

THE CONTENTS OF A LATE 18th CENTURY PIT AT CROSSWALL, CITY OF LONDON

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SUMMARY

The contents of a post-medieval brick-lined pit at 8–10 Crosswall, City of London, comprised a large collection of pottery and glassware including many complete profiles and near-complete items, which adds significantly to its importance and interest. Analysis of the material shows that it is a contemporaneous group deposited c. 1770. It is the largest group of this date known from the City and the first to be published in detail. The animal bone assemblage is relatively small but contains the complete skeleton of an Angora rabbit, probably the first example from an archaeological context in this country, and one bone from a linnet (probably kept as a song-bird). Amongst the glassware is the top of a bird-feeder for use in a bird-cage. It is suggested that the objects were disposed of as the result of a household clearance.

THE EXCAVATION

G. Egan

During the winter of 1979–80 the Department of Urban Archaeology, Museum of London, carried out excavations on a site at 8–10 Crosswall (TQ 3366 8056) on the NE side of the City (Fig. 1). Part of the Roman city wall and the foundation of a bastion were discovered and have been the subject of a report in *Transactions* (Maloney, 1980).

Two brick-lined pits were found against the external face of the Roman wall, one at each end of the 9m stretch still standing. The pits presumably represent two extramural properties; it was probably the survival of the boundary at the north of these properties (its line being indicated by the pits) that preserved the part of the wall remaining.

Assemblages of pottery and other household items were recovered from both pits. The dating evidence suggests that these were filled and abandoned in the later 18th century. A small group of domestic objects lay among the organic fills of the northern pit; but the southern one (Pl.1) contained a considerable amount of building material and a larger range of pottery, including some less common items, as well as some notable faunal remains. It is the assemblage from the latter pit that is described in this article.

A full description and discussion of the pits is contained in the Crosswall (XWL 79) archival report which is available at the Department of Urban Archaeology, Museum of London.

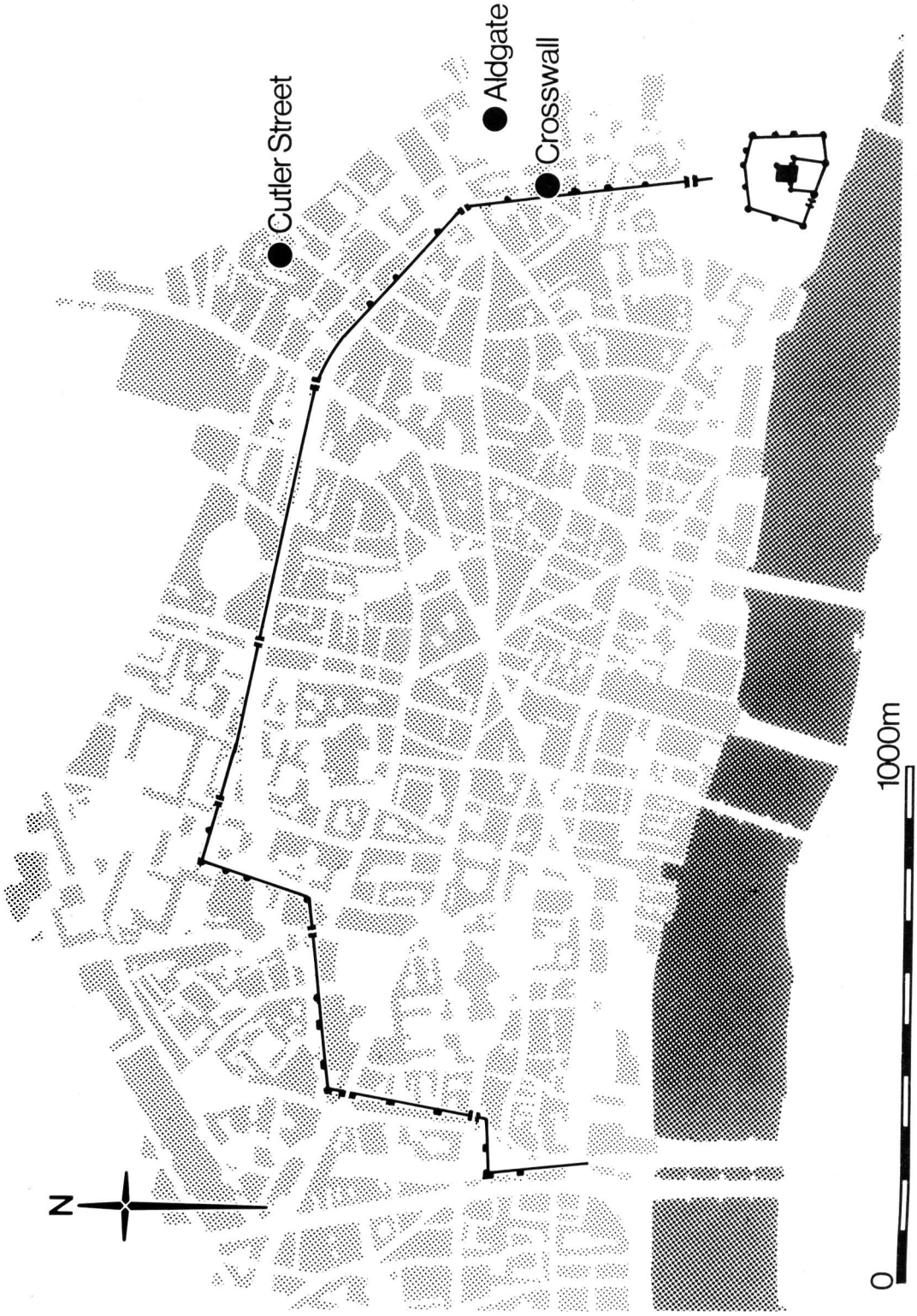


Fig. 1. Crosswall 1979: Site Location Map.

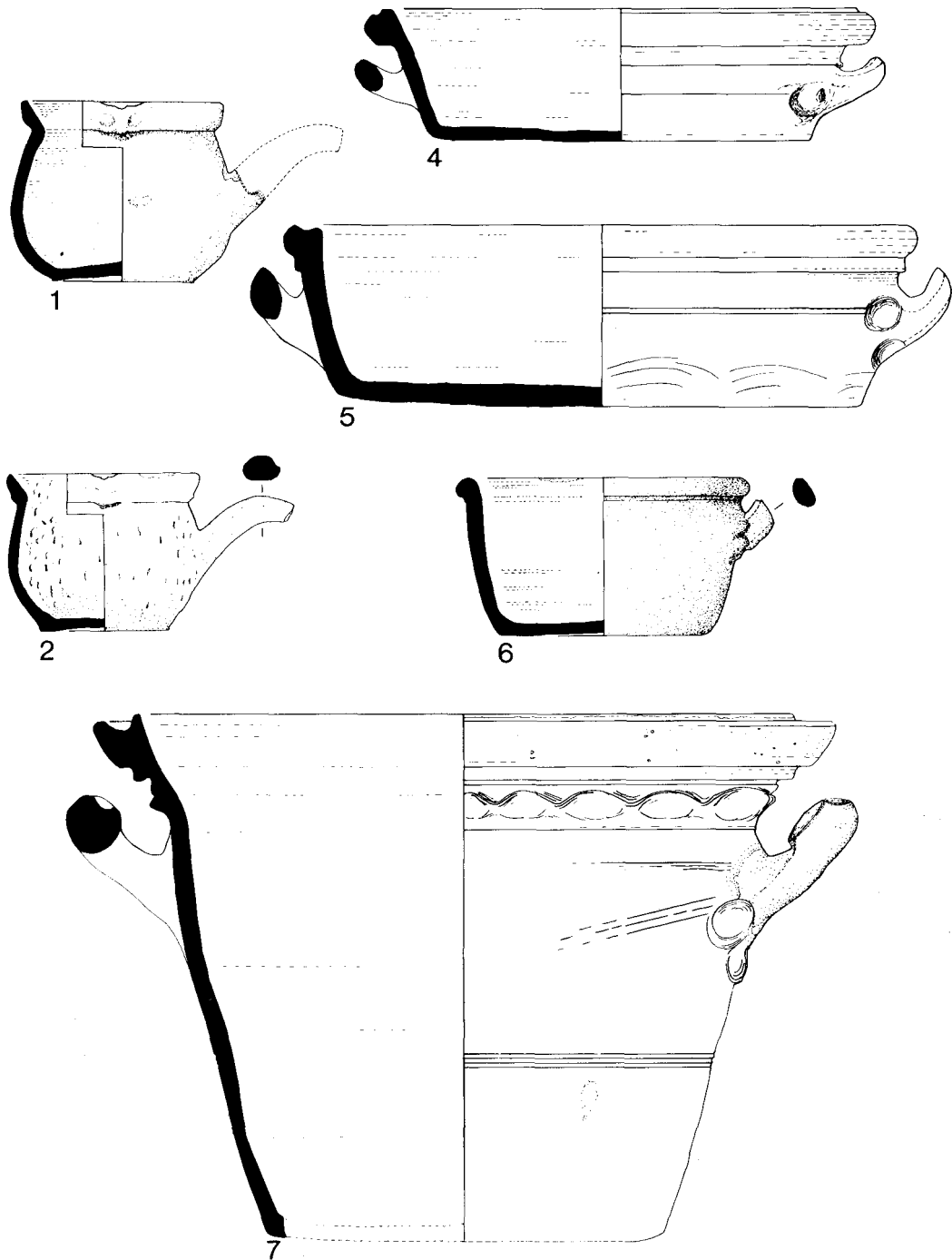


Fig. 2. Crosswall 1979: Post-Medieval Coarse Redware Nos. 1-7 (1/4).

