

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS IN THE CITY OF LONDON, 1960

(not including the excavations of the *Roman and Mediaeval London Excavation Committee*)

Communicated by the staff of the Guildhall Museum

ROMAN

Site of Aldermary House, Queen Street

Seven timber-lined Roman wells were found during the builder's excavation on this site, which lies immediately opposite the site of the Bank of London and South America, where 14 Roman and 11 later wells were found in 1953-54. Eight other wells were also observed on the Aldermary House site, but only two of these could be dated, one being medieval and the other 18th century. The alley immediately to the north is significantly named Well Court.

Upper Thames Street, west of Lambeth Hill

A multiple line of wooden piles, apparently of Roman date, running E.-W., has been observed just north of Upper Thames Street and west of Lambeth Hill—immediately to the north of the line of the river wall recorded east of Lambeth Hill by Roach Smith in 1841. (*Archaeologia* XXIX, 150: *Illustrations of Roman London*, 19.)

26-27 King Street

Traces of Roman ragstone walls were recorded during the builder's excavation. The position of the fragments observed—mostly in section—indicated the lines of two parallel walls 10 feet apart, apparently forming the corner of a room or courtyard round which ran a corridor. The alignment was unusual, being approximately N.E.-S.W., suggesting that these walls formed part of the same house as a wall observed on this alignment in 1955 on the site of Nos. 13-14 King Street.

Bush Lane

The development of a small site immediately east of Cannon Street Station has revealed massive Roman ragstone walls, from 3 feet to 7 feet thick, evidently part of the great building, the remains of which were found when Cannon Street Station was built, and also at various times during excavations under Bush Lane itself. The largest wall, running

approximately E.-W., stood to a height of 12 feet above its footings. The lower part, which was about 7 feet thick, was of ragstone rubble faced with squared blocks of ragstone set in white mortar. There was an offset, levelled by brickwork, at a height of 10 feet above the footings, and above this the superstructure was 6 feet thick, built of bricks and surviving to a height of 2 feet (10 courses of bricks).

Barclays Bank site, Lombard Street

This site is of considerable importance as it covers the S.W. part of the Forum, and it was hoped that the builder's excavation might throw new light on the history and ground-plan of that structure. Traces of the distinctive Forum floor of yellowish-white cement have been observed, but most of the features so far recorded are of earlier date. The earliest was a U-shaped trench, probably of Claudian date, running N.N.E. near the southern edge of the site. Subsequent walls of ragstone and broken brick seem to belong to the period Claudius-Nero.

A deposit of refuse of Claudian date has yielded a fragment of a green glass beaker with polychrome painting (Locarno type).

Bank Station

Workmen's finds during recent tunnelling operations opposite the Mansion House included Roman bronze ligulae; a spear-head, triple candle-holder, and plasterer's tool of iron; an iron pin with brass head in the form of a conventionalised bird; and an exceptionally fine brass steelyard with lead weight attached. From their condition there is little doubt that they came from the Roman stream-bed of the Walbrook, and can probably be attributed to the 1st century or first half of the 2nd century A.D.

Site of Shelley House, Noble Street

A fragment of ragstone wall was observed running for about 5 feet approximately parallel with the west wall of the Roman fort and about 140 feet to the east of it. A thickness of 9 in. only remained, but this included the east face. Fragments of Roman painted wall-plaster lay around it. About 23 feet further east was an area of gravelled metalling 1 in. to 6 in. thick.

Site immediately north of St. Alphege Church, London Wall

A good section showing the footings of the Roman fort wall, the V-shaped fort ditch, and both Roman and medieval town ditches, was revealed in the builder's excavation.

Upper Thames Street, at junction with Little College Street

From sewer excavations at this point came a complete jet bracelet and an orichalc plate with a curvilinear Romano-Celtic design. The latter was oblong in shape, but with one curved side, and had rivet-holes for attachment as a decorative fitting. Both finds came from black mud at a depth of about 20 feet.

ANGLO-SAXON

A portion of a sculptured stone cross has been found in the filling of the Anglo-Saxon archway at the Church of All Hallows Barking. On one face is a cross with circular interlaced central boss, and on the other part of a highly stylized animal, very similar to that on the Viking memorial stone from St. Paul's Churchyard in Guildhall Museum. (*Archaeological Journal*, X, pp. 82-3; XLII, pp. 251-9.) The new find is undoubtedly of the same date (late 10th-early 11th century) and probably from the same workshop.

MEDIEVAL

Church of St. Stephen, Coleman Street

Portions of the medieval church were revealed and recorded during the builder's clearance of the site.

18-26 *Ludgate Hill*

A medieval undercroft was found during the builder's excavation of the site.

Site of the "Times" building, Printing House Square

The foundations of the Priory of Blackfriars, already recorded, were again revealed during the recent builder's excavations. Several post-medieval walls on the site contained re-used architectural fragments from the Priory, and the more important of these have been recovered and will be preserved.

A stream valley crossed the site from north to south, cutting through the natural gravels and about 40 feet to 50 feet wide. It was filled with gravel and black mud, but no dating evidence for the filling could be found. A wall of the Priory with exceptionally deep foundations ran along its line.

Site immediately north of St. Alphege Church, London Wall

The medieval City Ditch, seen in section at this point, was 15 feet wide.

POST-MEDIEVAL

Church of St. Stephen, Coleman Street

A large intact double-handled jar of brown glazed ware of the 16th

or 17th century was found by the workmen at a depth of about 14 feet below street level towards the eastern end of the church. It is a storage jar of domestic type and contained only earth when found, but its position at foundation level beneath the Wren church suggests that it may have been placed there as a foundation deposit of some kind.

UNCERTAIN PERIOD

London Stone

The clearance for redevelopment of the site of St. Swithin's Church has necessitated the removal from the church wall of London Stone. It has been temporarily placed in the custody of Guildhall Museum and taken to the Royal Exchange. The stone, which was built into the church wall, is clearly only the top of the great stone which stood until 1742 on the opposite side of the road, and had such deep foundations that, according to Stow, it remained unshaken if carts ran against it. The surviving fragment is 21 in. wide, 16½ in. high and 12 in. thick, with rounded corners at the top. It is not a natural monolith, but has obviously been shaped by a mason. Careful examination has revealed no features of interest apart from two curious grooves on the upper surface running parallel with its longer axis. A sample of the stone has been examined by the Geological Museum and identified as Clipsham Limestone from the Inferior Oolite zone which runs from Dorset to the Wash.

Site of the "Times" building, Printing House Square

A massive wall, quite different in character from the medieval walls of the Priory, and, probably of earlier date, was traced for a distance of 22 feet 6 in. running E.-W., with its thickness varying from 5 feet 4 in. to more than 7 feet. It was built of ragstone and hard yellow mortar, and contained many fragments of Roman bricks. At the western end the footings of the foundation rose at an angle of 45°, and the wall appeared to be tapering to an end. The southern side, which had a distinct batter, was faced with roughly squared ragstone blocks and plastered over. The north side, also faced with roughly squared blocks of ragstone, was vertical and not plastered. Against it lay two horizontal timbers, both about 6 in. thick, one lying on top of the other.

There was no evidence of date, but the character of the wall suggested that it might be Roman, although it lay outside the Roman city walls. It may possibly have been part of a defensive outwork of some kind between the city wall and the Fleet River.