

EXCAVATIONS AT STEPNEY HIGH STREET, E1

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SUMMARY

Part of a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pit, much disturbed, was revealed in the north area. Medieval pits and some scoops lay in the north area, a ditch and postholes in the south trench. All other features were post-mediaeval, most seeming to be associated with a period of agriculture.

INTRODUCTION

The remodelling of the west side of Stepney High Street for a short term urban farm project and a new through route from Mile End Road to Commercial Road was thought likely to disturb the documented Saxon and medieval village of Stepney (Llewellyn Smith 1939, 16). The Inner London Archaeological Unit carried out an excavation in the autumn of 1979 to examine the deposits endangered by the redevelopments. Because only certain areas were available for investigation the excavation (TQ358816) was restricted to the north end of the High Street some 100m north-west of the medieval church of St. Dunstan (Fig. 1).

An 'L' shaped area 22m by 15m was cleared of *c.* 0.5m of modern deposits by machine. Further south a trench 12.5m by 2.5m was cut by hand. The north area was disturbed to the north, west and south by modern intrusions.

The site records may be examined at Imex House, 42 Theobalds Road, London WC1.

THE EXCAVATION (Fig. 2)

LATE BRONZE AGE/EARLY IRON AGE

Phase 1

The last vestiges of a pit or scoop (F155) containing a quantity of Late Bronze Age/

Early Iron Age pottery lay on the north edge of the north area. Cut to the north by a cellar and disturbed by later ploughing the feature had curved sides and a gently sloping bottom (length 1.05m, width 0.2m, max. depth 0.22m). It was filled with buff sandy clay (Layer 156) and a few pebbles. The pottery was distributed throughout the fill, some also having been transposed to the ploughsoil above (Fig. 3).

MEDIEVAL

Phase 2 (mid-late 14th century)

This consisted of features cut into the natural brickearth and sealed by the Phase 5 loam. In the north area pits (F111 and F146), scoops (F79, F109, F130, F144, F165, F178) and a posthole (F172) indicated a mid 14th-century presence, though no associated structures were found. The pit F111 (Fig. 4), irregular in outline and disturbed by later features (length 4.1m, width 1.7m, depth 0.75m) lay on the east of the site and continued under the pavement. Two other pits (F77 and F161) seem to be slightly later than the rest of the features, possibly late 14th century; by similarity of form the pit F99 may be contemporary. The south trench contained a north-south ditch (F233) and two postholes (F226 and F228).

POST-MEDIEVAL

Phase 3 (late 15th century-early 16th century)

Cut into the brickearth and sealed by the

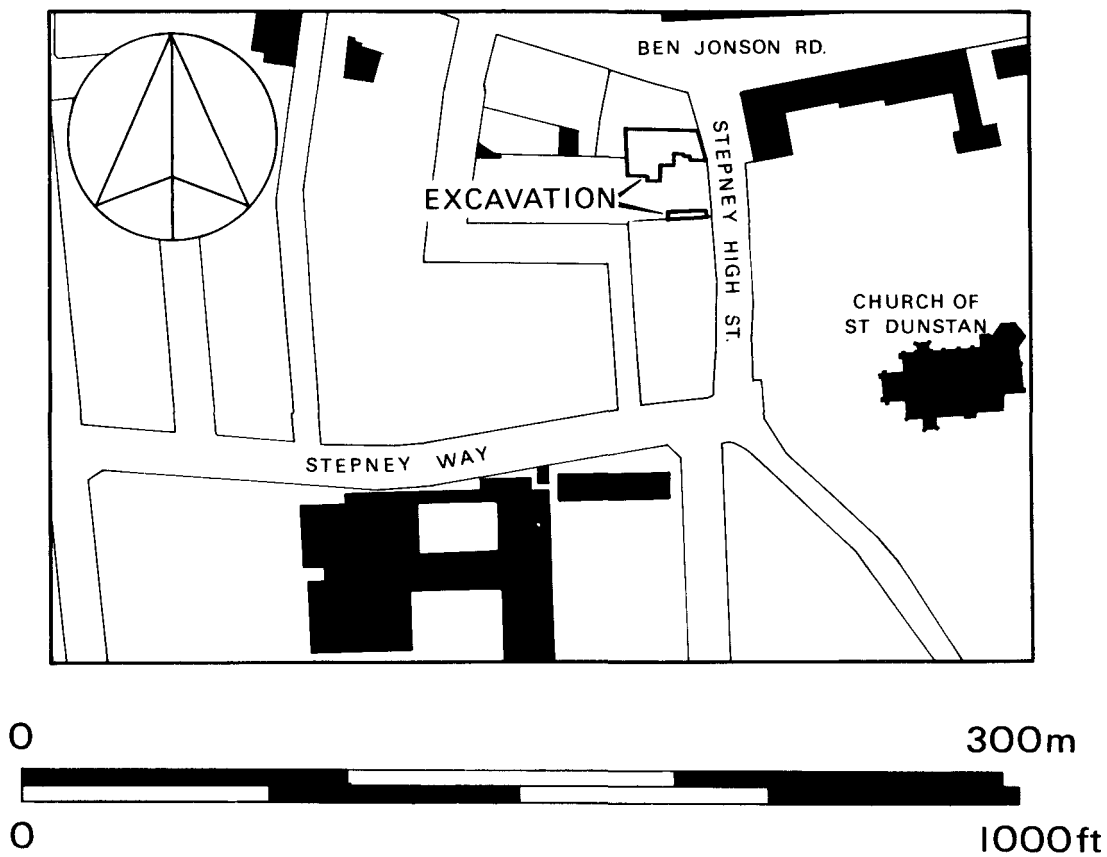


Fig. 1. Stepney High Street: Site Location.

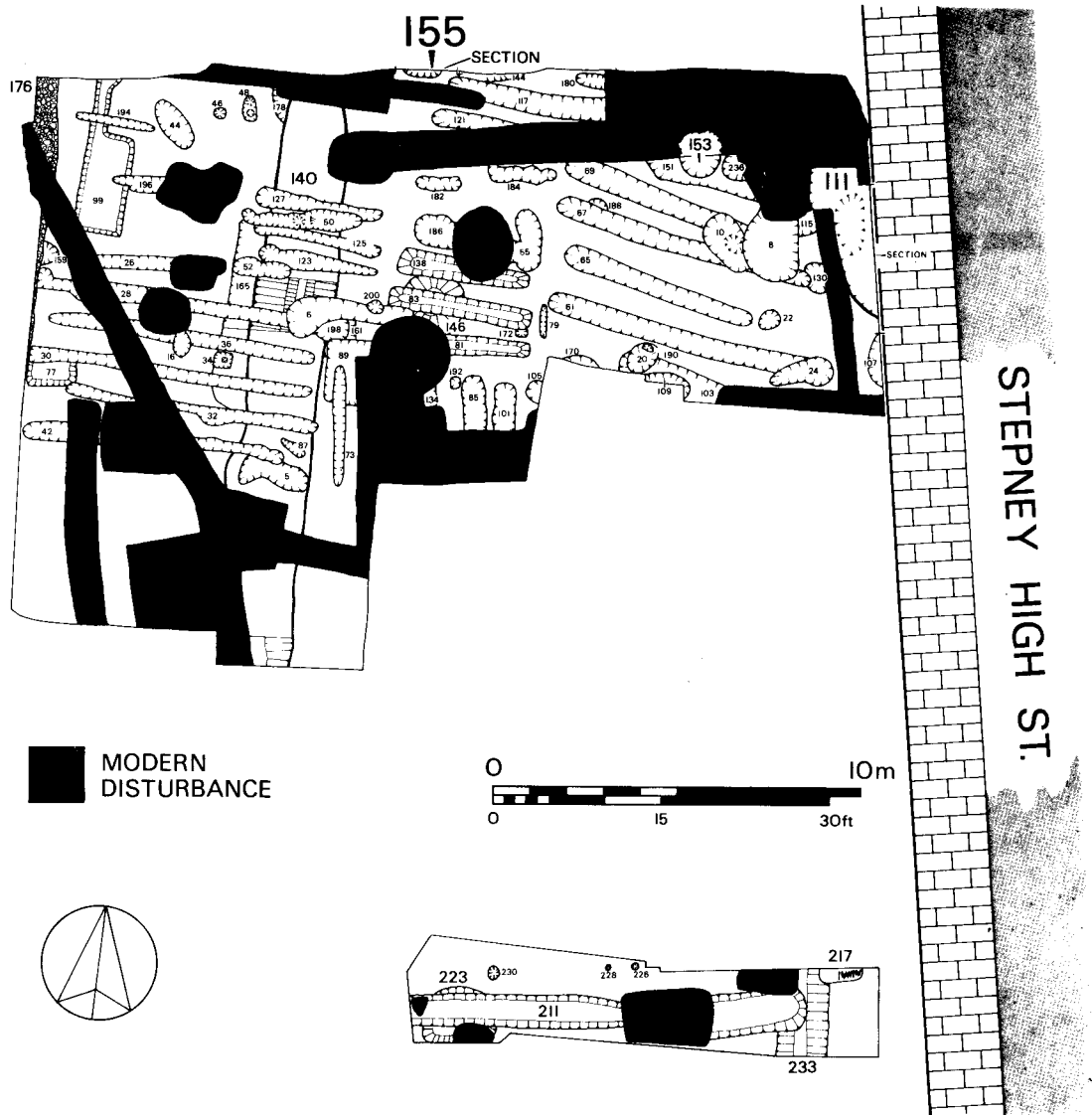


Fig. 2. Stepney High Street: Site Plan.

