



Fig. 1: archaeological sites within the London Jewry considered in this text (map by Judit Peresztegi; base map after Lobel *City of London* c. 1270,¹⁷ the extent of Jewry after Blair *et al.*¹⁸)

Late 13th-century household 'clearance groups' on Gresham Street and the London Jewry

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The medieval pottery retrieved from excavations on 93–95 Gresham Street (GHB06) in the City of London included a well preserved group, largely a selection of serving jugs, recovered from a pit fill (context [196]). It was recognised that this assemblage, discarded in the late 13th century, was

one of a number of similarly composed and dated assemblages found clustered around the Gresham Street area. The first identification of these 'clearance groups'¹ was made during the analysis of the excavations on 81–87 Gresham Street (GDH85),² where the archaeological evidence for the burial

in the late 13th century of a large quantity of pottery vessels in the footings of the back wall of a house could be related to the expulsion of the historically attested Jewish occupants in 1290 and the breaking up of the household.³ The composition and date of this assemblage is mirrored not just

Site code	Location	Context/feature	No of sherds/ENV (weight in gm)	Context TPQ-TAQ	Reference
MLK76	5–6 Russia Row, 1–10 Milk Street	[3061] stone-lined cesspit (116) serving Building 6 (Tenement I)	380/14 (9338)	1270–1300	Fn 19, 124–5, 128 and 218
GDH85	81–87 Gresham Street	[31] unlined pit/hole in Building 9 (Tenement 9)	685/88 (not weighed)	1270–1300	Fn 2, 159–60
NHG98	25 Gresham Street	[758] wattle-lined pit	149/29 (8160)	1290–1350	Fn 41
GHT00	20–30 Gresham Street	[11492] barrel-lined well serving Building 67 [1025] [3019] barrel-lined well serving Building 74 [4053] well serving Building 73	297/14 (9054) 122/41 (5462) 1498/80 (24742)	1240–1270 1290–1300 1290–1350	Fn 28
GHM05	14–18 Gresham Street	[134] [200] cellar serving Building 48 [232] [234] cellar serving Building 47 [1205] [1206] Structure 11	926/68 (22806) 106/27 (2670) 148/50 (9100)	1270–1300 1270–1350 1270–1350	Fn 42
GHB06	93–95 Gresham Street	[196] pit	1315/92 (18516)	1270–1350	Fn 40
GSJ06	54–56 Gresham Street	[318] [320] [321] cellar serving Building 12	214/84 (5886)	1290–1350	Fn 43

Table 1: large-sized late-13th-century pottery groups from sites in Gresham Street and its environs

by that from 93–95 Gresham Street but by many other pottery groups from nearby sites (listed below in Table 1 and located on the map in Fig. 1).

Definition of medieval ‘clearance groups’

The sites and pottery groups listed in Table 1 share distinctive characteristics:

- 1) **Location:** the most important feature that unites these sites is that they are all in the Gresham Street area.
- 2) **Chronology:** all the selected pottery assemblages are tightly dated to 1270/90–1300. Either few or no 14th-century ceramic fabrics and forms are present and there is minimal contamination by residual material.
- 3) **Composition:** a range of different-sized jugs – usually tulip-shaped and flared baluster jugs for wine (which feature heavily in GDH85, NHG98 and GHB06) – provide the major signature and are present in large quantities. Vessels in London-type ware⁴ are commonest, closely followed by Kingston-type ware products.⁵ They are supplemented by vessels in Mill Green ware⁶. When jars or cooking pots are found, they are commonly of south Hertfordshire greyware, with 29 Gresham Street (NHG98) containing the

most examples. Small quantities of glassware (notably urinals) and clothing accessories, retrieved from cellars at 14–18 Gresham Street (GHM05), and wooden bowls and wooden/iron eating utensils common in two pits from 20–30 Gresham Street (GHT00) provide a fuller picture of the range of objects used in a medieval household.

- 4) **Condition:** the pottery groups are large (100–499 sherds) or very large (500+ sherds) and well preserved. They contain many large joining sherds, and many reconstructable profiles and vessels were retrieved. Taken together with the tight date range for the pottery, this suggests a hastily discarded and discrete assemblage.

- 5) **Feature type:** the majority of assemblages were in cellars or pits, and represent the final use of these features. Such backfilling with domestic refuse and rubbish may indicate a general abandonment, and in the case of the cellars, may testify to a wider redevelopment of the property related to change of ownership.

