

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS IN THE CITY OF LONDON 1966-8

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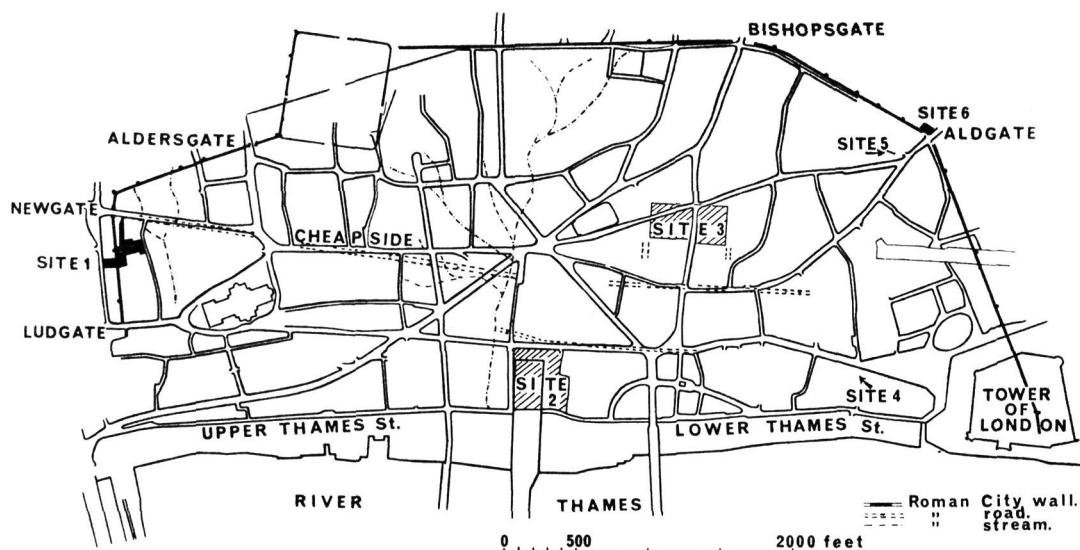


Fig. 1  
Sites excavated 1966-68.

## INTRODUCTION

This is an account of archaeological investigations made on several sites in the City of London between 1966 and 1968. The text has been compiled by Mr. Peter Marsden who also directed the excavations; and thanks are due to Mr. R. Merrifield for his valued advice in the preparation of these reports.

Special thanks are due to the City Engineer and his representative, Mr. E. Ferguson, who permitted the excavations on the Aldgate site prior to the widening of Aldgate High Street, and to the Improvements Committee of the Corporation of London who financed the work. Thanks are equally due to the Central Criminal Court Extension Committee of the Corporation of London who allowed us to excavate their important site in Warwick Square, and generously financed that work. Finally thanks are due to the volunteers who dug on both sites and without whom the investigations could not have been carried out.

Reference is made in this paper to groups of excavated objects which have been recorded in the Museum Excavation Register (e.g. E.R. 1276). With the exception of the Roman burial group from the Warwick Square site, which was kindly drawn by Miss Juliet Allan, none of the dating evidence has yet been drawn owing to the lack of time and staff. It is hoped that these groups will be published eventually, and meanwhile they are available for study on application to the Director, Guildhall Museum, Gillett House, 55 Basinghall Street, London, E.C.2.

## BRIEF SUMMARY

Site 1. *Warwick Square*

Controlled archaeological excavations in 1966 exposed two Roman burials and the corner of a Roman stone building. Three main phases of medieval houses were also found, the latest being a substantial part of the Warwick Inn, the town house of the Earls of Warwick during the 15th century.

Site 2. *Bush Lane area*

Through observations on building sites, coupled with a limited amount of controlled archaeological excavation, a major part of the layout of an extensive Roman palace has been found. It is evidently an official building, which may have been the residence of the Roman governor of Britain. It was built during the late 1st century and abandoned or demolished during the 4th century.

Site 3. *Roman basilica, and site of 3-6 Gracechurch Street*

The discovery of part of the south wall of the Roman basilica has made it possible to determine the exact alignment of that building in relation to modern streets and offices. Additional information on the south frontage of the basilica has been gathered, and also the position of the north-west corner of the large pre-forum building south of the basilica.

Site 4. *Byward Street (formerly Water Lane)*

The corner of a sunken room in a Roman building was revealed during the construction of a subway.

Site 5. *39-40 Mitre Street*

A bricked-up medieval arch, formerly in the medieval priory church of Holy Trinity Priory, was discovered during recent demolition work.

Site 6. *1-2 Aldgate High Street*

A succession of three or probably four city gates was found during a controlled archaeological excavation on this site. The earliest gate was Roman, and the latest was built in 1609. Beyond the gates lay a succession of three defensive ditches of Roman and medieval date.

Site 1. *Central Criminal Court Extension (1966)*

The site of the Central Criminal Court Extension is bounded by the north side of Warwick Square, and the west side of Warwick Lane. Special thanks are due to the Central Criminal Court Extension Committee for permitting and generously financing archaeological investigations on the site prior to redevelopment, and also to the City Architect, Mr. E. G. Chandler, F.R.I.B.A., M.T.P.I., and the site architect, Mr. F. Whitby, for their kind help at every stage in the investigations. Thanks are also due to the volunteers who took part in the investigation, especially those of the City of London Excavation Group (now the City of London Archaeological Society).

The results published here are of investigations mostly carried out during a period of six months in 1966 on the site of the medieval Warwick Inn. Other excavations were carried out across the ancient City defences, but the publication of those results has been deferred as the investigations will not be completed until 1969, at the earliest. The structures recorded here were surveyed from the south side of the Cutler's Hall.

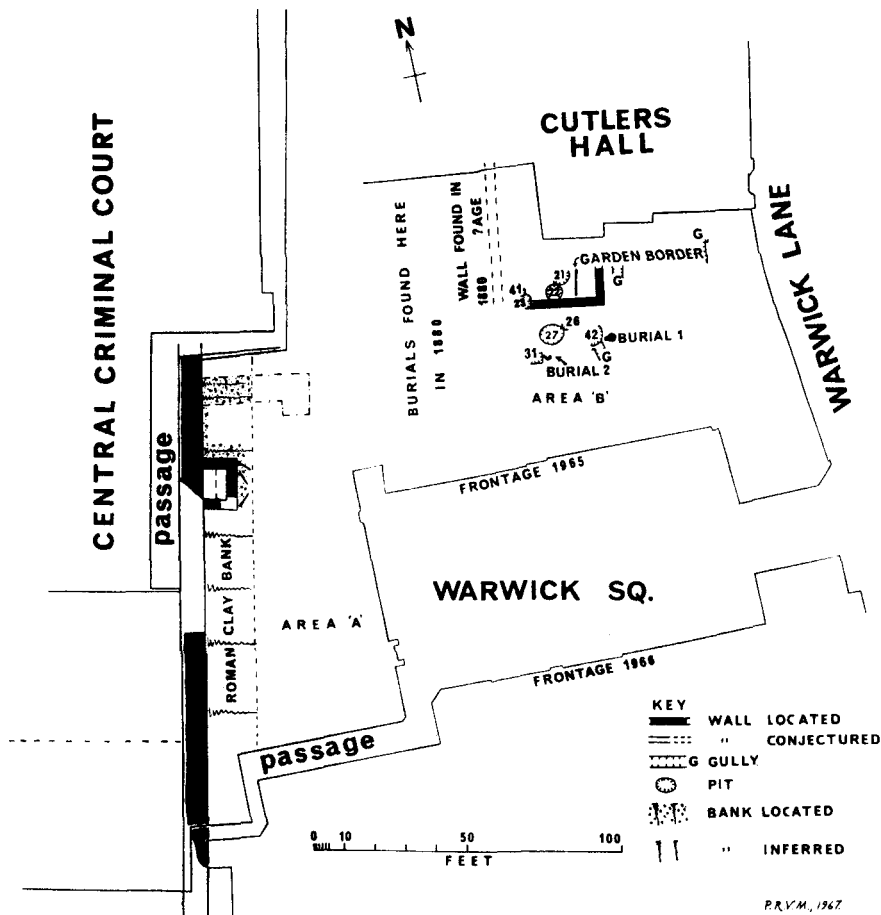


Fig. 2  
Roman features on the Central Criminal Court Site

## ROMAN

### PITS AND GULLIES. (Fig. 2)

The natural brickearth surface all over the site lay between 39 and 40 ft. above O.D., and above this was a deposit of light grey loam about 2 ft. thick. This contained flecks of wood ash with a scatter of pottery and other rubbish of the 1st and 2nd centuries (E.R. 1177). Dug into the natural brickearth were several small gullies, all of which were filled with grey loam. One of these, at the north-east corner of the site, contained sherds of the first half of the 2nd century. Presumably the purpose of the gullies was to drain the flat land surface.

A considerable expanse of the undisturbed surface of the natural brickearth was exposed, and it is worth recording that no evidence of ploughing could be detected, and wherever the surface of the brickearth was undisturbed no sign of any Roman timber structure was found. The brickearth surface was pock-marked by very many small root holes, however.

A few scattered Roman rubbish pits were found, one of which, 41 (E.R. 1207) contained pottery of the late 1st or early 2nd century. It is clear, however, that until the Flavian period no significant use was made of the site.

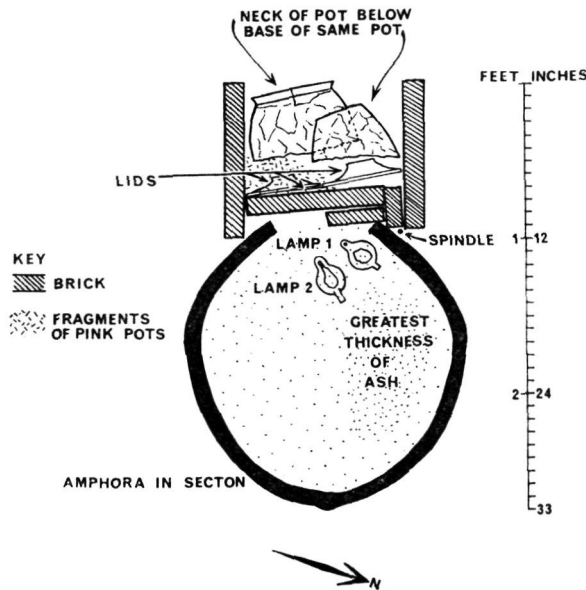


Fig. 3  
Burial I, Roman  
Cremation on Central  
Criminal Court Site

#### CEMETERY

The major Roman feature of the site was the small Flavian cemetery of cremation burials. Most of these were found during 1881, and are now preserved at the British Museum. At least eight cremations were found in 1881<sup>1</sup> and one more was found in 1966. Part of an inhumation burial was also found in 1966.

