

AN EXCAVATION AT 6–16 OLD CHURCH STREET, ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

Shahina Farid

With contributions by Chris Jarrett, Malcolm Lyne, Peter Moore and Ken Sabel

SUMMARY

An excavation at 6–16 Old Church Street in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea revealed 3rd-century Roman, Middle Saxon, and Saxo-Norman features and artefacts with similarity in location and alignment of the features, comprising boundary ditches, pits, and postholes. Residual Prehistoric material was also recovered from the site indicative of activity in the vicinity. The 17th- to 19th-century property boundaries, pits, and bricklined services recorded in the excavation reflect the Post-Medieval aspect of Old Church Street still visible today. An early 18th-century refuse pit was of particular interest since the pottery assemblage contained a good range of wares comparable to other locally published pottery groups of this period, but also because, relatively, it reflected a degree of affluence and a possible association with medical activities.

This report also takes account of the results of an excavation undertaken by the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS) at the neighbouring site of Cheyne Hospital. The co-operation of MoLAS in providing site specific information is duly acknowledged.

INTRODUCTION

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology in May 1997 in advance of a proposed residential development at 6–16 Old Church Street, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. It was commissioned by CgMs Ltd, on behalf of FL Estates (Kain 1997b). The site, a former builders merchant,

fronted onto Old Church Street to the west, and was bounded by residential properties on the other sides (Fig 1). The site Central National Grid Reference is TQ 2710 7765.

Prior to the excavation a desk based assessment was undertaken (Kain 1996), and an evaluation was carried out in April 1997 (Kain 1997a), with two trenches positioned for maximum coverage of the site. Trench 1 to the south revealed a north–south aligned drainage gully or boundary ditch containing Saxon and Roman pottery sherds, whilst Trench 2 to the north of the site was found to be too heavily disturbed and truncated by Post-Medieval activity to warrant further investigation in this area (Farid 1997a).

The subsequent excavation trench was located to the south of the site. The area of the excavation measured 10m east–west by 15m north–south (maximum) and incorporated the area of evaluation Trench 1 (Fig 2).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site is situated about 100m north of the River Thames between Battersea Bridge and Albert Bridge. The present day street topography of Old Church Street rises on a gentle slope from the Thames at c.5.0m OD just south of Chelsea Old Church to 7.84m OD at Paulton's Street to the north, and it is assumed that this slope reflects the underlying 'natural' topography of the river terrace gravels (1:50,000 Geology

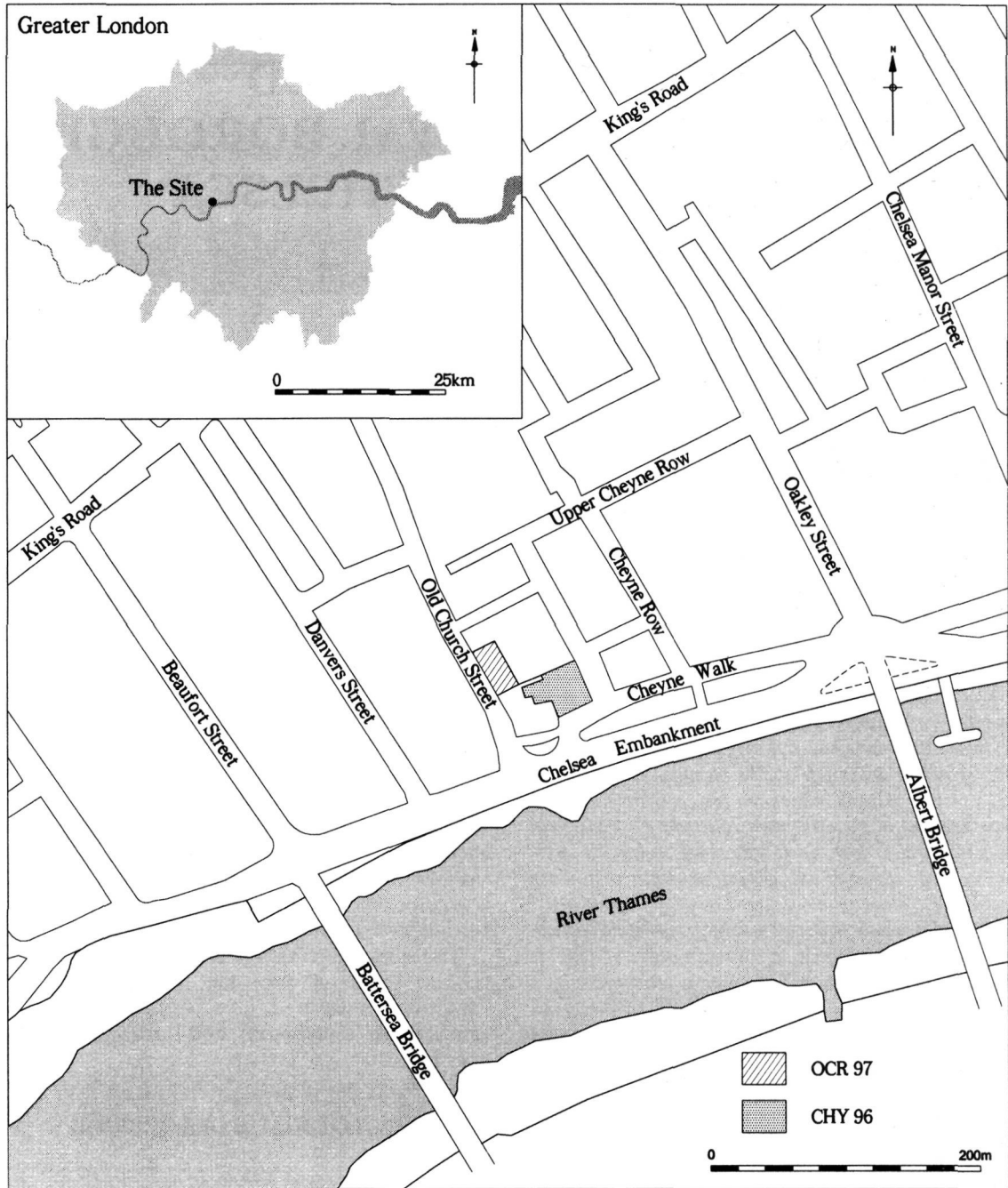


Fig 1. Site location plan

Survey of Great Britain (England and Wales) South London Sheet 270. Solid and Drift edition 1981). To date no evidence has been found for *in situ* Prehistoric settlement in the proximity of the site. However, a number of chance finds of

