

A note on the accessioned find and bulk nails from the Crossrail C261 Early East - targeted watching briefs

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1.1 Introduction and discussion

A small assemblage of finds was recovered from the Crossrail C261 Early East - targeted watching briefs and examined and recorded in accordance with standard MOLA procedures. All are made of iron and they comprise 1 accession <1>, [60] and three bulk nails from the same context. The finds are all essentially undiagnostic and require no further work and merit no publication. The dating is of insufficient precision to contribute in any major way to our understanding of the site providing only an Iron Age *terminus post quem* and a likely *terminus ante quem* of the mid 1800s based on the form of the nails.

<1>, [60] is badly corroded and flaking. It superficially appears to be a horseshoe but the accidental flaking away of large fragments of corrosion during examination suggests that it is unperforated. Firm identification without x-ray to show any perforations for mounting is impossible but it is most likely a U or oval shaped washer or piece of bracing, probably a structural fitting. Similar fittings are quite common in the medieval and post medieval period but this example is insufficiently well preserved for further identification.

Three iron nails also came from context [60]. All are square sectioned. One is a robust example with a domed head with hammer facets, broken across the shaft. The others are finer. One retains a sub square head and has a probable extraction curve to the shaft. These are all wrought nails which may imply a date preceding the widespread adoption of drawn nails in the mid 19th century (Hume 1969, 253-4; Adams 2002) but this cannot be regarded as precise form of dating with such a small assemblage.

1.2 Catalogue

Iron object

<1>, 60>

Max L 135mm, strip is 33mm wide, 5mm thick. Two fragments from a flat strip sectioned object with a U shaped bend broken in two places, possibly part of a large oval shaped washer or similar. Unlikely to be reaping hook or similar given the flat section.

Bulk nails

1: Domed head with hammer facets Diam 32mm, shaft Th 14.5mm.

2: 2 x slight nails one with sub square head and coiled tip, possible extraction curve. Diam 13mm, Th 5.5mm. L of complete example 60mm.

1.3 Reference

Adams, W, 2002, Machine cut nails and wire nails: American Production and Use for Dating 19th-Century and Early-20th-Century Sites, *Historical Archaeology* 36(4):66-88

Hume, I.N. 1969, *A guide to the artefacts of Colonial America* Penn