#### BURIAL I

The cremation (fig. 3) (E.R. 1163) was within a buff ware globular amphora (fig. 4, no. 1) which lay on its side at the bottom of a shallow pit, probably not more than 2 ft. deep, dug in the natural brickearth (Plate 1). The neck of the amphora had been broken off prior to burial. Mixed with the burnt human bones was a large quantity of wood ash, some iron nails, and a few small pottery sherds. Two much used and damaged clay lamps had been buried in the ash just inside the amphora (fig. 4, nos. 6, 7). The amphora entrance, which faced west, had been sealed by a brick lying on edge. Two other bricks had been placed on edge at right angles to the first brick, forming three sides of a box-like enclosure immediately in front of the amphora opening. Within this enclosure were the substantial portions of three deliberately smashed cooking pots of the late 1st century (fig. 4, nos. 5, 8, 9), and lying hard against the brick covering the amphora entrance were three complete pot lids (fig. 4, nos. 2, 3, 4). At the junction of two of the bricks a bone spindle-like object was vertically placed (fig. 4, no. 10).

#### OBJECTS FROM BURIAL I. (Fig. 4)

1. Buff coarse ware globular amphora. Neck and most of its two handles have been broken off and trimmed prior to burial. (Museum accession no. 24118).
2. Lid, of light orange sandy coarse ware. (Museum accession no. 24122). Complete.
3. Lid, of pale brown sandy coarse ware (Museum accession no. 24121). Complete.
4. Lid, of pale orange-brown sandy coarse ware (Museum accession no. 24123). Complete.
5. Jar, of pale orange sandy coarse ware, decorated with pairs of girth grooves at neck and bulge. Fragments comprising about a quarter of the pot were with the burial.

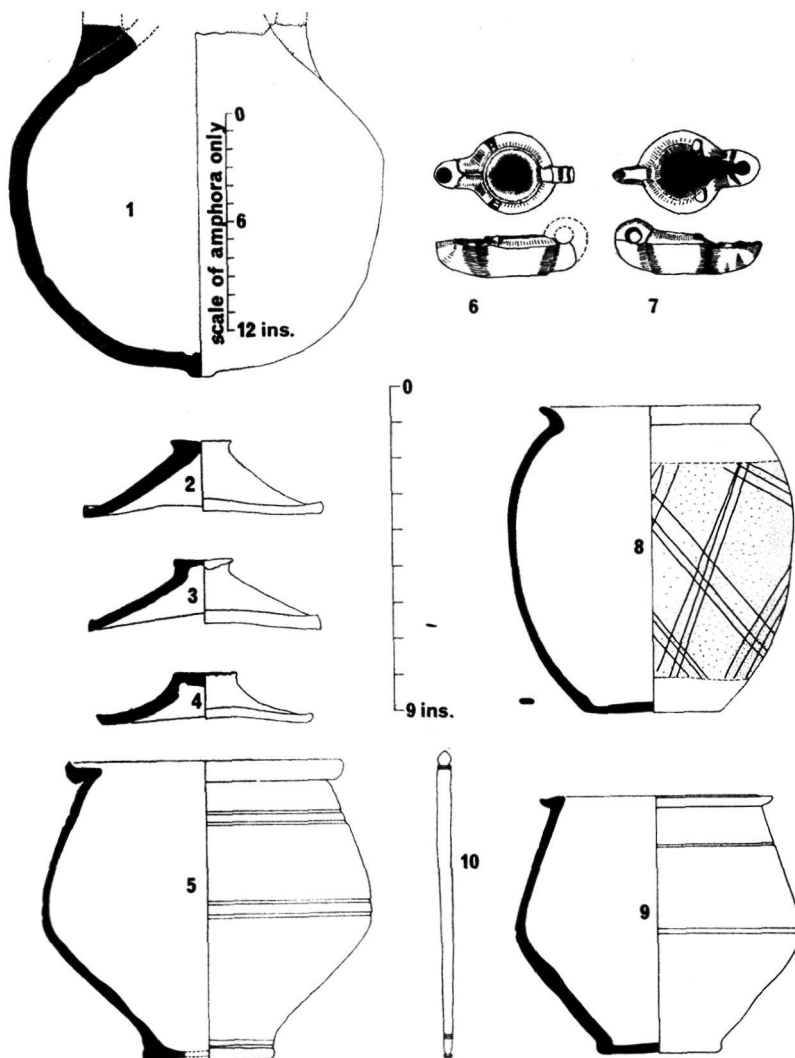


Fig. 4  
Objects from Burial I, Central Criminal Court Site

6. Lamp, type IIIA.<sup>2</sup> Buff-white coarse ware with a pale pink core and a brown slip. Two vestigial lugs. Handle broken, and nozzle burnt. (Museum accession no. 24128).
7. Lamp, type III. White ware with orange slip. Nozzle badly burnt. (Museum accession no. 24127).
8. Cooking pot. Grey sandy coarse ware with lattice design. Band of pinkish-white slip from the rim to shoulder. Found broken. (Museum accession no. 24119).
9. Jar, of pale orange sandy coarse ware decorated with single grooves at neck and bulge. Fragments comprising about three-quarters of the pot were with the burial. (Museum accession no. 24120).

10. Spindle of bone. Circular in section. Found complete. (Museum accession no. 24124).

REPORT ON CREMATION BURIAL (BURIAL 1) FROM WARWICK SQUARE

BY PROFESSOR R. WARWICK, J. OLDER, AND T.N.D. PEET OF GUY'S HOSPITAL

"The bones are human, and appear to come from two people. There are no obvious pathological changes, though the amount of identifiable bone is small. The bones are calcined, consistent with cremation.

Evidence rests on:

1. Four petrous temporal bones; two people.
2. Lower end of right humerus, with medial epicondyle fused with shaft: aged 20 at least.
3. Well-marked foveal pit in head of femur: adult.
4. Completely ossified and fused odontoid peg: "past middle life" (Frazer).
5. Maxilla.  
small  
median palatine suture wide.  
DCBA/ABCD sockets present.  
roots fully formed.  
no resorption.  
?  $\overline{I}$  unerupted  
?  $\overline{E}$  just erupted.  
no evidence of permanent dentition.
6. Left ramus mandible with intact coronoid and condylar process.  
Large retromolar fossa.  
?  $\overline{D}$  distal socket present.
7. Right condylar process.
8. Right junction of ramus and body.  
Large retromolar fossa  
?  $\overline{D}$  sockets.

SUMMARY

One adult aged 20 years at least.

One child aged 18 months to 2 years".

BURIAL 2.

The inhumation burial (E.R. 1199) had been almost completely destroyed by the digging of rubbish pits during the Middle Ages, and only the leg bones survived. There was no sign of a coffin of any kind, and the legs, bent at the knees, showed that the body was in a crouched position. The only indication of the date of the burial was that it antedated a 3rd century rubbish pit (31) which had been dug through it (E.R. 1168, 1172, 1190). Professor Warwick has examined the bones and reports that they belong to an adult.

ROMAN BUILDING

Two walls forming a corner were found in the north-west part of the excavated site. Their foundations were built of chalk and ragstone set in mortar, and these were overlaid by a tile bonding course. Medieval disturbances had destroyed all deposits contemporary with the walls. Fortunately, however, one of the walls had cut across an earlier pit (22) containing pottery of the late 2nd century (E.R. 1197), and another pit (23) containing pottery of the

4th century (E.R. 1187), had been cut through the wall and clearly post-dated its demolition. The evidence therefore suggests a third century date for the building. In 1881 a wall was found on the same alignment and a few yards west of the walls found in 1966, and it is likely that this too was Roman and was part of the same structure.

#### EVIDENCE OF GARDENING

Within the area enclosed by the two Roman walls described above was found a row of shallow angular cuts into the natural brickearth parallel with the east wall (Pl. 2). These were filled with, and overlaid by, light grey loamy soil containing pottery of the 1st and 2nd centuries (E.R. 1208). Experiment showed that similar cuts could be made with a spade, and it seems likely that the Roman holes were made when planting a row of shrubs or a hedge. There was unfortunately no satisfactory dating evidence for the holes within the Roman period.

It will be noticed in the photograph that the west sides of the holes were cut in a line, indicating that the gardener worked from this side; and it was noticed that the holes left by decayed plant roots were more numerous on the east side of the spade-holes, suggesting that there may have been a flower-bed to the east of the row of shrubs. It is significant that the row of spade holes is exactly parallel to one of the Roman walls on an alignment found nowhere else on the site. This suggests that the garden was contemporary with the walls which enclosed it. It is uncertain, however, whether these were merely garden walls, or formed part of a large house with a garden court.

#### MEDIEVAL

The extensive area excavated on this site exposed a complex of walls and foundations of several superimposed medieval houses (Fig. 5, Pl. 3). It proved difficult to establish the plan of each building and its place in the sequence. A careful comparison of their different methods of construction and their relationships eventually clarified the problem, but nevertheless one or two slight foundations were discovered which would not fit into the sequence. It now seems that these probably belonged to an earlier medieval phase. In addition to this a large number of rubbish pits were discovered concentrated in the western half of the site. Many of these were undoubtedly contemporary with the earlier phases of medieval building, but some cut by the medieval walls, must be earlier. At this point it should be stated that there was no sign of any medieval timber buildings.

#### MEDIEVAL HOUSE, PHASE 1 (see Fig. 6)

Only a few small portions remained of the medieval building of phase 1, the walls of which had been robbed when the house of phase 2 was built. The destruction was completed by the complex mass of rubbish pits. The foundations of phase 1 were built of alternate layers of chalk and gravel, and at one point a fragment of a wall of ragstone and brown mortar had survived. The building comprised several rooms, one of which was about 12 ft. wide and about 33 ft. long with an earth floor slightly below the contemporary land surface. At the north end of this room was a narrow chalk foundation, set in the natural brickearth, and it is possible that this was of even earlier date.