Prehistoric date show that some activity occurred in the vicinity. The Greater London Sites and Monuments Record shows that many artefacts have been recovered from the River Thames between Battersea Bridge and Albert Bridge and

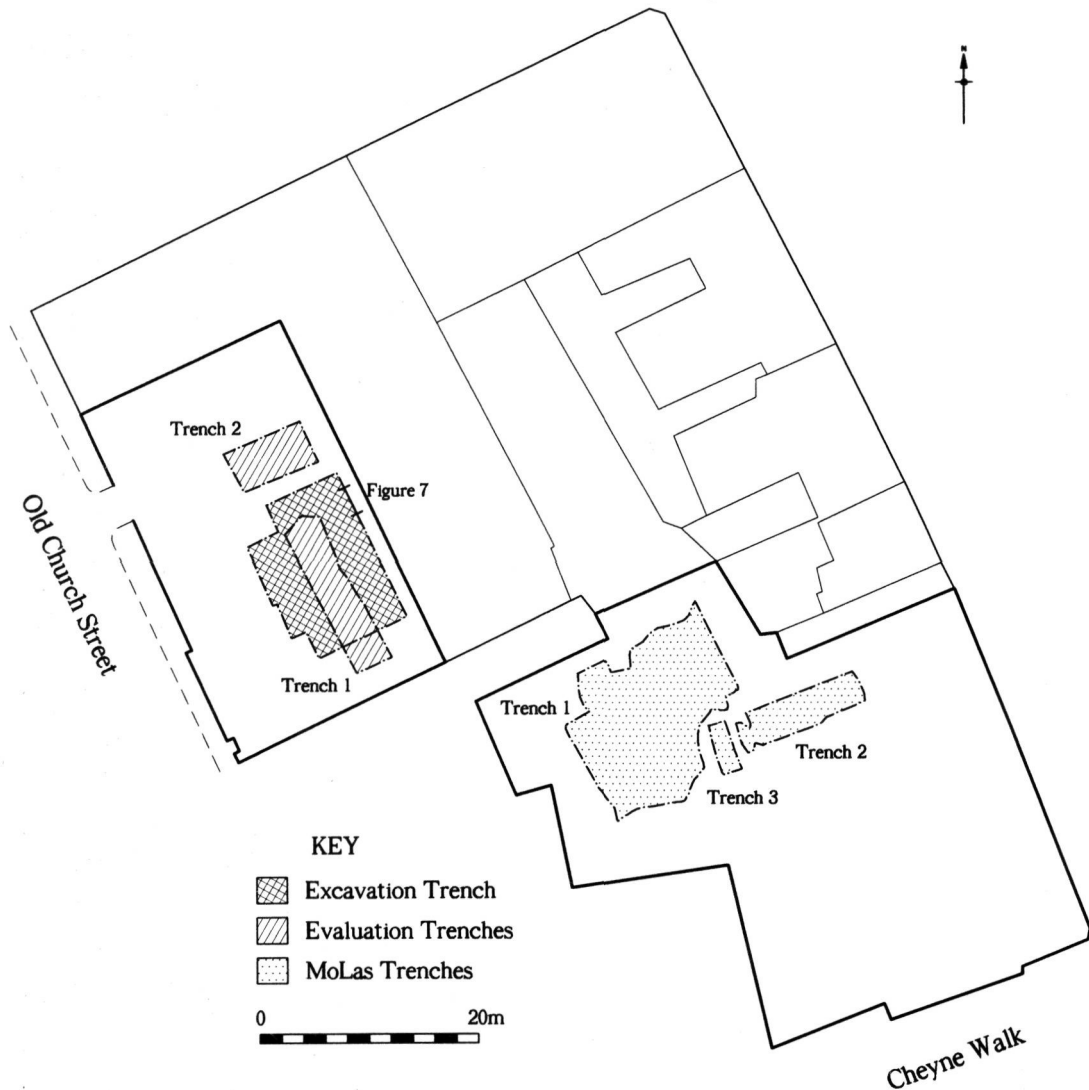


Fig 2. Trench location plan

residual finds spots have occurred about 200m north of the site under investigation.

Recent work by the Thames Archaeological Survey identified a submerged forest of Neolithic or Bronze Age date within a peat horizon on the foreshore between Battersea Bridge and the end of Old Church Street. A quantity of pottery and flint was recovered which is undergoing analysis at the time of writing but the general impression is that it is unlikely to be as late as the Iron Age (Webber pers comm).

During the Roman period the main focus of activity in the region was in *Londinium* with a significant suburb across the river in Southwark.

Roads radiated out from *Londinium*, and two led westwards en route to Silchester (Whipp 1975). One road is conjectured to lie along the route of the Kings Road about 300m north of the study site. From parallels elsewhere there is, therefore, considerable potential for small roadside settlements or farmsteads in the vicinity as well as Roman cemeteries along the roadsides. Examples of small roadside settlements on the Silchester road are known at Acton (Cotton 1993), Brentford, and Staines (Sheldon & Schaaf 1978).

Substantial Roman activity was found at the Fulham Palace Moat site dating from at least A.D. 270 until 380: surfaces, pits with animal

skulls interpreted as votive offerings, postholes, a road with evidence of 3rd- and 4th-century resurfacing, and an earthwork bank with associated ditch which may have been part of a timbered revetment structure for the bank (Whitehouse 1974). To the north-west a site in Acton located Roman field boundary ditches and pits dated to the early to mid 2nd century A.D. (Cotton 1993).

