

# Books

## Settlement in Roman Southwark

Archaeological excavations (1991-8) for the London Underground Limited Jubilee Line Extension Project

James Drummond-Murray and Peter Thompson with Carrie Cowan

*Museum of London Archaeology Service*, 2002

308 pages, with photographs and drawings in colour and in black and white, bibliography and index. £22.95 paperback.

This is the report of the series of evaluations, excavations and watching briefs carried out by MoLAS between 1991 and 1998, when construction work on the Jubilee Line Extension near London Bridge Station offered a major archaeological opportunity. As the title suggests, this work concentrates on the Roman period, and

a volume on the medieval and later remains will follow.

An Introduction explains the circumstances of the fieldwork, the sites and phases of work involved, and reminds the reader that although Roman Southwark has in the past had a low profile, it is now starting to take its rightful place as an important suburb of *Londinium*.

The eyots and shifting river channels that make up the underlying topography of north Southwark are described, with specific reference to the JLE sites investigated, and evidence of early Roman activity is presented. A chapter is devoted to the pre-Boudican settlement, including the remains of what are described as the first buildings in Southwark; this is followed by evidence of the destruction of the settlement by fire, which is attributed to the Boudican revolt.

Successive chapters deal with the late 1st century reconstruction, the expansion of the

(continued from p. 193)

1. London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London, N1 7ED.
2. I. Blair *An Archaeological Excavation at Abacus House, 33-39 Gutter Lane, City of London EC2* MoLAS unpub rep (1987).
3. L. Casson and A. Francis *2-12 Gresham Street, City of London, EC; A Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design* MoLAS unpub rep (2002).
4. I. Blair, J. Taylor and B. Watson *30 Gresham Street, City of London EC; A Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design* MoLAS unpub rep (2002).
5. P. Chitwood and J. Hill *An Archaeological Excavation at St Albans House, 124 Wood Street, City of London EC2* MoLAS unpub rep (1986).
6. I. Blair *An Archaeological Excavation at 7-10 Foster Lane and 5-6 Rose and Crown Court, City of London, EC* MoLAS unpub rep (1982).
7. I. Blair *An Archaeological Evaluation at 1 Carey Lane, 11-12 Foster Lane and 2-4 Carey Lane, City of London, EC2* MoLAS unpub report (1998).
8. J. Lyon *1 & 2-4 Carey Lane, 11-12 Foster Lane, City of London, EC2; A Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design* MoLAS unpub rep (2002) fig. 10.
9. This is in marked contrast to the Hadrianic fire assemblage from Regis House (KWS94), which had a large amount of Les Martres de Veyre samian ware, perhaps due to the site's proximity to the port area and warehousing.
10. M. Russell in I. M. Betts, E. W. Black and J. Gower 'A Corpus of Relief-Patterned Tiles in Roman Britain' *J Roman Pottery Stud* 7 (1994) 49.
11. J. Price and S. Cottam 'Romano-British glass vessels: a handbook' *CBA Practical Handbook in Archaeology* 14 (1998) 188-9.
12. *Op cit* fn 7.
13. N. Tobert *Foster Lane 1982: the finds, an appraisal report* DUA unpub rep (1982).
14. J. Pearce and A. Vince 'A dated type-series of London medieval pottery part 4: Surrey whitewares' *London and Middlesex Archaeol Soc Spec Pap* 10 (1988) 25; no. 66.
15. For similar rim forms see *op cit* fn 14, nos. 301, 302, 321.
16. J. E. Pearce, A. G. Vince and R. White with C. M. Cunningham 'A Dated Type-Series of London Medieval Pottery Part 1: Mill Green Ware' *Trans London and Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 33 (1982) 266-98.
17. *Op cit* fn 16, no. 42.
18. L. Blackmore 'The pottery' in J. Ayre and R. Wroe-Brown 'The London Millennium Bridge, Excavations of the medieval and later waterfronts at Peter's Hill, City of London, and Bankside, Southwark' *MoLAS Archaeology Studies Series* 6 (2002) 90-92, fig 42.
19. D. Perring, S. P. Roskams and P. Allen 'The early development of Roman London west of the Walbrook' *The archaeology of Roman London 2, CBA Res Rep* 70 (1991); J. Hill and P. Rowsome *Excavations at 1 Poultry: the Roman sequence* (in prep) MoLAS Monograph.