The walls of the building of phase 1 had been built across the earlier rubbish pits (pits 6, 7, 14, 15), of which pit 7 contained sherds of the 12th or 13th century (E.R. 1209), and pit 6

## CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

### FEATURES IN AREA 'B'

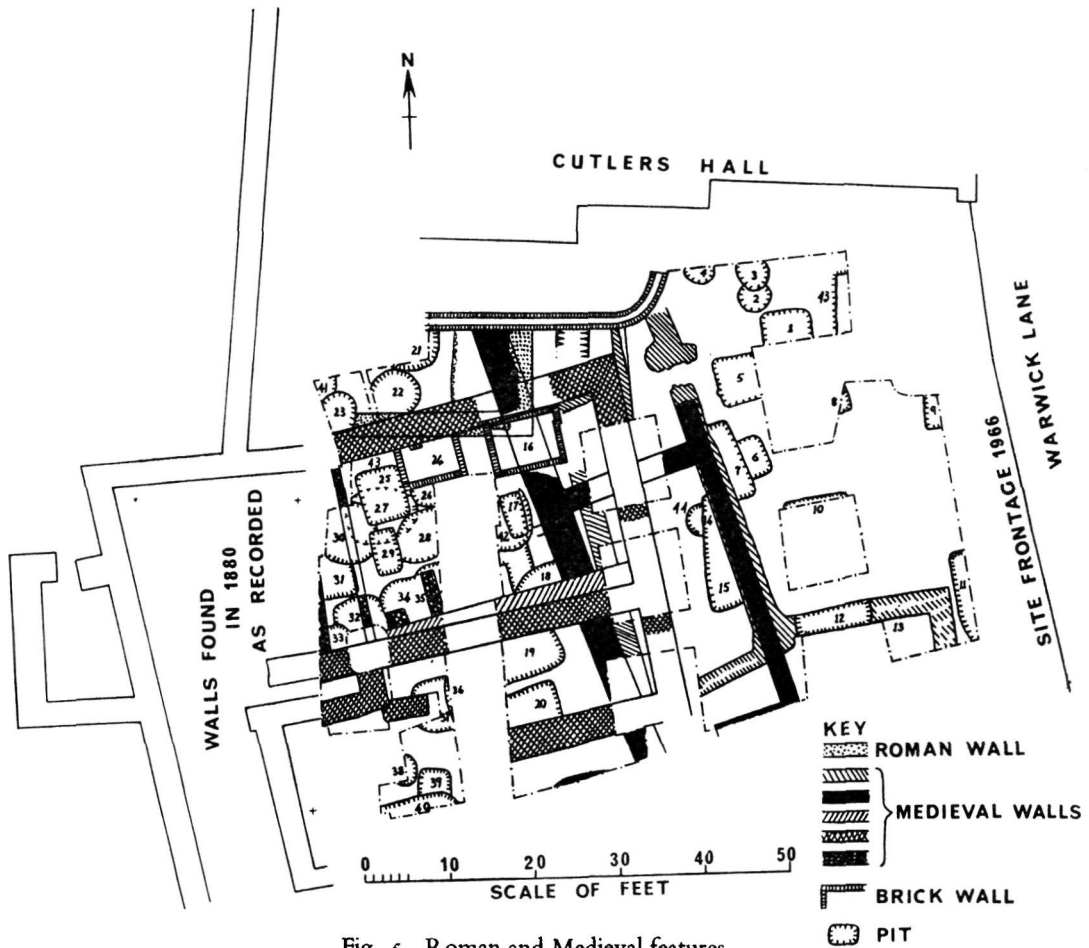


Fig. 5 Roman and Medieval features

P.R.V.M. 1967.

a large quantity of sherds of the late 13th century (E.R. 1151). The building cannot therefore have been constructed before the late 13th century.

#### MEDIEVAL HOUSE, PHASE 2 (Fig. 6)

The house was completely rebuilt on the same site at the start of the second phase and it was presumably at this time that walls were robbed at the south end of the first building.

The house of the second phase comprised at least two rooms, one of which measured 15 ft. by 29 ft., with an entrance at its south end, and had an earth floor below the contemporary ground level. At the south-east corner the site of a hearth was probably indicated by a circular patch of scorched floor. The wall foundations of this building were constructed of alternate layers of chalk and gravel, and the walls above of ragstone and chalk in brown mortar. The inner faces of the large room with the sunken floor were rendered in white painted wall plaster.



*Archaeological Finds in the City of London, 1966-8*

The dating evidence for the occupation of this building consists of 13th century pottery found on the floor of the large room (E.R. 1212), and in the ash of its hearth (E.R. 1213). This occupation debris was covered by rubble from the demolition of the building from which 14th century sherds were recovered (E.R. 1194).

**THE DISTRIBUTION OF MEDIEVAL PITS**

All the medieval rubbish and cess pits found in the area of the first and second medieval houses are shown on fig. 5, but those pits beneath the buildings presumably ante-dated the

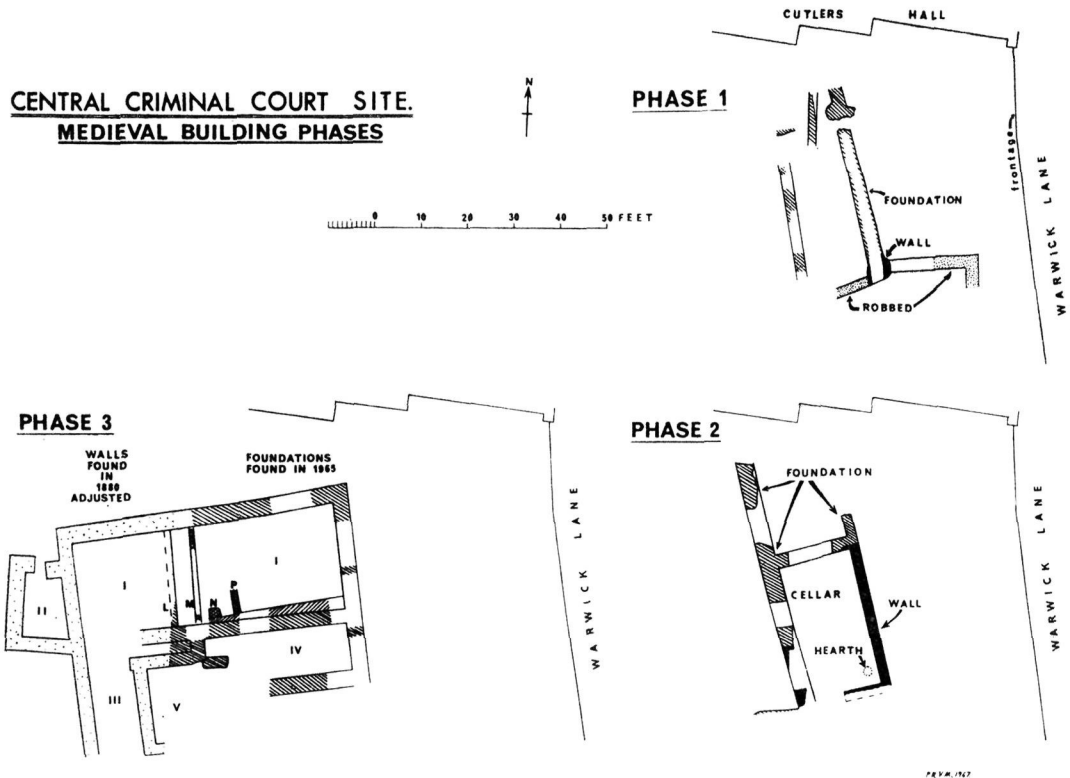


Fig. 6

first house. A scatter of pits lay to the east of the medieval house, and a great concentration to the west. This concentration presumably indicates the site of a back yard or garden associated with the house. Some pits were filled with a considerable quantity of pottery and other rubbish, and were clearly refuse pits, whereas others contained little rubbish in their dark earth fill and were presumably cess-pits.

The pits east of the medieval houses were: pit 1, 12-13th century (E.R. 1183); pit 2, not dated; pit 3, 13th century (E.R. 1148); pit 4, 13th century (E.R. 1217); pit 5, late 13th century (E.R. 1147); pit 6, late 13th century (E.R. 1151); pit 7, 12-13th century (E.R. 1209); pit 8, not dated; pit 9, not dated; pit 10, not dated; pit 11, 12th century (E.R. 1216); pit 12, 12-13th century (E.R. 1211).

The pits beneath the houses were: pits 14 and 15, not dated; pit 44, 13th century (E.R. 1184).

The pits west of the houses were: pit 17, not dated; pit 18, dated to the 12-13th century (E.R. 1154); pit 19, 13th century (E.R. 1214); pit 20, 13th century (E.R. 1178); pit 25, second half of the 13th century (E.R. 1171); pit 28, first half of the 13th century (E.R. 1169); pit 29, 14th century (E.R. 1167, 1174); pit 30, 12-13th century (E.R. 1182); pit 32, 13th century (E.R. 1179); pit 33, 13th century (E.R. 1180); pits 34 and 35, 12th century (E.R. 1218); pit 36, not dated; pit 37, 13th century (E.R. 1153, 1215); pits 38, 39 and 40, not dated.

### MEDIEVAL HOUSE, PHASE 3 (Fig. 6)

Phase 3 was represented by the foundations of ragstone, chalk and hard buff mortar, of a substantial later medieval house. Its west end was discovered in 1880, and this has been included on the plan of the remains found in 1966. The building appears to have contained a large hall (room I) about 20 ft. wide and 57 ft. long. At the west end of this was a small chamber (II), possibly a guardrobe; while to the south were several rooms (III, IV, and V) the shapes of which are not completely known.

Several small foundations (L, M, N, P) crossed the main hall, and as these were not bonded into the main foundations they were evidently of a later date, and may represent a different use of the main building.

The portions of this building recorded in 1880 do not exactly tie in with the remains found in 1966 (see fig. 5); and as there can be little doubt that this is due to faulty recording in 1880, the positions of these walls have been adjusted to accord with the recent discoveries (fig. 6).

The house of the third phase is so massive and extensive that it must have belonged to a rich man, and there is very little doubt of its identity. A great house, eventually known as Warwick Inn, stood on or very close to this site from the 14th century onwards, and gave its name to the present streets of Warwick Lane and Warwick Square.<sup>3</sup> It became the property of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the 'Kingmaker', about the middle of the 15th century, and eventually passed into the possession of Henry VII. Thereafter its importance as one of the great London houses declined and before 1539 it had been turned into a storehouse for the King's tents, and for the goods of the office of Revels. It is thought that the Inn was sold by 1559, and soon after was divided into tenements. These Tudor modifications might account for the small wall foundations which later divided up the great hall.

