread dental disease than the rest of the sample and a different range of skeletal pathology. In conjunction with documentary evidence, the most likely explanation for these differences was status. Unfortunately the sample was too small to confirm this statistically, but it is hoped that a forthcoming study of a much larger priory sample from another London site may allow similar differences to be statistically validated. The current excavations at Spitalfields are producing an immense collection of human skeletons that will further develop the interpretation of this group.

Of the *c.* 8,500 burials more than one-third were in pits, with up to 50 bodies in perhaps five layers.

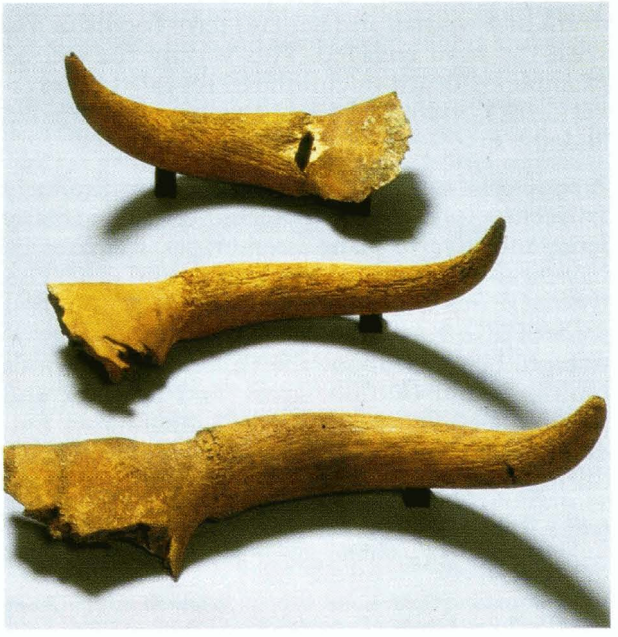

Fig. 4: horncores, similar to those recovered from St. John, Clerkenwell (copyright MoLAS)

9. D. J. Rackham 'Skeletal evidence of medieval horses from London sites' *in* J. Clark (ed) *The medieval horse and its equipment Medieval finds from excavations in London:* 5 (1995) 169-174.

10. R. H. C. Davis *The Medieval Warhorse* (1989).

11. C. Thomas, B. Sloane and C. Phillpotts (eds) *St. Mary Spital, London. Excavations at the Priory and Hospital, 1935-1991.* MoLAS Monograph 1 (1997).

12. A. Waldron 'DISH at Merton Priory: evidence for a "new" occupational disease?' *British Medical Journ* **291** (1985) 1762-3.

There was evidence of haste, following some catastrophic event, since in many cases little regard was given to disposition, orientation or even clothing. Such pits were observed during the building work of the 1930s. Radiocarbon dating should determine whether the pits hold the remains of those who died locally during the Black Death of 1349 or of some other visitation of bubonic plague or some other scourge. There were orderly burials of high status persons as attested to by the provision of lead coffins, anthropomorphic stone coffins or Papal *bullae*. However, most of those excavated from the main part of the cemetery represented the sick poor who had ended their lives in the great hospital of St Mary. By contrast to attrition cemeteries such as St Nicholas Shambles[13], which may reveal little pathology beyond osteoarthritis and dental caries, the main St Mary Spital cemetery showed pathology in profusion. Thus, there were high prevalences of trauma, tuberculosis, treponemal disease and DISH. This large sample of skeletal remains will provide an immensely valuable resource for the study of the history of medicine and disease.

The Priory of the Knights of St. John, Clerkenwell

Analysis undertaken on material collected from the Priory of the Knights of St John in Clerkenwell[14] has yielded some interesting new evidence for how the precinct was laid out and used. With regard to the human remains buried in the cemetery, although the excavated area provided a mere twelve burials, the sample included the obstetric death of a woman and her full term foetus *in situ* with the head engaged. This is only the second example of death-in-childbirth revealed by excavation in London, the first being from St Nicholas Shambles.