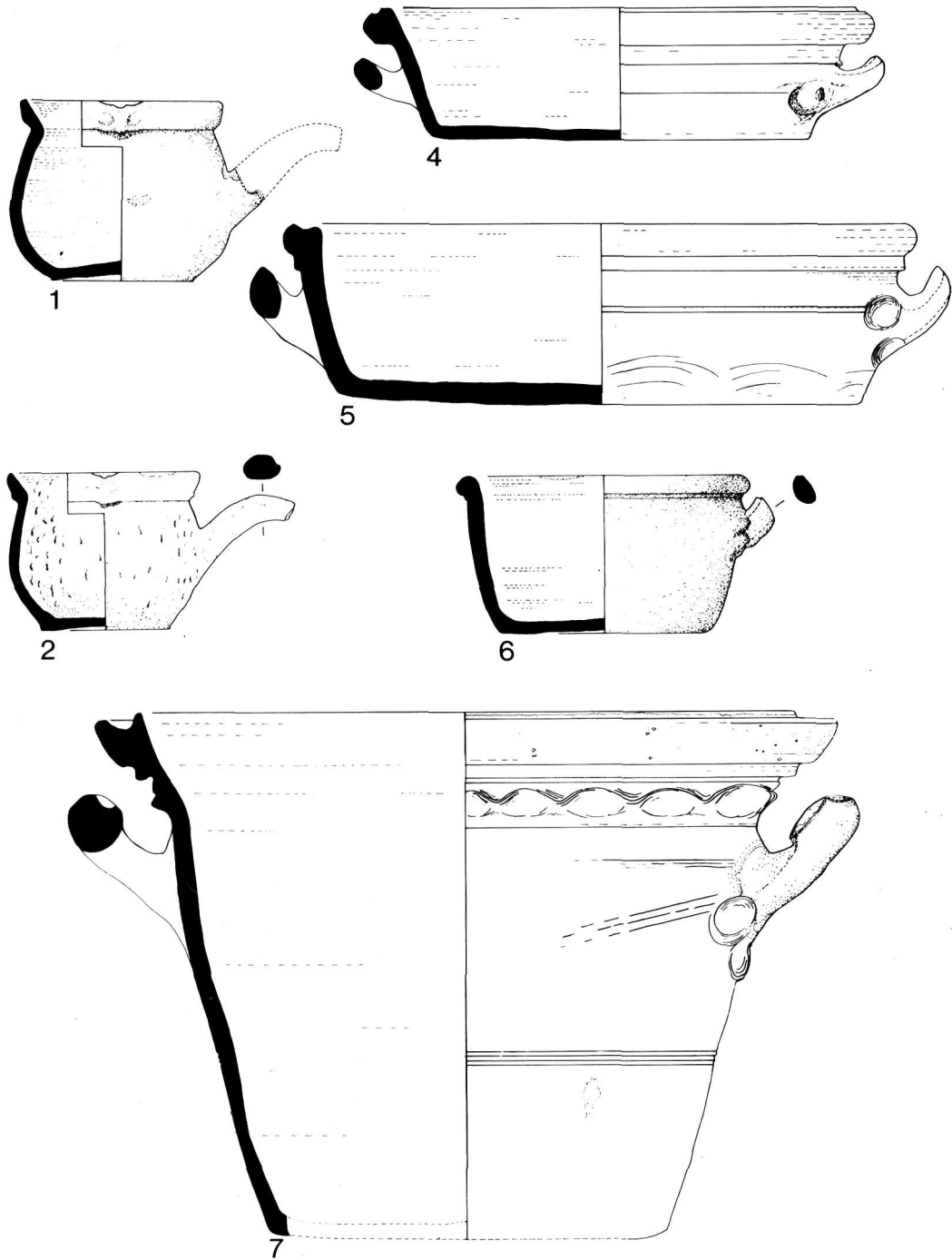


Fig. 2. Crosswall 1979: Post-Medieval Coarse Redware Nos. 1-7 (1/4).

THE FINDS

INTRODUCTION

A. G. Vince

Very few of the finds in the pit appear to be residual. Many of the pottery and glass vessels and one of the clay pipes, though smashed, could be reconstructed. This pattern of survival contrasts with that observed in most groups of the period, in which a large number of vessels are represented but only by a small proportion of the complete item. The reasons for this pattern are not understood, but the archaeological implications are clear: everything in the Crosswall group was probably discarded at the same time. A comparison of the pottery, clay pipe and glass dating evidence indicates that the pit was probably filled *c.* 1770. The association of such a large collection of contemporary finds enables a date to be assigned to the coarse pottery, which cannot be independently dated, and also gives an indication of the period of use of various types of artefact during the 18th century (Vince, 1981, which has photographs of many of the items of pottery and porcelain described herein).

All the finds and the archival record are housed with the Finds Section, Department of Urban Archaeology, Museum of London.

COARSE POTTERY

A. G. Vince

Post-Medieval Coarse Redware (Fig. 2, Nos. 1-7 and Fig. 3, Nos. 8 & 9)

1. Pipkin, internal glaze.
2. Pipkin, internal and external brown mottled glaze.
3. Fragment of pipkin (not illustrated) *cf.* No. 1. These pipkins differ from the 18th-century examples from Woolwich which are biconical in profile and have no feet (Pryor and Blockley, 1978, 106).
4. Dish, two loop handles and internal glaze.
5. Dish, two loop handles and internal glaze. These large dishes are not represented amongst the Woolwich wasters, but are relatively common in excavated assemblages from the City. Both have a

grooved rim and might therefore have had lids.

6. Bowl, one loop handle, internal glaze.

7. Deep bowl, two loop handles, internal and external glaze, combed decoration and elaborately moulded and thumbled rim. The rim is lid-seated.

8. Jug, external glaze, pulled spout.

9 (?) Paint pot, internal glaze.

This pot is similar in form to a chamber pot, but without a flattened rim. Some 19th-century examples were stamped, for example, J. H. Simpson Colorman 34 London Road, showing that their use as paint containers was sometimes primary (Amis, 1968, No. 50).

The fragments from the nine coarse redware vessels recovered were plain lead glazed, with the exception of one pipkin which had a mottled brown glaze. Two fabrics were present; the dishes, deep bowl and jug were tempered with an ill-sorted medium to coarse quartz sand, whilst the bowl, pipkins and 'paint-pot' contained an ill-sorted fine to medium quartz sand (*i.e.* no inclusions larger than 0.5mm across). Both fabrics were found amongst waste from the Woolwich pottery and the fabric difference does not indicate that more than one source was supplying the coarse redware.

Border Ware (Fig 3, No. 10)

10. Stool Pan, green glazed inside and out.

This type of vessel was made to be used in a wooden commode and therefore represents a higher rung up the social ladder than chamber pots. The stool pan was virtually complete and therefore probably contemporary with the rest of the assemblage. It is therefore one of the latest datable Surrey white ware products known.

Tin Glazed Ware (Fig. 3, Nos. 11-14)

11. Chamber pot, light blue tin glaze.

Three almost identical chamber pots were found. All are different from the standard late 17th- and early 18th-

century examples. They are squatter and do not have a cordon at the neck.

12. Ointment jar, decorated with horizontal blue lines.

The base was pushed up after throwing, an almost universal feature on tin-glazed ware without turned bases. This form developed from the albarelo of the late 16th and 17th-centuries, but does not have a restricted neck and base.

13. Plate, floral border, central pattern of spray of (?) flowers.

14. Plate, floral border, central pattern of (?) spray of flowers.

Fragments of several other plates were found, mostly of plain moulded forms represented at Lambeth House (Bloice, 1971, Nos. 25, 28A, 28B, and 29) but also forms with turned bases (Bloice, 1971, 22).

The tin glazed ware in this assemblage is typical of the very latest phase of the industry. The introduction of cream ware in the 1770s immediately brought the production of plates to a halt, although the ointment pots continued to be manufactured into the 19th century.

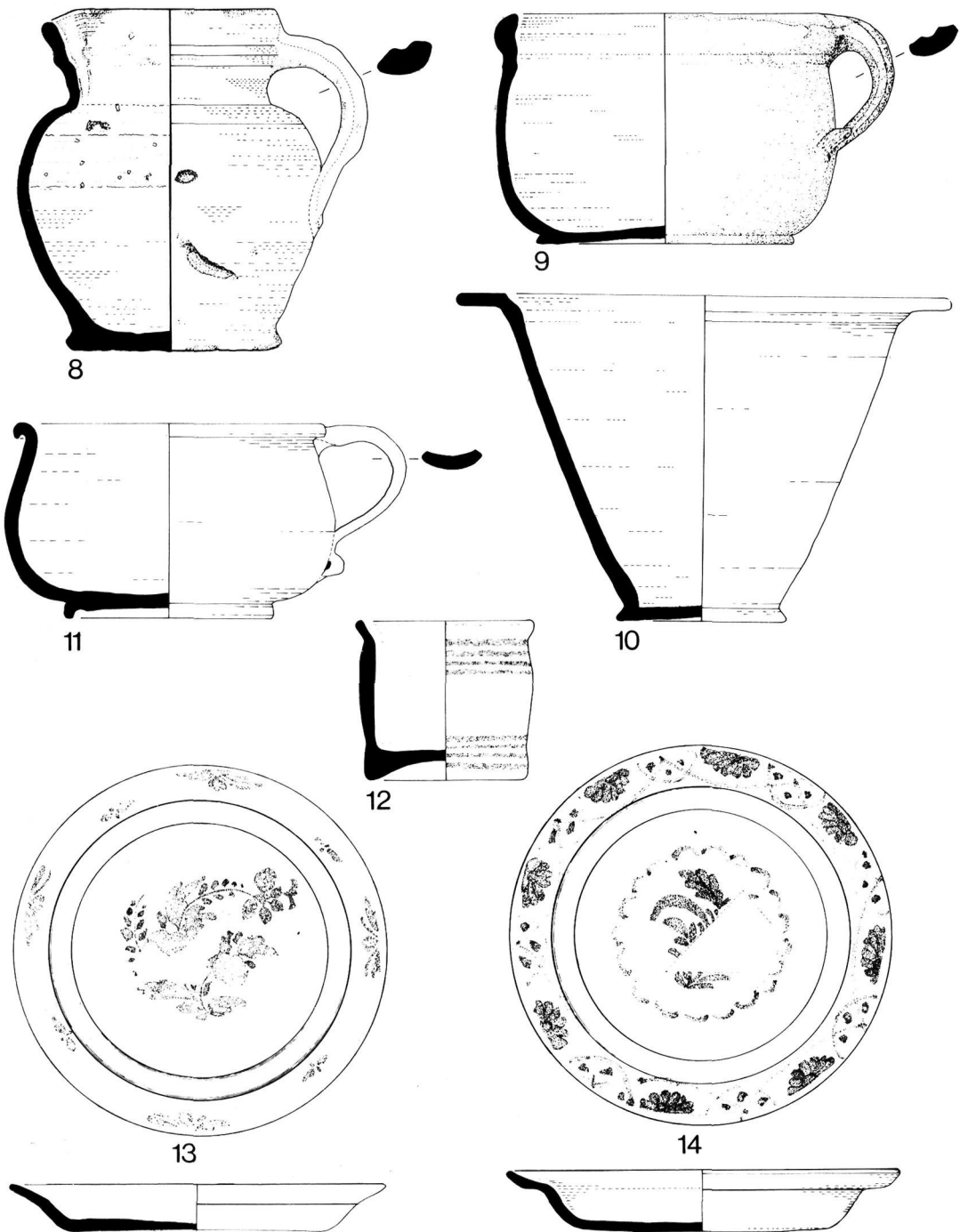


Fig. 3. Crosswall 1979: Post-Medieval Coarse Redware Nos. 8-9; Border Ware No. 10; Tin Glazed Ware Nos. 11-14 ($\frac{1}{4}$).

Staffordshire White Salt-glazed Stoneware (Fig. 4, Nos. 15–20)

15. Chamber pot, a similar form to those in tin glazed ware.

16. Bowl, wheelthrown with turned exterior.

17. Miniature dish, wheelthrown, turned exterior.

18. Miniature bowl, wheelthrown, turned exterior. These last two vessels were probably toys (Mountford, 1971, 44 & Pl. 84).

19. Moulded plate, turned exterior.

Two other identical plates were found. This pattern is one of the latest found in salt-glazed stoneware and is

also used on creamware plates.

20. Moulded plates, turned exterior.

An identical design, but used on a oval dish, is illustrated by Mountford (1971, Pl. 147).