Phase 5 loam this phase was represented by scoops (F103 and F170), a posthole (F230) and a drain (F140). This substantial brick-lined drain (exposed length 16m, width 2.3m, depth 1.5m) ran north–south.

Phase 4 (mid–late 16th century)

On the eastern side of the north area were a series of bedding trenches or furrows (F61, F65, F67, F69, F81, F117, F121, F123, F125, F127, F138, F180) which ran east–west, though three (F85, F101, F134) ran north–south. There were also scoops of unknown function (F75, F87, F105, F151) and some postholes (F91, F159, F188, F190, F192) which formed no discernible pattern. In the north-east corner was a hollow showing signs of burning (F153), possibly the site of a bonfire.

In the south trench a ditch ran east–west (F211) cutting a slightly earlier pit (F223).

Phase 5 (early–mid 17th century)

Sealing Phases 1, 2, 3 and 4 and cut by Phases 6 and 7 was a layer of brown sandy loam, F3 in the north area and F203 in the south trench. In the north area this produced a range of exotic pottery (see below) probably derived from either the Great Place, which lay to the south, or from Worcester House to the west. In contrast the south trench produced only domestic wares.

Phase 6 (post 1650)

Cut into the Phase 5 loam were a number of features apparently agricultural in origin. On the west side of the north area lay some furrows (F26, F28, F30, F32, F36, F38, F42, F50, F52, F194, F196) running east–west and one north–south (F73). These respected a chalk wall (F176) which defined the western edge of the site and was probably a property boundary. This wall was subsequently reused as the foundation of a 19th-century brick wall. There were also several shallow scoops (F6, F10, F16, F20, F24, F44, F107, F115, F198, F236) and two pits (F8 and F89) in this phase. Six postholes (F22, F34, F40, F46, F48, F200) of differing proportions made no recognisable pattern.

At the east end of the south trench a small hearth was uncovered made of tiles set on edge in clay over the Phase 5 loam (F203).

No associated structure was revealed and it was sealed by loam (F201).

Phase 7

This consisted of modern drains and cellars and *c.* 0.5m of modern deposits.

DISCUSSION

The Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pit or scoop F155 was unexpected and, due to later disturbance, its purpose remains unclear though the pottery vessels (possibly buried upside down) may indicate a funerary deposit. Nonetheless it does provide further evidence of a Bronze Age presence in the vicinity already suggested by a bronze founder's hoard uncovered about a mile away at the turn of the century (Read 1903, 14).

The sparse remains of the medieval settlement found during the excavation add little to Stepney's written records. The scatter of pits implies the area was open during the 14th century and, indeed, the kitchen gardening may have begun in this period. There was no indication of the purpose of the pits, though the pit F111 could have been a brickearth quarry pit. Certainly the continuation of the pit suggests that the medieval High Street lay further east than its modern counterpart.

The early post-medieval period is represented principally by the large drain which crossed the site from north to south. This may be connected with the prestigious local house, the Great Place, or perhaps nearby Worcester House, though this is less likely. These houses may have been the source of the unusually varied range of imported pottery recovered from the first period of furrows (Phase 4) and subsequent loam (Phase 5).

The layout of the Phase 4 furrows suggests the area was cultivated as a kitchen garden. These furrows, the loam (Phase 5) and the second phase of furrows represent a continuous period of small scale

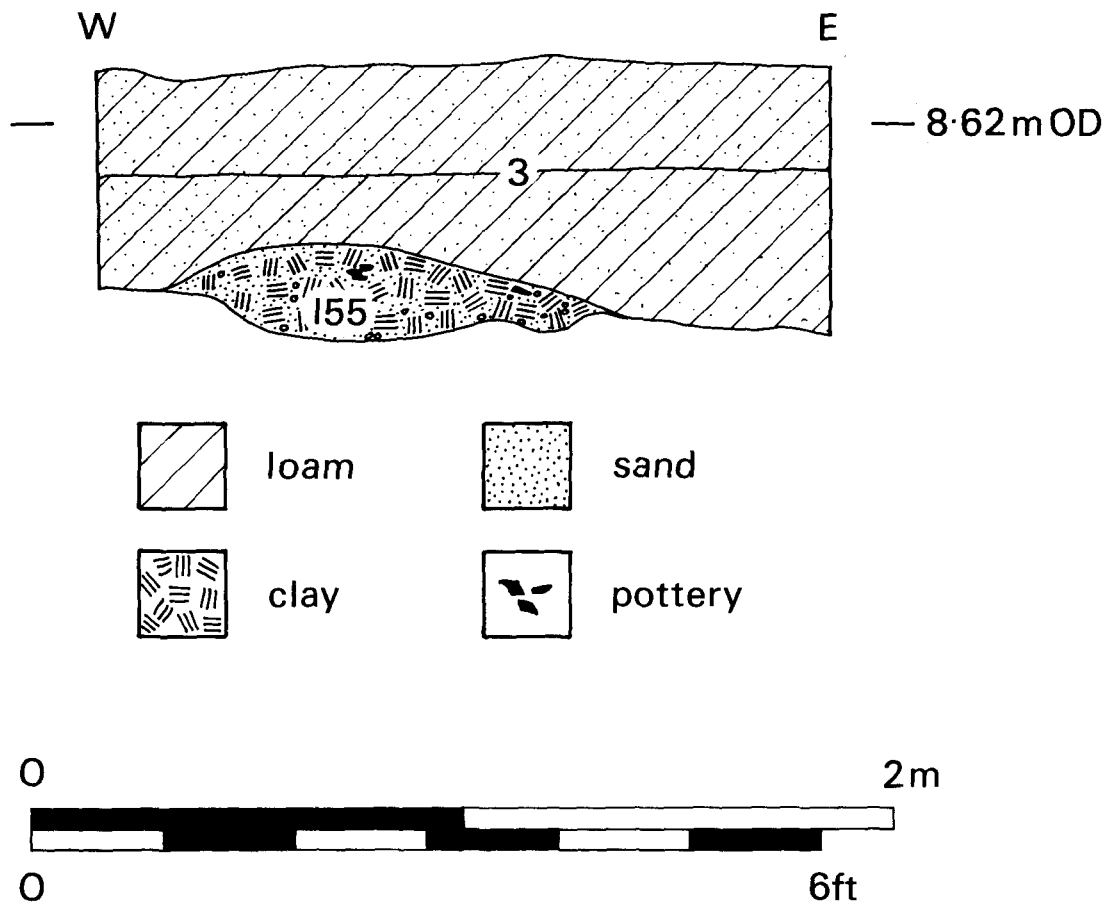


Fig. 3. Stepney High Street: Section of Pit F155.