settlement, and its continuity into the early 2nd century. Further redevelopment in the mid-2nd century includes evidence of a market hall complex, and this is followed by evidence of later (early 3rd to 4th century) Roman activity, though excessive truncation has restricted the amount of new information that could come from the latter deposits.

The first half of the report concludes that while the investigations have produced a refined picture of the natural topography of north Southwark, the main advance has been in the discovery of "intensive and well documented occupation" between the AD 50 founding of *Londinium* and the destruction of the settlement around AD 60/1. Significant detail of post-Boudican reconstruction has emerged, allowing interpretations to be put forward relating to residential and industrial activities.

The final half of the report is made up of specialist appendices giving detailed coverage of the building materials, Roman pottery, accessional finds, glass, Roman coins, iron-smithing, botanical remains, animal bones, eggshell, and archaeological conservation on the JLE project.

While a review must give an account of the contents of this report, a note on its presentation should also be offered. The text is authoritative and easy to read, and the editing, reproduction, printing and paper (funded by London Underground) are of the highest order.

Deceptively simple yet effective plans of principal archaeological features for each period are given in colour, together with separate plans of individual buildings. High quality colour photographs are used throughout, giving views of excavation progress and significant features, but it is where the sherds of pottery are concerned that the addition of colour photography to the conventional drawing process has taken the illustration of such evidence to new heights. This report is a joy to read and is little short of stunning: it must be one of the best ever to have been produced for an archaeological investigation.

It is the twelfth in the MoLAS Monographs series, and not only exceeds the high standards set by earlier publications but succeeds in setting a new and daunting benchmark for the future.

Richard Gilpin

### **Excavations at Hunt's House, Guy's Hospital, London Borough of Southwark**

Robin Taylor-Wilson

*Pre-Construct Archaeology Limited, 2002*

78 pages, with black and white photographs and drawings, bibliography and index. £7.00 paperback.

This is the report of archaeological fieldwork preceding the redevelopment of Hunt's House, a Victorian building within the Guy's Hospital complex in Southwark. The work, carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology between 1997 and 1998, revealed evidence of intermittent activity from the late Mesolithic to the present day.

The Introduction outlines the circumstances of the fieldwork programme, and gives details of the underlying geology and topography of the site, which lies on the eastern margin of what was once low-lying marshland on the north and south eyots. Guy's Channel runs under the south-east corner of the site.

The bulk of the report deals with the archaeological sequence, and divides it into a total of twelve periods, starting with the prehistoric period and working through the stratigraphy to the early 19th century. Details of the features and finds in each period are given, together with analyses and interpretations, and these are followed by a discussion of the period concerned. The concluding section of the main report gives an overview of the prehistoric, Roman and (rather extensively truncated) post-medieval evidence.

Summaries by specialists complete the report, and topics covered include lithics, Roman pottery, medieval and post-medieval pottery, Roman small finds, Roman mammalian remains, and Roman plant remains.

Although the identification of a number of bones from AD 170–190 "on balance" as donkey may provoke discussion, the core of the report may be seen to concern the fluctuations in river levels, the use of Guy's Channel by river craft during the Roman period, land management, and information regarding lead-working and other industrial activities.

The detailed information provided, and the time span covered by the report, make it a welcome addition to the body of published material regarding a part of London that has in the past suffered from under-recording. It is the first in a series of Monographs to be published by PCA, and archaeologists with a special interest in the capital will look forward to further publications from this contractor.

Richard Gilpin