Until recently there was no excavated evidence for Roman activity in the Borough. However two excavations have thrown new light on the Roman period. An excavation at St Mary Abbot Hospital, about 2km to the north-west of the site, located a possible 1st-century A.D. farmstead represented by postholes and beamslots indicative of a clay and timber building. Nearby was a series of possibly contemporaneous intercutting field ditches (Howe 1995).

There is no excavated archaeological evidence of Saxon activity in the immediate vicinity of the site but documentary sources suggest the origins of Chelsea are in the Saxon period. The Saxon king Offa was first linked with Chelsea in the A.D. 785 Saxon Chronicle recording a Church Synod held at Caelchyth, the residence of King Offa of Mercia. Caelchyth is generally accepted as modern Chelsea, but the etymological argument is not conclusive. The Domesday Survey of 1086 provides the first definite evidence of a settlement at Chelsea. It states that the Manor of Chelsched, which has been accepted as modern Chelsea, in the Ossutan Hundred of Middlesex was held by Edward de Sarisberi and was previously held by a vassal of King Edward (Whipp 1975).

The location of the Saxon settlement is not known, but the little information available regarding Medieval Chelsea records that it grew up around the old church located to the immediate south of the study site. The church was first mentioned in documents of A.D. 1290 which, taken in conjunction with the record of a settlement in the Domesday Survey, could well refer to one and the same location. Saxon activity on the foreshore south of Old Church Street has recently been confirmed by the discovery of a substantial timber-piled structure by the Thames Foreshore Survey, radiocarbon analysis of which has yielded a Middle Saxon date of A.D. 700–900. The remains have been interpreted as fish traps, the size and date of which have led the team to propose a possible association with the palace of King Offa of Mercia (Webber pers comm).

During the Medieval era the Manor is believed

to have been located towards the north end of Lawrence Street (parallel to Old Church Street to the east), the Vicarage in Milmans Street (west of Old Church Street), while Old Church Street itself was a roadway (Partridge 1997, 13). The first significant evidence of early Medieval occupation in Chelsea was recently excavated by MoLAS at the Cheyne Hospital site. It produced postholes, pits, a ditch and linear features interpreted as possible bedding trenches sealed by a possible beamslot (Partridge forthcoming, fig 5). Further agricultural activity has been identified at Earls Terrace (Douglas 1998), some 500m west of the St Mary Abbot Hospital site, where an early Medieval 'V'-shaped ditch has been interpreted as a field boundary.

By the 16th century the Chelsea riverbank was a fashionable place for the rich and titled to settle. When Sir Thomas More moved to Chelsea in c.1520 it was still a rural location. He built a large house, believed to have been at the location of what later became known as Beaufort House (c.2km west of Old Church). King Henry VIII acquired Chelsea Manor and set the royal accolade of 'village of Palaces' (Denny 1996) by rebuilding a new and larger manor at what is now 19–26 Cheyne Walk. Yet Chelsea was still a secluded and sparsely populated rural area with a few cottages interspersed with stately homes in a parish of c.600 acres. This is reflected on James Hamilton's map of 1664, the earliest known map of Chelsea, which shows the borough as open fields and gardens with a concentration of buildings along Old Church Street. Located at the site of the excavation was a row of terraced houses and gardens which fronted onto the street, the excavation being in the garden area behind the southern block of houses.

Subsequent maps (1717 Anon, 1741 Roque, 1836 Thompson, 1847 Tithe map) record the development of the area, but show very little change to the plan of Church Lane recorded on Hamilton's map of 1664. By the 19th century the outline of the terrace block was intact but the property boundaries had been reduced from nine (James Hamilton's map 1664) to six (Cassel's map 1860). Little change to the property boundaries occurred into the late 20th century (1:1250 Ordnance Survey Map 1964).

THE EXCAVATION

The modern and Post-Medieval overburden was machine excavated in spits to the top of the

alluvial silt within a stepped trench. All archaeological deposits and cut features were excavated and, because of the results of the evaluation, the alluvial silt was hand excavated in spits. Soil samples were taken and analysed from the Roman and Saxo-Norman ditches and the alluvial silt, in order to compare them and attempt to interpret the depositional origin. However, little interpretation could be made other than that the assemblage probably represents burnt waste deposited on agricultural soils. Manuring fields with domestic and industrial waste often produces this type of sparse but varied assemblage which would accumulate in boundary or drainage ditches and because of the variable source of the material the assemblage is of little interpretative value (Carruthers 1997).

Geology

The River Terrace Gravels uncovered across the entire area of the excavations were composed of loose, mid yellow-brown, medium gravel and coarse sand. This survived to a maximum height of 5.08m OD to the north in Trench 2, with a gradual decline to the south in Trench 1 to 4.95m OD. The contemporary gravel horizon was recorded as surviving to a height of 6.0m OD at the Old Rectory about 200m to the north of the site and c.4.0m OD at 25 Oakley Gardens about 250m to the east. About 700m to the north, at 53–54 Cale Street, the gravels were recorded at 5.2m OD (Kain 1996) and to the immediate south-east at the Cheyne Hospital site the natural gravel was observed at 4.66m OD (Partridge 1997, 53).

The gravels were overlain by deposits of fine sandy silts between 0.25 and 0.45m thick. The depositional origin of this deposit was not established, but given that the riverbank, prior to the construction of the Victorian Chelsea Embankment, was much closer to the site, it is possible that the gravels would have been sealed by alluvial deposits and therefore the silts may represent multiple flood episodes of the Thames.