A series of features dated to the 13th to the early 17th centuries in the outer precinct contained many large and diverse plant assemblages. Remains of hay-meadow, arable, garden, edible and other cultivated plants were identified, as well as abundant seeds of disturbed-ground weeds, enabling suggestions to be made about the functions of various buildings and outdoor areas, and the diet and possible social status of the site's inhabitants. Evidence was found for the presence of livestock during the medieval period, in the form of stable refuse, stock parasites and charred animal fodder. Much of this occurred within a large cut feature, apparently in use from the 13th to the 16th centuries mainly as a rubbish heap. A narrow range of cultivated food plants was found in the earlier phases of the site, but many more fruits and spices appeared in the post-dissolution period, suggesting that much of the former precinct was inhabited by high-status households. This was corroborated by the variety of possible garden plants found in pits within the same property boundaries.

Evidence from the substantial animal bone assemblage indicates that animals were being slaughtered either very close to, or on site. The presence of two medieval markets, *Le Cowemarket* and Smithfield, recorded in documentary sources supports this. The outer precinct of the Priory also appears to have been used for craft industries, particularly horn-working. Several hundred horn cores, many of which had been cut from the skull, were recovered from a series of pits dated to the late medieval period (Fig. 4). These were thought to be waste from the process of removing the organic horny sheath from the skull. The horn itself is generally thought to have been soaked and

Fig. 5: reconstruction of Thorney Island, Westminster, undertaken during the Jubilee Line Extension Project. (copyright MoLAS)

13. W. J. White 1988 *Skeletal remains from the cemetery of St Nicholas Shambles, City of London.* London Middlesex Archaeol Soc special paper 9.

14. B. Sloane and G. Malcolm, in prep. *Excavations at the Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, Clerkenwell, London.* MoLAS Monograph Series.

then made into spoons, lantern panes etc. Additional evidence indicates that tanning of skins and hides may also have taken place in the outer precinct. The food waste indicates both high and low status diets, with swan and sturgeon being the best examples of the former. The evidence from this project has helped to clarify what the outer precinct of this religious house was used for, including domestic occupation, commercial activity and general waste disposal. This may benefit future work on the religious houses of London, and their relationship with the lay community.

Fastolf's Place and The Rosary

Excavations at two medieval houses, *The Rosary*, built for Edward II in AD 1324-5, and *Fastolf's Place*[15], built for Sir John Fastolf in the mid-15th century AD, provided extensive collections of well-preserved animal bone. *The Rosary* produced material from a range of medieval and post-medieval contexts, particularly those associated with construction and use of the building, and then later backfill of the moat. Cattle, sheep/goat, and pig, with a small proportion of fish, chicken, goose, duck and rabbit, dominate the bone groups derived from construction and use of the building. The major domesticates are mainly carcass areas of good meat-quality and include substantial numbers of juveniles indicating consumption of beef, mutton, and pork/bacon, veal, and lamb. There are also occasional fragments of game species often interpreted as 'high-status' dietary components; sturgeon, swan, crane, plover, and fallow deer. The large bone group recovered from the moat backfill again appears to be dominated by cattle, sheep/goat and pig with a small component of domestic poultry. There is a small and not very diverse group of wild game species, particularly red deer and brown hare.

The much larger assemblage from *Fastolf's Place* also provided good samples from a range of medieval and later contexts. Particularly useful groups were recovered from the moat and causeway contemporary with use of the building, the later moat backfill, deposits contemporary with post-medieval industrial activity, and post-18th-century dumping. The material contemporary with the use of the building is very much dominated by cattle, sheep/goat, and pig, with only a very minor component of fish, domestic poultry, and game (fallow deer). The incidence of juvenile cattle, sheep/goat, and pig was markedly less than that seen from *The Rosary*. Further analysis of the faunal groups will allow detailed comparisons of the dietary and waste disposal practices associated with these spatially adjacent, but temporally separate, households.