Nottingham Stoneware (not illustrated)

21. Base of a vessel with turned foot-ring.

Refined Red Earthenware (Fig. 4, No. 22)

22. Cup, wheelthrown and turned, glossy brown internal and external glaze.

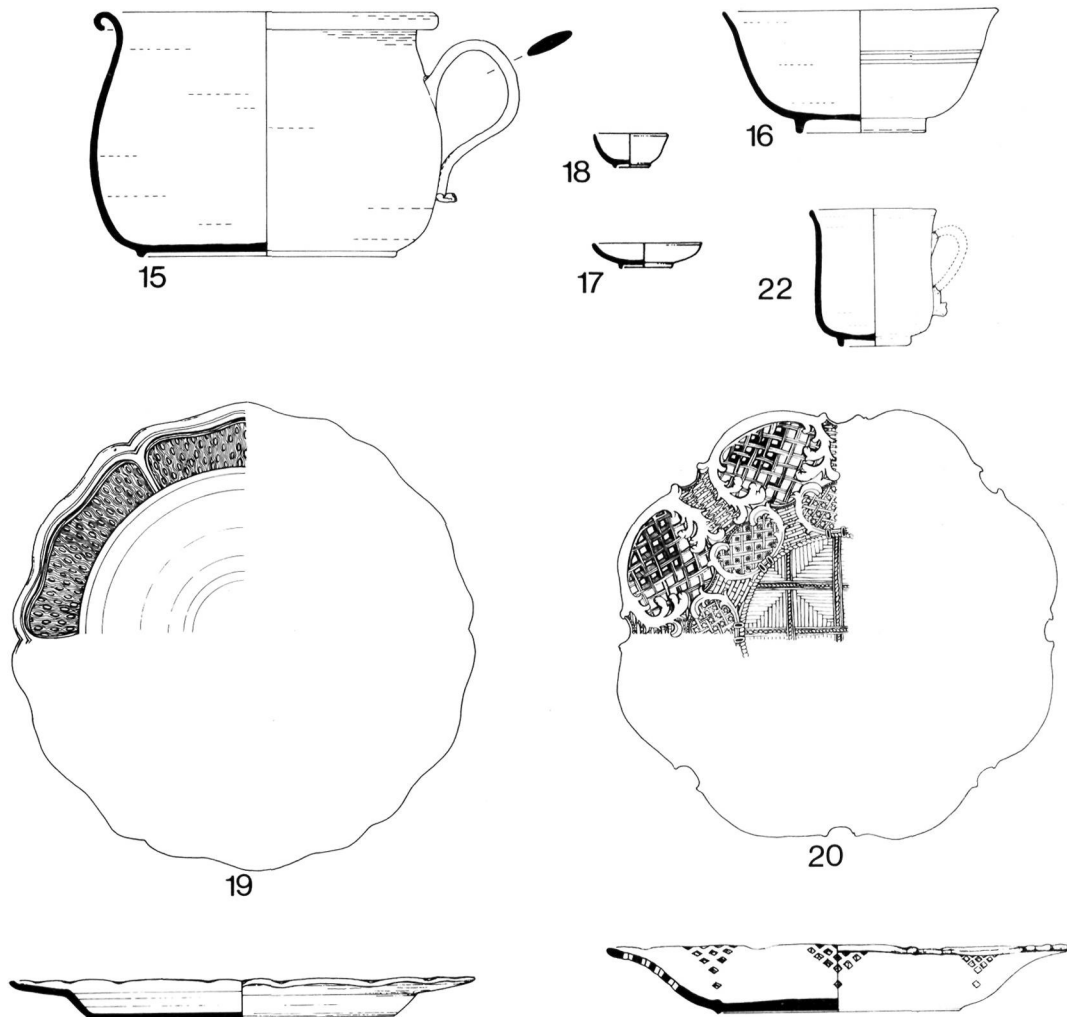


Fig. 4. Crosswall 1979: Staffordshire White Salt-Glazed Stoneware Nos. 15–20; Refined Red Earthenware No. 22 (1/4).

CHINESE PORCELAIN (Figs. 5, 6 & 7)

J. E. Pearce

23. Bowl, inferior quality blue and white provincial porcelain, possibly from Fukien in S. China. The decoration consists of a four-clawed dragon, with cloud scrolls, extending both inside and outside the bowl, coarsely painted in a dull grey-blue. Since this is a long-lasting, cheap, export type, it is difficult to date closely, but is probably late 17th century, and possibly as early as the end of the Ming dynasty (1644), thus predating the rest of the group, and perhaps kept as an heirloom or antique.

High quality blue and white porcelain forms the largest proportion of the group, and is characterised by less clearly defined painting and by greater use of mauve-blue than is found on later pieces. The designs are also more to the Chinese taste, and less formal or stylised

than those later developed to meet European demand.

24. Bowl (not illustrated).

25. Dish, diamond diaper border and scene apparently depicting bird-training.

There are four illustrated dishes of closely similar form with internal decoration and plain exterior (*cf.* Nos. 26, 30, 31).

26. Dish, very thin walls and landscape design (without border).

27. Cup, with foot-ring of early K'ang Hsi type and simple internal diaper border. The development of the decorative border is principally an export feature.

28. Cup, very high quality external landscape design and unusual, thick, unglazed foot-ring.

29. Cup, external sea-weed design (not illustrated).

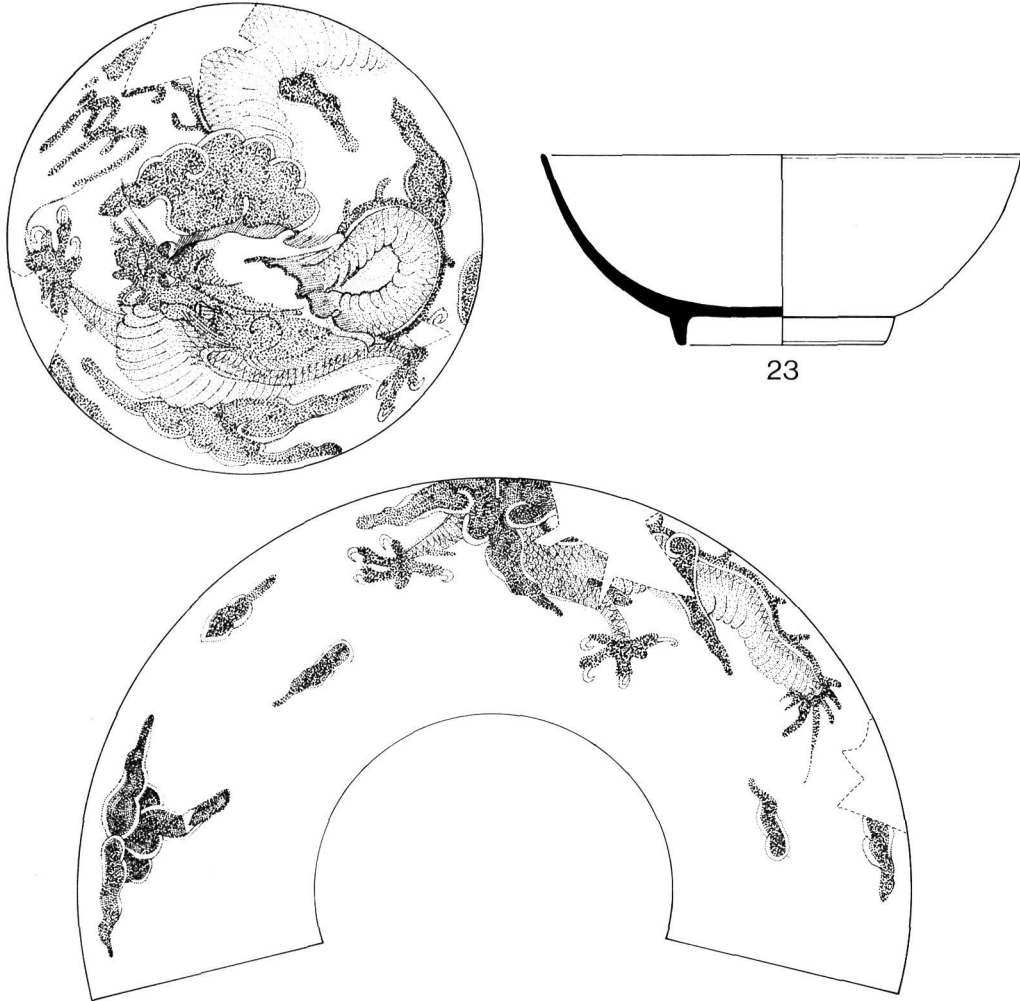


Fig. 5. Crosswall 1979: Chinese Porcelain No. 23 (1/3).

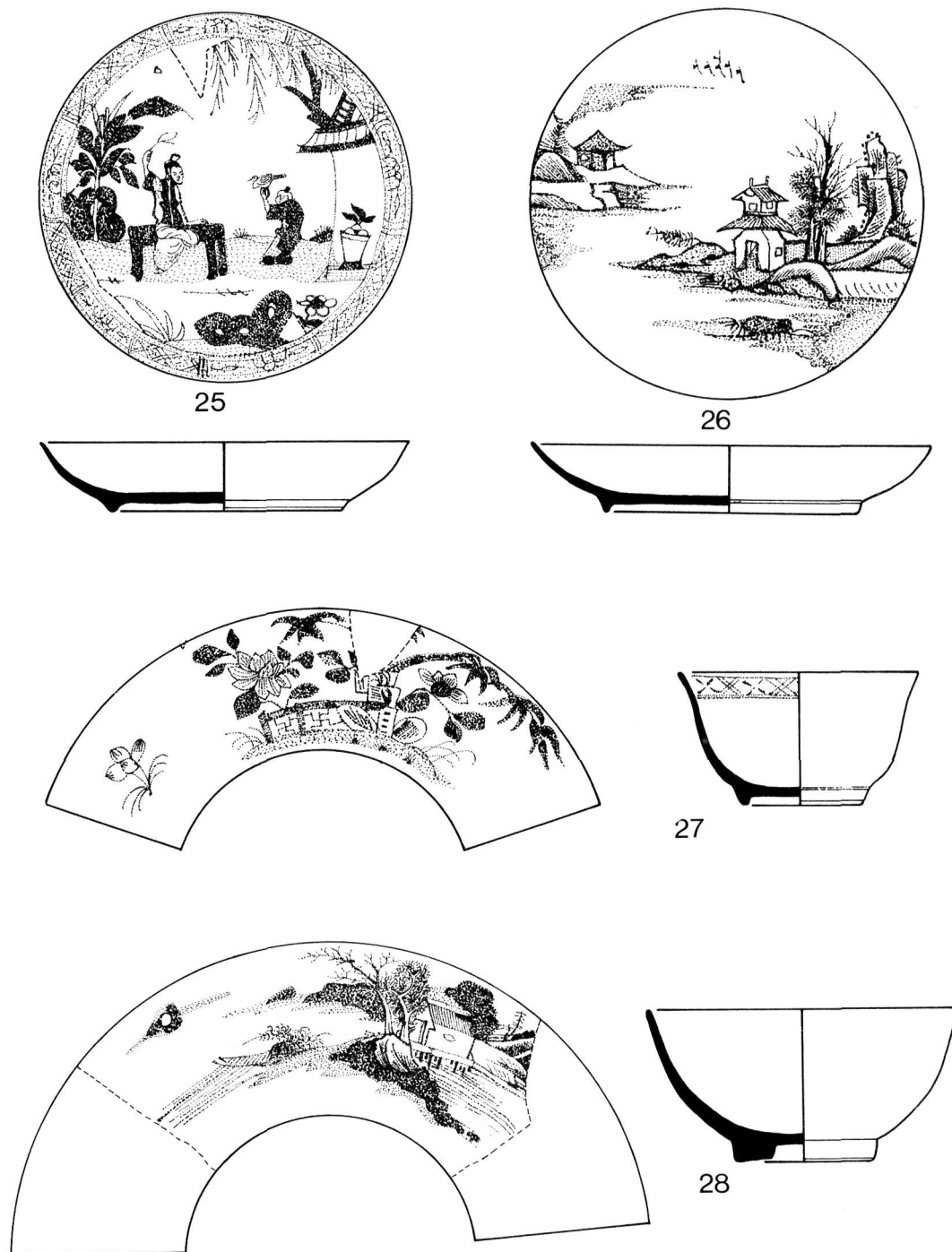


Fig. 6. Crosswall 1979: Chinese Porcelain Nos. 25–28 (1/2).