The close dating of the Gresham Street groups in Table 1, and in particular the *terminus post quem* of 1270 that can be applied to most, is possible because important changes in

the pottery supplied to medieval London, principally the introduction of Mill Green ware and the developments associated with the later phases of the Surrey whiteware industry,⁷ provide some important chronological landmarks. Similarly, the development in the later 13th century of particular decorative trends (for example, stamped bosses applied to Kingston ware) and vessel forms, such as Kingston-type ware metal copy and squat jugs and London-type ware tulip-baluster and drinking jugs, provide further dating indicators. The presence of Mill Green squat and white-slipped and polychrome decorated jugs supplies the 1290 *terminus post quem* applied to certain deposits (for example, 29 Gresham Street (NHG98)).

These intriguing and large finds assemblages therefore provide an important resource for the study of the archaeology of medieval households in a well-defined City neighbourhood. However, they have further topographic and historical significance. All sites lay close to the centre of the area of Jewish settlement in medieval London, and it is therefore proposed that this determinant, together with the close dating of these groups, suggests the

possibility that at least some were deposited as a result of the changes of property ownership caused by the gradual expropriation of Jewish housing here during the mid to late 13th century and the traumatic events surrounding their Expulsion in 1290.

London's medieval Jewry and its archaeology

London's medieval Jewry developed after William I 'transferred' Jews to London from Rouen in 1070.⁸ The community existed for 220 years, during which its fortunes fluctuated considerably, until Edward I expelled Jews from England in 1290. Situated between the centre of civic government at Guildhall to the north and the City's principal commercial area of Cheapside to the south, Catte (now Gresham) Street formed the geographical backbone of London's Jewish community.⁹ Since Hillaby stated his surprise 'that archaeology, on the other hand, can offer virtually no assistance'¹⁰ to understanding London's medieval Jewry, excavations have supplied a number of important discoveries. In particular, the uncovering of two medieval *mikva'ot* or ritual baths, one during the excavation at 81–87 Gresham Street in 1986 (GDH85) and the other located close by on Milk Street in 2001 (GHT00) are now well documented.^{11, 12} Pepper also attempted to identify London's medieval Jewish households from their material culture by examining four archaeological sites located in the Jewry.¹³

Therefore, the evidence presented in Table 1 builds from the evidence found at 81–87 Gresham Street¹⁴ to suggest a cluster of similarly located 'clearance' groups within the heart of London's medieval Jewry¹⁵ (Fig. 1). All dating to the late 13th century and all with a consistent emphasis on ceramic jugs for large-scale entertaining, these groups could supply the material signature for London's Jewish households in the period immediately before the Expulsion in 1290. Not all archaeological excavations within the footprint of medieval Jewry have generated similar medieval 'clearance groups'. They are absent from sites such as King Street (KNG85), Ironmonger Lane (IRO80), Old Jewry (OLC85) and three other interventions on Gresham

Street (LSO88, GAM88 and GRM90); however, it may be noted that at all these sites the survival of medieval archaeological material was less pronounced.¹⁶

As with any preliminary hypothesis there are caveats. First, because other contemporary sites around London's Jewry – in particular those close by on Cheapside – have not been analysed in the same way, it cannot be determined whether the Gresham Street 'clearances' are unique to this area. However, similar assemblages were absent from three chalk-lined cesspits serving adjacent wealthy properties on Basing Lane near Cheapside¹⁹ and at One Poultry (ONE94), where two 13th-century cesspits (serving Building 130) were largely filled with food waste.²⁰

Also, London's Jewry was not a ghetto. Its Jewish population intermingled with non-Jewish residents²¹ and not all of the 'clearance' assemblages in Table 1 will necessarily correspond to a documented Jewish household. One example is the finds associated with the abandonment of a stone-lined cesspit ([3061] in pit 116) serving a tenement²² fronting onto Milk Street during the late 13th century, a property at the heart of London's Jewry. The pit was notable for the preservation of wooden bowls²³ and inorganic food waste,²⁴ and the pottery from it conforms to many of the criteria for medieval clearance groups that have been defined above. However, the documentary evidence indicates that its in-filling is likely to have occurred during the tenure of Andrew son of Robert de Karlton, citizen,²⁵ and its contents cannot be attributed to a Jewish household.²⁶ At the present time, 81–87 Gresham Street (GDH85) is the only site at which it is possible to associate archaeological finds with a known Jewish household.²⁷ However, the finds assemblage found in a barrel-lined well or soakaway at 20–30 Gresham Street²⁸ (GHT00) serving a property, Building 67,²⁹ to which one of the mikvehs belonged clearly has the potential to be tied to Jewish occupants.³⁰

The variable survival of medieval stratigraphy on different sites, and often within the same site, also creates problems, and during the analysis of the results of the Guildhall Yard

excavations³¹ severely limited the extent to which contemporary assemblages derived from documented Jewish and non-Jewish households could be compared.

