

## **A note on the pewter measure and iron nail from Pudding Mill Lane Portal (Crossrail sitecode XSK10)**

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### **1.1 Introduction**

A pewter measure <7> and a single nail were recovered from excavations on this site. The former was recorded directly onto MOLA Oracle database, noting dimensions, weight and other attributes.

### **1.2 The measure**

The unlidded, quart size spouted measure <7> was found in fill [131] of the timber box structure [138] ] located at the southern end of Strip 3. Dating to the early/mid 19th-century, it is of straight-sided tapering form, with a double cordon above the base and a single cordon just above the handle junction and complete apart from the spout (body H 150mm, total H 154mm; rim Diam 10x11mm, base Diam 124mm). The rim is distorted and now oval. The body is engraved with names of owner and pub 'G Kent, Albion, Old Ford', opposite the rim in a sub-rectangular wrigglework cartouche defined by three parallel interrupted lines. To left of this, just below rim, is the upper part of a stamped pewterer's mark, a lozenge containing a shield with two horizontal elements. To the right the measure size is engraved just to left of handle. The top of the handle is carinated, rising just above the rim itself, with a raised tab motif on the curved side and the initial 'K' carved into the angle by the rim, facing the holder.

Pewter is an alloy composed primarily of tin, with varying quantities of hardening agents such as antimony, bismuth, copper and lead. It can be divided into different types, as defined by the ordinances of The Worshipful Company of Pewterers, the two main categories being 'fine' and 'lay' metal. The former is of higher quality, while the latter, use for hollow wares, including tankards and measures, contains a higher proportion of lead, which was used as a low cost bulking agent and help durability (<http://www.pewtersociety.org>).

In the context of a public house, in this case the Albion, Old Ford, the measure was used ensure standard quantities when serving ale, specifically that to be taken off the premises in non-standard containers and consumed at home. Similar, but taller and narrower spouted forms, often lidded, were used as jugs or flagons for serving at table. Flagon, tankards and measures were made in a variety of different forms, some with regional associations. The straight-sided tapering form, however, based on the lidless tavern mugs of the 17th and 18th centuries, is the most common from the mid 18th to 19th century (Hornsby 1983, 281–5) and <7> is identical to many tankards of the period around 1830. The stamp below the rim may be a touch mark, a pewterer's 'trade mark'; it remains to be identified.

### **1.3 The nail**

The timber-lined pit [138] had a corner post made from a reused ship timber in which were wooden treenails. The pit fill [136] contained the upper part of a large nail or stake (extant L 90mm; original length unknown) which may be from an inner lining of the same boat or

another structure (D Goodburn pers comm). The head is flattened by hammering but was originally pitched, with two sloping sides (W 18mm) and two straight-edged sides; the shank is of uniform square section (11mm square). Traces of mineralised wood from the timber the nail was driven into are visible on the shank and up to the top of the head, showing that this was countersunk, hammered down so it was flush with the surface of the wood.

#### **1.4 Bibliography**

Hornsby, P R G, 1983 *Pewter of the western world, 1600–1850*, Pennsylvania