

letters of an inscription in the Latin alphabet remain, showing that the vessel was made for the western market. These are executed in white enamel, and are similar to those on the Aldrevandino goblet.

Some even smaller fragments were found on the site of Dale Abbey, Derbyshire, but though they can be recognized as Syro-Frankish, it is impossible to draw close parallels with the Cheapside bowl. The fragments are now on exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The remaining site producing glass, of a slightly later date and not true Syro-Frankish, is Weoley Castle, Warwicks.³⁷ Two fragments were found in 1955, in a sealed deposit of the early-fourteenth century, decorated with gold and red paint. If they belong to the same vessel, it must have been of flask shape.³⁸

As well as excavated fragments there is at least one other object of Syrian glass which seems to have been imported into England at the time of the Crusades and which has never been buried, remaining in private hands. This is the 'Luck of Edenhall', recently purchased for the nation, and, since 1926, at the Victoria and Albert Museum. This beaker, enamelled in red, blue, green and white and also gilded, is contained in a *cuir-bouilli* case of similar shape.^{38a}

It seems quite clear, from this brief survey, that the Cheapside bowl and the Basle bowl are very similar, not only in technique and design, but also in form, and may even have been made in the same workshop. It is suggested that this workshop was in Europe and the two alternatives are Venice and the Rhineland. The latter seems the more likely in view of the later date given to the rise of the enamelling technique at Venice. The main difficulty in accepting a Rhenish origin lies in the nature of the metal. There is no other evidence that such good clear glass was being produced there in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

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AN EARLY MEDIEVAL PEN FROM THE CITY OF LONDON

In the *Catalogue* of the Guildhall Museum³⁹ there is published a cast bronze object, $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, which is described as an instrument of stylus form and which is classified as Roman (acc. no. 1574). It has recently been suggested, however, that the object (PL. XX, B) is an early medieval pen, and it seems well to draw attention to it, therefore, in the hope that more can be learned about it.

The shaft is faceted on four sides for about two-thirds of its length. One end swells into a knob which is flattened on top and the other end widens into four flanged grooves which taper to a point. When these grooves are filled with ink, it is possible to write with the pen, although it is difficult to achieve any sort of flowing script.

The pen is not without parallels. During restoration work in St. Andrew's chapel, Canterbury Cathedral, a floor and ceiling were removed. In the flooring were found several charters and a similar though unornamented pen, which had slipped through the floor from the room above, which had been used as a muniment room.⁴⁰ The documents belong to the thirteenth century but this does not, of course, help to date the pen, though it is likely that it would not be of much earlier date than the documents. Its present whereabouts is unknown. Two identical pens in the Corinium Museum, Cirencester (PL. XX, C) are twins of the Guildhall specimen. These pens are hitherto unpublished and there is no record of their discovery. Another, in the Layton collection (no. O. 1551), found in the Thames, has recently been deposited in the London Museum with the rest of that collection.

³⁷ Unpublished: information from Mr. A. Oswald.

³⁸ Possibly to be compared with A. Hartshorne, *Old English Glasses* (1897), fig. 154.

^{38a} It has often been published. For two recent illustrations see *Museums J.*, LVIII, Feb. 1959, frontispiece, and *The Connoisseur*, CXLIII, no. 575, Feb. 1959, p. 35).

³⁹ *Catalogue of the . . . Guildhall Museum* (London, 1908), p. 53, no. 71, pl. xxii, no. 11.

⁴⁰ *Archaeol. Cantiana*, VII (1868), 341.

Recently another, though less remarkable, parallel (PL. XX, D) was brought to the Guildhall Museum (Acc. no. 21223). This is part of a glass pen, found near the Fleet river in Blackfriars, in an eighteenth-century cellar and associated with a wig-curler. The tip is strikingly similar, with the four reservoirs for holding the ink. Such glass pens are well-known curiosities in the nineteenth century and are not uncommon.

The Guildhall pen, if such it is, has obvious disadvantages for a modern writer. It is both too short and too slender. Nevertheless, it is quite possible to make letters, and certainly to draw lines, although there is no way of achieving variation in the thickness of stroke. It is probably for drawing rather than writing.

The provenience is given as London Wall. This almost certainly means that the pen was found in the city ditch, which was dug in the latter part of the thirteenth century, and in view of the evidence of the Canterbury pen, the Guildhall specimen may well be of this date.

JEAN M. COOK

A MEDIEVAL UNDERCROFT AT 50 MARK LANE, LONDON, E.C.3.

During the excavation of foundations for a new block of offices⁴¹ at 50 Mark Lane, in the city of London, the substantial remains of a stone-built undercroft of medieval date were discovered. The building plans caused trenches to be cut across the site from north to south and it was in two of these neighbouring trenches that the eastern and western parts of the undercroft were found, the centre remaining concealed by the builder's baulk and being at no time available for examination.⁴²

The undercroft had apparently been built on undisturbed ground, since the N. wall and parts of the E. wall were laid in the sand and gravel ballast which forms the undisturbed subsoil on this site (FIG. 45). Owing to disturbance by later buildings it was not possible to ascertain whether the other walls were also partially laid into the ballast, but it is likely from analogies elsewhere that this was so.⁴³ The walls were well built and varied in thickness from 2 ft. (N. and E. walls) to 2½ ft. (W. wall). The interior surfaces were of chalk ashlar work and the core of chalk and flint: the exterior surfaces, where visible, were quite rough and laid in the ballast and did not appear to have been dressed. The surviving height of the walls varied from approximately 6 ft. on the W. side to 2½ ft. on the E. side. There were no rough foundations to any of the walls, the interior dressed surface of each wall commencing at its base and resting directly on the ballast below.

In the interior, at the middle of both the E. and the W. walls was a semicircular engaged column in limestone.⁴⁴ The base mouldings⁴⁵ were simple (FIG. 44, sections AB, CD; PL. XXI, B) and the columns rested on substructures of tightly-packed hearthstone fragments,⁴⁴ flint, etc. Engaged attached shafts⁴⁶ of limestone stood at each of the four corners of the undercroft and rested on substructures of similar content to those

⁴¹ Thanks are due to the Hammerson Group of Companies, Quadrex House, Park Lane, London, W.1, the owners of the site, for permission to visit it and to the builders, Messrs. Poolman (Builders) Ltd., especially Mr. Oliver, their general foreman, and his men, whose helpfulness and interest made the recovery of the plan of the undercroft possible.

⁴² It should be pointed out that this baulk has remained undisturbed except for the sinking of a wooden buttress and that any further building on this site might provide an opportunity to see whether there was an entrance or any other feature on the N. or S. wall.

⁴³ T. H. Turner and J. H. Parker, *Domestic Architecture of the Middle Ages*, II, 185; Margaret E. Wood, 'Thirteenth century domestic architecture in England,' *Archaeol. J.*, cv, supplement (1950), 117.

⁴⁴ I am indebted to Miss Helen A. H. Macdonald of the Petrological Department in the Geological Survey and Museum for her kindness in identifying these stones. She described the limestone as 'fine grained and very similar to a specimen of Chipping Norton Limestone from the inferior oolite at Stow-on-the-Wold, Glos.' and the hearthstone as 'a soft calcareous sandstone similar to a specimen in our collection of hearthstone from the Upper Greensand at Merstham, Surrey'.

⁴⁵ Guildhall Museum, nos. 21156-7.

⁴⁶ Guildhall Museum, no. 21155.