The majority of Roman and Saxon features were revealed below the alluvial silt, cutting the river floodplain gravels. It is, however, probable that these features cut through at least some of the overlying alluvial silt but were not visible within that horizon. The difficulty in tracing these early features may have been due to general degradation of the subsoil through

continued bioturbation and/or weathering. With this in mind the many artefacts recovered from the alluvial silt therefore represent data of poor stratigraphic value. These comprised several burnt flint pebble fragments, two struck flint flakes, pottery sherds ranging in date from A.D. 170 to the mid 14th century, three iron nails, and a possible iron blade.

Undated features

There were several shallow hollows and/or pits cut into the alluvial silt excavated across the site. The fills were generally sterile, and although occasional flecks of charcoal and ceramic building material were observed they were probably introduced by root or worm action. These features were likely to have been of both natural and anthropogenic origin.

Prehistoric

No Prehistoric features, deposits, or artefacts were found *in situ* but residual cultural material from this period was recovered from later features. The majority of these artefacts consisted of burnt flint pebble fragments, probably of local origin as the fragments exhibited features indicative of alluvial derived gravel pebbles. The date of the heating of these pebbles could not be established and, given the relatively low densities of occurrence, could represent activity during any period on or near the gravel terrace.

Included in the lithic assemblage were six struck flints consisting of two blades and four flakes. All but one blade may be regarded as debitage, and this was found to be similar to 'bulhead' flint which originates from the Upper Chalk of Kent and East Anglia; its presence at this site is probably the result of alluvial displacement. The characteristics of this piece show a concern with core preparation and maintenance typical of pre-Late Neolithic assemblages (Bishop 1997).

Two sherds of prehistoric pottery were also recovered which appear to be Late Bronze Age in date, consisting of abraded fragments with very coarse calcined-flint filler (Lyne this paper).

Roman

From the limited evidence available it was not possible to prove Roman occupation at the site before the 3rd century. The natural gravel in the south-east corner of the excavation area was cut by two features of Roman date (Fig 3) and the basal remains of a circular pit were found in the extreme south-east corner, measuring 1.54m x 1.4m and 0.28m deep, with shallow sloping sides and a concave base. The pottery recovered dated the backfilling of this pit to the 3rd century A.D. Two of the vessels represented were a cordoned jar with down-turned and flattened rim, and a large body sherd from a similar vessel, but with a double girth cordon.

At a distance of 1.4m to the north of this pit lay an east-west aligned ditch with shallow sloping sides and flat base. The ditch was up to 0.26m deep and 0.7m wide, but extended beyond the edge of excavation to the east whilst its western extent was removed by a later ditch. The backfill of the ditch was broadly contemporary with that of the pit to the south. The pottery represented sherds from a minimum of ten vessels (Lyne this paper). Several fragments of building material were recovered, including brick, *tegula*

and *imbrex* tile fragments (one *tegula* tile fragment had four curved signatures) with a date range of A.D. 55/70–140/200. Whilst the presence of the material suggests proximity to Roman structures, the quantity is not large and may have been imported into the area. Much Roman building material appeared residually in later deposits (Sabel this paper).

The ditch fill also contained slag and fragments of iron nails and basalt lava querns. Basalt lava was imported in large quantities during the Roman period either as unworked stone or finished products: in this context the material is probably re-used as hard-core, a common Roman practice (Riddler 1997). Two poorly preserved and badly weathered large ungulate bones were also recovered from the fill, one of which may have been a cow humerus (Meddens 1997).

Middle Saxon

Middle Saxon activity was indicated by the pottery assemblage from a small number of features located in the eastern half of the trench. The quantity of Saxon pottery is small with no closely dateable fragments. However, because of an absence of Ipswich ware, (which was in common use in *Lundenwic* between c.A.D. 750 and 850), a date between c.A.D. 650 and 750 appears likely.

A timber structure, or structures, was indicated by several postholes located just north of the Roman ditch (Fig 4). A total of eleven postholes was recorded, of which three cut the alluvial silt and the rest were found at the gravel horizon. Pottery sherds were recovered from only one posthole: three sherds of Middle Saxon date, one of which was a North French import, and a fragment of residual Prehistoric pottery. Although the dating evidence is meagre, the postholes have been interpreted as one phase of activity on the grounds of their location. Within this phase a group of six postholes formed a right angle; the three southern postholes mirrored the east-west alignment of the Roman ditch whilst the western end formed a northern return. The evidence is insubstantial but the posthole alignment may represent the corner of a timber structure or a staked palisade along field or boundary ditches. Other postholes were less obviously related to this structure.