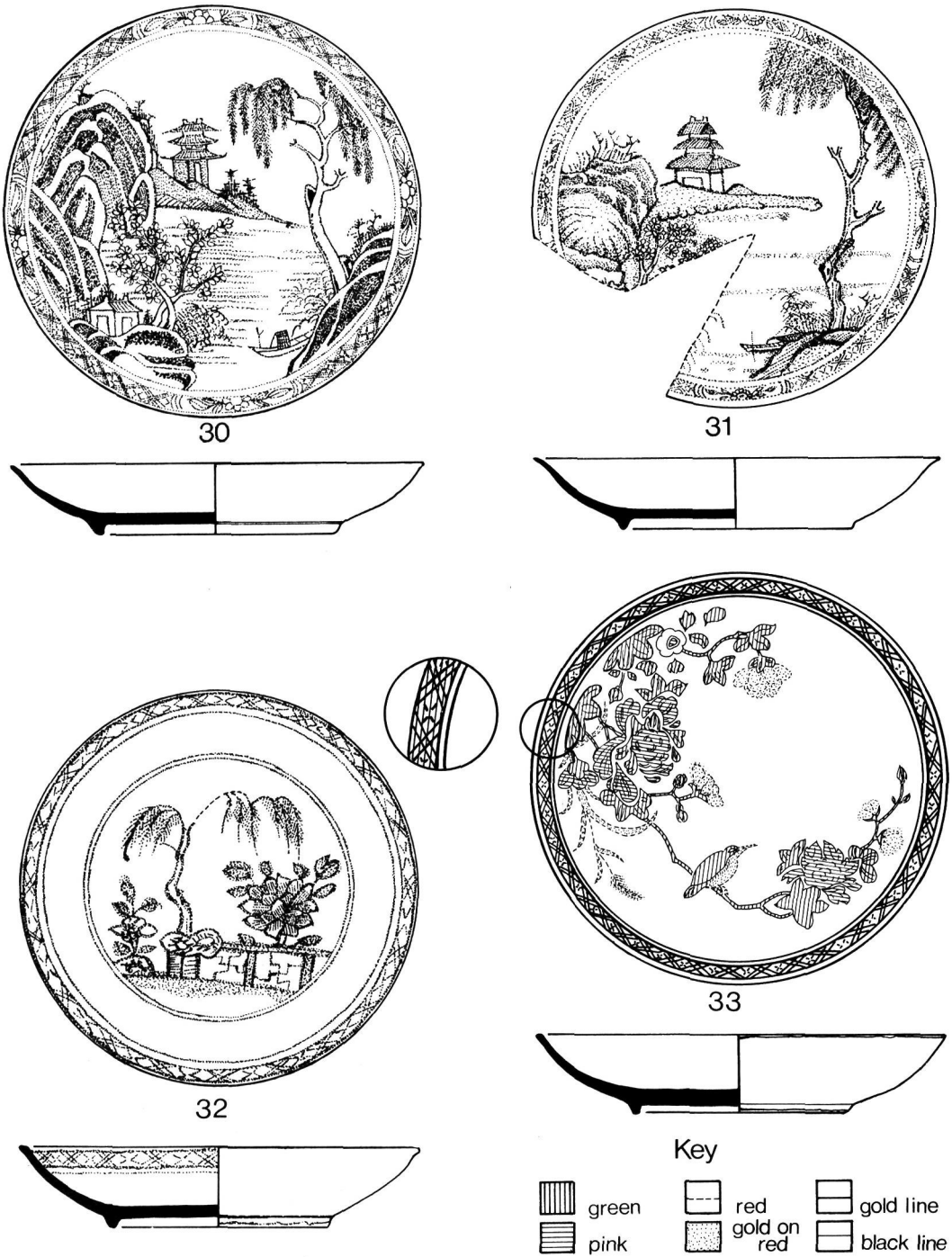


Fig. 7. Crosswall 1979: Chinese Porcelain Nos. 30-33 (1/2).

30. Dish, diamond diaper border and landscape design.
 31. Dishes, *cf.* No. 30, possibly from a set. These four vessels have external brown enamel, of a tone known as *cafe au lait*, "dead leaf", or Batavian brown, which was first produced during the reign of K'ang Hsi, probably after 1700.
 32. Dish, internal blue and white decoration, with simple diaper border, similar to No. 25. The external enamel is an unusually deep brown.
 33. Three dishes, more or less identical and probably from a set. Internal enamelled design of a bird sitting on

a branch, with peonies. The enamels have badly deteriorated, and the colours are therefore difficult to distinguish, although it appears that pink, iron-red or 'rouge de fer', green and gold were applied over a basic design sketched in black paint. This would have required three separate firings, thus making these the most expensive pieces in the group. This type of decoration is dated to c. 1720–30, after which the use of red and pink enamels on export wares, ('famille rose'), becomes increasingly popular at the expense of blue and white porcelain.

This is a group of high quality porcelain, possibly representing a wholesale household clearance, including pieces from at least two sets (Kerr, pers. comm.). With one exception (No. 23), the group as a whole can be dated to the first quarter of the 18th century, the latter part of the reign of K'ang Hsi (1662–1722), the second emperor of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644–1912). This reign saw the revival of production from the 1680s onwards, following the slump in trade caused by the fall of the Ming dynasty.

GLASS

K. H. Armitage and A. G. Vince

Green Bottle (not illustrated)

Three types of wine bottles were found: onion (34), mallet (35–37) and tall, straight-sided (38–46). None of the bottles were intact when excavated but, like the pottery, were possibly complete, or almost so, when thrown away. It appears from a series of dated examples (Noël-Hume, 1970) that the onion bottle was made in the period 1680–1720, while the mallet-shaped bottles date to 1720–1760, and the tall, straight-sided type started about 1760 and continued throughout the 18th century.

Pharmaceutical Glass (Fig. 8)

47. Pharmaceutical phial, clear glass, rough pontil mark in the upkick.
 48. Pharmaceutical phial, light bluish-green glass, pointed upkick with very rough pontil mark.
 49. Pharmaceutical phial, clear glass, rough pontil mark in upkick.
 50. Pharmaceutical bottle, light bluish-green glass, string rim, high pointed upkick (51mm) with rough pontil mark.
 51. Bottle neck, function uncertain, light green glass.
 52. Pharmaceutical bottle, clear glass, cello-shaped, with moulded legend. According to a broadsheet of 1755–7 the authentic legend should read: BY THE KINGS ROYAL PATENT GRANTED TO ROBT. TURLINGTON FOR HIS INVENTED BALSAM OF LIFE LONDON JANUARY 26, 1754, (Noël-Hume, 1969, 43–4).
 53. Jar, light bluish-green glass, ribbed, pontil mark on the base.

54. (?) Flask, clear glass, slight pontil mark on the base.

Straight-sided pharmaceutical bottles with flat rims were found. They were clear and light bluish-green in colour. Although most examples were incomplete, there seem to be two sizes: short phials, 30–40mm. in diameter and taller phials, 50–60mm. in diameter. The small type occurs only in clear glass, but the taller phials occur both in clear and bluish-green glass. One phial—the taller type—has a much wider rim than normal.

Small, conical-shaped bottles with high kick bases were found in light bluish-green, light green and clear glass. They all have string rims. It has been suggested that these bottles contained oil or vinegar (Noël-Hume, 1970, Fig. 17, No. 9).

Other forms were represented by single examples, notably, the 'Robert Turlington' balsam bottle dated 1754; however, it is known that some of these were contemporary forgeries (Noël-Hume, 1970).

Glass Fineware (Fig. 9, Nos. 55–58)

55. Wine glass, clear, pontil mark on the base. Two parallels, which come from Colonial Williamsburg (Noël-Hume, 1969, Fig. 8, Nos. 3 & 4) are dated to the mid 18th century.
 56. Wine glass, clear, pontil mark on the base. A similar example comes from Colonial Williamsburg (Noël-Hume, 1970, Fig. 13, No. 2), but this has simple wheel-engraving. It is dated to 1765–1780.
 57. Tumbler, clear, pontil mark on the base. For parallels see Noël-Hume (1962, Fig. 33, No. 5).
 58. Tall, cylindrical container, wide-flanged rim, pontil mark on base. (?) Bulb glass (Matthews, pers. comm.)

All the fineware is in clear, presumably lead, glass. Two drinking glasses were found, both with straight stems and folded feet. One of the glasses has a bell-shaped bowl and a tear drop at the base of the bowl and the other has an ogee bowl. Both forms have parallels found in mid 18th-century contexts.

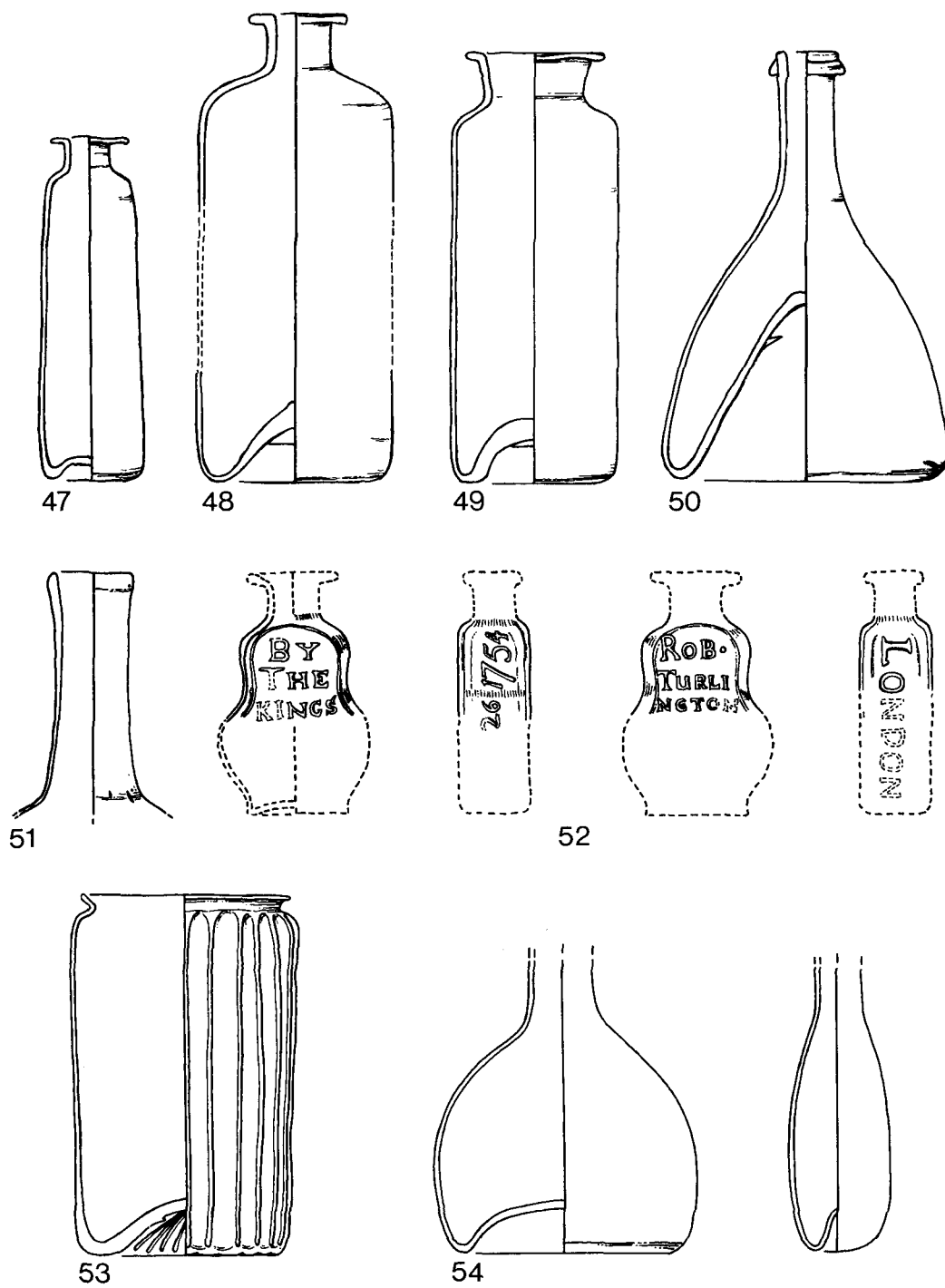


Fig. 8. Crosswall 1979: Pharmaceutical Glass Nos. 47-54 (1/2).