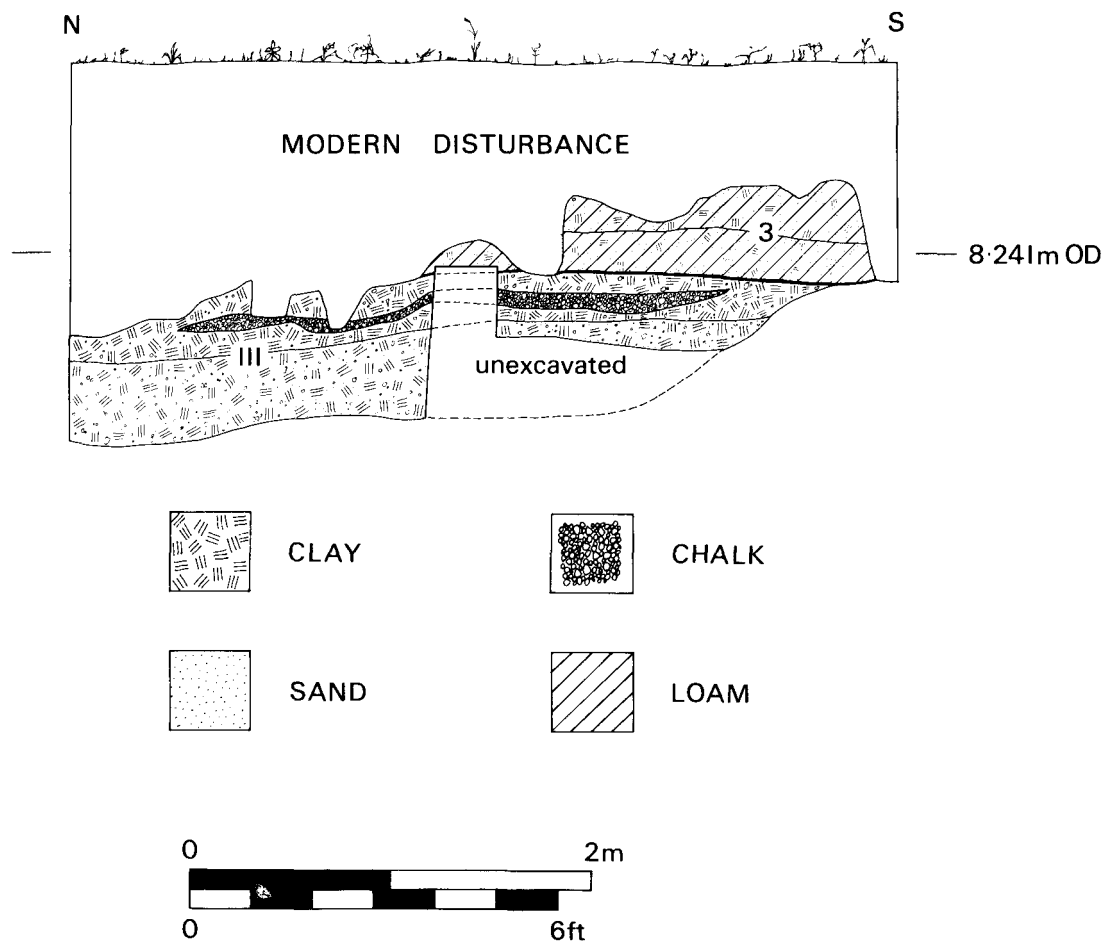


Fig. 4. Stepney High Street: Section of Pit F111.

agriculture. The east–west ditch in the south trench (F211) may have formed a property division though this could not be determined within the confines of the excavation.

The Phase 5 loam, apparently two layers in the north area but only one in the south trench, seems to include domestic debris from two different sources. The northernmost pottery included a considerable amount of foreign material whereas the south trench contained pottery of a more local nature. Possibly this reflects separate landholdings beside the High Street.

Finds from the later kitchen-garden use (Phase 6) show a marked reduction in the imported pottery, possibly corresponding to a change in the status of the neighbourhood. The south trench hearth (F217) indicates a house or workshop stood on the site but no trace of this survived.

Generally the evidence implies that the area was open for tipping and cultivation from the 14th century onwards, though the hearth shows that later agricultural works could destroy the remains of buildings. Further work around the High Street, where extensive developments are expected may reveal more details of the Bronze Age in Stepney and central London. To the south of the excavation, nearer to the church and the Great Place, there may be an area undisturbed by post-medieval agricultural features which could produce evidence for the growth of Saxon, medieval and post-medieval Stepney.

THE POTTERY

By Lyn Blackmore

1. The Prehistoric Pottery

Group 1. Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age (Fig. 5)

The unexpected discovery at Stepney High Street of a pit (F155) containing fragments of two Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age jars datable to *c.* 800–700 BC is of considerable interest and potential importance, being the first stratified ceramic land find of this period not only from Stepney but from the entire north bank of the Thames between Rainham, Essex (Greenwood 1982, 185–193) and the Heathrow area (Grimes 1961; 1969), a distance of some 20 miles.

The stylistic affinities of the two vessels are discussed below.

No. 1 Four rim sherds and fifty eight body sherds with extremely variable wall thickness, from a large hook-rimmed jar. The fabric is almost identical to that of No. 2, but is less well fired, and contains a sparse scatter of red haematite inclusions. This ware is also closely matched at Rainham (Greenwood 1982), where the presence of haematite is a noticeable characteristic of the assemblage. With the exception of the rim and adjacent body sherds, which are reduced to a purple-grey throughout, the majority of sherds have a pale grey core, black interior, and dull orange-grey exterior, although there are patches of redder orange. The inner wall is well smoothed, but the exterior has both untreated areas with protruding flint grits and a porous appearance, and areas with a roughly smoothed surface, which has caused a localised vertical scarring of the clay.

No. 2 Two rim sherds and sixty-nine body sherds from the neck and body of a large thick-walled jar with an open, flat-topped rim and probably of tripartite form. The hard fine micaceous fabric, heavily tempered with very coarsely crushed angular white, grey, black and occasionally burnt flint grits (up to 10mm across), is closely paralleled at Rainham (Greenwood 1982). Surface colouring varies from grey black exterior and core with yellow-brown interior on the neck and rim sherds to, on the majority of the body sherds, yellow-brown exterior with grey-black core and interior. The outer surface has been vertically smoothed, giving a rippled, but not burnished, appearance.

The fabric of both vessels, although hard, is somewhat laminated in structure, and this has caused some flaking of the surfaces. Together with the fragmentary condition of the pots, and the uneven nature of the rim sherds and wall thicknesses, this has prevented a full reconstruction of either vessel. The illustrations here present the most probable profile of each jar; the angle of No. 1 may in fact be more pronounced.

DISCUSSION

These two jars belong to the 'plain ware' tradition of ceramics which succeeds that of Deverel-Rimbury. They date to the transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age, a period which over the last few years has been the subject of widespread review (e.g. Barrett and Bradley 1980 and papers therein; Barrett 1979, 231) and they have elements in common with both the earlier and later ceramic styles.

Technologically the Stepney jars represent an eastward extension of the general southern tradition of Later Bronze Age plain coarse wares built with the slab rather than with the coil technique, a trait which is common in Somerset, the Upper Thames Valley and the south-east counties of Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire (Barrett 1975, 104), but not apparently at Mucking, where coil building

is the norm (Jones 1980, 477). The slab technique results in extreme variations in the wall thickness of the pot, and a rippling or smearing of the surfaces where the clay has been moulded to shape, and is particularly obvious on jar No. 2 from Stepney; jar No. 1 has apparently been built up with smaller pieces of clay, with less attention to the appearance of the final product. The absence of base sherds in the Stepney deposit is of some interest, suggesting that the pots were buried in an inverted position, and that their bases were destroyed by subsequent agricultural activity on the site. Another possibility is that, as at Mucking, the bases were formed as a separate piece of clay, and then ineffectively luted to the body of the pot, with a resulting weakness at this point. A general absence of base sherds in the assemblage from the North Rings at Mucking has been noted (Jones 1980, 477).



Fig. 5. Stepney High Street: Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age Pottery.

Stylistically the Stepney pots fall within the category defined by Barrett (1978, 268; 1980, 301) as 'Class 1' jars, that is, large plain ware jars in coarse fabrics with minimal surface treatment and little or no decoration. In the 10th and 9th centuries BC the range of forms is fairly limited, with the emphasis on larger vessels. By the 8th century, however, there is a much greater variety of forms, and a growing use of decoration, but the Class 1 jars are on the whole rather smaller (Barrett 1980, 303). For its probable date jar No. 1 from Stepney is a particularly large example (330mm diameter), while No. 2 is probably of average size (238mm diameter).

Of the two forms represented at Stepney, No. 1, referred to by Bishop (1971, 3) as Form 1, is typologically the earlier, although it is also extremely long lived, with a probable life-span of over 600 years. First identified as a specific form at Ram's Hill, Berks., where it was associated with the earliest phases of the site, *c.* 11th century BC (Barrett 1975, 103–104, Fig. 3.5, 6, 8, 9, 15), the 'hook-rimmed jar' is now known from a number of Late Bronze Age sites in southern England, although with considerable variation in the angle of the 'hook' to the main body of the pot, and in the depth of the rim itself. Assuming the reconstruction of No. 1 to be correct, the Stepney example seems to represent a hybrid of the hook-rimmed form and the slightly later barrel urn form. The closest local parallels would appear to be from Petter's Sports Field, Egham (O'Connell and Needham, 1977, Fig. 5, 5), from Brooklands, Weybridge, where a number of rim sherds from barrel-type jars ranging in size from 130–160mm were found (Close-Brooks 1977, Fig. 15, 39; Fig. 16, 57; Fig. 18, 123, Fig. 19, 144; Fig. 20, 158, 168), and at Orsett, Essex, where the complete profile of a much smaller barrel-shaped jar was recovered from the upper fill of the causewayed enclosure ditch (Barrett 1978, 277–8, Fig. 39, 4). The Petter's example may be dated by its association with a hoard containing Ewart Park style metalwork to the 8th or 7th century BC, and while a possible date in the 6th century BC was postulated for the Weybridge jars, some of these derive from the early land surface and

may therefore be earlier (Close-Brooks 1977, 40). The Orsett jar, although with an associated C14 date of 564 ± 81 bc, was found together with simply decorated Class 1 jars and bipartite bowls comparable both with those from Petter's Sports Field and with a group of 8th century BC material from Mucking (Jones 1980), and also with certain elements of the apparently 9th century BC assemblage from Runnymede (Barrett 1978, 273–4); this jar would therefore also appear to be of probable 8th-century BC date.