### Site 2. *Roman Palace in the Cannon Street—Bush Lane Region* (fig. 7)

#### DISCOVERY AND EXCAVATION TILL 1966

This region comprises the hillside overlooking the Thames just east of the Walbrook valley, nowadays bounded by Suffolk Lane, Cannon Street, Dowgate Hill, and Upper Thames Street. Since the time of the Great Fire of London many fragments of Roman structures have been found in this area, and as early as the time of Wren 'a large building or hall' (possibly D) was discovered in Scots Yard, and at the time was supposed to be either part of the Roman governor's palace or the basilica. The Royal Commission Report on Roman London (1928),<sup>4</sup> summarised the discoveries and concluded that 'the evidence here, as in most cases, is very vague, but that there must have been an extensive building or series of buildings in this locality seems clear.'

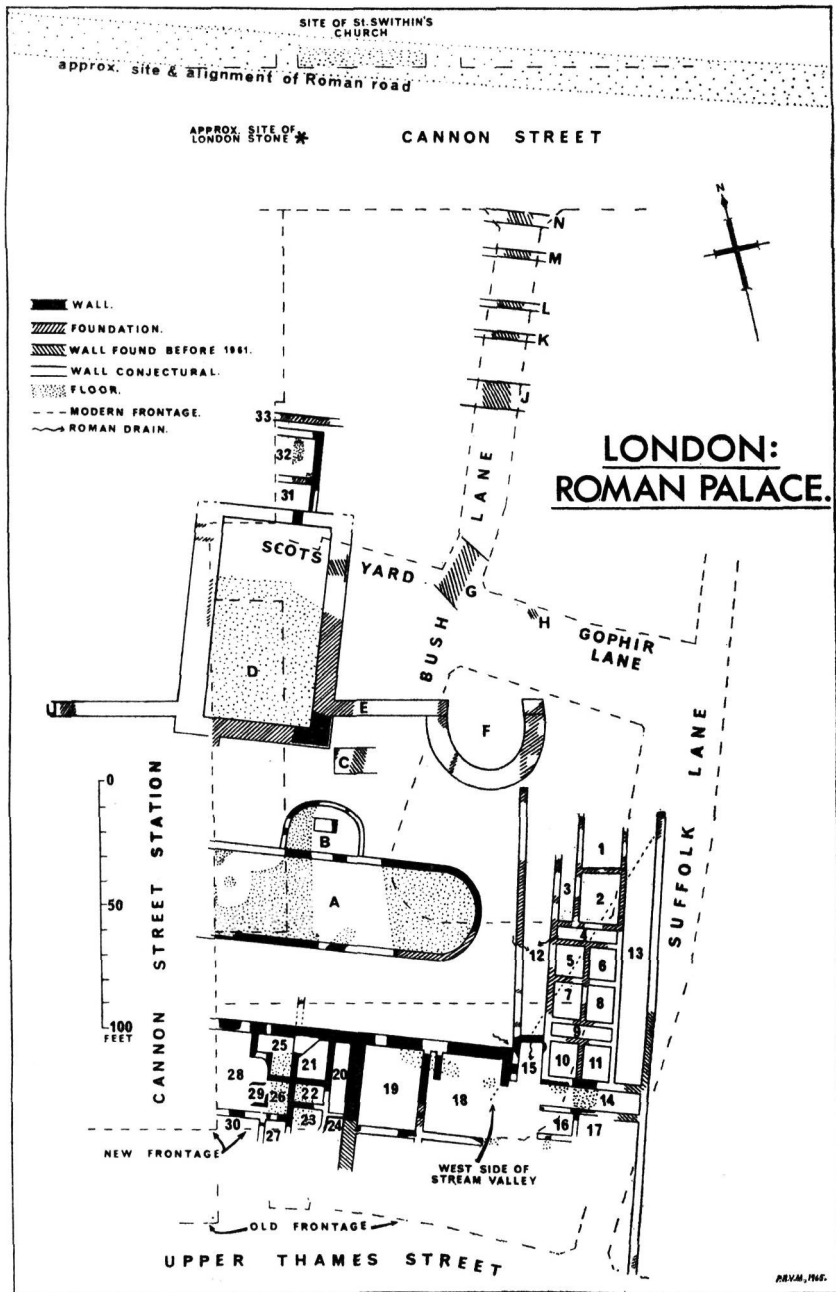


Fig. 7

Since 1961 Guildhall Museum has paid special attention to this region because the massive Roman walls, up to 12 ft. wide, suggested that a public building was situated here. In 1961 the site of Elizabeth House was redeveloped and the west ends of A and B, and the major part of the great hall D were recorded. In 1964-5 the sites of 156-162 Upper Thames Street were redeveloped, but just prior to that the former City of London Excavation Group (COLEG) was allowed to excavate on the site for about eight weeks and discovered the east wing of the Roman building. The south wing and the east end of A, and room F were mostly recorded during the subsequent builders' excavations. Finally in 1965-6 COLEG excavated the site of the bombed Dyers Arms public house and located the north wall of D, and two small rooms (31, 32).

Sufficient of the Roman building complex has been recorded to enable us to identify it as having been a great palatial residence, presumably of a very high ranking Roman official and his staff.

A full excavation report is in preparation and will be published by Guildhall Museum in due course. This preliminary report, published in advance of the full report, is a general account of the discoveries to date. The dating evidence, however, has not yet been fully studied, and the modern ground survey upon which the palace was plotted has not been checked in every detail. The plan may therefore require some minor revision.

#### HISTORY OF THE AREA BEFORE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PALACE

During the period A.D. 60-80, work started in preparing the site for the construction of the palace. This involved the excavation and dumping of enormous quantities of clay and gravel. A deep stream valley which passed across part of the site had to be filled, and the hillside deeply terraced.

There was evidently a pause after the completion of this initial work, perhaps to allow the dumped deposits to settle properly, and for a short while a goldsmith apparently set up a workshop on one of the terraces (in the area of rooms 2, 4, 5 of the east wing of the later palace). Unfortunately the surface of this terrace had been destroyed during the construction of 19th century cellars, and no structure of the workshop was found. The evidence that there was a goldsmith working on the site was found in a rubbish pit dated to A.D. 80-90. It comprised fragments of several crucibles impregnated with gold, broken crucible lids, and baked clay luting which had sealed the lids to the crucibles. The view that there was a goldsmith's workshop in this area was strengthened by the discovery of a sprinkling of gold-dust in a nearby well, again with pottery of the same period.

#### THE DATE OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE PALACE

The palace appears to have been built during the Flavian period. The south wall of room D had been cut across an earlier rubbish pit containing Flavian pottery. Most of the south wing was destroyed by a dragline and in these conditions it proved extremely difficult to recover dating evidence, but a group of late 1st century sherds was found beneath the floor of room 25. The most satisfactory dating evidence, however, came from the east wing, the foundations of which had been cut through a number of rubbish pits of the period A.D. 60-90, and pottery of this period was found in the foundation trenches. According to Mr. B. Hartley some of

the Samian ware pre-dating the east wing is unlikely to have been made before A.D. 80. The ragstone foundation of what might have been a hypocaust flue in room 2 also contained Flavian sherds.

The noticeable lack of any post-Flavian pits or other deposits beneath the palace is a strong indication that it was built before the end of the Flavian period, and this is confirmed by pottery from deposits contemporary with the construction and early occupation of the palace. The evidence of the Samian ware antedating the east wing indicates that it was built after A.D. 80, so that a mid-Flavian date can be attributed to the building with some confidence.

#### THE LAYOUT OF THE PALACE

The palace was an impressive building occupying an area of more than 400 ft. by more than 240 ft. Its northern frontage lay beside the main east-west Roman road now beneath Cannon Street, and its southern limit lay beside the Thames, probably beneath Upper Thames Street.

Basically the known elements of the palace seem to have been three, perhaps four, wings ranged around a large ornamental courtyard or garden. The palace was situated on three, possibly four, terraces; the south wing (rooms 14-30) lay on the lowest at 10 ft. above O.D.; the east wing (rooms 1-13), state rooms (D and F), and the great courtyard or garden around A and B lay upon a higher terrace between 19 and 24 ft. above O.D.; rooms 31 and 32 lay at a slightly higher level; and north of them there may have been an even higher terrace.

The known parts of the palace fall into five distinct groups each with its own characteristic layout:

##### 1. ROOMS 20-30 OF THE SOUTH WING

These were a series of small rooms with buff mortar floors, and with a rendering of pink plaster on some of the wall faces. Room 24 had a floor of *opus signinum*. Room 28 was large and possibly contained an apsidal recess on its east side. The layout and construction of these rooms is somewhat suggestive of living quarters.

##### 2. ROOMS 14-19 OF THE SOUTH WING

These rooms generally had soft mortar floors overlying wet silt. Rooms 14, 16, and 18 apparently opened into room 15 through which flowed a small shallow unembanked drainage stream. The sources of this stream lay on the higher terrace where drains were found flowing into the middle of the corridor 12. There was presumably a drain flowing down the middle of this corridor under the floor, for at the north end of room 15, at the base of the retaining wall, there was an arched culvert. This stream must have discharged into the Thames. It is likely that it was covered with floor boards in room 15, but no sign of these was found. The walls of room 18 and 19 were not covered with plaster, and projecting south from the north (retaining) wall of 18 were two short walls the purpose of which is obscure. The walls of room 14 were covered with white painted plaster with a simple design of red lines. These rooms were probably damp and therefore unsuitable for living quarters. It is far more likely that they were used for some other purpose such as for storage or as workshops.