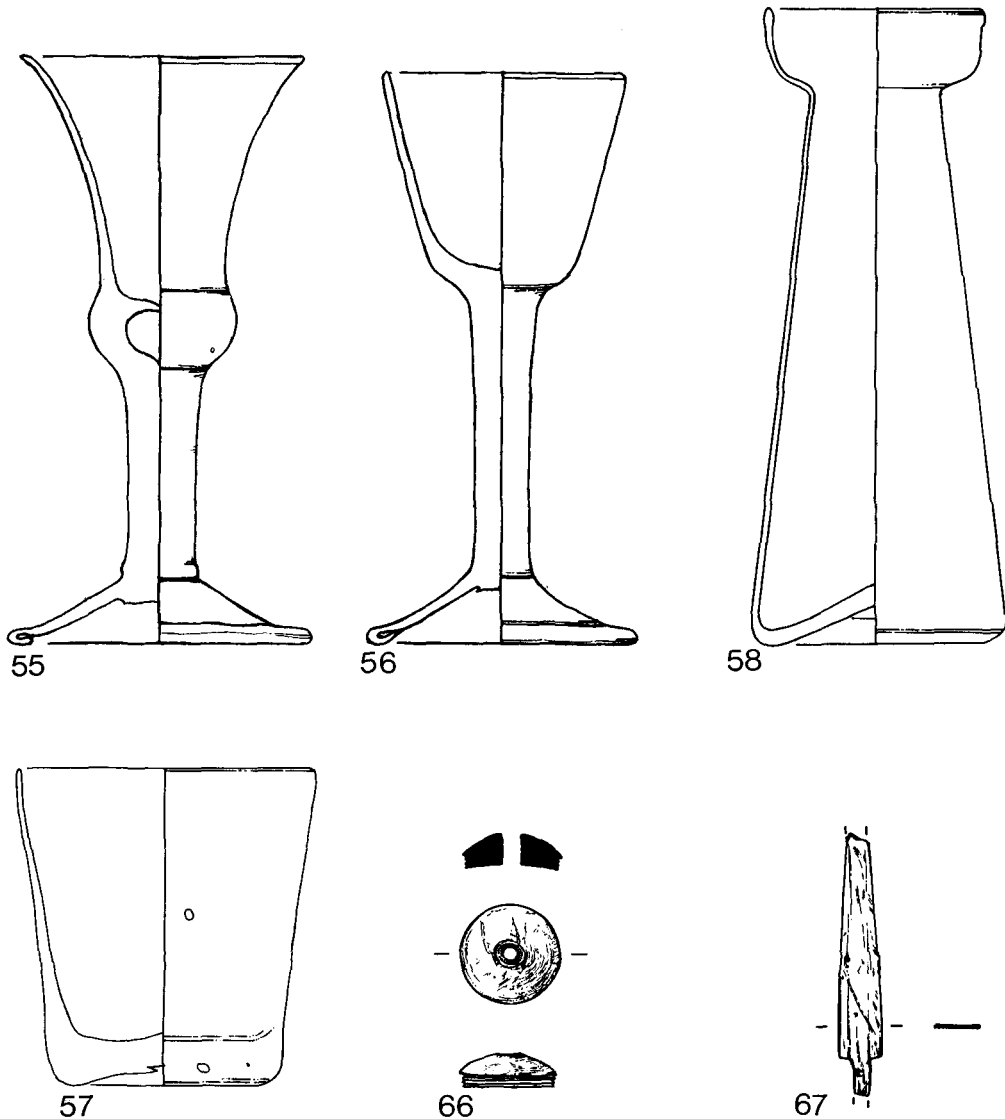


Fig. 9. Crosswall 1979: Glass Fineware Nos. 55–58 ($1/2$); Bone Objects Nos. 66–67 ($1/2$).

Mirror (not illustrated)

Several fragments of a clear glass mirror (59) with a silvered back were found. It has scalloped edges and cut-glass decoration. A similar find from Rosewell, Virginia is thought to date to the late 17th-early 18th century (Noël-Hume, 1962, Fig. 33, No. 9)

Window Glass (not illustrated)

Two types were found; light green, heavily weathered fragments of spun glass (60) and thicker light blue unweathered fragments (61). In both cases, the glass

came from large rectangular, rather than diamond, panes, but no dimensions could be measured.

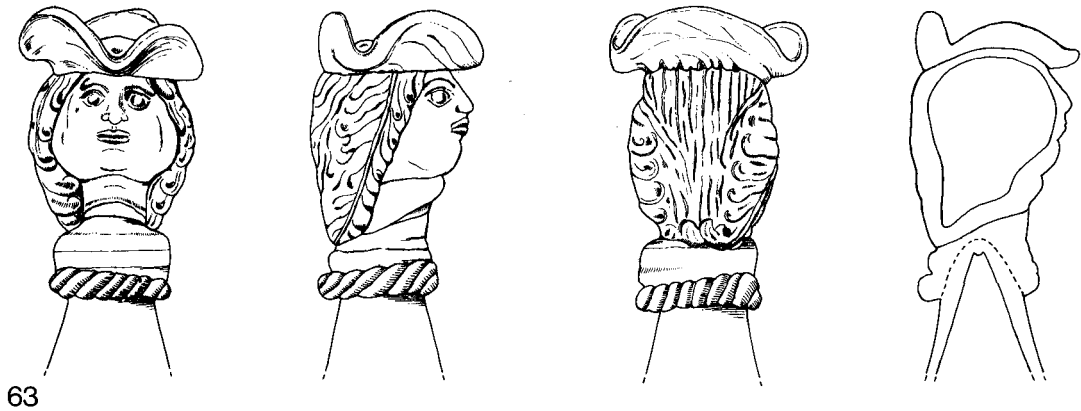
Roundel (not illustrated)

62. Roundel, clear glass, rough edges, diameter 38mm, width 3mm. (?) Locket glass.

GLASS BIRD FEEDER (Fig. 10, No. 63)

G. Egan

63. Bird feeder, clear glass; only the moulded head remains. For a similar example see Thorpe (1969, Pl. LXXX11)



63

Fig. 10. Crosswall 1979: Glass Bird-Feeder No. 63 (2/3).

A colourless lead glass finial in the form of a male head, with tricorn hat applied separately. At the base of the neck is a small rod-shaped piece of glass with a series of diagonal lines in a band (like a heraldic wreath), which connects the head to the rest of the object. Most of this lower part of the vessel is missing. A seam from the join of the two-piece mould in which the head was blown is evident on the gathered shoulder-length hair.

This is the top of a distinctive type of conical feeder for caged birds. A number of examples of both male and female heads, in a variety of colours, are known from such vessels e.g. London Antiquities (1908, 163, Nos. vii 1–9): the heads of Nos. A12126 & 5099 (SG173), now in the Museum of London, are probably from the same mould as the Crosswall example; the features on the first are more clearly defined, while those on the second are less distinct than on this most recently excavated case. No. 5106, also in the Museum of London, is very similar, but minor differences in details of the hair and profile suggest that this head is from another mould. Outside London a closely parallel finial was found in Oxford (Leeds, 1938, 156–74 & Pl. XIIB). A few almost complete examples have a rectangular feeding trough at the base, on the opposite side to the face on the finial—e.g. No. 5099, referred to above, a female headed feeder found at Goodwood House, Sussex (Noël-Hume, 1966, 208–9), and a less complete example found in Williamsburg, Virginia (*ibid.*, 210).

Bird feeders of this form appear to have been used throughout the 18th century. An advert of 1706 suggests that they were an innovation then: ‘new fashion Cristal Bird Glasses, which effectively prevent the littering of seeds into the room’ (Buckley, 1925, 143, Appendix No. 95. The maker, T. Meyer, worked at the Bird Cage in Long Acre). Thomas Rowlandson’s version of ‘The Tax Gatherer’ (published 1799) depicts a feeder with the characteristic tricorn hat, fixed to the outside of a bird cage (Noël-Hume, 1966, 210, Fig. 6). Although it has been suggested that the male heads were intended to represent a specific person, e.g. the Duke of Marlborough, they are unlikely to have had any such particular significance (*cf.* Thorpe, 1969, 171, note 3, with Noël-Hume, 1966, 208).

As the 1706 advert shows, the feeders were used for seed. They might perhaps also have been used for water (Noël-Hume, 1966, 209–10), as are their modern counterparts made in plastic (e.g. Petcraft’s Flo-matic Feeder, made by Thomas’s of Halifax, ‘specially designed for seed or water’: 18th century feeders would have used the same gravity-flow principle to replenish the trough automatically as long as the seed or water lasted). It is unlikely that the present practice of cluttering pet birds’ cages with toys of various kinds was foreshadowed by these elaborate glass vessels; the moulded heads faced in the opposite direction from the cage (*cf.* Rowlandson, above), so the anthropomorphism of the feeders was not for the delectation of the pet, but of the owner.

CLAY PIPES (not illustrated)

A. G. Vince

64. One complete example of Type 27; 361mm long; mark SB crowned, possibly made by Sarah Bett who is recorded in Southwark in 1756 (Oswald, 1975, 132).

65. One bowl of Type 27; mark WK (Atkinson and Oswald, 1969); and 20 stem fragments. Type 27 is thought to have started c. 1770.

BONE OBJECTS (Fig. 10, Nos. 66 & 67)

F. A. Pritchard

66. Domed circular bone object with central perforation and screwing thread; diameter 25mm, diameter of perforation 5mm. (?) Lid of small container.

max. width 12mm. Plain.

67. Fragments of three bone fan sticks of identical shape with angular shoulders and straight tapering edges;

68. Cylindrical, polished bone handle; diameter 11mm. The terminal is sawn and recessed for the fitment of a decorative (?) metallic knob. Heavily corroded iron tang. (?) Knife or fork (not illustrated).