The shouldered, or tripartite jar, No. 2, is a typologically later development, but by the 9th–8th century BC forms a major part of the ceramic assemblages from Runnymede, Brooklands and Heathrow (Needham and Longley, 1980, 412). Classified by Bishop (1971, 3) as Form 2, this type also sees numerous variations in the basic form, most noticeably in the profile of the rim and the angle of the shoulder, which range from an exaggerated 'S' curve to a more angular form with a developed, carinated shoulder. This last element of the Stepney example must remain in doubt, but the flat-topped rim with its slight internal bead, slightly convex neck and apparently broad shoulder find possible parallels in West London and Surrey at Heathrow (Canham 1978, Fig. 1, 3), at Petter's Sports Field (O'Connell and Needham 1977, Fig. 5, 2) and at Runnymede (Needham and Longley 1980, Fig. 5, 11). A similar form was also found at Ivinghoe Beacon, Buckinghamshire (Waugh 1968, Fig. 18, 71). The Heathrow examples have however a characteristic short, sharply curved shoulder, while the rim profile of the Ivinghoe and Runnymede jars is more upright; the shoulder of the latter is extremely broad, whereas that of the example from Petter's Sports Field is remarkably slack. Downstream from Stepney similar, although more developed, forms are found at Orsett (Barrett 1978, Fig. 40, 24), although this is decorated, at Mucking (Jones 1980, Fig. 3, 16) and at Mill Hill, Deal in Kent (Champion 1980, Fig. 6, 3). These latter examples have a noticeably more convex neck, rounded rim and generally slacker shoulder.

As may be expected from its geographical location, the above jars from Stepney have

affinities with ceramic finds from sites both to the east and to the west. Jar No. 1 is typologically later, but the two forms are frequently found together, as for example at Ram's Hill and at Petter's Sports Field. On the evidence of the above parallels, the generally coarse nature of the fabric and lack of decoration on the Stepney jars, a date in the 8th–7th century BC seems appropriate for this deposit. The association of both forms at Petter's Sports Field with a hoard of bronze metalwork containing Ewart Park type material contemporary with that found in a hoard at Devons Road, Tower Hamlets, only one mile from the site at Stepney High Street, is particularly valuable, lending further weight to the suggestion that the two pots here discussed and the Devons Road hoard may be contemporary and indicative of a settlement nearby, perhaps between the two find-spots. A settlement here is not unexpected given its strategic position just to the west of the River Lea, with commanding views over the Thames. It lies only a mile from the City of London where numerous land finds of 8th–7th century BC metalwork indicate considerable activity (Needham and Burgess 1980, 449).

2. The Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery

Introduction

1. In addition to the prehistoric pottery discussed above, a total of 2791 sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery was also recovered from the site, mainly from the 14th-century features, and from the mid 17th-century garden soil. The nature of the assemblage is governed by two main factors, namely the limited number of medieval features, and the considerable disturbance of the site, probably from the 15th century, but dateably on a major scale from the mid 16th century. As a result the number of securely stratified medieval sherds is low, while the post-medieval layers contained a high proportion of residual material. The assemblage as a whole, however, is of some interest for the wide range of imported wares represented.

2. The pottery is first discussed according to the main phases of activity on the site; the

imports are then summarised, and the assemblage as a whole considered in relation to the local history of the area.

3. For economy the following consists of generalised descriptions of the fabric groups only, with reference to published groups and parallels wherever possible; full fabric descriptions are only included where not matched elsewhere. Full details of all fabric types and all unpublished material may be consulted in the pottery archive, which is stored together with the material at the I.L.A.U., Imex House, 42, Theobalds Road, London W.1.

Group 2. Mid-late 14th century (Fig. 6, Nos 3–21)

These features produced an entirely homogeneous assemblage of wares with a general date range of *c.* 1270–1350, suggesting a probable date of *c.* 1325–1350 for the majority of features in this group. F161 however also contained one sherd of 'Tudor Green' type ware, while F77 produced two sherds of Cheam type white ware, which if securely stratified, would suggest a date of *c.* 1350–1380 for these two square pits, and therefore, by analogy of form, possibly also for F99. The dominant fabrics in this group are the Mill Green red wares, and the white wares from north-east Surrey. There is also a small proportion of South Hertfordshire type ware, London ware and some unidentified wares which appear to be of 13th-century rather than 14th-century date. Of these the South Hertfordshire wares are represented by only cooking pots (Nos. 5, 6, 7) and bowl sherds (No. 3); these are mainly reduced (see Orton 1977, 80), but include some oxidised wares. No. 5 resembles the reduced products of the Pinner kilns (Shepard 1977); the oxidised wares are as yet unprovenanced, although red wares are known at Elstree (Castle and Hammerson 1977, 152), and red or brown surfaced wares are present in the assemblage from the Manor of the More (Hurst 1959, 163). The London wares are varied (see Orton 1977, 80–81), but comprise mainly jug sherds, some decorated with a white slip and green glaze, and also include one unusual base with a ring foot (No. 18). Of some interest is the almost complete

lower half of a jug of unknown origin (No. 22) from the lower fill of F111 (Layer 133), which appears to combine the London and Mill Green traditions of painted slip decoration with an oxidised South Hertfordshire type coarse sandy fabric.

The Mill Green wares range from extremely fine to very coarse. Formerly known as 'West Kent' ware (Thorn 1975; Orton 1977, 82; Orton 1979a, 30), these are discussed more fully elsewhere in this volume (Pearce *et al.*, 1982). The Stepney group consists almost entirely of jug sherds, which occur more or less equally in all fabric grades, both with a white slip and green glaze (Nos. 19, 20) or unglazed (No. 21). Cooking pots are few, and appear in the coarsest fabric type only. The Surrey wares, conversely, are represented predominantly by cooking pots (No. 8), bowls (Nos. 10, 11) and jars (No. 9) with a wide range of rim forms. There are however some jug sherds (Nos. 12–17), and an early copy of a lobed cup (No. 17). Decoration is rare, consisting mainly of a patchy green glaze, but includes stabbing on the rim (No. 10) or handle, while on the jug sherds both the repoussé (No. 12) and the applied techniques are represented, the latter in the form of rouletted strips (No. 14) or overlapping scales (*cf.* Thorn 1975, Fig. 11, 161; Orton 1979, Fig. 16, 103). The majority of sherds would appear to be of 'Kingston' type (see Orton 1977, 82; Hinton 1980). There are, however, in addition to two sherds (including No. 16) of 'Cheam' type ware (see Marshall 1922; Matthews and Green 1969; Orton 1977, 82; Orton 1979b), and a few sherds (including No. 8) of probable south-west Surrey ware (see Holling 1968; Holling 1971, 57–69), two other smaller groups. Of these the first, also noted at Angel Court (Orton 1975, 82) is solely or predominantly tempered with translucent red quartz grains (in sharp contrast to the main group, which is predominantly tempered with white, grey or clear quartz in varying proportions and a moderate amount of very fine black iron ore, with little or no red quartz); the second has a much sandier texture and is pinkish-buff rather than white or off-white in colour, and is in fact more akin to the oxidised South Hertfordshire wares. This ware is fur-

ther distinguished by its much thinner wall and poor finish; some sherds are hand-made, and it is possible that this group is of 12th–13th-century date. The attribution of the various Surrey wares to specific kiln sources is frustrated by the current lack of excavated kiln sites, the very considerable inter-grading of the fabric types, the similarity nature of the forms produced, and moreover by the recent discovery at Bankside, Southwark, of a large dump of kiln wasters (Dennis and Hinton 1983) which contains many sherds identical both in form and fabric to wares from Kingston, Cheam and Stepney. Given the proximity of the Southwark site to the City of London, it seems likely that a certain proportion at least of the Surrey white ware jugs and mugs found in London and formerly assigned to the Kingston or Cheam kilns may in fact derive from the nearer production centre.

Ceramically the richest features in this phase are F111 and F146 in the north trench, which, on the evidence of matching sherds in different layers of their fill, would both appear to have been backfilled as one controlled operation. Sherds from the same pots were also found in F146 and F161. In the south trench F226, F233 and F228 would also appear to be contemporary with this phase, although these only contained only one sherd of South Hertfordshire grey ware and one sherd of Surrey white ware (No. 13) respectively; F228 was sterile. Imported wares in this group are limited to one sherd of Langerwehe stoneware, and one sherd of possible Low Countries grey ware, although the Saintonge wares from the fill of F140 may derive from this phase.