A previous attempt by Pepper³² to characterise medieval London's Jewish community from five artefact types from four Gresham Street sites is open to revision.³³ This study focussed largely on the material evidence of commerce, such as tokens, weights and seals, but did not include important dietary evidence. It also used ceramic lamps, an artefact type with ritual significance in Jewish households, as an indicator. Medieval ceramic lamps are found throughout London, but a significant number were retrieved during the Guildhall Yard excavations,³⁴ largely clustered in deposits now dated 1140–1230 (Period 11). Pepper linked this large collection of ceramic lamps with the location of Guildhall Yard within the medieval Jewry. However, the problems of using lamps as Jewish 'marker' artefacts have been discussed by Isserlin³⁵ and it should be noted that most of the Guildhall Yard lamps concentrated within one building, probably a cookshop.³⁶ The remaining lamps found here were mostly restricted to external dumps and make-up layers not associated with individual properties. The presence of ceramic lamps is not mirrored elsewhere in the Jewry: of all the sites listed in Table 1, only the cellar serving Building 12 from 54–56 Gresham Street (GSJ06) contained any examples.

Conclusion

The pottery from late 13th-century backfills of pits and cellars cited in this article provides an important opportunity for more detailed analysis, which can throw light on the status of households on or near to late 13th-century Catte (now Gresham) Street and their place in society. The dating and location of the comparable assemblages raises the possibility that the deposition of some at least may be the result of changes of property ownership caused by the gradual expropriation of Jewish housing leading up to their Expulsion in 1290. However, it is clear that further work is needed to explore this hypothesis. One clear pre-requisite is a data collation and mapping project

Letters

The *Burh* of Southwark

I have been following with interest the debate between Bruce Watson and Graham Dawson about the boundaries of Saxo-Norman Southwark (*LA* 12 no 6 (2009) 147–52; *LA* 13 no 1 (2011) 3–8; *LA* 13 no 3 (2011/2012) 65; *LA* 13 no 4 (2012) 99), based largely on excavated evidence and on documentary evidence respectively. I would like to propose a compromise solution in which both parties can be right. I am sure that Dawson has succeeded in tracing the boundaries of the borough of early 13th-century Southwark, although I prefer his green lines to his red ones; this seems to be supported by Watson's pattern of Saxo-Norman site distribution. However, these boundaries seem unconvincing as the original extent of the *burh* of the late 9th or early 10th-century Burghal Hidage. I suggest that the northern part represents the *burh* as first founded as a military work on the south bank of the Thames, and that the southern part represents an extension of settlement in the 11th century.

In this scheme the 9th/10th-century *burh* had a semi-circular defended area (as proposed by Watson) or was sub-

rectangular, the western boundary at St Mary Overy Dock, the southern boundary approximately on the line of Bedale Street (formerly Foul Lane) and St Thomas Street, and the eastern boundary along Dawson's green line. Within this bridgehead fortification were a minster church (generally thought to be St Mary Overy) and the church of St Olave, existing by the 1090s but with a dedication suggesting a foundation earlier in the century. Most of the later Guildable manor lay within these boundaries, and the quitrent of five farthings traced within this manor by Dawson was perhaps payable from the burgage plots of the original *burh*. The area later forming the precinct of Winchester palace was a separate enclosure or *haga* established by the predecessors of Orgar the Rich to the west of the *burh* in the late 10th or early 11th century. There remains the vexed question of how Cnut managed to move his ships around Southwark in 1016. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us he dug a channel on the south bank and dragged the ships to the west side of the bridge, and subsequently constructed siege earthworks around the *burh*. Whether Cnut widened and

deepened the *burh* ditch (in the face of hostile fire from the defences) or took a wider route using a combination of existing water channels and portage, the operation would have been much more difficult if Southwark had extended as far south as St George's church at the time.