##### 3. ROOMS 1-13 OF THE EAST WING

Only the foundations of this wing survived. It comprised a central range of rooms (1-11) bounded on either side by long corridors (12, 13). At the surviving north end of the wing lay

the large rooms 1 and 2, and the long narrow chamber 3. Possible evidence was found to suggest that these rooms might have been heated. The surviving tops of the foundations lay at 19 ft. above O.D. (therefore the floors lay above this level), and their bases were at a depth of about 10 ft. above O.D. in the southern part of this wing. These very deep foundations suggest that an upper floor existed above rooms 4-11. Rooms 4 and 9 therefore probably contained staircases to the upper floor. The six small box-like cubicles (5-8, and 10, 11) are a very distinctive feature of this wing. They cannot be paralleled in private Roman houses, but are not unlike the suites of guest rooms which occur in the *mansio* at Silchester and in the east wing of the palace at Fishbourne. Their shape and arrangement, however, is perhaps rather more like that of the small rooms on the north side of the London basilica, which are thought to have been offices.

#### 4. THE COURTYARD OR GARDEN

The central courtyard or garden was about 110 ft. wide and probably more than 180 ft. long. Its surface had evidently been destroyed during the construction of recent basements and foundations. In the middle of the court was a great sunken pool (A) 33 ft. wide and more than 102 ft. long internally. The surrounding wall was 3 ft. thick and was faced on the inside with pink mortar. The buff mortar floor of the pool overlay a massive ragstone and flint foundation 6 ft. thick which conformed to the shape of the pool (Pl. 4). The floor of the pool lay at 16-17 ft. above O.D., and was more than 3 ft. lower than the surface of the courtyard. On its north side was a smaller pool (B) which had a mortar floor only a few inches thick, slightly above the level of the floor of the main pool. In the middle of pool B was a brick structure which was possibly the pedestal base of a fountain or statue.

Large ornamental pools like these are a feature of palatial Roman residences in the Mediterranean (e.g. Villa dei Papiri, near Ercolano).<sup>5</sup> Normally, however, the courts in which they lay were surrounded by a peristyle. There is no indication that one was present in the courtyard of the London palace, the north and south frontages of which were extremely irregular.

#### 5. THE STATE ROOMS C-J AND U

The great state rooms bounded the north side of the courtyard, and their characteristic features were their great size and massive walls and foundations. The distribution of the massive walls probably indicates the extent of these rooms.

Recognisable parts of two state rooms have been found. The largest known of these, D, was a great hall 42 ft. wide and about 82 ft. long, and this was probably a reception hall. It had a white mortar floor at 24 ft. above O.D. (probably roughly level with the surface of the court on its south side), and at its south-east corner the inner faces of the east and south walls were covered with white painted wall-plaster. This hall does not appear to have had an apsidal recess, and was therefore probably not an audience chamber. Indications of a projecting apse (F), however, were found to the east of room D. The north end of this seems to have been open, so that it evidently formed part of a large room. Unfortunately, only the foundations remained, and very little could be learnt about this room, which seemed to encroach curiously on to the line of the east wing.

#### 6. NORTH OF THE STATE ROOMS

A few scattered fragments of Roman walls have been recorded in the northern part of the palace, and their small size and nearness to one another suggests that here were rooms of more

normal size. Parts of two rooms (31, 32) have been recorded, and 32 might have contained a hypocaust.

#### LATER HISTORY OF THE PALACE

At a later date during the Roman period important modifications were made to parts of the palace. Rooms 20-30 were rebuilt, probably as a bath-suite; the east end of the great pool (A) was modified; and the areas of rooms D, E, 31, 32 at least were completely rebuilt with rooms on a different plan. Two heated rooms have been found overlying room D, one of which was probably a small octagonal chamber.

The destruction of the palace has been dated only in the east and south wings. The best evidence comes from compartment 14 where it was found that at the end of the 3rd century, when the building was in a dilapidated condition, squatters had taken up residence, and had burnt fires on a roughly constructed tile hearth, which they had built against the north wall. Eventually rooms 14 and 15 were filled by dumping great quantities of rubbish during the 4th century. A similar date is indicated by sherds recovered from a probable hypocaust flue in room 3 of the east wing. In the ash filling of a hypocaust of the bath suite in room 26 of the south wing a coin of A.D. 270 was found, and above it was debris of the destruction of the rooms. The evidence consistently indicates that the east and south wings were destroyed during the 4th century, but not by fire, since there was no burnt debris. No evidence was found to show how the rooms which replaced the state rooms were destroyed. The great pool A was obliterated by being filled with earth, containing pottery apparently not later than the late 1st century.

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PALACE

The question which naturally arises is who built the palace and lived there. Clearly it must have been an extremely important Roman official and his staff, and the great state rooms indicate that formal receptions and meetings took place from time to time.

The small regular rooms of the east wing were presumably used by officials, either as offices or accommodation—or both. It is significant that it is this purely utilitarian part of the building that remains almost unchanged for more than two hundred years.

Several bricks bearing the official stamp P.P.BR have been found on the site, both when Cannon Street Station was built and again in the recent excavations. These only occur in London, and the abbreviation LON for *Londinii* is often included on the stamp. It is clear that they came from an official brickworks. A variant P.PR.BR is known, so that it is clear that the second and third abbreviations stand for PROVINCIAE BRITANNIAE, and that the brickworks was under the control of some branch of the provincial administration. It may be that the first P stands for the PROCURATOR, whose sphere extended beyond mere financial administration into the fields of industry and economic life. If so, it does not, of course, follow that the bricks were used only for departmental purposes; they have in fact been found on the sites of the military fort and of the purely civic basilica. They were evidently likely to be used for any public building, so that the attribution of the brickworks to the procurator certainly does not imply that he lived in the palace.

There is no doubt that the procurator *did* have a palace and headquarters in London from a date twenty years earlier than the building of the Cannon Street palace, but since this is the largest and most impressive residence yet discovered in London, the first claimant to it is a more exalted official—the legatus (military governor) himself, who must have had a palace in London from the time that it replaced Camulodunum as the capital. There is considerable evidence that this change of status took place in the latter part of the first century, perhaps soon after the revolt of A.D. 60–1.<sup>6</sup>

An interesting comparison with the London palace is the Roman governor's headquarters (Praetorium) discovered at Cologne. It had rooms of varying sizes, some with massive walls, and it was built on a hillside overlooking a river. At this point the comparison stops, for the arrangement of its rooms was unlike any in the London palace. The plan of the Cologne *praetorium* is far from complete, but it is interesting to note that it was rebuilt several times, the latest occurring during the 4th century.

### Site 3. Area of the Basilica and Forum, and site of 3–6 Gracechurch Street (1966)

During 1966, excavations for rebuilding nos. 3–6 Gracechurch Street exposed part of the southern sleeper wall of the nave of the Roman basilica (fig. 8, 'A'), and also provided important information concerning the southern frontage of the basilica. This information has considerably advanced our knowledge of the basilica layout, and the opportunity has been taken to define the plan of the whole building as far as it is known. In addition, further information has been gained about the Roman building which pre-dated the basilica and forum, and which was partly investigated on this site during 1964.

Several plans of the Roman basilica have been attempted, based on records of past discoveries which have been plotted on modern surveys. Unfortunately the latter have been

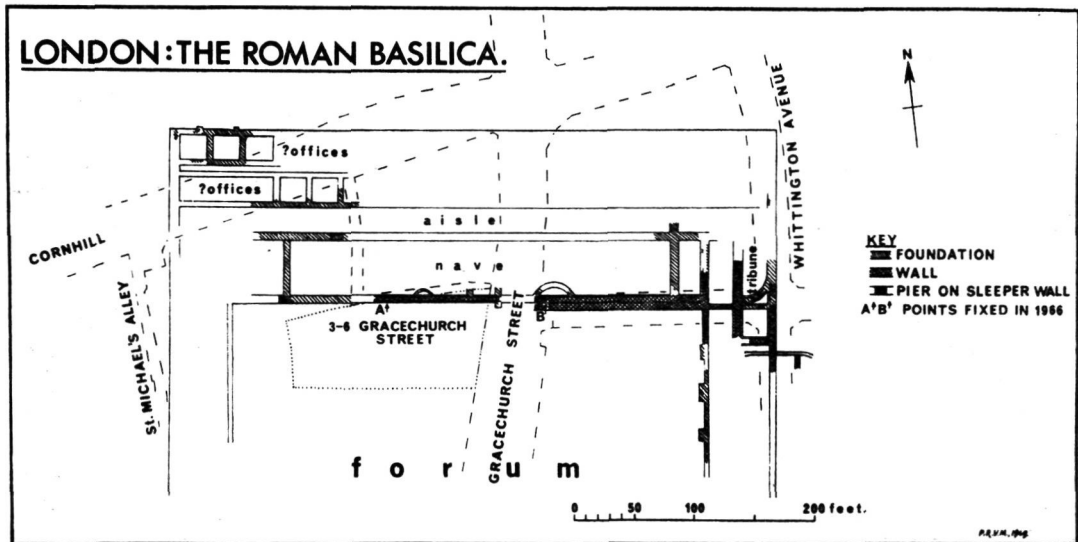


Fig. 8



found to be inaccurate, with the result that discoveries on the various sites have not linked up satisfactorily. Some of these problems have been discussed by Mr. R. Merrifield, who made a survey of the basilica and forum area in 1965.<sup>7</sup> It has since been found that an apparently accurate large scale post-war survey of the area is published by Messrs. Chas. Goad Ltd. (56 Crouch Hill, London, N.4), and this has been used as the basis of the new survey of the remains of the Roman basilica published here. On this only walls which are accurately recorded and are clearly part of the basilica have been plotted.

#### THE POSITION AND ALIGNMENT OF THE BASILICA

The south and east sides of the basilica were recorded by Henry Hodge in 1880-1, and their positions were related to buildings then existing, none of which now survive.<sup>8</sup> As a result it has proved impossible to plot the position of the Roman walls on a modern map with absolute accuracy. During 1966, however, this was rectified by taking careful measurements and fixing the exact position of the south sleeper wall at two widely separated points (A and B on the plan, fig. 8). Point A lay on the site of 3-6 Gracechurch Street, and careful measurements were taken while the south face of the Roman sleeper wall lay exposed for a short time. Point B was also carefully fixed at the same time by plotting the position of the south east corner of the Roman brick pier which is preserved beneath a shop at the corner of Leadenhall Market and Gracechurch Street. From these two points on the wall originally recorded by Hodge, it was possible to re-plot on the survey of the present buildings all the relevant Roman walls recorded by Hodge. Other portions of the basilica found after 1881 were plotted separately without reference to the walls recorded by Hodge. On one site only, the positions of the Roman walls have been adjusted to fit in with the plan of the rest of the basilica, because they were evidently inaccurately recorded. These were the south sleeper wall and a transverse foundation crossing the nave on the site of 50 Cornhill.<sup>9</sup>

#### THE LAYOUT OF THE BASILICA

The plan of the basilica is far from complete, but from the known parts it is clear that it contained some unusual features. For these reasons, therefore, only those walls of which substantial portions have been recorded, and which are reasonably certainly part of the basilica, and not of earlier buildings, have been included on the new plan.