- No. 3 Flanged bowl, South Hertfordshire grey ware (*cf.* Hurst 1959, Fig. 8, 14; Sheppard 1977, Fig. 5.2). 13th century. F79, Layer 80.
- No. 4 Cooking pot, shell tempered ware (oxidised). Laminated structure. 12th–13th century. F111, Layer 133.
- No. 5 Cooking pot, South Hertfordshire grey ware, exterior slightly vitrified. (*cf.* Sheppard 1977, Fig. 3, 19). 13th century. F111, Layers 133, 132.
- No. 6 Cooking pot or jar of pinkish-buff sandy ?South Hertfordshire ware, with seated, flanged rim (*cf.* Hurst 1959, Fig. 11, 15). Probably mid 14th century. F146, Layer 147.
- No. 7 Cooking pot with rim as above. Hard sandy ?South Hertfordshire ware with splashes of thin

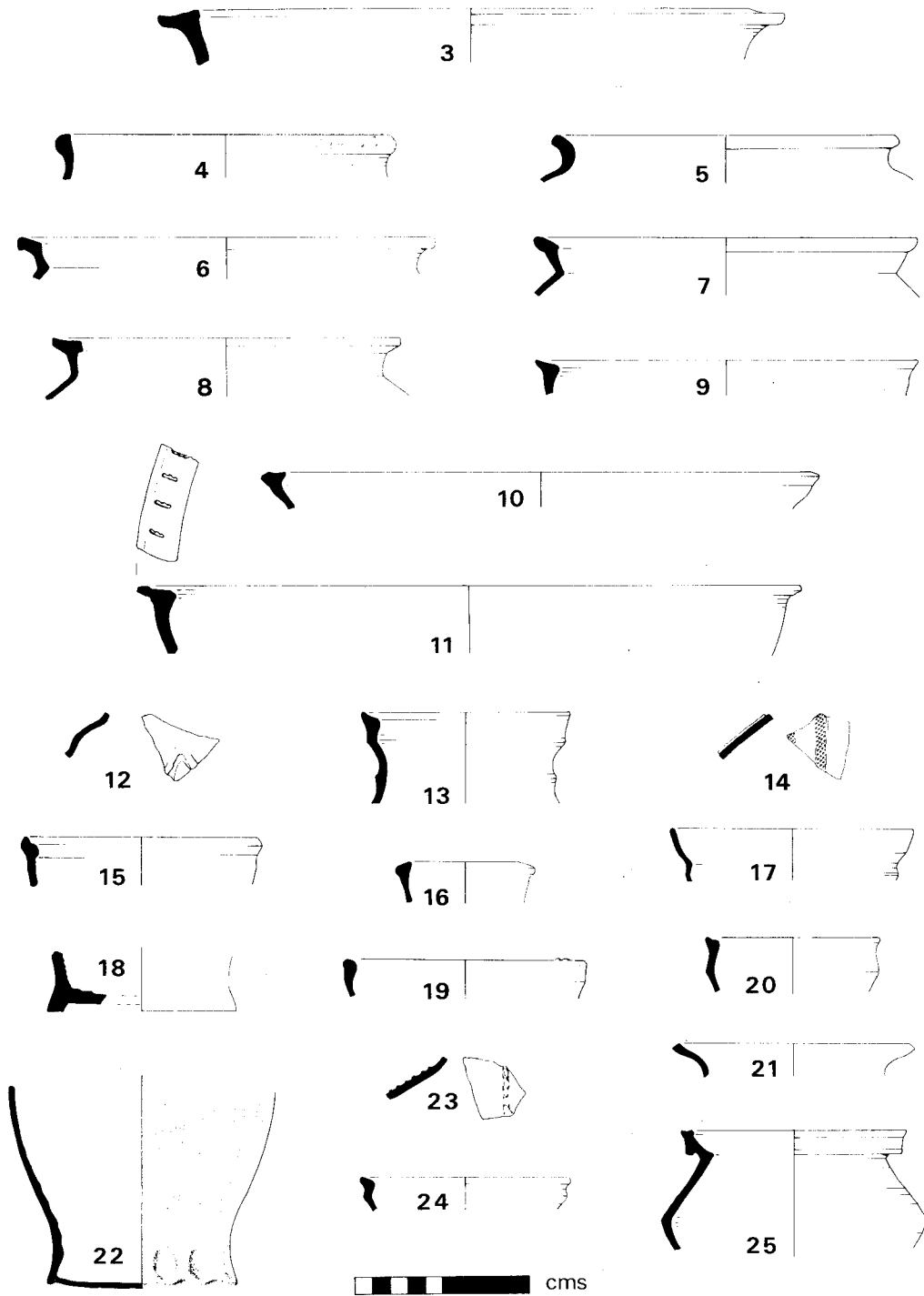


Fig. 6. Stepney High Street: Medieval and Late Medieval Pottery, Phase 2 (Nos. 3-21): Phase 3 (Nos. 22-24), Phase 5 (No. 25).

- green glaze on the underside of the rim. (*cf.* Thorn 1975, Fig. 20, 347). Probably mid 14th century. F111, Layer 132.
- No. 8 Cooking pot in a very hard greyish-white ware, possibly from south-west Surrey. The heavy flanged rim form with marked internal bead is paralleled at Ash (Holling 1971, Fig. 8, 6 and 7). Probably mid 14th century. F165, Layer 166.
- No. 9 Straight-sided cooking pot in medium sandy pale orange Surrey ware, with splash of green glaze over top and underside of rim, and smoke-blackened outer wall. The flat rim form with slightly triangular section is typical of the Kingston products (Hinton 1980, Fig. 3). Late 13th–14th century. F165, Layer 166.
- No. 10 Seated rim sherd from a large cooking pot or bowl in Kingston type greyish-white ware, with splashes of green glaze. Late 13–14th century. F146, Layer 149.
- No. 11 Large bowl with coarsely finished flanged rim decorated with triple stabbing at intervals of *c.* 120mm. Medium coarse pinkish-white ware, possibly from south-west Surrey, with thin green glaze over rim and inner wall, outer wall smoke-blackened. 14th century. F130, Layer 131.
- No. 12 Body sherd with repoussé decoration. Medium-fine pinkish-buff Kingston type ware with rich external green glaze. (*cf.* Hinton 1980, 381–382, Fig. 4). Late 13th–14th century. F130, Layer 131.
- No. 13 Jug neck and rim sherd with elegantly shaped profile. Medium fine dull pinkish grey Kingston type ware with rich external green glaze. Late 13th–14th century. F233, Layer 234.
- No. 14 Body sherd with decoration of applied rouletted strips. Medium fine Kingston type ware with rich external green glaze. Late 13th–14th century. F77, Layer 78.
- No. 15 Jug rim, very hard coarse greyish-white Kingston type Surrey ware; dark green glaze externally with a scar on the rim from contact with another vessel in the kiln. Late 13th–14th century. F146, Layer 147.
- No. 16 Jug rim, fine sandy Surrey ware with pinkish-buff core and creamy-yellow surfaces (*cf.* Hurst 1960, Fig. 2, 6; Turner 1971, 162, Fig. 3, 6). A pedestal base in the same fabric was also recovered from this feature, (*cf.* Hinton 1980, Fig. 2, 8, 10–12). Mid 14th century. F77, Layer 78.
- No. 17 Rim sherd, possibly from a copy of a lobed cup. Surrey ware; fine pinkish-cream fabric with internal yellow glaze, external olive green glaze with brown streaks, possibly from Kingston, where a few lobed cups and ‘Tudor Green’ type vessels were found together with the more usual coarse fabrics (Hinton 1980, 381). 14th century. F146, Layer 148.
- No. 18 Jug base with applied ring foot. London ware, lightly knife-trimmed above the base angle, with traces of white slip and green glaze. ?13th century. F146, Layer 149.
- No. 19 Plain rounded jug rim sherd. Mill Green coarse ware with white slip and green glaze (See Pearce, this volume). Poorly finished, with a scar on the rim from contact with another vessel in the kiln. Late 13th–14th century. F146, Layer 147.
- No. 20 Three rim sherds and two body sherds, Mill Green coarse ware with white slip and thin, mottled green glaze. Late 13th–14th century. F146, Layers 147, 148; F3, Layer 5.
- No. 21 Forty-five sherds, many joining, from the lower half of a jug in a coarse, slightly micaceous sandy fabric with occasional larger inclusions of finely crushed flint, rounded or sub-angular grains of red or grey quartz, and haematite. Pale grey core with orange surfaces, externally decorated with vertical stripes of white slip and a patchy green glaze. The surfaces are very rough, and almost appear to have been water-worn. The jug resembles the products of the Earlswood kiln (Turner 1974, 50–54), but probably derives from one of the nearer South Hertfordshire kilns. The base of a jug in a rather coarser version of this fabric, with similarly abraded surfaces was recently excavated by the I.L.A.U. in Stoke Newington (Harding and Gibbard, in prep), while a similar ware was found at Elstree (Castle and Hammerston 1978, 152).