The above items represent artefacts of a 'bourgeois' character. In the 18th century good quality cutlery was made of silver, but the knife or fork found at Crosswall is only made of iron and the surviving bone handle is undecorated. The fan sticks similarly indicate a relatively cheap type of fan probably mounted with a hand-coloured printed leaf (Mayor, 1980, 53-54). In the 18th century fans were at their most elegant and sophisticated: those of good quality were frequently characterised by intricately carved sticks, which were designed to harmonise with the leaf as a complete decorative entity (Armstrong, 1974, 51). The sticks considered here, however, lack any kind of decoration, being of a mass-produced type. Their tapering shape and squared-off shoulders suggest a date in the second half of the 18th century.

FAUNAL REMAINS.

INTRODUCTION

P. L. Armitage

A total of 582 bone elements (191 mammal, 359 bird and 32 fish) were recovered from the late 18th-century pit at Crosswall. A full list with measurements of the faunal remains is available on request, in the form of an archival report, from the Department of Urban Archaeology, Museum of London, where the bones are held in store and may be examined.

The faunal remains are described in systematic order under species:

MAMMALIAN BONE

P. L. Armitage

A total of 191 mammalian bone elements were recovered; 178 (93.2%) are identified to species and part of skeleton, and 13 (6.8%) remain as unidentified bone fragments. The weight of all the mammalian bone is 1239.9g, of which 1200.4g (96.8%) is the weight of the identified material and 39.5g (3.2%) the unidentified. The following animals are identified; cattle, sheep, pig, rabbit and (?) cat (foetal). Figure 12 lists the bone elements identified for each species.

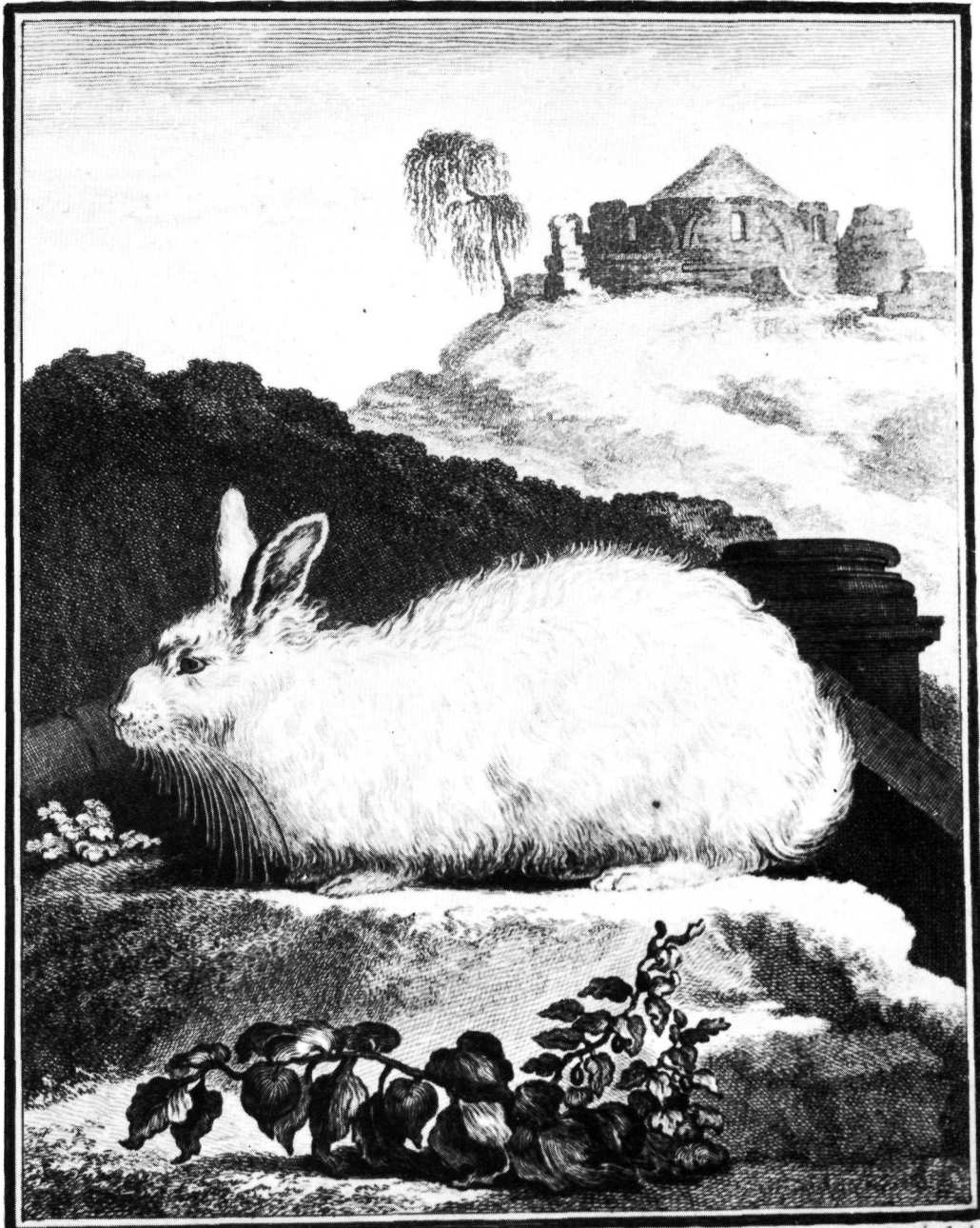
All the bone is in a good state of preservation. With the exception of 7 sheep and pig vertebra, 1 sheep innominate bone and 8 rabbit ribs that are stained dark brown, all the bone elements are pale yellow in colour. Certain bones of the skeleton of the large rabbit (described below) do, however, show brownish streaks on them and appear shiny (waxy); a condition observed in bones that were buried with the flesh still on them and unearthened when the muscle and skin tissues had decomposed.

Many of the cattle, sheep and pig bones show evidence of butchery and are discarded household refuse. There is one group of articulated bones comprising a femur, tibia, astragalus and calcaneum from the left hindlimb of a pig aged approximately two years. Together, these bones are identified as the discarded remnant of a joint of meat which corresponds to the modern 'leg of pork' (Meat & Livestock Commission, 1977).

Parts of the articulated skeleton of a large fully grown adult rabbit were recovered from the cess pit. There is no evidence of butchery and apart from two humeri which have lesions immediately below the proximal epiphysis on the medial side, all the elements of the skeleton appear perfectly healthy. Comparison of the skull of this animal with those of modern wild and domestic rabbits in the collections of the BM(NH) has revealed that the Crosswall rabbit is certainly domestic and that it bears a close resemblance to the Angora; a breed known in England in the later 18th century. Confirmation that the Crosswall skeleton is indeed an



Pl. 1. Crosswall 1979: Brick-lined pit constructed against the Roman city wall.



De Seve delin.

LE LAPIN D'ANGORA

C. Baughey Sculp.

Pl. 2. Engravings of an Angora rabbit (de Buffon & Daubenton *Histoire Naturelle* 45 (1756) Pl. 53, 340).

Angora rabbit is provided by the narrow width between the supraorbital fissures in the skull (Fig. 11). The value, 11.9mm, for this point of measurement falls within the range established for the series of British wild rabbits in the collections of the BM(NH) (range: 10.6–12.7mm); a characteristic which, according to Darwin (1868) distinguishes the skull of the Angora from those of the other breeds of domestic rabbits. In all other dimensions, the Crosswall skull is considerably larger than that of the largest wild rabbit in the BM(NH) collections, except for the neurocranial width, which is smaller; this last feature is commonly found in the other breeds of domestic rabbit (e.g. Silver-grey, Lop-ear and Flemish giant). The Crosswall rabbit is the subject of special study and a detailed description of the anatomical features of the skeleton of this animal has been published elsewhere (Armitage, 1981).

The soft silky fur of the Angora rabbit, which is either plucked or combed out of the coat, is highly prized and is used in the manufacture of articles of clothing and as stuffing for pillows and cushions. Although it is possible that the inhabitants of the site were involved in the commercial breeding of Angora rabbits for the fur trade, it seems more likely that the Crosswall rabbit was kept as a pet: Angora rabbits (Pl. 2) are said to be 'very quiet and docile' and 'are very tractable as pets', especially suitable 'as ladies' pets' (Knight, 1889, 2–18).

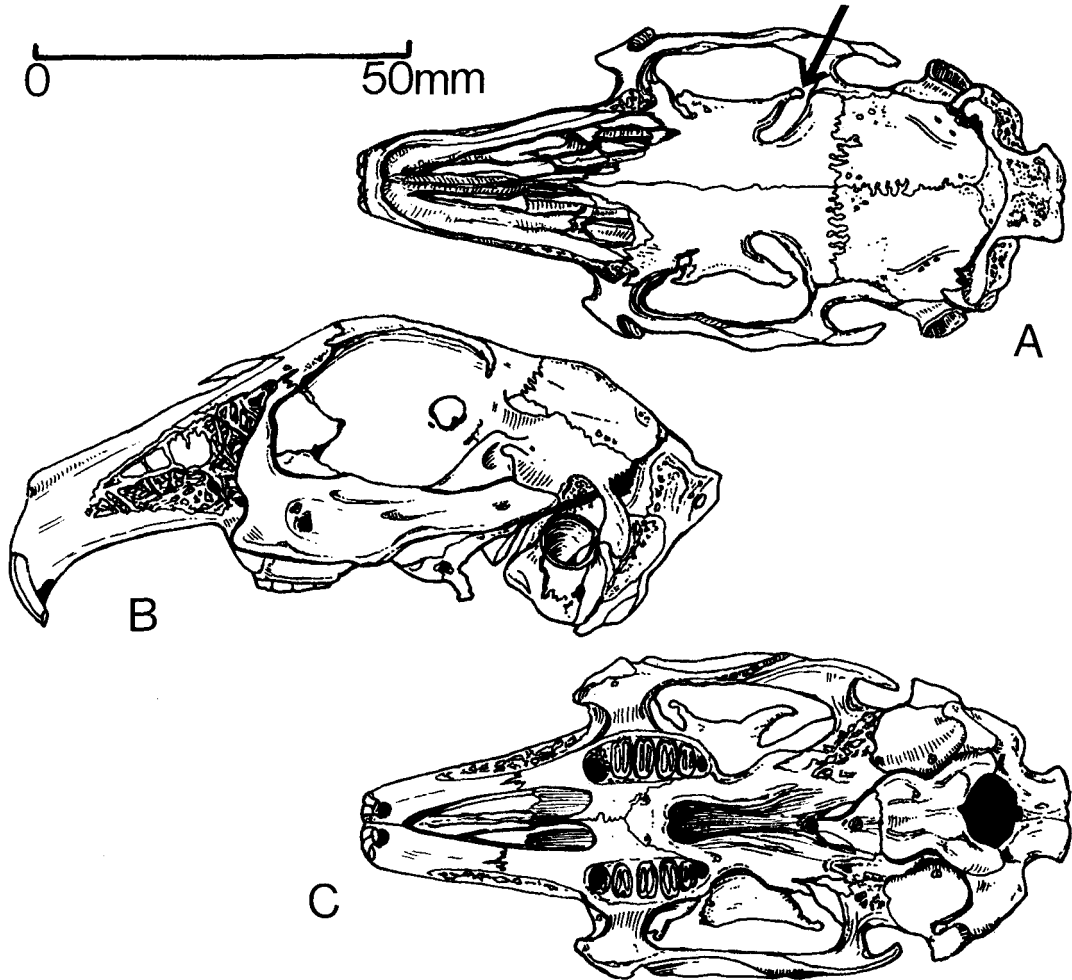


Fig. 11 Crosswall 1979: Drawings of the skull of the Angora rabbit from the late 18th century cess pit: (A) dorsal view; (B) left lateral view; (C) palatal view. The narrow width between the supraorbital fissures (arrowed) identifies the specimen as Angora (1:1).