Aquatic and marshland/bankside species and plants of waste places were well represented in the samples. Economic plants included seeds from a range of fruit species with potential uses as food and drink, for instance grape, fig, plum/bullace, cherry, hop, dyers' rocket, flax and hemp. A few charred cereal grains were also recovered. These assemblages may provide general information on the changing character of the local environment along this stretch of the Southwark waterfront from the late medieval to post-medieval period, as well as providing information on diet and economic activities.

Westminster

A number of sites in Westminster were excavated as part of the Jubilee Line Extension Project (Fig. 5)[16]. They produced extensive and important environmental assemblages from the Prehistoric periods, but a further suite dated to the phase associated with the medieval Palace and the subsequent use (from 1530 onwards) of the Parliament buildings. A very large proportion of the bones dating to the medieval period were found in association with 14/15th-century buildings situated to the east of the Palace in an area of reclaimed land. The concentrated assemblages found in the dumps and pitfills adjacent to these buildings included the usual domesticates plus recognisably high-status food species such as fallow deer, rabbit and swan. Most of the samples from these deposits produced copious quantities of fishbone, the majority of which, especially from the pits, are very small. This size range may indicate that these bones represent the remains of faecal material, pointing to the use of these features as a nightsoil depository.

The rich waterlogged plant assemblages indicate that wetland habitats and wasteground formed part of the local environment. Several rich charred plant assemblages of cereal grains and arable weed seeds were found in samples from New Palace Yard, providing information on aspects of food supply and crop husbandry. A sample from a cesspit at Parliament Street contained over 100 fruit stones dominated by cherry; this pit also contained many puparia and beetle fragments, indicating that it was used as a breeding ground by the local

15. S. Blatherwick and R. Bluer, in prep. *Medieval mansions of Southwark: The Rosary, Rotherhithe and Fastolfs Place.* Molas Monograph Series.

16. C. Thomas, R. Cowie and E. J. Sidell, in prep. *The royal palace, Abbey and town of Westminster on Thorney Island: Archaeological excavations (1991-1998) for the London Underground Limited Jubilee Line Extension Project.* Molas Monograph Series.

Fig. 6: excavation of a timber revetment at Queenhithe (copyright MoLAS)

insect fauna, and suggesting it was not hygienically maintained.

Queenhithe

Most of the bones dated to this period were found in a series of revetment dumps closely dated to the 12th century (Fig. 6). These produced large assemblages of mixed refuse, principally composed of the major domesticates, but also including a large proportion of bones belonging to wild species. Amongst the latter there is a good representation of deer and hare/rabbit, plus a great abundance of fishbones, these constituting a wide diversity of species. Other more unusual species recovered include whale (similar to the Saxon example from this site) and puffin. There is no doubt that the meat diet of the early Norman population was significantly different to the previous late Saxon diet (see Saxon Bull Wharf above) in terms of the number of species exploited and the extent of this exploitation. A number of the wild species, including deer and rabbit, are likely to have been imported from the newly formed deer parks[17]. A number of them were established, largely for the hunting of fallow deer, within a short distance of the City during the 12th century, reaching a nationwide peak about 1300 AD[18]. Contemporary with these revetment dumps there was a two-phase timber building, which had some unusual structural features. These constituted a series of wooden drains emptying into a wooden barrel. It has been conjectured that this building may represent a food-processing centre, reminiscent of the Thamesside cookshop mentioned by FitzStephen[19] writing in the 12th century, which may have been near the Vintry, i.e. within the area of this excavation. This cookshop catered for all tastes, including 'fish great and small, the coarser flesh for the poor, the more delicate for the rich, such as venison and birds both big and little'[20]. A case could certainly be

(continued on p. 202)

17. A. Grant 'Animal Resources' *in* G. Astill and A. Grant (eds) *The Countryside of Medieval England* (1988) 149-187.

18. O. Rackham *The history of the countryside* (1995).

19. W. Fitz Stephen *Norman London* (1990).

20. *Op cit* fn 19.

tions. Publication of the report was delayed by staffing problems, allowing prior publication of a ceramicist report (Drakard's *Limehouse ware revealed*, in 1993; see *LA* 7, no. 9 (1994) 244).