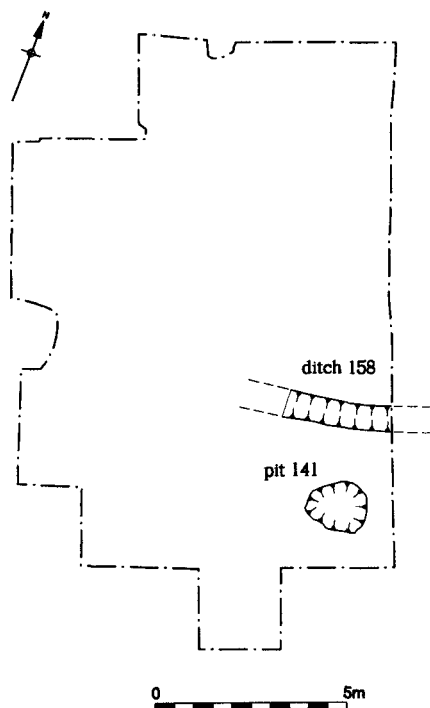


Fig 3. Roman features

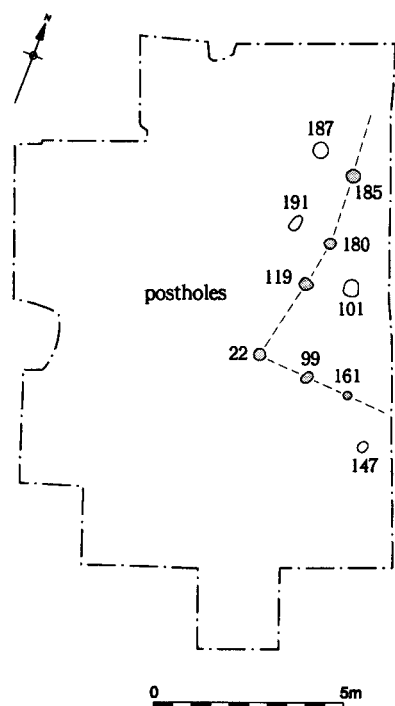


Fig 4. Middle Saxon features

Saxo-Norman

A north-south aligned ditch cut through the western edge of the Roman and Middle Saxon features, truncating the western end of the Roman ditch and partially disturbing the Middle Saxon posthole structure (Fig 5). The alignment respected that of the western row of postholes from the preceding phase (see above). The ditch was interrupted towards the northern end by a 4.5-m-wide gap which was flanked by butt ends of the ditch and presumably this area represented an entrance or crossing point. The ditch was up to 1.05m wide and 0.46m deep with sloping sides and a flat base. The pottery assemblage from the ditch dates the backfill to the Saxo-Norman period and generally consists of small body sherds from cooking pots and three sherds from a closed form dated to c.1050-1350. A number of residual Roman pottery sherds and ceramic building material fragments were also recovered.

The only feature found to the west of the area of activity discussed so far was an irregular cut that measured 3.2m by 2.3m and up to 0.49m deep located towards the south-west of the trench. The few finds it produced consisted of two sherds of Middle Saxon and Saxo-Norman

date, residual Roman ceramic building material, and a small bone assemblage containing eleven hare or rabbit bones. The feature may have represented a series of Saxo-Norman intercutting pits but its irregularity suggests it may represent a tree bole cast.

A further three features can be tentatively attributed to the Early Medieval period. These were irregular discolorations in the alluvial silt as opposed to well defined features and the dating evidence was derived from a few fragments of ceramic building material with a date range of 1150-1500.

Further Saxo-Norman/Early Medieval evidence was found at the Cheyne Hospital site (Partridge forthcoming), where a number of inter-cutting and discrete pit and posthole features yielded a tighter date range of c.1080-1200, as compared to Old Church Street's range of c.1050-1350. The dominant ware was Coarse London-type ware, followed by Early Medieval Sand and Shell-tempered ware and South Herts Greyware. A possible later period of activity was dated to the 13th and 14th centuries.

The nature of the activity on the Cheyne Hospital site which produced these features could not be identified from the pits and postholes other than that it represented more intensive land use than at Old Church Street. An east-west ditch was of sufficient size to serve as a drainage feature but little of it had survived later truncation to offer a more specific interpretation.

At Cheyne Hospital a narrow section of vertical stratigraphy survived between the foundation of two later walls where the only evidence of occupation layers was found. The earliest of these deposits were dated to the 12th century; these were cut by pits datable to the 12th and 13th centuries. In turn the pits were sealed by an occupation layer dated to the 13th or 14th century. The later pottery fabrics include part of a cooking pot in Kingston-type ware and a jug sherd in Mill Green ware. Also recovered was a rim fragment of a medieval glass urinal and a fragment of window glass.

Three closely spaced and parallel gullies orientated north-south were also dated to the 12th century (Fig 5). These were interpreted as possible agricultural or horticultural bedding trenches as opposed to foundation trenches because of their proximity to one another and irregular size and shape. An interpretation as bedding trenches for vine growing has been proposed because of the proportions of the