The southward extension might be attributed to Earl Godwine, who controlled Southwark as part of his earldom of Wessex from the 1030s to the early 1050s. Stretching as far as St George's church and Dawson's western, southern and eastern ditches, this was a planned settlement with regular burgage plots extending from the street to the boundary ditches, and perhaps represented by the quitrents of 20¼d traced by Dawson on the east side of Borough High Street in the later Great Liberty manor. The ditches were probably wide enough to be defensive or at least to provide effective drainage. The establishment of the extension is likely to have involved the diversion of the north end of Kent Street into its later course around the south end of St George's church. At the south end St George's Bar did not necessarily mark the position of the south gate of the

which would build on the existing documentary survey of ownership and tenancy in the Gresham Street.³⁷ Using geographical information systems (GIS), documented Jewish households in the late 13th century³⁸ could be plotted as a base against which the various strands of archaeological evidence could be mapped. Within this framework, it is possible that further analysis and reappraisal of pottery and associated finds, including the investigation of organic remains for information on household diet,³⁹ could lead to a

clearer identification of archaeological assemblages that may characterise Jewish properties. This in turn could act as a springboard to fuller understanding of this important component of medieval London's population up to the close of 13th century.

Acknowledgements

MOLA thanks Standard Life Investments for commissioning the archaeological works on 93–95 Gresham Street. The comparison of the pottery groups with previously published material was

undertaken as part of the analysis programme for this site which will culminate in publication elsewhere.⁴⁰ The author thanks his colleagues David Bowsher, Nick Holder and Jacqui Pearce who supplied valuable comments. This article was edited by Julian Hill.

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1. J.E. Pearce 'A late 18th-century inn clearance assemblage from Uxbridge, Middlesex' *Post-medieval Archaeol* 34 (2000) 144–86, defines this term with regard to post-medieval assemblages.

2. D. Bowsher, T. Dyson, N. Holder and I. Howell *The London Guildhall: An Archaeological history of a neighbourhood from Early Medieval to Modern Times* MoLA Monograph 36 (2007) 159–60, 339.

3. *Ibid.*, 339.

4. J. Pearce, A.G. Vince and M.A. Jenner *A Dated Type-Series of London Medieval Pottery Part 2, London-Type Ware* London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Special Paper 6 (1985).

5. J. Pearce and A.G. Vince *A Dated Type-series of London Medieval Pottery Part 4: Surrey Whitewares* London Middlesex Archaeol Soc Special Paper 10

(1988).

6. J.E. Pearce, A.G. Vince, R. White, and C.M. Cunningham 'A dated type series of London medieval pottery part one: Mill Green ware *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 33 (1982) 266–98.

7. Notably coarse border ware, though this fabric is not frequent in the pottery groups considered.

8. I. Blair, J. Hillaby, I. Howell, B. Sermon and B.

original *burh*, but rather the limit of burgage tenure and borough jurisdiction (granted to the City in 1327), and a toll collection point. It did not correspond to manorial boundaries, as Dawson has pointed out.

This extension was probably the part of Southwark burnt by William the Bastard in 1066, as he was unable to penetrate the *burh* defences and cross the bridge into London. If so, the settlement was rebuilt after the Norman conquest, as the *Domesday Book*

survey of 1086 indicates that Southwark contained at least 40 or 50 houses, a minster and a landing-place. Most of the houses mentioned were attached to manors in Surrey, which had perhaps earlier contributed to the defence of the *burh*. By the early 12th century the extension had two parish churches of its own, St Margaret's at the north end and St George's at the south end.

Of course, I have no new evidence and I know that Graham Dawson considers this extension to be 'very

unlikely' (*LA* 13 no 1 (2011) 7), but it appears to me to be a reasonable working hypothesis until more evidence emerges. Much will now depend on the results of the Thameslink project and Bruce Watson's report on the excavations at St George's church.

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Delftware production sites

I would like to make a few additions to the article on delftware sites in *LA* 13 no 3 (2011) 70–6. For Aldgate, the article by Julie Edwards 'A group of biscuit and glazed wares from Holy Trinity Priory, London' in D. Gaimster (ed.) *Maiolica in the North: the archaeology of tin-glazed earthenware in north-west Europe c. 1500–1600* (1999) 137–9 should be added. There is a much more extensive description of the three kilns at Montague Close in 'Montague Close Excavations 1969–73: Part 1 – a general survey' in *Res Vol Surrey Archaeol Soc* 3 (1976) 51–8; the recent excavations by PCA have also been published in *A New Millennium at Southwark Cathedral* PCA

Monograph 8 (2009). Mortlake potters did not take over the Vauxhall factory; rather the reverse happened, Samuel Swabey from Vauxhall took over Mortlake. The excavations at Mortlake mentioned have been published by Barney Sloane and Stewart Hoad in *MOLA Archaeological Studies Series 9* (2003). For Rotherhithe there is a brief discussion of a possible mill site for the pottery in 'Rotherhithe's two 'moted places'; part 2' *SLAS News* 127 (December 2011) p. 13.

