

A note on the leather from Crossrail Central – Farringdon Station, Eastern Ticket Hall evaluation (XSF10)

Beth Richardson

Six pieces of accessioned leather from XSF10 context [27] were examined while wet (pre-conservation). There are three shoes or shoe-parts (<1>, <2>, <6>), a knife-sheath (<4>), a large piece of thick leather with stitch marks (<5>) and part of a plain strap (<3>). The context is dated c 1550–1650 by ceramics.

The most complete shoe (a child's shoe) has high strap-like extensions to the quarters which are sewn to the vamp throat in a distinctive 16th-century form of latchet fastening (<1>). One of the shoe-parts, part of a vamp, has the same fastening method (<6>), while another (vamp and quarters) has a high straight-throated vamp joining the quarters at a butt seam (<2>). These are all typical mid 16th-century shoe-styles (Mould in Gardiner 2005, 66, Shoe Types 1 and 2.1; also late 16th century shoes from London's Rose and Globe theatres, Bowsher and Miller 2009, 195–9).

The knife sheath (<4>) does not appear to be decorated, which again is typical of 16th century sheaths and scabbards which are far plainer than their medieval equivalents. The large piece of leather (<5>) is difficult to examine while wet, but interesting, and possibly identifiable when conserved.

Potential for further work

Sixteenth-century shoes and other leather items are comparatively rare finds in London. With other leather of the same date from the Crossrail sites (eg XRV10) the leather from XSK10 should be catalogued, analysed and published.

Bibliography

- Bowsher, J and Miller, P, 2009 *The Rose and the Globe- playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark*, MoLAS monograph 48
- Gardiner, J, ed, 2005 *Before the Mast Life and Death aboard the Mary Rose*