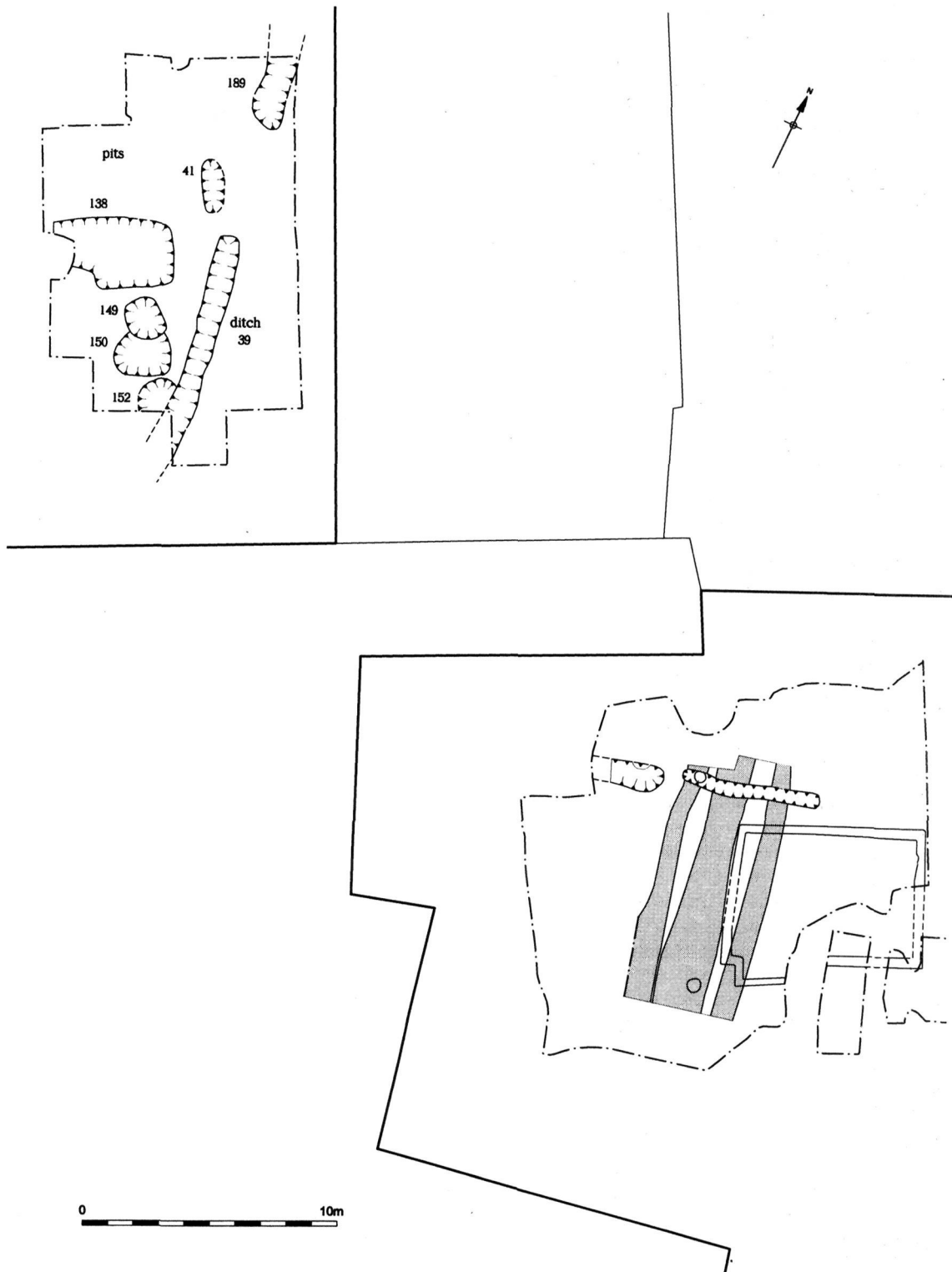


Fig 5. Saxo-Norman features and contemporary features (shaded) at Cheyne Hospital

features and contemporary documentary sources. Vines were known to have been grown in the area at this period until the climate became unsuitable in the 14th century. The Domesday Book records three arpents of vines in the 1086 survey of the property of Aubrey de Vere, who held Kensington from the Bishop of Coutances, to the north-west of Chelsea but in the same Hundred of Ossulstone. Although there is no record of vines being grown in Chelsea in 1086 the soil and climate would have been suitable. The gullies were cut by a later east-west aligned linear feature which has been interpreted as a possible beam slot for a timber building.

Evidence from the two excavations suggests that the focus of Saxo-Norman/Early Medieval activity lay closer to the Cheyne Hospital site than Old Church Street and this distance may explain the diverse nature and the difference in the quantity of features found. There is, however, a similarity in alignment of the linear features which is not unusual for drainage and boundary ditches associated with agricultural activity (Fig 5). The closely set parallel gullies at Cheyne Hospital illustrate an alternative function to the one at Old Church Street which probably represented a field boundary.

Post-Medieval

The earliest known cartographic record of the area is James Hamilton's map of 1664. This shows a Medieval village area with domestic houses fronting onto Church Lane, the precursor of Old Church Street, where the excavation was located in the gardens behind the houses. The east-west aligned property boundaries shown on this map can be traced through to the present day properties, and it was this continuity of alignment and garden related features that the Post-Medieval archaeological elements of the excavation reflected (Fig 6). These elements clearly represented external features related to domestic activity with artefacts occurring in small amounts in them. The exception to this was one large pit, where pottery, glass and clay tobacco pipe analysis has indicated an early 18th-century deposition date (see Pit Group 97 this paper).

To the north of the trench were two intercutting east-west aligned features which have been interpreted as boundaries between garden properties. The garden divisions may well have been plant based as opposed to wall or

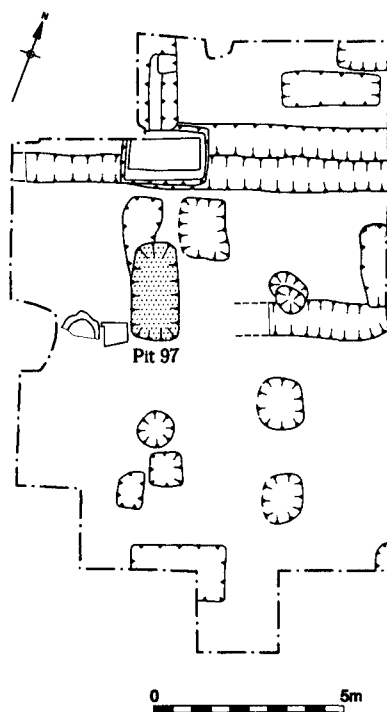


Fig 6. Post-Medieval features

ditch construction; a hedgerow type division would explain the depth of these features from contemporary ground level and the paucity of finds in the backfill. The earliest linear feature was 0.9m wide and 0.34m deep with shallow sloping sides and a flat base. The fill was fine sandy silt and contained two small fragments of pottery one of which was probably residual dating to 1300–1500 whilst the other can be interpreted as intrusive as it dated to 1800–1900 (Jarrett 1997a). The second linear feature lay to the south and cut the side of its precursor. It was up to 0.88m wide and 0.22m deep with a similar profile and backfill. This contained residual Saxo-Norman sherds and six fragments that dated the fill to between 1500 and 1750. Interestingly the fill also contained whole horse bones in good condition and without butchery marks.

For a number of reasons these features have been interpreted as property boundaries despite their similarity to the gullies at Cheyne Hospital, as their use would appear to coincide with the climatic change that was adverse to the growth of vines in this period. More significantly, a boundary division at the same location was maintained by later structural foundations which

can be traced through map regression from the 17th to the late 20th century (Fig 7).

Several circular and rectangular bricklined soakaways and/or cess pits were present as well as domestic waste pits. These ranged in date from the 15th to 19th century. Three bricklined circular features of similar size and depth were interpreted as cess pits, as opposed to soakaways, due to their size, shallow depth, and the associated leached and discoloured deposits. Two of the three circular brick features were possibly related to square bricklined pits with mortar base slabs because of their close proximity.

Two bricklined rectangular soakaways were dated by their construction bricks; soakaway [111] to the south of the trench was dated to between the 15th and 18th centuries and soakaway [104] to the north dated to the 18th–19th centuries. A third soakaway was recorded in Trench 2 but not excavated.

