

12 Goslett Yard, WC2 (TCG09)

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Summary Note on Building Materials

A total of nine fragments of building material were recovered from TCG09 (contexts [+], [6], [8], [13] and [18]). These comprise eight bricks and a large fragment of ceramic drain pipe. All the building material is of post-medieval date.

The building material from TCG09 has been fully recorded and the information added to the Oracle database.

Listed below is a summary of the building material in each context:

Trench	Context	Fabric	Type	Context date
8	[+]	3253	Drain pipe	1867–1894
2	[6]	3046	Brick	1550–1700
2	[8]	3032	Brick	1800–1900
3	[13]	3032	Brick	1600–1800
3	[13]	3033	Brick	
5	[18]	3275	Firebrick	1852–1900
5	[18]	3275?	Firebrick	

Discussion

i) Brick

The earliest bricks are London-made examples in fabrics 3033, 3032 and 3046 from an E–W brick wall (context [6]) and a brick vault (context [13]). These cannot be dated with any certainty, but are probably mid 16th/17th–18th century. Bricks were often reused during this period, especially for less visible brick features such as wells, drains and cesspits, so they need not necessarily indicate the date of the brick walls in which they were incorporated.

The bricks from the N–S brick wall (context [8]) are fairly deeply frogged with sharp edges, which suggests a 19th century date.

The most interesting bricks from the site are from an area of brickwork (context [18]). These are yellowish-cream coloured firebricks stamped in their top/bottom face: EJ&J.PEARSON/STOURBRIDGE. Similar firebricks from the Stourbridge area are known from London (Smith 2008, 36; Betts 2009), but these are the first examples from the firm of E. J. & J. Pearson. These date from after 1852 where George Pearson and Peter Harris formed a partnership in 1852 (Pearson 2005, 366). The firm of Harris & Pearson was a sister company to E. J. & J. Pearson.

The other firebrick collected from context [18] has a slightly different fabric, so may be from another source. This has a curved header end and is marked 6A on the top/bottom surface. Numbers were impressed in the stretcher faces of voussoir bricks made by Joseph Cowen & Company of Blaydon-on-Tyne on Tyneside (Smith 2008, 34).

Firebricks were made to withstand high temperatures, so were frequently used in the construction of hearths, furnaces and oven structures.

ii) Waterpipe

Found unstratified in Trench 8 was a large fragment of brown glazed stoneware waterpipe approximately 140mm in (outer) diameter. This is of interest in having being stamped SMITH & CO, OLD KENT ROAD, LONDON in an oval frame. This was made by Thomas Smith at his Canal Potteries, which was in existence by 1867 and survived until at least 1894. The company was succeeded by Hosea Tugby in about 1896. Smith made various other stoneware items such as ginger beer bottles (Askey 1998, 179).

No other stamped waterpipes are known from London, although this is probably because such items are not normally collected, unless they are mistaken for pottery.

References

Askey, D, 1998 *Stoneware bottles*, 2nd edition, Elsecar Heritage Centre, near Barnsley

Betts, I M, 2009 Building material, St Giles Court, St Giles high Street, WC2 (SIC06), unpub MoL rep

Pearson, L, 2005 *Tile Gazetteer*, Shepton Beauchamp

Smith, T P, 2008 Some sources of fireclaybricks used in London, *Information* (J British Brick Soc) 106, 33–41