Although the exact position of the west end of the basilica has not been determined, its position is roughly known, and it is clear that the basilica was about 500 feet long and 140 ft. wide. It comprised a nave 45 ft. wide with an apsidal *tribune* at the east end. The west end has not been excavated as it lies beneath the church of St. Michael in Cornhill. The nave was apparently bounded on either side by either a colonnade, or more probably by brick arcading, three piers of which have been found standing upon sleeper walls, and the south side seems to have opened directly on to the forum courtyard.

That the arcading opened on to the forum is now reasonably certain because the recent excavations at 3-6 Gracechurch Street have shown no sign of any outer wall enclosing an aisle to the south of the nave. The builders' excavations during 1966 were watched with the specific purpose of determining the nature of the south frontage of the basilica, and no walls which could possibly be attributed to this building were found south of the wall which carried piers on the sites of 50, Cornhill and 90, Gracechurch Street. On those sites it was

merely a sleeper wall, and it seems unlikely that its character was any different where it is known only from its massive foundations. What was previously thought to have been an outer wall on the south side of the basilica is now known to have been the wall of an earlier building demolished prior to the construction of the basilica and forum.<sup>10</sup>

A basilica frontage consisting of an open arcade or colonnade is most unusual in northern Europe, where there is normally an enclosed aisle on each side of the nave. The London basilica was not quite unique in this respect, however, for the much smaller basilica of Alesia in northern Gaul apparently had a similar frontage.<sup>11</sup>

The plan of the basilica north of the nave is uncertain. It seems reasonably clear, however, that there was a north aisle about 22 ft. wide. North of this, in the western part of the building, were two rows of square compartments, presumably administrative offices, separated by a corridor. The *curia* probably lay to the east of these.

#### THE FLOOR LEVEL OF THE BASILICA

The upper surface of the southern sleeper wall of the basilica had been destroyed during pre-war building at 3-6 Gracechurch Street. Its surviving top lay at 44 ft. 3 ins. above O.D., and there is evidence that the floor of the basilica lay level with or above the sleeper wall.<sup>12</sup>

#### THE FORUM

The layout of the Forum does not enter into this discussion except in so far as the lack of a south aisle in the basilica now affects the interpretation of the forum. It now appears that what was previously thought to have been the south-east corner of the basilica, as recorded by Henry Hodge, was in fact the north end of the east wing of the forum.

#### A BUILDING PRE-DATING THE BASILICA AND FORUM

During 1964 part of a Roman stone building was found on the site of nos. 3-6 Gracechurch Street (fig. 9), and it seemed that it had been demolished prior to the construction of the basilica and forum<sup>13</sup>. Positive evidence that this theory was correct was discovered during the 1966 excavations; the occupation debris and rubble from the demolition of the building lay below the level of the top of the south sleeper wall of the basilica, and therefore it must have been buried beneath the floors of the basilica and forum.

In addition no sign of any foundations or walls of the pre-basilica building lay to the west of wall 'b'<sup>14</sup> and it is to be inferred therefore that wall 'b' marked the west frontage of the early Roman building.

Immediately to the west of wall 'b' was found in 1964 a mortar 'floor' above which were deposits of hard gravel metalling, the latter suggesting that a street ran along the west side of the building. During the 1966 excavations it was not possible to confirm this theory positively, but additional information was gained about this pre-forum phase in the area at the west end of Corbet Court.

The surface of the natural brickearth was found to lie at 37 ft. and 39 ft. 3 ins. above O.D. near the west end of Corbet Court, and above it were horizontal deposits of Roman made ground. At one point marked \* on the site plan (fig. 9) the grey trampled natural brickearth surface lay at 36 ft. 11 ins. above O.D., and above it was a deposit of clean brickearth, evidently dumped. The top of the clean brickearth lay at 37 ft. 5 ins. above O.D., and above it were dark grey deposits of occupation debris 11 ins. thick. This was overlaid by a layer of rubbly mortar, possibly a floor surface, 4 ins. thick with its upper surface lying at 38 ft. 8 ins.

**ROMAN BUILDING**  
**IN GRACECHURCH STREET.**

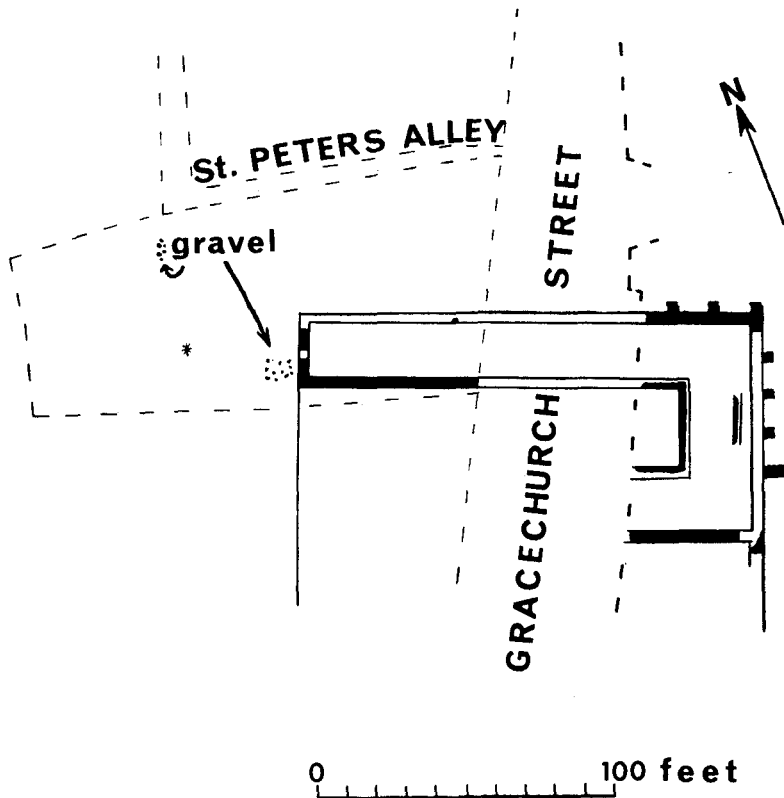


Fig. 9

above O.D. This was in turn overlaid by a deposit of dumped brickearth 1 ft. 2 ins. thick. A mortar floor 6 ins. thick sealed the yellow clay, and its surface lay at about 40 ft. 5 ins. above O.D. This latest floor seems to have extended over a considerable part of the site west of the pre-basilica building for fragments of flooring were exposed in many places at about that level. It is possible that it formed part of a courtyard or an open area.

In the northern part of the site close to St. Peter's Alley was exposed an area of gravel metalling. This overlay a thin layer of grey soil which covered the surface of the natural brickearth and the gravel was clearly one of the earliest features on the site. The north-south section in which the gravel was exposed was 6 ft. wide, and the gravel layers amounted to a thickness of 3 ft. Other sections exposed both to the north and south of this showed no trace of similar deposits of gravel metalling, and this suggests that the gravel was possibly an early Roman road aligned east-west, and perhaps skirting the north side of the pre-basilica building.

If the gravel had been part of a courtyard it would have extended over a wider area, and probably would not have amounted to such a great thickness.

Site 4. *Byward Street, formerly Water Lane (1968)*. (Fig. 10)

The corner of a room in a Roman building was cut through during the construction of a subway at the north end of the former Water Lane (now part of the new Byward Street). The walls were 1 ft. 9 ins. and 2 ft. wide and lay about 4 ft. below the top of the natural gravel. They were constructed of ragstone set in yellow mortar and there were two double courses of bonding tiles. It was impossible to determine the exact alignment of the Roman building, but it was approximately as shown on the accompanying plan. The Roman building was clearly on roughly the same alignment as the main east-west Roman street which underlies Cannon Street and Eastcheap, but which has not been located further east than Gracechurch Street. The position of the Roman walls was measured from the south-east corner of the existing building west of the subway.

On the west side of the new Byward Street two walls of chalk and ragstone, presumably medieval, were revealed in the core of modern walls, which had been built round them.

Site 5. *39-40 Mitre Street (1968)*

A well-preserved stone arch was discovered in the rear or south wall of this building during demolition work in 1967-8 (Fig. 11, Pl. 5). The arch is clearly part of the Holy Trinity Priory church, the remains of which mostly underlie Mitre Street. A careful examination of the south and east walls of the modern building showed traces of a medieval stone core behind the recent brick facing. The arch is partly obscured, but is 12 ft. 6 ins. high, and probably 12 ft. wide, with its base just above modern ground level. The surviving medieval wall is shown as two thick black lines on the accompanying plan (fig. 11). It seems to be part of the south wall of the chancel of the Priory church which is shown on the well-known plan of the Priory drawn by J. Symons in 1592. In the south wall Symons shows an opening leading into a small chamber, possibly a chapel, and it seems likely that the arch discovered in Mitre Street is that opening.

Site 6. *1-2 Aldgate (1967)*

The site lies at the east corner of Aldgate High Street and Dukes Place and was formerly occupied by a Post Office (see fig. 11). Now, however, it lies under the widened High Street, and the remains of the actual gateway are inaccessible. The archaeological investigation was carried out during the interval between demolition and road construction with permission from the City Engineer; and the Improvements Committee of the City Corporation generously financed the excavation.

## ROMAN

Although the foundations of four successive gates and three defensive ditches were found (fig. 12), it was impossible to relate them precisely to the city wall which underlies Dukes Place (fig. 11). The proximity of the wall, however, is indicated by the modern backfill of Roman masonry around the foundations of the basement alcoves under the pavement of Dukes Place (see Pl. 6), and it seems that the outer face of the Roman city wall was cut away when the alcoves were built.