Several rubbish pits of Post-Medieval date were excavated but of particular note were two rectangular pits, one on either side of the postulated property boundaries [35/121/129] and [143] (Fig 6). The northern pit [133] lay on an east–west alignment, measured 2.6 m by 0.8 m by 0.64 m deep, and was vertically sided with a flat base. The backfill [132] was sandy silt and gravel and contained a small pottery assemblage dated to 1750–1900. The second pit [97] lay on a north–south alignment and measured 2.6 m by

1.3 m by 1.69 m deep with sharply sloping sides and a flat base. The backfill [96] was fine sandy silt and contained a relatively large and rich early 18th-century assemblage of material of high status and is reported on in detail below.

A number of Post-Medieval wall footings were also present but these were recorded in section only. Their alignments conformed to the known plan and the ceramic building material dates fitted the Post-Medieval activity represented in the excavation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results of the adjacent Old Church Street and Cheyne Hospital excavations represent the first archaeological evidence of a continuum of activity, dated from the Roman period to the 20th century, found in Chelsea to date.

Much of our knowledge of the origins and early occupation of Chelsea comes from documentary sources and, although the features excavated at Old Church Street and Cheyne Hospital cannot address issues concerning the status and size of the settlement, its economy and social history in the Roman, Saxon, and Medieval periods, the results can be compared and added to the developing picture of early settlement patterns and their relationship to the local geology and geography.

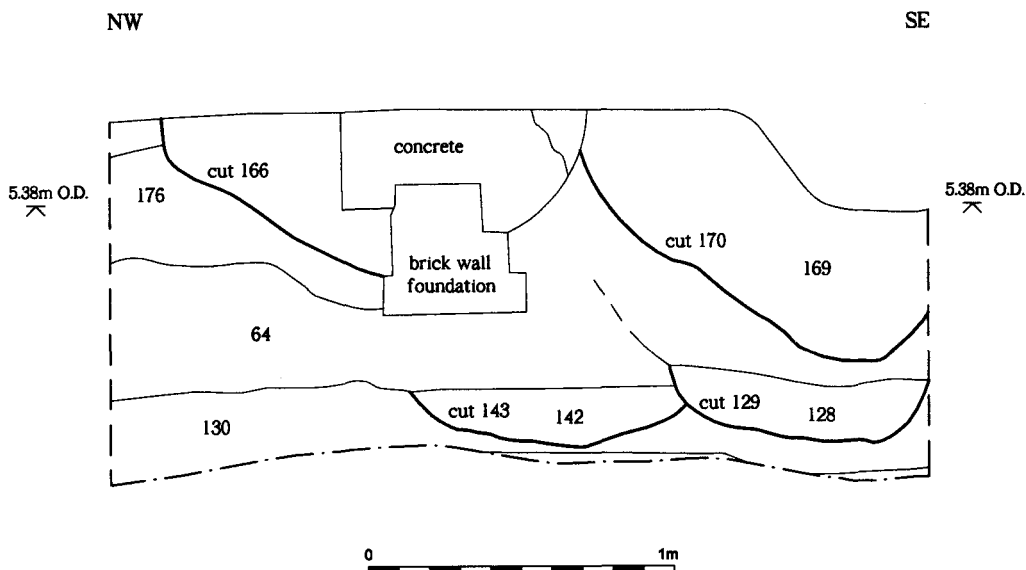


Fig 7. Section showing continuity of boundary divisions

Current available information suggests that the location of Iron Age and Romano-British settlements around *Londinium* was strongly influenced by the distribution of good soil. This is generally found on the terrace gravels, often with a covering of brickearth. It is a fertile, well drained and easy to work soil, and mostly located adjacent to the main rivers, in particular forming a wide band on either side of the Thames (Bird 1996).

There is very little evidence of continuity from the late Prehistoric to the Roman periods at any one site and therefore administrative factors need to be considered along with the geological and geographical situations of sites in order to address settlement patterns around *Londinium*. It would appear that a requirement for efficient communications and supply was a criterion that resulted in the development of a road network radiating from *Londinium* (Margary 1955).

The ribbons of settlements, religious and industrial sites, and cemeteries that developed along the main roads and near crossing points over the river are commonly termed 'small towns'. Little is known of these peripheral 'small town' sites due to the limited archaeological excavations that have so far been undertaken on them, leaving questions on the size, layout, and the density of these sites still to be addressed. There is also no consensus of what constitutes a 'small town' and generally sites have been grouped together because of lack of information on how they functioned within the Romano-British landscape (Millett 1995).

However, not all 'small town' sites are found along the main routes into and out of *Londinium* and those that are produce varying characteristics. Some remains include substantial stone structures whilst others comprise mostly negative features. Common to most, however, is their location on 'good soil'. Many of these sites probably represent farmsteads, some of which may have been associated with local villas which in turn may have been within a system centred on *Londinium* and therefore possibly taking part in a wider scale supply and distribution of produce. Some 'small towns' may also have been part of a larger system of settlement representing residential areas of craft workers and traders under the patronage of an élite living in nearby villas. Some 'small towns' prospered and a number are walled; some even grew to a size comparable with some small *civitas* capitals. Most remained straggling, unpretentious, and essentially small in scale but with a

range of craft and workshop activities (Millett 1990).

At present there is insufficient evidence to determine the status of the occupational evidence at Old Church Street, and any interpretation is therefore speculative. The location fulfils some of the criteria for settlement as it is located by the river, not too far from a main road, and on 'good soil'. On this basis it could be interpreted as a small peripheral farmstead, similar to that found at St Mary Abbot (Howe 1995), but even this interpretation is somewhat ambiguous as the archaeology at Old Church Street was considerably less extensive, consisting of a pit and a ditch. One suggestion offered is that when pits are accompanied by ditches the site may constitute a small land parcel, possibly a house plot separated by lanes or streets (Wilson 1995), or an enclosure ditch or field boundary. It may therefore reflect simple agricultural activity at Old Church Street rather than any evidence for occupation. This interpretation is supported by the results of the environmental data from the ditch fill and by the fact that the ditch lay at a right angle to the line of Old Church Street. The western terminus, however, had been truncated by the north-south aligned Saxo-Norman ditch but it is possible that the dating of the latter may be attributed to a scouring event and that it may have been in use during the Roman period as well. The alignment of the ditches and the significant absence of activity to the west also suggests that the origins of Old Church Street may date back to at least the Roman period.