The first two chapters follow a conventional pattern: chapter 1, introduction and background, chapter 2, the excavation, period by period. Only four of the twenty pages of this chapter deal with Period 3, the porcelain works, which existed from 1745 to 1748, so the authors have not let its importance bias their account. About half the book consists of a detailed description of the porcelain itself, carefully provenanced and enhanced with illustrations of comparative complete vessels supplied by Phillips Fine Art Auctioneers. The entire assemblage is illustrated by means of high-quality colour photographs (not a line-drawing in sight), which certainly makes the firing outcomes easier to understand, and which is well suited to the often fuzzy nature of the decoration. Trying to draw it would be an illustrator's nightmare! Of course, to assess production from its mistakes is always dangerous, but the authors are well aware of this and give a very balanced account.

What makes this so much more than simply a well-illustrated catalogue is the short (three-page) final chapter, in which the fate of the works is set in the context of some theory about ceramic innovation. Briefly, the Limehouse works is seen as a failure, perhaps lacking the financial backing to weather the early 'research and development' stages of production, but one which nevertheless contributed to the overall progress of British ceramics in the 18th century. Here we have clear evidence that the apparently inexorable progress was more a case of 'two steps forward, one step back', and that the broad sweep of history can miss out on the individual struggles and failures so poignantly demonstrated here. I hope that we shall see more reports like this in the future.

Clive Orton

Also received

In the Presence of Dinosaurs, by John Colagrande and Larry Felder. *Time Life Books*, 2000, 189 pp., many illus., bib. £18.99.

GLOSSY, WELL WRITTEN and original -- definitely a cut above the usual dinosaur book.

The Victorian Railway Worker, by Trevor May. *Shire Publications*, 2000. 32 pp., many illus., bib. £3.50.

The Victorian Engineer, by Adrian Jarvis. *Shire Publications*, 2000. 32 pp., many illus., bib. £3.50.

TWO MORE additions to the excellent *Shire Album* series.

A Celebration of the Bourne, by Paul Sowan, Roger Packham and Gwynneth Fookes. *The Bourne Society*, 2000. 52 pp., illus., price not stated.

AN UNFORTUNATELY timely history of flooding in the area south of Croydon.

Teach Yourself Greek Civilisation, by Michael Hutt and Abhi Subedi. *Hodder & Stoughton Educational*, 1999. 148 pp., 28 illus., bib., index. £8.99.

Teach Yourself Eastern philosophy, by Mel Thompson. *Hodder & Stoughton Educational*, 1999. 243 pp., 28 illus., bib., index. £8.99.

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made from the combined evidence that the revetment dumps may represent the waste from this or a similar establishment.

Archaeobotanical samples from medieval dumps and occupation deposits also produced well-preserved plant remains, similar in character to the Saxon assemblages, with charred cereal grains, waterlogged seeds of fruits and wild plants, cereal bran, stem, moss, wood fragments, and occasional mineralised fruit seeds and cereal grains. Fragments of box leaf, recovered from a waterfront dump sample, may represent the residues of garden waste.

Conclusion

As can be seen form these short summaries, there is still a substantial gap in knowledge between the Saxon and medieval periods. This is due to a number of factors, including *Lundenwic* having been identified comparatively recently, the relative 'invisibility' of early Saxon material in London, and a tendency of previous workers to concentrate on the City of London. Yet the Saxon period is an enigmatic and fascinating chapter of London's history and it is to be hoped that in the future more work can be undertaken on its biology to bring out knowledge closer to the large body of information which has been generated for medieval London.