Group 3. Late 15th–early 16th century (Fig. 6, Nos. 22–24)

F140, the drain, which cut both the large shallow pit F165 and the square pit F161, contained predominantly residual material largely derived from those features. In addition, however, this feature also produced a few sherds of coarse Surrey/Hampshire border ware, Late London ware (see Orton 1979a, 31), one sherd of ‘Tudor Green’ and also the first imported wares, namely two sherds of Saintonge (Nos 23, 24), one sherd of Beauvais stoneware and one sherd of Raeren stoneware. Beauvais stoneware was produced from the 14th to the 19th century; this sherd would appear to be from a flask, and thus is probably of late 15th or early 16th-century manufacture. Raeren stoneware is known in England as early as 1460 at Southampton (R. Thompson, pers. comm), but the main influx of this ware is not until the later 15th century, with dated groups of *c.* 1480 at Trig Lane (A. Vince pers. comm) and *c.* 1500 at Norwich. Since the cut for the drain would appear to have been backfilled more or less immediately, the stoneware and other late medieval/early post-medieval sherds together suggest a date in the first years of the 16th century for this feature (although

if the drain is associated with Worcester Place, which was constructed by the first Marquis of Worcester (1577–1644) this date would, unless these sherds are residual, seem rather early).

Also probably associated with this phase are pits F103 and F170, of which F170 contained one sherd of Andalusian lustreware with badly decayed glaze (see Dunning 1961, 6–12; Caiger-Smith 1973, 53–64; Hurst 1977, 68–95), one sherd of Late London ware, and one sherd of Cistercian ware (see Le Patourel 1966, 262–69). F103 contained three sherds of early post-medieval red ware, including one sherd tempered with minute chalk or shell inclusions. Although unusual, this ware is also known from a 16th-century garderobe pit at the Tower of London (exc. G. Parnell). In the south trench, F230, which contained only one sherd of Raeren stoneware, would also appear to be contemporary with these features. Only the following sherds merit illustration.

- No. 22 Jug or small jar with flaring rim. Mill green coarse ware, unglazed. Late 13th–mid 14th century. F140, Layer 141.
- No. 23 Body sherd Saintonge ware with decoration of applied, moulded strip and mottled green glaze. Possibly from a three handled pitcher (*pégau*) (cf. Moorhouse 1972, 37, Fig. 4, 56; Barton 1972, 29–30; Thorn 1975, Fig. 6, 34). Probably late 13th century. F140, Layer 150.
- No. 24 Jug rim, Saintonge ware. As above, fine white micaceous fabric with no visible inclusions; pale grey core, greyish-cream surfaces. (cf. Thorn 1975, Fig. 6, 34; Broady 1979, Fig. 35, 381, 386). 13th century. F140, Layer 137.

Group 4. Mid-late 16th century.

These features produced a totally different assemblage to that seen in the earlier phases. As above there is a dominant group of residual wares, but now also a considerable variety of both English and imported wares which all point to a date of *c.* 1550 for this first phase of garden features. The possibility, suggested by their marked difference in form, that garden beds F81, F83 and F138 may be earlier or later in date than the other garden features, was not borne out by their ceramic content, indeed sherds from the same vessels were found in F81 and F138, in F81 and F69, and in F67 and F121.

The residual English wares are in the main

as those described above, but there is now a larger proportion of late medieval buff-white wares from south-west Surrey/Hampshire. These include a wide range of cooking pots and bowls, mainly with flanged rims, and also a base sherd from a 'D' shaped Dutch oven (I am indebted to Alan Vince for the identification of this sherd). The Mill Green wares include two sherds of coarse ware, from F67 and F121, decorated with rings and barbotine pellets of white slip under a clear glaze. Contemporary English wares are represented by a greatly increased proportion of 'Tudor Green' type wares (29 sherds), and also the first appearance of the post-medieval red wares produced at Cheam and Kingston. Of these the most readily identifiable forms are a wall-sided bowl and possibly a jug rim from Cheam (Orton 1979) Fig. 5, 40, and possibly Fig. 4, 26), and one jug rim, one handle, and one body sherd from a costrel with concentric grooves (Nelson 1981, Fig. 2, 3 and 5; Fig. 4, 20) from Kingston. Other sherds of interest include two joining sherds from a dish in a clear glazed sandy pink ware (cf. Dawson 1979, 44), and one sherd of Cistercian ware from F138. In the south trench F223 and F211 would also appear to be contemporary with the above. The most striking feature of this group is the dramatic increase in the number of imported wares, which total twenty-four sherds from ten different sources (see Fig. 8).

Group 5. Early-mid 17th century (Fig. 6 No. 25, Fig. 7 Nos. 26–32)

The building up of the garden area consisted in the north trench of two deposits, Layers 5 and 4 (F3), and in the south trench of only one deposit, Layer 204 (F203). In the north trench the ceramic contents of Layer 5 are again in total contrast to those of the preceding groups. As before there is a high proportion of residual material from vessels noted in earlier contexts, most noticeably in the Mill Green wares, but now the range of late medieval and post-medieval wares is much broader, with a marked emphasis on table wares such as 'Tudor Green' cups, lobed cups and dishes, fine Surrey/Hampshire border wares (Holling 1971, 69–86) which include a rare albarello form (No. 36), Cis-

tercian ware cups, fragments from a number of exotic dishes and bowls (see Fig. 7) and other imported wares, and a quantity of German stoneware. The contemporary coarsewares are mainly from Kingston or Cheam. These include one rim sherd with strap handle, deeply thumbled below the rim, and one rim sherd from a wall-sided bowl from Cheam (Orton 1979a, Fig. 4, 27 and 29; Fig. 5, 40); one slightly everted squared rim sherd, possibly from a cistern, and one base sherd with multiple thumbled feet, internal cream slip and greenish glaze, probably from a wall-sided bowl (Nelson 1981, Fig. 2, 1; Fig. 3, 14), also possibly one pipkin handle.

This pattern is continued in Layer 4, although here the total number of sherds is much smaller, and the total number of fine and imported wares proportionally lower.

In addition to the above, Layer 5 contained 25 fragments of clay pipe, including four bowls, which may be loosely dated to *c.* 1610–1680, while Layer 4 produced 48 fragments of clay pipe, including seven bowls, which may be loosely dated to *c.* 1610–1710.

Layer 204 in the south trench yielded pottery which was again quite different in character to that from Layers 4 and 5, with virtually no residual wares, and a greater proportion of contemporary English coarsewares. Whereas in Layers 5 and 4 these were mainly represented by fragments of Cheam and Kingston ware in the same style as those seen in Phase 4, and therefore possibly residual, in Layer 204 the contemporary wares are dominated by quite sizeable fragments of pottery of a very domestic, mundane nature, coming apparently from the 17th-century Woolwich kilns. These include at least half of a large bucket-type vessel with horizontal strap handles, and the base of a strainer (*cf.* Pryor and Blockley, 1978, Fig. 14, 69; Fig. 15, 77). Following the maxim that the lightest wares travel furthest, these heavy duty vessels suggest the presence of a scullery in the vicinity of this trench. The fine wares in this group are also different, comprising only two sherds Staffordshire slip-ware, a few sherds of post-medieval black glazed ware, and only six sherds of imported ware.

On the basis of the pottery and clay pipes,

and also the coin evidence from Layer 4 (see p. 343), which contained two tokens dateable to post 1613–1625, and to the late 16th–17th century, Phase 5 may be dated with some confidence to the mid 17th century.

- No. 25 Small 'cauldron' pot or pipkin, copying a metal form. Fine sandy fabric, with dull orange inner margin and surface, orange-grey outer margin and surface with unevenly poured green glaze over the shoulder, which is heavily rilled and sharply carinated with a pronounced ridge. Corresponds to the description of the type I cauldron shaped cooking pots from Kingston (Nelson 1981, 97) but the small size, only 95mm internal rim diameter, is not paralleled among the published groups from Kingston, Arundel House (Haslam 1975) or Guy's Hospital (Dawson 1979). Probably late 15th century or early 16th century. Layer 5.
- No. 26 Dish rim, Spanish lustreware, probably Valencia, white tin-glaze, over both surfaces, geometric decoration in cobalt blue over copper lustre internally, externally in lustre only (now very faint) over lightly fluted surface. Fine pinkish-buff fabric. ?15th century. Layer 5.
- No. 27 Costrel, probably Spanish. Very fine micaceous dull red fabric with slightly powdery surfaces, one face lightly burnished, the other bearing a bib of green glaze. 16th–17th century. Layer 5.
- No. 28 Base of dish with wire marks faintly visible on the underside; Italian, Montelupo. Fine pinkish-buff micaceous ware with minute red and black inclusions and rare grains of quartz. White slipped body with white tin glaze externally and rather gaudy decoration internally in yellow, orange, and light and dark blue. Reconstruction based on an example from St Andrews Street, Plymouth (Broady, 1979, 76, Fig. 43, 532). 16th century. Layer 5.
- No. 29 Dish rim, Beauvais sgraffito, double slip. Hard fine buff fabric with occasional fine red inclusions, with first red slip, then white slip over the upper surface and extending over the rim onto the underside of the dish (poorly finished). Geometric decoration then inscribed through the upper slip only, the body of the dish painted with copper oxide and the whole glazed with a clear glaze. The bead of the rim is thus yellow, the flange green, the incised decoration dark green/black. Beauvais sgraffito is known from a number of sites in southern England (Hurst 1968, 58); to date it is not common in London (although this may in part reflect a publication bias towards earlier material), but a few sherds have recently been published from Guy's Hospital (Hurst and Clark 1979, 53, Fig. 12, 210). Mid-late 16th century. Layer 5.
- No. 30 Two base sherds with wire marks on the underside, and three body sherds Cologne/Frechen drinking mug. Pinkish-bronze internally, mottled honey-brown glaze externally over applied,

