

IPSWICH LEATHER

IAS5001 0040

Bottom components of a left—foot welted shoe. Starting from the top (next to the foot in wear) these are:

a) Insole. Although worn into a hole at the tread and inside toe margin, the specimen has its periphery almost complete. It carries an of holes, edge/flesh marginal row / stitch length c. 7.5mm. (variable), where upper and welt were joined (see "Glossary" enclosed under "Welted Construction"). The imprint of the lasting margin is visible on the flesh side (underside) in places and there is also the impression of the fore—end of the middle (see below).

Length: c.201mm.; width at forepart: c.80mm.; at waist: c.47mm.; at seat: 45mm. Its length corresponds roughly to a modern size 124 children's; allowing for shrinkage during burial (c. 10,) originally probably c. size 2 adults'.

b) Middle. A short section covering waist and seat only (middles normally extend the whole length of the shoe from toe to heel). It has marginal grain/flesh stitch holes set in c. 5.0mm. from the edge and with a stitch length of 6.5mm. Near the front end there is a second set of holes indicating that a repair was made. The front edge is "skived" (tapered) so as to avoid a ridge when sandwiched between insole and sole. Presumably the purpose of this short middle was to lift the back of the foot slightly thus heralding the advent of a heel proper later in the 16th century.

c) Sole. Very broad round toe, now worn away at inside edge and also at the outside seat corner (the usual place, then and now). The stitch holes are grain/flesh, stitch length 6.5mm. and set "in channel", i.e. in a groove, still visible in places on the grain side 6.0 — 8.0mm. from the present edge. These holes show where the sole was stitched along with its middle to the welt which had already been sewn in (see "Glossary" and also "The Examination of Early Shoes to 1600" — Trans. 12 of Museum Assistants Group, 1973). Dating. The welted construction, particularly the position and spacing of the holes in the insole, and the broad round toe suggest 1490-1510. Note: 16th century church monuments, if the feet are visible, often show the ditching channel on the sole.

IAS5001 0071

Welted insole, probably right foot. Very broad round toe, worn away at outside waist and seat but has had a lenticular disc cut from the forepart. Edge/flesh marginal welt sewing seam holes, stitch length c.8.5mm., and there are additional holes indicating re—sewing for repair. Two small holes in the central axis may indicate where the insole was tacked to a wooden last during shoemaking.

The curvature of both toe and heel seat is reminiscent of a Tudor arch

and this shape together with the early welted construction suggest a date of late 15th or early 16th century.

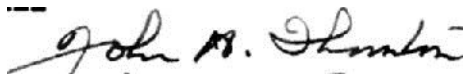
Length: 227mm.; width at toe: 119mm. The present length corresponds to a size 2-i childrens; allowing for shrinkage in burial, it would probably originally have been c. size 5 — 5 in modern sizes.

IAS5002 0080

Welted sole, right foot, toe—end and outside seat now missing. Has grain/flesh stitching holes, stitch length 13mm. (very large) set "in channel" (except where the holes miss it at the outside waist), varying from 10mm. to 152,m. from the edge. The fore—end of this specimen tapers in thickness and this plus diagonal impressions suggest that the original forepart was removed and new repair sections added, the present piece being all that is left of the original sole. There is some indication of a seat repair. The sole stitching is unusually coarse with a stitch length of 13mm. normally being about half this.

Length: c.202mm.; width at mist: 64mm.

Dating: again probably about 1500 but this takes into account the associated finds; by itself it could come from almost any time in the 16th century.



5th July, 1977 . H. Thornton)