	HEAD			BODY		FORE & HIND LIMBS							EXTREMITY						TOTAL NUMBER	WEIGHT (g)	
	Skull	maxilla	mandibular ramus	vertebra (incl. sacrum)	rib	scapula	humerus	radius	ulna	innominate	femur	tibia	fibula	calcaneum	talus	metapodial	phalanx 1	phalanx 2			hoof core
CATTLE	—	—	—	6(5)	9(5)	—	1(1)	—	—	2(2)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	18	403.0
SHEEP	—	1	2	14(14)	—	—	—	—	—	4(2)	1	4(4)	—	—	1	1(1)	2	3	1	35	343.7
SHEEP & PIG SIZED	—	—	—	14(14)	18(11)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	32	104.6
PIG	—	—	—	6(6)	—	1(1)	1(1)	1(1)	—	—	1(1)	1	1(1)	2(1)	2(1)	1	—	—	—	17	244.0
RABBIT small sized (1 individual)	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	0.6
large sized (parts of 1 skeleton)	1	—	2	18	22	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	—	12	1	—	—	72	106.2
CAT (foetal)	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	0.3

() Numbers in parentheses refer to bones showing evidence of butchery

Fig. 12. Crosswall 1979: Numbers of identified mammalian bones.

BIRD BONE

B. A. West

There were 339 bones from domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*), 19 unidentified fragments and one linnet (*Acanthis cannabina*), none of which display butchery marks. The total weight of the identified bone is 485g and the unidentified, 2.6g. In addition to the bird bone, several small fragments of egg shell (?chicken) were found.

The considerable variation in age and size of the domestic fowl bones facilitated the estimation of minimum number of individuals, of which at least 26 are represented.

Of the 209 fowl bones in which age can be estimated by epiphyseal fusion, 137 (65%) are adult and 73 (35%) immature (under six months old).

Gender can be determined in 10 adult tarsometatarsal bones: 8 are unspurred and thus female, 1 bears a spur scar and is also female, while one is spurred and therefore either male or capon (West, forthcoming).

Only one pathological specimen was recovered: a *Gallus* skull with a small lump of irregular deposition on the left frontal process, and, on the right frontal process, an indentation or puncture with a raised circular rim. These injuries suggest that the individual was probably pecked on the head (Cowles, pers. comm.).

Measurements of the limb bones of domestic fowl (Figure 13) were compared with those from six other sites: Southampton (Bourdillon & Coy, 1980), Exeter (Maltby, 1979), Lincoln (O'Connor, 1981, in press), St. Magnus, London (Carcy & Armitage, 1979) Baynard's Castle, London (Carcy, 1979) and Aldgate, London (West, 1980). The study revealed that the Crosswall specimens are much larger than those from St. Magnus (1st–14th century), Southampton (8th–10th century), Lincoln (8th–13th century), and all periods at Exeter except c. AD 1600–1800, to which they are similar. The Crosswall measurements compare more closely with the bird bones from various City deposits, dumped at Baynard's Castle (c. AD 1500–1520), than with those from the Castle itself, which are larger. They are only slightly smaller than those from Aldgate (17th–18th century). Thus the measurements are consistent with those from other post-medieval sites, providing additional confirmation of the general trend toward increased size in domestic fowl from medieval to modern times.

The linnet bone probably represents a cage bird:

'In the 1770's song birds were taken alive on the outskirts of London, with the aid of nets and tame decoys, to be sold not as food but as caged birds' (Wilson, 1973, 117).

And the linnet was highly prized for its song;

'Of all house birds, this, from the softness and flute-like sound of its voice, gives the airs that it is taught in the neatest and most agreeable manner' (Bechstein, 1812, 143).

FISH BONE

A. Locker

A total of 32 fish bones was recovered; of these, 29 (90.6%) are identified to species and part of skeleton and 3 (9.4%) remain as unidentified bone fragments. The weight of the identified bone is 17.6g and, of the unidentified, 0.1g. All the fish bones are heavily stained. The following species are identified; cod (*Gadus morhua*), haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) and plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*). Fig. 14 lists the bone elements identified for each species.

The two cod dentaries appear to be a pair and using the D measurement to estimate the length, weight and age relationship (Wheeler & Jones, 1976) the total length of the individual is assessed at approximately 60cm, the age 3 to 4 years and the weight 1.75kg. The P measurement made on the cod premaxilla indicates the presence of a smaller individual approximately 40cm in length, 2 years old and weighing around 0.75kg. One of the cod cleithra has a knife cut suggesting butchery possibly resulting from the removal of the head.

All three species from Crosswall could have been purchased from one of the three main London fish markets of the 18th century: Billingsgate, Fishstreet Hill and Old Fish Street (Defoe, 1724 reprinted 1974 ii;343).

Bone	Measurement (after the method of von den Driesch, 1976)					
		GL	Bp	SD	Bd	GL: Range
Femur	\bar{X} N	83.4 10	16.5 10	7.3 10	16.9 10	74.9-94.1
Humerus	\bar{X} N	78.2 6	21.0 6	7.3 6	16.2 6	71.9-85.7
Radius	\bar{X} N	63.2 14	— —	3.3 14	6.6 14	57.5-75.6
Tarsometatarsus (female)	\bar{X} N	72.9 9	13.0 9	6.1 9	13.1 9	64.9-84.6
Tarsometatarsus (male or capon)	\bar{X} N	92.8 1	15.4 1	8.2 1	16.9 1	—
Ulna	\bar{X} N	70.2 12	8.4 12	4.4 12	DiD 9.5 12	64.5-83.2
Carpometacarpus	\bar{X} N	39.9 8	12.7 7	— —	DiD 7.6 8	35.2-43.8
Scapula	\bar{X} N	74.5 10	— —	— —	DiC 12.7 15	68.6-81.0
Coracoid	\bar{X} N	56.9 9	— —	Bb 15.3 9	BF 12.6 9	51.9-65.0
Tibia	\bar{X} N	117.6 6	DiP 21.9 6	SD 6.7 6	Bd 12.2 6	103.5-132.5

KEY: \bar{X} =mean; N=number; GL=length; Bp=proximal width; SD=minimum shaft width; Bd=distal width; DiD=diagonal of the distal end; DiC=cranial diagonal; Bb=basal width; BF=width of the basal articular surface; DiP=diagonal of the proximal end.

Fig. 13. Crosswall 1979: Measurements of the limb bones of domestic fowl.

Cod	Haddock	Plaice	Unidentified
2 d	2 v	1 h	3 b
1 p		4 v	
5 c			
8 h			
6 v			

KEY: d=dentary; p=premaxilla; c=cleithrum; h=other head bone; b=branchiostega; v=vertebra.

Fig. 14. Crosswall 1979: Numbers of fish bones.

DISCUSSION

A. G. Vince, P. L. Armitage and G. Egan

The discovery of a large group of household objects (intermixed with a considerable amount of building material) in what was seemingly a brick-lined cess pit, is unusual. Further, it is notable that many of the objects were apparently intact when discarded, even sets of dishes are represented. Everything in the group seems to have been disposed of at the same time, *c.* 1770 (Vince, 1981). A remarkably domestic feature of the assemblage is the presence of pets, indicated by the remains of a linnet, glass bird feeder, Angora rabbit and the (?) cat foetus. The range of the material—evidently not the result of the day to day accumulation of refuse—suggests that it may represent the clearance of a household. Such a clearance might have occurred on the death of the resident or in more unusual circumstances (Huggins, 1969).

A documentary search was carried out but failed to discover any evidence of the property or its owner/resident during the relevant period. However, there are some fairly positive indications of the social status of the household: the keeping of pets such as the caged linnet and exotic Angora rabbit; the presence of at least two sets of high quality Chinese porcelain, including one piece some 70 years old and possibly an heirloom; the fan; the stool-pan for use with a wooden commode and, finally, the evidence of diet (discussed below), consistently suggest a middle-class background.

The information from this group is best interpreted by comparison with that from contemporary groups elsewhere in London. The nearest available comparison is with a slightly earlier group from Cutler Street (CUT 78, 928 & 929: D.U.A. archives, Museum of London), which contained a similar pottery assemblage but little else. Although this is possibly a *real variation it could*, however, be due to differential recovery of the pottery and other artefacts. The only other 18th-century group for which such information exists is from the Aldgate 1974 excavation (AL 74, 1241: D.U.A. archives, Museum of London) and is dated *c.* 1700–1720, at least half a century earlier than that from Crosswall. Nevertheless, a comparison between these two groups is informative.

From the point of view of the faunal remains, the assemblage from the late 18th-century cess pit at Crosswall is most unusual and atypical of the other animal bone groups that have so far been recovered from post-medieval sites in London, for example, Aldgate (Fig. 15). Cattle, sheep and pig bone form the bulk of the assemblage from Aldgate and relatively few bird bones are present (less than 1% of the total weight of the identified bone elements). The faunal remains from the pit at Crosswall, on the other hand, include a very high proportion of bird bone mostly domestic fowl with one bone of a linnet; forming 29% of the total weight of the identified bone elements. With the exception of the linnet bone and skeleton of an Angora rabbit, both thought to be pets, all the mammalian, bird and fish bone from Crosswall is kitchen refuse. The presence of a high proportion of immature cattle, sheep, pig and chicken bones may indicate that the household (or ? households) from which this material originated was reasonably 'well-off': a poorer family would presum-

ably have eaten the cheaper meat from older animals. The suggestion that the linnet may have been kept as a cage bird is substantiated by the presence in the same deposit of a glass bird feeder.

Glassware is ten times more common in the Crosswall pit than the Aldgate assemblage, but differences between the pottery assemblages are less pronounced and mainly reflect the disparity in date (Fig. 15). In both cases the most common ware, by weight, was locally produced (Aldgate 93.5%, Crosswall 83.4%). Non-local pottery is more common in the later group, but this is part of a countrywide trend and the Cutler Street group contains a similar proportion of non-local wares to that from Crosswall. A big difference can be seen in the quantities of imported pottery. Only two imported types of pottery were recovered at Aldgate, Cutler Street and Crosswall: Westerwald stoneware (which declines from 1.0% to 0.2% to absent) and Chinese porcelain (which increases from 0.5% to 2.2% to 5.6%). However, if the pottery is examined by counting the proportions of rims present (Estimated Vessel Equivalents or EVEs), rather than by weight, the results are different. In Fig. 16 the groups are divided into types of wares and quantified in the first column by weight and in the second by EVEs. Since some of the less frequent wares had no rims present they do not feature in the second column. The main difference between the two methods of quantification is in the relative frequencies of coarsewares and finewares. Local red earthenware and Border wares are less prominent by EVEs whilst tin-glazed wares, non-local wares and imported wares are more so. This second method of quantification is more sensitive when comparing the frequencies of small, light vessels which by weight are unimportant. Chinese porcelain is the most common ware by EVEs in the Crosswall assemblage (31% of the group) compared with 2% in the Aldgate assemblage and 12% from Cutler Street. This clearly distinguishes the Crosswall group from the others. The only other significant difference between the wares present in the Crosswall and Cutler Street groups is the much smaller quantity of Border ware in the later group. Perhaps the importation of pottery from this region went into decline in the mid 18th-century.