stamped decoration of medallions containing classical portraits, acanthus leaves, and central horizontal band with moulded inscription inscribed '...T. DOTs. NEIT...'. The legend probably reads 'Trink und esst, Gots nicht ver-gesst', one of the two most common mottoes on mugs of this type (Holmes 1951, 173-4, Pl. XXI). Mid 16th century. Layer 5.

No. 31 One of two decorated sherds Cologne/Frechen stoneware bottle. Grey glaze internally, mottled dark brown glaze externally over applied medallions with face stamps. Mid 16th century. Layer 5.

No. 32 Body sherd, Cologne/Frechen stoneware. Streaky pale grey-brown internally, rich yellowish-brown glaze externally over large medallion containing stamped portrait of warrior or courtly figure. Mid 16th century. Layer 4.

Groups 6, 7 Post 1650 (Fig. 7, Nos. 33-36)

With the exception of F16 and F34, which produced sherds of 19th-century china, the pottery from these features remains consistently of late 17th-century date regardless of any apparent stratigraphic sequences. By comparison with the wealth of pottery from the preceding group, the pottery from the second phase of garden features and the pits and scoops they cut, is poor and almost entirely medieval in character, with only nine sherds of imported ware, including six sherds of stoneware, of which four derive from F28. The pits and scoops F6, F8 and F10 were more productive, yielding in addition to sherds of contemporary coarsewares, a number of finer or imported wares reminiscent of those seen in Layer 5 (including Nos. 33, 34, 36) and sixteen sherds of stoneware.

With the exception of the following and the stonewares, which are well published elsewhere, sherds from this group are too fragmentary or of insufficient interest to merit illustration.

No. 33 Base of dish or shallow bowl, Vauxhall or Lambeth tin glazed ware with decoration in cobalt blue and manganese. 17th century. F10, Layer 11.

No. 34 Dish rim, Low Countries tin-glazed ware. Pinkish-red body with pinkish-buff surfaces, densely tempered with fine black sand, and with frequent inclusions of both red and white grog ranging from 1 × 1mm to 3 × 4mm. Thin white tin glaze externally over rilled surface, internally decorated with orange swirls and blue blobs within concentric rings of blue and yellow. Early-mid 17th century. F10, Layer 11.

No. 35 Dish rim, ?German. Fine pinkish-buff ware with pinkish-orange surfaces, poorly prepared and having a laminated structure; occasional red ?flint, greyish and translucent quartz inclusions (up to 3 × 4mm) and with one large inclusion of rose coloured quartz (4 × 5mm). Externally corrugated surface, unglazed, internally decorated with bands of zig-zag lines under a thick orange glaze. A possible source near Limburg has been suggested by Dutch and German specialists, although a similar rim form in a finer fabric from St Andrews Street, Plymouth, was identified as being of Dutch origin (Broady 1979, 74, Fig. 108, 492), Probably early 17th century. F209, Layer 210.¹

No. 36 Albarello, very fine buff Surrey/Hampshire border ware, with pale green glaze over inner face of rim only. 17th century. F10, Layer 11.

THE IMPORTED WARES

In all a total of 216 sherds from stratified groups, and a further 16 unstratified sherds was recovered. In all a minimum of twenty wares are represented, coming from the Mediterranean, France and the Rhineland (see Fig. 8). These range in date from the 13th century to the late 17th century. In the earlier period the South-west French ware predominate, but in the post-medieval period the Cologne/Frechen wares are the dominant group, both in the stonewares and in the assemblage as a whole (Fig. 8). There is an unexplained lack of imported Delft type tin-glazed ware. Considering the nature of the site the assemblage is one of the richer and more diverse groups so far published from the Inner London area, other comparable groups being in the main derived from more auspicious sites such as Arundel House (Haslam 1975), the Custom House (Thorn 1975) and Guy's Hospital (Dawson 1979). In many respects, although on a considerably smaller scale, the group closely resembles those from Castle Street and St Andrew's Street, Plymouth (Clark 1975; Broady 1979), which together have produced the largest collection and widest range of imported wares in Britain to date. Sherds of interest in the Stepney assemblage include:

Saintonge, 13th century. Phase 3: Nos. 23 and 24. Phase 4: one strap handle, F67 (*cf.* Thorn 1975, Fig. 11, 149), one sherd with applied decoration, as No. 23, F123; one sherd with red painted decoration, F144.

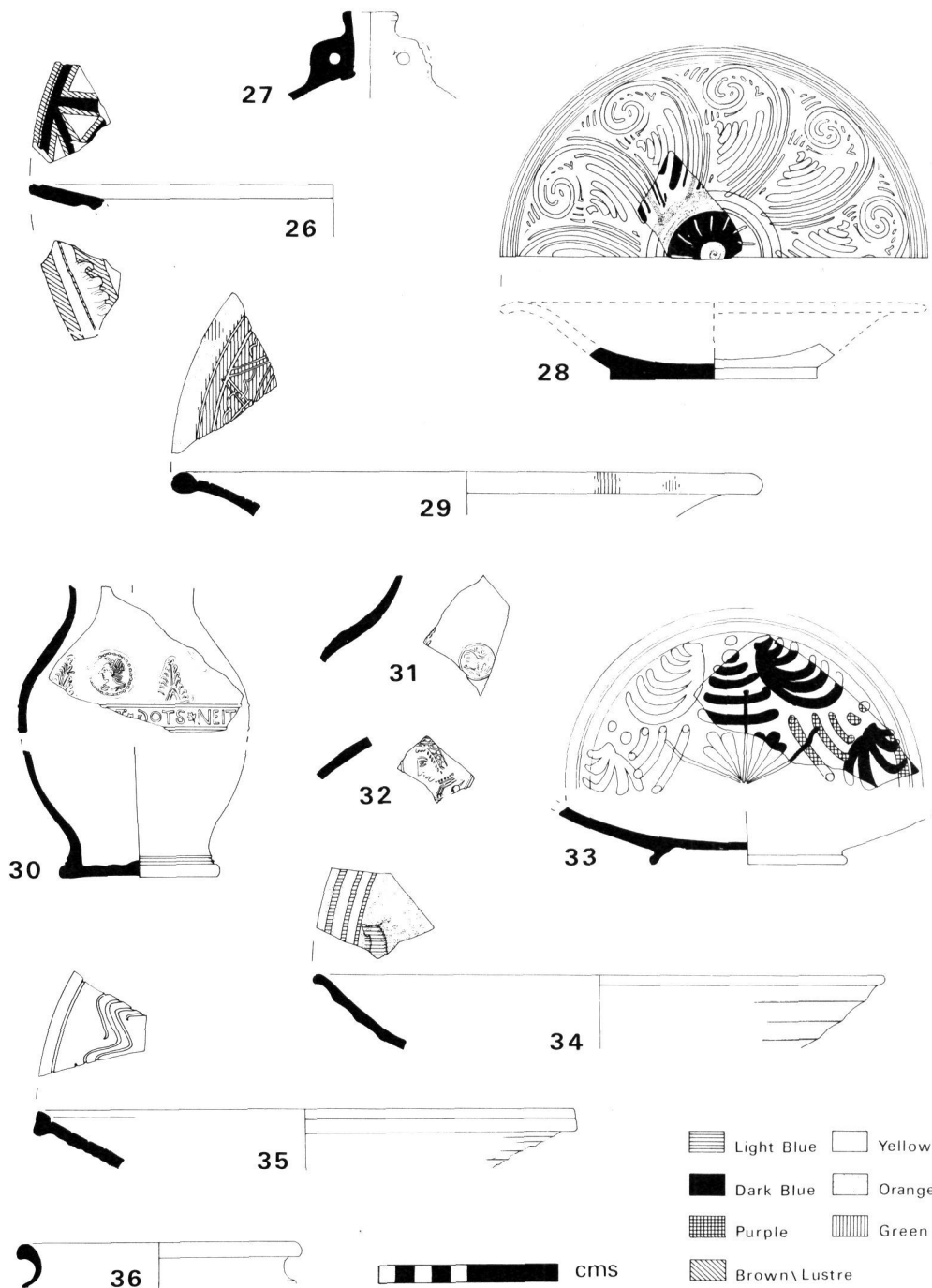


Fig. 7. Stepney High Street: Imported Pottery and Other Fine Wares, Phase 5 (Nos. 26–32): Phases 6/7 (Nos. 33–36).