I think there must be a strong doubt about the pothouse shown on Rocque's map to the west of the hall of Winchester Palace (the Clink in the article) being a production site. I understand that no delftware waster

material was found in the extensive excavations of the Winchester Palace area by DGLA, nor was there much if any from Dr Celoria's excavations in the area of the pothouse, while production sites produce large quantities of waster material. It does seem to have some connection with the Montague Close factory, and it has been suggested that it was actually a warehouse for their products rather than a production site; the lack of waster material would support that.

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Watson 'Two medieval Jewish ritual baths – mikva'ot – found at Gresham Street and Milk Street in London', *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 52 (2001) 127.

9. Both *ibid*, Fig. 2, 130 and J. Hillaby 'London: The 13th-century Jewry revisited' *Trans Jewish Hist Soc* 32 (1992) 90–6, further define the topographic extent of this area.

10. *Ibid*, 100.

11. *Op cit* fn 8.

12. *Op cit* fn 2, 336–7.

13. G. Pepper 'An archaeology of the Jewry of medieval London' *London Archaeol* 7 no. 1 (1992) 3–6.

14. *Op cit* fn 2, 159–60, 339.

15. *Op cit* fn 8, Fig. 2, 130.

16. See J. Schofield with C. Maloney *Archaeology in the City of London, 1907–91: a guide to records of excavations by the Museum of London and its predecessors* MoL Archaeol Gazetteer Ser 1 (1988) for details of these sites.

17. M. Lobel (ed.) *British Atlas of Historic Towns: The City of London from Prehistoric Times to c. 1520* 3 (1991).

18. *Op cit* fn 8, Fig. 2, 130.

19. J. Schofield, P. Allen and C. Taylor 'Medieval buildings and property development in the area of Cheapside' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 41 (1990) 39–238; 54; fig 9, 55.

20. M. Burch and P. Treveil with D. Keene *The development of early medieval Poultry and Cheapside,*

Excavations at 1 Poultry and vicinity, City of London, MoLA Monograph 38 (2010) 101–3.

21. *Op cit* fn 8, 128–9.

22. *Op cit* fn 19.

23. *Ibid*, 218.

24. A. Davis in *ibid*, 231.

25. *Op cit* fn 19.

26. This amends the original suggestion that the household of William Joiner as responsible for deposition published in *op cit* fn 19, 176, due to revision of the pottery dating evidence for GHT00 in B. Watson *Wells and Water: Roman and later excavations at 20–30 Gresham Street and Blossom's Inn, City of London* MoLA Monograph (in prep).

27. *Op cit* fn 2, 159–60, 339.

28. B. Watson *Wells and Water: Roman and later excavations at 20–30 Gresham Street and Blossom's Inn, City of London*, MoLA Monograph (in prep).

29. This property correlates to Buildings 10 and 11 (Tenement 5) as identified during the Milk Street excavations see *op cit* fn 19, Fig 40 125, 145.

30. *Op cit* fn 8.

31. *Ibid*, 337–8, 413.

32. *Op cit* fn 13.

33. J.E. Pearce 'A rare delftware Hebrew plate and associated assemblage from an excavation in Mitre Street, City of London', *Post-medieval Archaeol* 32

(1998) 95–112, 106; *op cit* fn 8, 129.

34. *Op cit* fn 2, 316.

35. R. Isserlin 'Building Jerusalem in the 'Islands of the Sea': the archaeology of medieval Anglo-Jewry' in S. Kadish (ed.) *Building Jerusalem: Jewish architecture in Britain* (1996) 24–53.

36. *Op cit* fn 2, 93–8.

37. Existing documentary coverage of the area is also principally found in: D. Keene and V. Harding *Historical gazetteer of London before the Great Fire: 1, Cheapside* (1987); C. Taylor and D. Keene in *op cit* fn 19; *op cit* fn 2, 72–3, 131–2, 336–9.

38. This was principally achieved in *op cit* fn 9 and summarised in *op cit* fn 8.

39. *Op cit* fn 8, footnote 3, 135.

40. S. Watson 'Princes and Bartlett Houses, 6–12 Basinghall Street and 93–95 Gresham Street, London EC2' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* (in prep).

41. J.M. Lyon 'New Work on Cripplegate fort: Excavations at 25 Gresham Street 2000–1' *Trans London Middlesex Archaeol Soc* 55 (2005) 153–82.

42. S. Watson *14–18 Gresham street, a post-excavation assessment* (2008) MoLA unpub. rep.

43. R. Wroe-Brown and S. Pennington *A Roman Temple on Gresham Street: excavations at 52–66 Gresham Street, EC3*, MoLA Study Series Paper (in prep).