

EXCAVATIONS
AT
THE FORMER
BUTTERKIST FACTORY
BLACKBOURNE ROAD
DAGENHAM
DA-BK 93
LDPEM/ACDA/208
BY
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REPORT INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the details of the recording of eleven trenches at the former Butterkist Factory, Blackbourne Road, Dagenham. The excavation took place over a three week period. The results of the work are set out here in an ordered and structured form to facilitate the checking of the results and use of the site archive.

The results of the work can be summarised as follows:

Excavation of eleven trenches at the old Butterkist factory, Dagenham revealed eight phases of natural and archaeological activity dating from the Pleistocene to the present day. The probable archaeological evidence revealed during excavation, however remains undateable.

The report is divided into the following sections:

SITE INTRODUCTION AND METHOD
GROUP DISCUSSION
INTER-TRENCH PHASING
SUMMARY
FINDS
BIBLIOGRAPHY
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The purpose of the work, methodology, contract details, dates and project management details are set out in the "SITE INTRODUCTION AND METHOD".

In the "GROUP DISCUSSION" the contexts recorded on site are discussed in discrete groups. A context is any event in time represented by physical remains, e.g. a ditch, the material filling a ditch, a wall, a rebuild of a wall or a layer of soil. When several contexts are related, e.g. a pit and the material filling it, a line of postholes, a wall and its foundation trench, they are discussed together so as to see fully their archaeological implications.

Firstly the stratigraphic relationships between the contexts under discussion is illustrated in a matrix form:

e.g. 27
 I
 28
 I
 30

In this diagram the stratigraphic relationships are shown as follows: context (27) happens after both contexts (28) and (30), context (28) happens after context (30) but before context (27) while context (30) happens before both contexts (27) and (28).

Then the contexts are listed with short descriptions. The nature of the group is then described in text. Finally a list of plans, sections, black and white photographs and colour slides relevant to that group, are given for accessing the site archive. The site archive is stored in the Passmore Edwards Museum.

In the "PHASE DISCUSSION" the groups of contexts are drawn together into phases. Phases are significant blocks of archaeology representing single or related activities within a band of time on the site under discussion, e.g. the occupation of a house or settlement, the complete renovation of a house, the change of settlement pattern or the abandonment of a house or settlement. When a significant change in activity is found in the archaeological record of a site then a change of phase can be said to have happened. By discussing phases and comparing them we can see the overall sequence of events at the site.

In the "SUMMARY" the archaeological and specialist reports are drawn together to give dates for the various phases and more details for the activities. In this case detailed finds analysis (apart from bricks) and environmental analysis will have to await the completion of conservation work on the organic finds and assessment of the bone material.

In "THE FINDS", cultural material collected during the excavation are listed, e.g. the number of pottery sherds of a certain ceramic fabric, followed by the fabric code and its date range if known.

The "BIBLIOGRAPHY" lists publications used in this report while the "ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS" thanks all the individuals and organisations involved in the archaeological fieldwork and in the production of the report.

The "ILLUSTRATIONS" include figures showing plans, sections and elevations of the structures under discussion. A site matrix illustration is also included so that the exact relationship between any contexts on the site can be checked.