- Saintonge, 16th–17th century. Phase 6: one sherd bucket handle, F34 (*cf.* Hurst 1974, 225, Fig. 1).
- Beauvais sgraffito, 16th century. Phase 5: No. 29.
- Spain, Valencia, 14th–15th century. Phase 5: one rim sherd, No. 26.
- Iberia, 14th century. Phase 4: One body sherd, very coarse laminated ware with ill-sorted inclusions of fine grey quartzsand, fine plates of mica, and large inclusions of translucent quartz, red haematite and white ?silica. Bluish-grey core, dull reddish-brown surfaces, smoothed but rough to the touch; F117.
- Iberia, 16th century. Phase 4: four joining sherds from a flat-based vessel, probably a jug. Fine sandy orange ware with frequent large plates of mica, very fine black sand and translucent quartz inclusions. Pale grey core, pale orange inner surface, orange-red exterior. Wall thickness 4–5mm. There is a concentration of black sand on the underside of the vessel similar to that seen on the larger Merida wares (Clark 1975, 47). F223. Phase 5: one body sherd, Layer 4, and one handle sherd, Layer 5, from the same vessel as that from F223.
- Spain/Iberia, 16th century. Phase 5: No. 27.
- Mediterranean Maiolica, 16th century. Phase 5: one base and two body sherds from an albarello. Fine pinkish-red micaceous fabric with a slightly rough, powdery texture. Clear glaze internally, white slip under white tin glaze externally; Layer 5.
- Italy, Montelupo. 16th century, Phase 5: No. 28.
- Italy, ?Pisa, 16th–17th century. Phase 5: Four sherds marbled slip-ware dish, one sherd marbled slip-ware bowl, Layers 4 and 5. Phase 6: One rim sherd from the above dish. F8.
- Low Countries, 16th–17th century. Phase 6: No. 34.
- Germany, Earthenware, 17th century. Phase 6: No. 35.
- Germany, Stoneware. Siegburg, 13th–14th century. Phase 5: One rim sherd from a cup or shallow drinking bowl (Beckman 1974, 202, Fig. 19, 174).
- Cologne/Frechen, 16th–17th century.

Phase 5: Nos 30–32; one acanthus leaf stamp, Layer 5; one fragment from an armorial stamp showing a lion passant below a crown (*cf.* M.O.L. Acc. Nos. 6351, 25148), Layer 204; one fragment from a medallion stamped with a ?trident and cross within a single rosette, Layer 4; one fragment from an applied face mask, Layer 4; one rim sherd from an 'oak leaf' jug or mug decorated with a stamped leaf, Layer 5. Phase 6: Fragments from two armorial stamps bearing the arms of Amsterdam (*cf.* M.O.L. Acc. No. 6552), F8, F28; one fragment from an armorial stamp showing the upper part of a chevron with a star on either side of the point (*cf.* M.O.L. Acc. No. 37.194.28. Young Collection), F10; one fragment from the border of an armorial stamp, Layer 202; fragments of two medallions stamped with a double rosette (Layer 2) and as Phase 5, Layer 4; fragments of five applied stamped face masks; F8, F8, F10, F36, Layer 202.

DISCUSSION

Although the bulk of the medieval pottery is of the period *c.* 1270–1350, there is a small proportion of potentially earlier material (see Group 2) which may derive from some earlier activity in the vicinity of the site. The medieval wares are dominated by the products of the Surrey and Mill Green kilns; London wares were apparently less popular, although the poor finish of many sherds in the dominant groups suggests that there may have been a local market for 'seconds'.

In the post-medieval period there is a brief but drastic change in the quality of the contemporary wares, which include a high proportion of fine table wares and a number of exotic imported wares. The diversity of the 16th-century wares on this garden site is not however as surprising as might at first appear when one considers the status of the residents of the immediate neighbourhood of the site throughout the medieval and early post-medieval periods. Documentary sources reveal the presence of at least two houses of some standing to the west of and close by St Dunstan's Church. Of these the earlier, which in 1299 served as the temporary meeting place

Group	2	3	4	5	6/7	U/S	Total
FRANCE							
Saintonge 13th century		2	3	6	6		17
Saintonge 16th century					1		1
Beauvais Stoneware 15th–16th c.				1			3
Beauvais Sgraffito 16th c.		1	2				1
North French Red-ware Flasks 16th c.			2	3	1		6
SPAIN/IBERIA							
Andalusian lustreware 13th–17th c.		1			1		2
Valencian lustreware 14th–17th c.				2			2
Amphora/olive jar 16th c.			3	3	2		8
Costrel 16th c.				2			2
IBERIA							
Medieval coarseware 14th c.			1				1
Jug/costrel 16th–17th c.			5	2	1		8
MEDITERRANEAN MAIOLICA 16th c.							
				3			3
ITALY							
Montelupo 16th c.				1			1
N. Italy ?Pisa 16th–17th c.				5	1		6
LOW COUNTRIES							
Grey ware 14th c.	21			21			22
Tin-glazed ware 16th-early 17th c.					1		1
GERMANY							
Earthenware							
Stoneware: Siegburg 13th–14th c.					1		1
Langerwehe 14th–15th c.			2	27	2		11
Raeren/Langerwehe 15th–16th c.	1		1	11	1		14
Cologne/Frechen 16th–17th c.		2	2	13	2	3	22
Miscellaneous stonewares (?English)			3	37	46	8	94
				1	4	5	10
TOTAL	2	6	24	98	70	16	216

Fig. 8. Stepney High Street: Distribution of Imported Pottery.

of the 'Stepney Parliament' (Smith 1937, 257–62), was known as the Great Place. In the late 13th century this was occupied by Henrey le Waleys, Gascon wine merchant and twice Lord Mayor of London, and thereafter by men of considerable importance in social, political or religious affairs (Smith 1939, 257–62; Loftie 1884, 155) including, in the mid 17th century, the Vicar General Cromwell, Earl of Essex. In the late 16th or early 17th century a second large house, known as Worcester Place was also apparently constructed near the site by the first Marquis of Worcester (1577–1644), while throughout the 16th century, with the growth of the Tudor navy and the growth of the mercantile marine, Stepney flourished as the residence of seamen and naval officers retiring from expeditions

to the East and West Indies, the Mediterranean, Africa, Cadiz and the Baltic (Brett-James 1935, 188–193). It is therefore perhaps not entirely coincidental that the bulk of the medieval wares are of south-west French origin, while in the post-medieval period there is a much greater variety, coming mainly from the Mediterranean and the Rhineland. The great quantity of pottery and the nature of the table wares in Phase 5 suggest the clearance in the mid 17th century of an establishment of some wealth. It is suggested therefore, that some at least of the imported or more unusual pottery found on the site may derive from one or other of the two houses noted above. The pottery from the drain, F140, shows that this feature probably predates the building of Worcester House, but the general

deposit over the first phase of garden features, F3 (Phase 5), would appear, ceramically, to date to the death of the Marquis of Worcester, 1644. At the same time there is a marked change in the nature of the pottery from the south trench, which suggests the presence of a domestic building immediately to the south or east of the site, and thus perhaps a changing pattern of land use. Following this the general composition of the assemblage reassumes its former 'medieval' appearance, although the imported stonewares make a stronger appearance in the latest pits. The general sequence of imported wares ceases with the Cologne/Frechen stonewares—there are no Westwald or other later wares—and indeed although the English wares continue into the 19th century, the major ceramic sequence would appear to cease in the late 17th century.

COINS

1. Copper farthing token, 1613–25 James I; F3 Layer 4.
2. Nuremberg jetton, late 16th century–17th century; F3 Layer 4.
3. Halfpenny—Edward³ lead forgery, 14th century–15th century; F65 Layer 66.

THE ANIMAL BONES

by Alison Locker

Some 449 bones were recovered from Stepney High Street excavation, mostly from post medieval features. The following species were identified: ox (*Bos* sp.), sheep (*Ovis* sp.), pig (*Sus* sp.), horse (*Equus* sp.), rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), dog (*Canis* sp.), domestic fowl (*Gallus* sp.), jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*), and pigeon (*Columba* sp.). There were also some fragments of oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), and cockle (*Cardium edule*).

Although numerous features were excavated relatively few bones were recovered hence it is not possible to comment on their distribution over the site. However, they seem mostly to represent domestic debris with butchering marks.

Each bone was recorded and measured using the method of Jones *et al.* (1981); further details are available from the author.

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