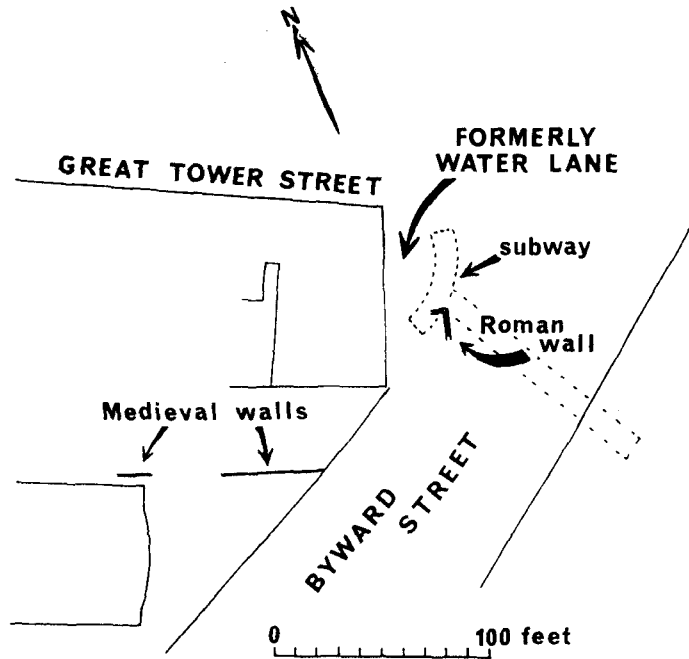


Fig. 10 Roman and Medieval Walls in Byward Street

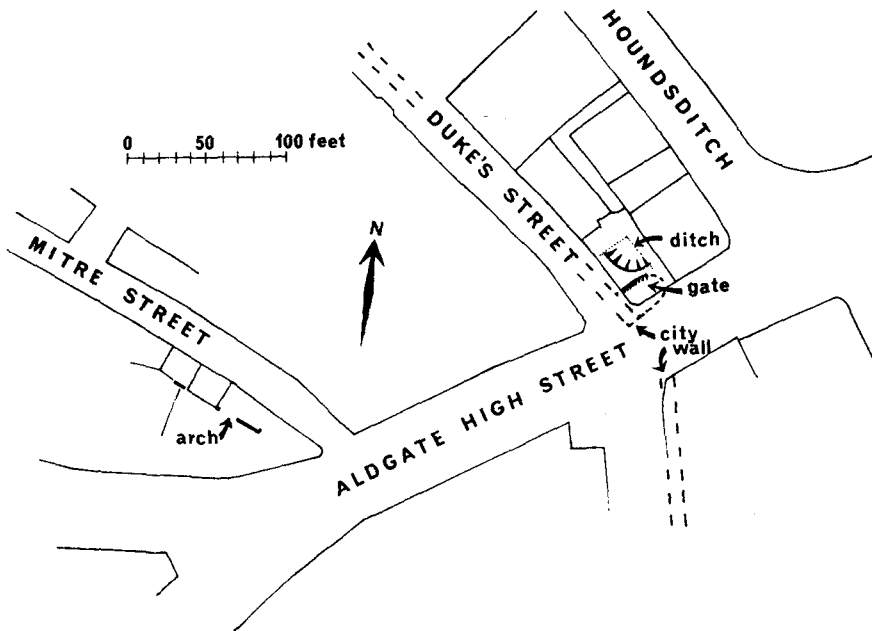


Fig. 11 Medieval Aldgate, and part of Holy Trinity Priory

The natural subsoil on the site was brickearth approximately at the same level as the modern basement floor. Three Roman rubbish pits were found in the berm between the Roman city wall and the Roman defensive ditch (fig. 13). Pit 1 contained pottery of the late 3rd century (E.R. 1268); pit 2 contained pottery mostly of the Flavian period but there were four sherds of the second half of the 2nd century (E.R. 1269); and pit 3 contained a few Roman sherds possibly of the first century (E.R. 1270).

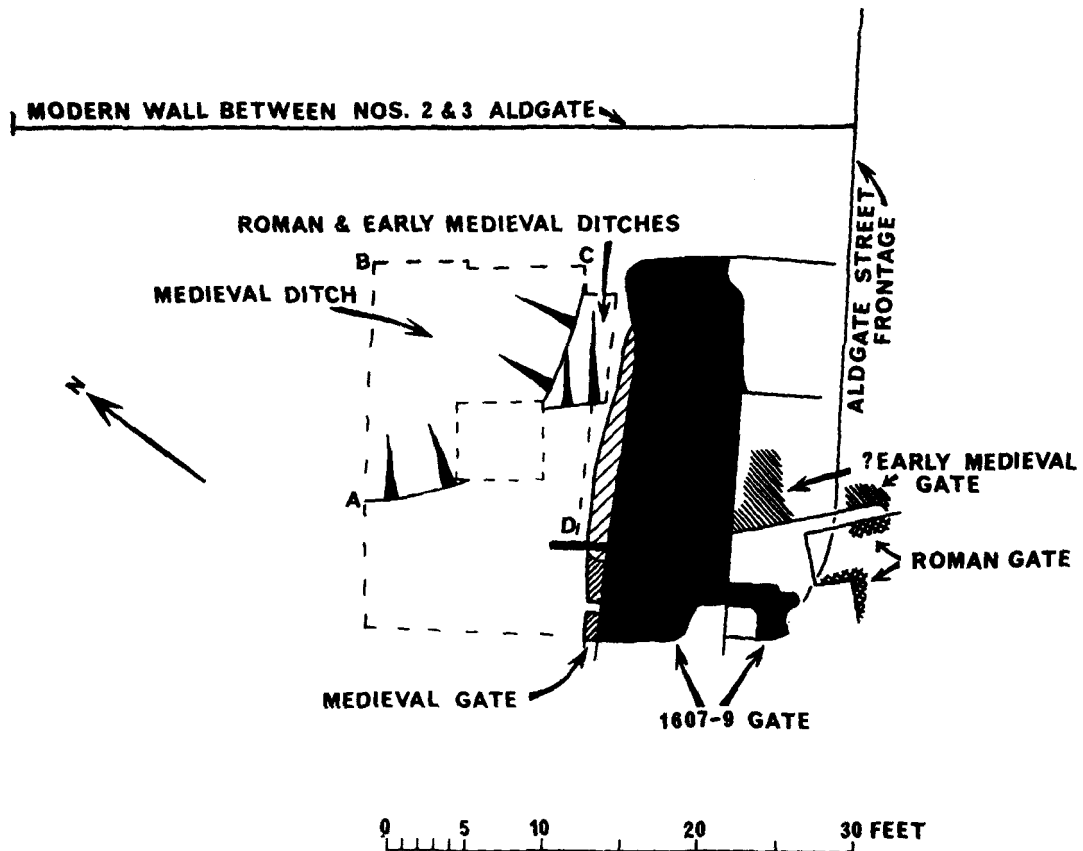


Fig. 12 Aldgate, succession of Gates and Defensive Ditches

#### GATE

The north-east corner of the north tower of the Roman Aldgate was found in alcoves beneath the pavement of Aldgate High Street. Only the foundation of flints, freshly quarried from chalk, set in puddled clay survived beneath the modern basement floor, and these had been badly disturbed by modern foundations. Enough remained, however, to show that there was originally an external buttress on the corner, and that the north tower projected about nine feet from the city wall.

#### DEFENSIVE DITCH

Almost the entire Roman defensive ditch had been destroyed by an early medieval ditch dug on its site, but the sloping west side of the Roman ditch was traced for a length of about 12 ft.

The berm between the city wall and the ditch was about 18 ft. wide, and the ditch itself was at least 7 ft. deep. A few Roman brick fragments were found in the surviving Roman ditch fill, and near the bottom there was a very small sherd of red colour-coated ware of the 4th century (E.R. 1274). As only an inch or two of the Roman ditch fill survived (level 1, section C-D, fig. 14) between the sides of the medieval and Roman ditches this sherd *could* have been trodden into the Roman ditch when the medieval ditch was dug. But if it was *in situ*, then it shows that the Roman ditch was open during the fourth century. The fact that the west side of the early medieval ditch almost exactly followed the side of the Roman ditch suggests that the latter was still visible in some form when the former was dug.

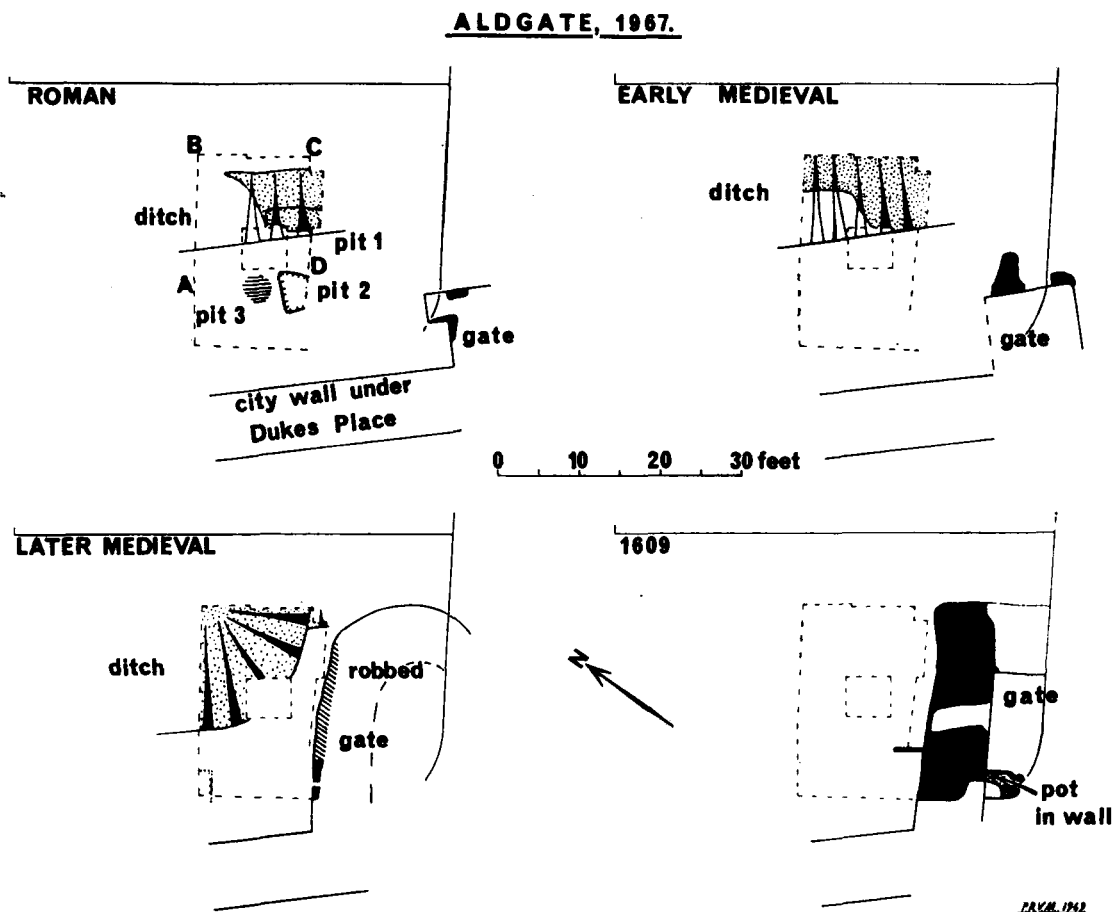


Fig. 13 Four main phases of Aldgate

### MEDIEVAL

#### THE EARLY MEDIEVAL DITCH

The inner even-sloping face of a deep medieval ditch almost exactly coincided with the comparable face of the Roman ditch (Pl. 7). Its bottom was not reached, but the beginning of the rounding-off towards the bottom was detected (fig. 14, section A-B, level 8).