An intriguing aspect of the porcelain is that the objects found at Cutler Street and Crosswall were some 40 years old when discarded, and coincidentally contemporary with those in the much earlier Aldgate group. It is remarkable that at Cutler Street and Crosswall there are no later pieces, and there is also the question of the reasons for the variation in the quantity of porcelain between the three groups. Clearly, to get much further with the interpretation of this pottery requires more comparative material. A corresponding problem arises when looking at the glassware since although there is much more glass in the Crosswall pit, the relative proportions of the different types of vessels (bottles/medicine phials/fineware) are similar.

Factors which may explain the variations between the three groups are: social differences, diverse methods of rubbish disposal, chronological differences in the material culture of the 18th-century Londoners and, of course, personal taste. To judge the relative strengths of these factors more assemblages need to be examined, preferably in well-documented situations where some of the archaeological variables can be controlled.

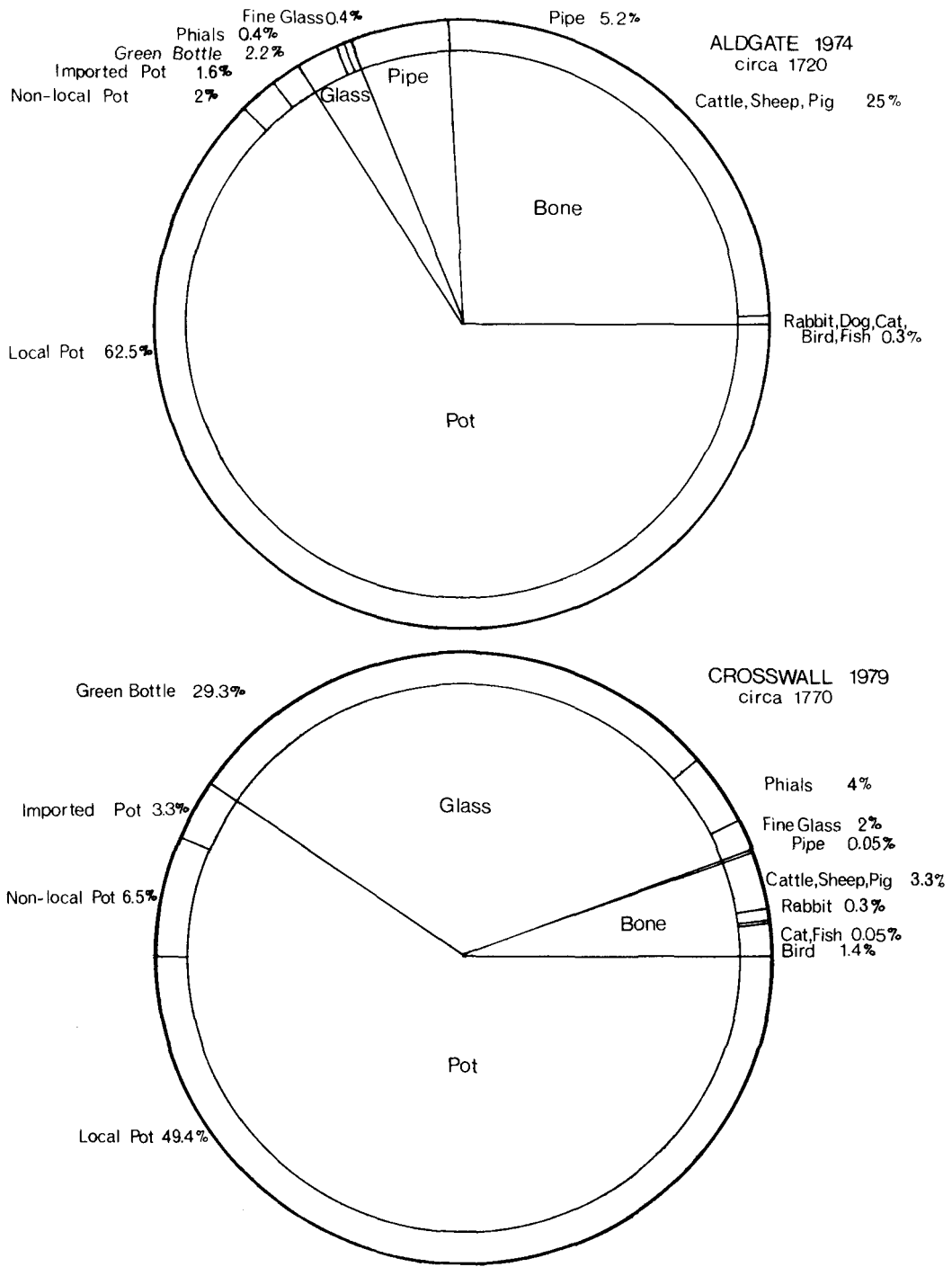


Fig. 15. Crosswall 1779: Statistical analysis of finds from Aldgate 1774 and Crosswall 1779 (percentages by weight).

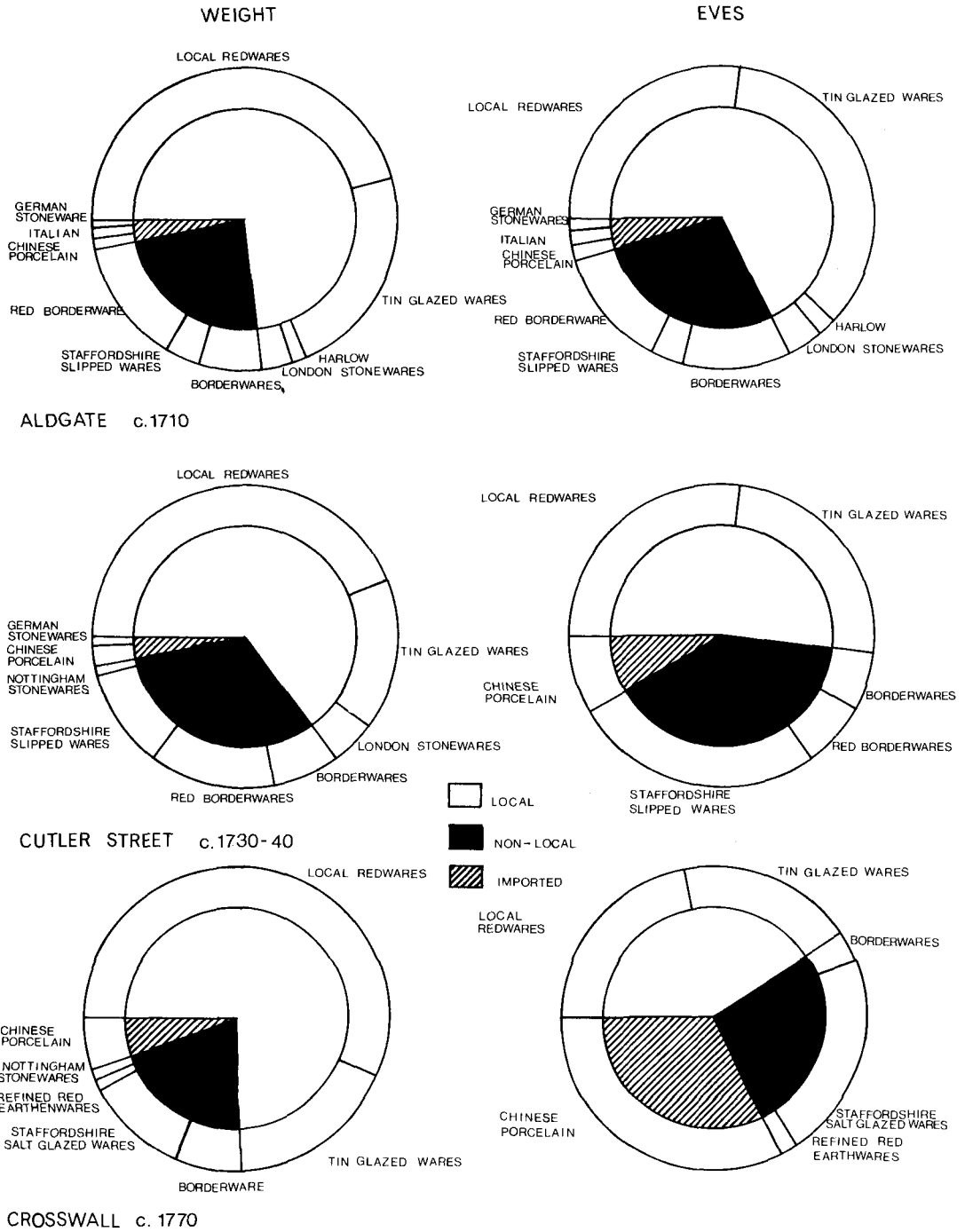


Fig. 16. Comparison of three post-medieval pottery assemblages by (a) weight (b) estimated vessel equivalents.

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REVIEW

PETER MARSDEN *Roman London* (Thames & Hudson) (1980) 224pp. 160 illustrations, £8.95.

A new book on Roman London is only to be welcomed. No definitive work has been published on the history and archaeology of Roman London since 1965, when Ralph Merrifield's invaluable book, *The Roman City of London*, was published (now sadly out of print). So much has happened on London's archaeological scene in the past fifteen years that such a book is sorely needed. This book traces the major excavations and finds from which the history of Roman London is drawn. It includes details from excavations carried out since the establishment of a permanent archaeological unit in 1973.

The book traces the origins of London, putting forward the theory that Roman London was founded by civilians and that it was not a military settlement as has been previously argued—a point still under discussion and needing more evidence either way. It describes the first century with the Boudican rebellion, the city's subsequent rebuilding and its creation as the capital of the Province in the second century. Later chapters deal with the impressive Roman public buildings that have been excavated in the City and the people known to have lived in Roman London. The history continues with the building of the city wall, and the later riverside wall and bastions. It describes the decline in London's prosperity and population and finally what is known of the end of Roman London.

A final chapter traces the stages in the recovery of Roman London from the earliest archaeological efforts of Christopher Wren in the seventeenth century, to eighteenth-century cartographers, the antiquarian collectors of the nineteenth century and the professional archaeologists of the twentieth. This final chapter is particularly worthy of mention, since it is a useful compendium of the antiquarians and archaeologists involved in the discovery of Roman London. More important, it lays blame with the Corporation of London for its lack of interest and financial involvement at the times when the opportunities for excavating Roman London were at their greatest. It cannot be stressed enough that had the Corporation been forced to take archaeological responsibility during the Victorian rebuilding of London or even after the last war, a more systematic approach and indeed a more comprehensive picture of Roman London might have been produced.

This book is well-illustrated with numerous archaeological plans and photographs, some of which have lost detail in their reproduction. Perhaps some of the plans could have been drawn rather more professionally with a uniform house-style, and scales should have been checked before publication. Illustrations of Roman objects and the Sorrell reconstructions of Roman scenes enrich the archaeological content. The book is essential reading for all those studying Roman London.

Jenny Hall