

# Letter

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## Segrave Manor

I was intrigued by the reference in 'Waste and its disposal in Southwark' to rubbish being sent from the City to 'the manor of Segrave in the Parish of St Mary Overy, Southwark' (*LA 11*, no. 4 (Spring 2006) 96) and even more intrigued by the source quoted for it (*The Farmers Weekly* 1939). Unfortunately I do not have access to past issues of *The Farmers Weekly*, though I would doubt that it quotes a source for this item, which is a shame.

For there are problems with this. There was no manor in Southwark called Segrave, and there was no parish called St Mary Overy; there was a small parish round Southwark Priory called St Mary Magdalen, which sometimes has the Overy suffix added to it, but not until the 16th century, and the Priory itself had only recently acquired the suffix Overy in 1364 (see *LA 9*, no 5 (Summer 2000) 144).

It is, in any case, very unlikely that anywhere in St Mary Magdalen Parish would be used for dumping rubbish in 1363, since it is largely in the built-up core of Southwark. There is, however, one place in Southwark with a Segrave connection. This is a plot on Bankside towards its western end (the *Fleur de Lys*) which in the 13th and first part of the 14th centuries belonged to the Segraves, though this was hardly a manor

even in the loosest sense of that term (perhaps this was a misreading of mansion). In 1353 when John Segrave died it is described as a messuage and 6 shops but ruined because no one would give anything for it (*Inquest Post Mortems 10*, no. 116). It briefly escheated to the crown (1st April to 28th September) but when the escheator presented his accounts he said there was no income because it stood empty (PRO E136/4/16). John had no sons so the property descended to his daughter Elizabeth Mowbray and they were blamed by their neighbour for causing the area to flood by not repairing their wharf (PRO KB27 Easter 1363 rex 19d). As late as 1375 the bailiff of the Bishop of Winchester's manor was cutting rods of willow in 'Segrave's close' to set against arrears of rent for the property (Hampshire Rec. Off. Winchester Pipe Rol 1375/6). So clearly this was derelict and thus might well have been used for dumping waster, though how that was arranged is hard to say; perhaps permission was obtained from the Bishop of Winchester or his bailiff, for the Mowbrays seem to have abandoned it and eventually it escheated to the Bishop and was reoccupied by 1380 (*ibid* 1381/2 and PRO E179/184/30).

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(continued from page 194)

well as the excavation evidence, indicates 17th-century origins.

This was supported by the detailed study of the finds, the account of which represents just over half the report. The description of typologies and dating is smoothly merged with discussion of the significance of particular types of pottery, clay pipes, tiles, bottles, coins or animal bone. Plenty of helpful background to each class of artefact is given without being too dry, so that quite a vibrant picture emerges of comfortably off occupants enjoying the fruits of their various labours. An unusual collection of bird, or sparrow, pots, for example, elicits a fascinating consideration of the form, the origins of the pots, where they might have been placed and what they were used for (either for collecting bird bounties or sparrow pie apparently).

The few quibbles with this volume are hardly substantial ones. The omission of a modern site plan in favour of a few historical maps makes it difficult to understand where the excavations took place and how the buildings related to each other and to neighbouring farms, church and pub. The writing by seven authors is inevitably a bit patchy. The chapter on future work doesn't actually describe any. An index would have been good. This really is the gold standard, though. It's both a readable, well organised and interesting account of a site of local importance, and a benchmark for those with cupboards full of seemingly unmanageable archives.

Becky Wallower

## Also received

### Egypt

Joyce Tildesley  
*BBC Books*, 2005  
256 pp., many figs, bib, index. £17.99