The ditch was almost entirely filled with grey earth, but the bottom was extremely gravelly. Most of the finds in the lower half of the ditch (Fig. 14, section C-D, level 2) were Roman sherds, but there were a few fragments of gritted medieval pottery and pieces of medieval roof tiles (E.R. 1277). The whole of this fill has therefore been dated to the early 13th century. Pottery from the surviving upper part of the ditch (fig. 14, section C-D, level 3) has also been dated to the same period (E.R. 1276), and it is probably significant that no glazed medieval pottery, which became common during the second half of the 13th century, was found in this ditch.

It seems that this ditch was deliberately filled by dumping during the early 13th century, perhaps before the reconstruction of the gate in 1215.<sup>15</sup> The even-sloping side of the ditch and its rounded bottom suggests that it may have been V-shaped in section.

#### ? AN EARLY MEDIEVAL ALDGATE

Traces of the foundation of a gate tower possibly contemporary with the early medieval ditch, were found under the foundations of the later gates. It is equally possible, however, that this foundation might have been an internal partition of the later medieval gate described below, and that the gate standing in the early 13th century was built upon the Roman foundations. It was clear, however, that the early 17th century gate had cut into the foundation described here proving that it was earlier than 1607 when the gate was built. It is equally clear that the early 13th century ditch had been filled-in before the later medieval gate was built across its site, and that the gate contemporary with the early medieval ditch must have been smaller than the later medieval gate. Unfortunately, the structural relationship between the later medieval gate and the possibly earlier foundation could not be established.

The remains of the possibly early medieval gate consisted of a foundation of ragstone and mortar, and what seems to have been an internal south-east corner was detected beneath the then pavement line of Aldgate High Street. It is possible that this was the gate referred to by Stow as having been new built in 1108-47.<sup>16</sup>

#### THE LATER MEDIEVAL GATEWAY

Traces of a later medieval gate were also found on this site, comprising the mostly robbed foundation of the north side of a bastion-shaped north tower. This had been cut into by the 1607 gateway and consequently very little of its structure had survived. The gate clearly projected across the line of the early medieval ditch, and must therefore post-date the dumping which filled the latter in the early 13th century. This gate tower is shown on a detailed plan of 1592,<sup>17</sup> and it might be the gate described by Stow as having been new built in 1215.<sup>18</sup> The curving north edge of the gate tower was found, and it was confirmed on the site that it did not project eastward beyond the 17th century gate tower. It was presumably robbed about 1607 when the gate was rebuilt, since the north tower of the latest gate was found to contain pieces of shaped stones which had evidently been re-used.

#### THE LATER MEDIEVAL DEFENSIVE DITCH

On this site a very large later medieval defensive ditch (Pl. 8) had cut away almost all trace of the earlier ditches, except in front of the gateway itself, where there was evidently a causeway of unexcavated land. The rounded south end of this great ditch occurred immediately north of the gateway, with its bottom not quite as deep as the early medieval ditch.



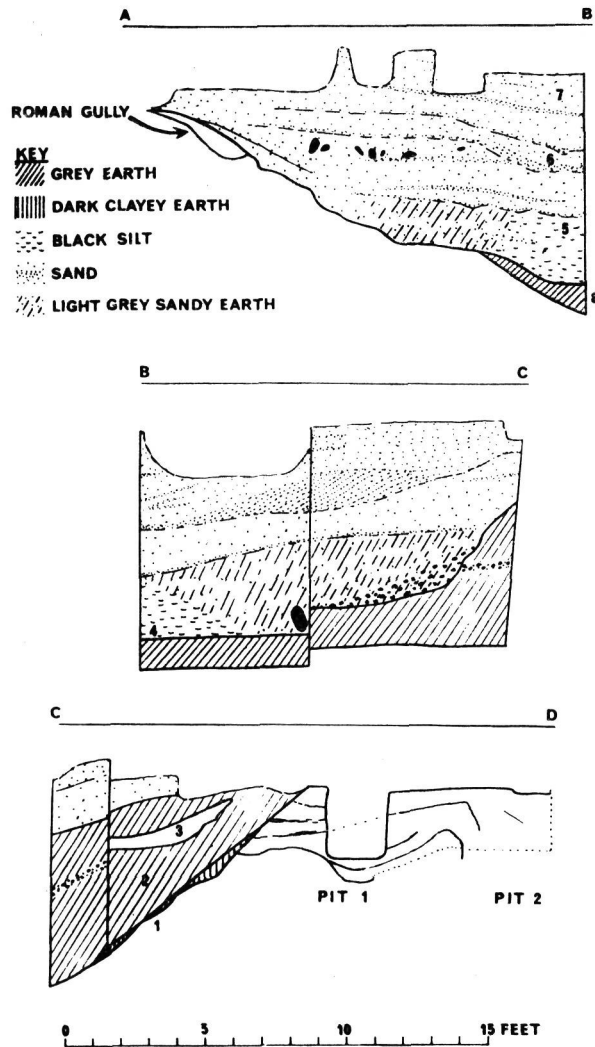


Fig. 14 Sections across Defensive Ditches at Aldgate

Sand deposits just south of the ditch and in the side of the ditch itself gave clear evidence of a northward flowing stream flowing into the ditch. They were a characteristic example of the geological feature of layered sand deposits called 'current bedding', which results from a flowing stream.

Around the west and south sides of the ditch the fill was predominantly sand, but in the corner of the excavation furthest from the sides the ditch fill was mostly fine black clayey silt. A small group of sherds from the pebbly black silt at the bottom of the ditch (fig. 14, section A-B, level 4) has been dated not earlier than the second half of the 13th century (E.R. 1278E). The upper part of the black silt (level 5), which contained the scattered skeletons of several dogs, also contained a sherd of the second half of the 13th century (E.R. 1278D). At a higher

level the black silt was overlaid by sand deposits (level 6) containing sherds of about the middle of the 14th century (E.R. 1278C, B). In the top of the surviving ditch filling (level 7) were sherds of the second half of the 14th century.

This ditch was presumably dug about the time the later medieval gate was built, as it seems to have avoided the north tower of the gateway. As has been suggested above the gate might have been built in A.D. 1215, and it is significant that there is documentary evidence for the City Ditch having been commenced about A.D. 1213.<sup>19</sup> The construction of both the gate and the ditch should therefore be contemporary.

According to documentary evidence the ditch survived till the end of the 16th century when it was filled-in and houses and gardens were built on its site.<sup>20</sup>

The discovery of an unusually large number of dog remains in this ditch gives some confirmation to Stow's suggestion that the ditch was called Houndesditch because it was used as a repository for "much filth (conueyed forth of the citie), especially dead dogges were there layd or cast".<sup>21</sup>

### THE 1607 GATE

Aldgate was completely rebuilt in 1607-9 with two large towers and a single archway between them; and this was demolished in 1761.<sup>22</sup> The north side of the north tower was found during the excavation, and comprised a foundation of ragstone set in hard buff mortar, which included a scatter of shaped stones that had evidently been re-used from the earlier gate.

The interior of the gate tower was faced with carefully tooled squared stones, and was clearly part of a basement room. The floor inside was natural brickearth, which was overlaid by stone and mortar rubble, presumably derived from the demolition of the gate in 1761.

Also inside the tower, and butting up against its north wall, was a foundation of ragstone and mortar structurally, though not necessarily chronologically, later than the original construction. Set in the mortar of this was a 17th-18th century brown glazed pot (E.R. 1273), perhaps used as a foundation deposit. It had been badly damaged by a modern disturbance, but sufficient remained *in situ* to show that it had not been filled with rubble or concrete when the foundation was built. Presumably it originally had a lid, but no trace of this was found.

### NOTES

- 1 A. Tylor, *Archaeologia*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 221. These cremations were also indicated on an unpublished plan by H. Hodge in Guildhall Library.
- 2 *London in Roman Times*, published by the London Museum, 1946, p. 67.
- 3 *London Topographical Record*, Vol. XII, (1920), pp. 52-5.
- 4 p. 110.
- 5 *Encyclopedia Classica*, Vol. XII, fig. 251.
- 6 R. Merrifield, *Roman London*, 1965, ch. 5.
- 7 *Ibid*, pp. 132-140.
- 8 *Roman London*, Royal Commission Report, 1928, Pl. 5.
- 9 *Ibid*, p. 115, fig. 35.
- 10 *Trans. L.M.A.S.*, Vol. 21, pt. 3 (1967), p. 209.
- 11 *Encyclopedia Classica*, Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1959, fig. 441.
- 12 Merrifield, *op. cit.* fig. 22.
- 13 *Trans. L.M.A.S.*, Vol. 21, pt. 3 (1967), p. 209.
- 14 *Ibid*, fig. 12.
- 15 H. A. Harben, *A Dictionary of London* (1918), p. 311.
- 16 *Ibid*, p. 9.
- 17 W. Bell, F. Cottrill, and C. Spon, *London Wall through eighteen centuries*, (1937), fig. 48.
- 18 Harben, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
- 19 *Ibid*, p. 311.
- 20 *Ibid*, p. 311.
- 21 J. Stow, *A Survey of London*, C. L. Kingsford, ed. (1908), p. 128.
- 22 Harben, *op. cit.* p. 9.