The pottery assemblage from Old Church Street, although small, reveals the points of contact with other contemporary settlements. The pottery assemblage has been dated to c.A.D. 200 to 300 and as much as half originates from the Alice Holt/Farnham kilns on the Hampshire/Surrey border. Similar assemblages of early 3rd-century pottery have been found on other river sites immediately west of London at Brentford, and at Putney across the river (Lyne this paper). Alice Holt wares, however, are very rare or totally absent from contemporary sites in *Londinium*. The assemblage also contained a significant amount of BB1 pottery which almost certainly originated from London where it makes up nearly half of the coarse pottery from mid to late 3rd-century assemblages and was imported by sea direct from the Dorset producers.

No Roman activity was recorded at the Cheyne Hospital site and only half a dozen or so

Roman artefacts were recovered as residual material from later features. The negative evidence is surprising but can either be attributed to large scale truncation or the fact that the area of Roman activity was closer to the Old Church Street site.

No evidence was found to demonstrate continuity of occupation between the Roman and Middle Saxon periods. It is possible that small farmsteads and peripheral sites may have survived the disruptions higher up the social and economic scale as their roles may have been self-sufficient or geared to local economy, in such a way that it would be expected that they could continue to function as stand-alone farmsteads for nucleated or extended family units. However this period has not been successfully traced on small excavations and where there is evidence of later Saxon or Medieval activity overlying Roman it is not always clear that one directly succeeded the other (Myers 1986).

The Middle Saxon elements at Old Church Street consisted of a series of postholes forming a right-angled alignment reflecting the preceding and succeeding ditch alignments. No contemporary features were recorded at the Cheyne Hospital site but a timber pile structure of similar date was found by the Thames Archaeological Survey to the south.

Parallels can be seen for example in the excavations at Staines, Brentford, and Brockley Hill which have produced evidence for Saxon activity after the Roman period. At Staines there were pits and a possible iron-working area, sunken buildings were found at Brentford, with possibly one at Dartford, and a possible earthworks feature was identified at Brockley Hill (Sheldon & Schaaf 1978, 73). Re-occupation dates of these sites are uncertain but a Church Synod was recorded as being held at Brentford about A.D. 704 and both Staines and Brentford were documented as Saxon river crossings (Vince 1990, 131-3). This evidence suggests that, although the local rural economy suffered from the collapse of *Londinium*, the entire population did not disappear.

Agricultural and/or horticultural activity in the Saxo-Norman period was found at both Old Church Street and the Cheyne Hospital site, and, where vertical stratigraphy survived later truncation, domestic activity was identified at Cheyne Hospital.

Overall, considerable Post-Medieval truncation had taken place in the area but these two

neighbouring sites indicate that small pockets of early activity survive which can eventually aid the determination of the status and continuity of early occupation in this area of Old Church Street and the former Cheyne Hospital.

The Post-Medieval aspects of the excavation reflect the development of the area as recorded in cartographic sources from the 17th century to the present day. Chelsea attracted many notable figures and there is much documentary evidence about some of the larger properties and their inhabitants. However lesser known properties and 'ordinary' dwellings are not well documented. The remains of a 15th-century cellar found at the Cheyne Hospital site have not been related to any documented boundaries of recorded estates in the vicinity, and whilst the early 18th-century rate books record individuals living on 'Church Lane' by name, they do not relate to specific properties.

For the early 18th century the evidence from pit group [97] from the various finds categories all points to the presence of medically orientated activities at or near the site.

In conclusion, the archaeological evidence for the Chelsea area is still extremely limited, but the recent excavations at the adjacent Old Church Street and Cheyne Hospital sites is changing that. The developments at these sites suggest a rural economy from the Roman times onwards. It is not until the 17th to 18th centuries that the area appears to have changed from a rural economy to a middle to high status residential landscape.

THE POST-MEDIEVAL PIT GROUP [97]

Chris Jarrett with contributions from Peter Moore, Ian Riddler and Shahina Farid

Pit [97] was located in the garden area to the back of the properties shown on maps dating from 1664 up to the 19th century. Through a map regression exercise of the available cartographic sources (Kain 1996), it was possible to place the approximate location of pit [97] within the garden boundaries of the third house north from the church on Church Lane. The cultural record of this pit revealed a varied and relatively affluent range of wares dating to the early 18th century in contrast to its association with a small domestic dwelling.

The local rate book records identify persons

living on Church Lane at this time but the records do not specify who lived at which property. The pit group cannot therefore be associated with a particular family or individual, but the analysis of the cultural assemblage has shed light on the possible economic and social status of the individual(s) concerned.

The pit was a north south aligned rectangular cut, which measured 2.6m x 1.3m at the top, 1.69m deep, with sides sharply sloped to a smaller and flat base. The backfill [96] was fine sandy silt.

The Pottery

The pottery assemblage consisted of largely complete or near complete vessels and was quantified as a total of 342 sherds of pottery, weighing 16,083kg. The MoLAS pottery-type codes were used to classify the ceramics. The pottery is discussed in estimated vessel equivalents (eves), measured from the percentage of surviving rims, as this method of quantification appeared to give a more accurate description of the pottery, compared to sherd counts and weight. An eve of 23.99 was calculated and exceeds the 20 eves set as a minimum statistical quantification (Orton & Pearce 1984). Post-Medieval pottery-types occurring in the London region have been discussed in detail elsewhere (Vince & Egan 1981, Jennings 1981, Orton & Pearce 1984, and Crossley 1990), and there is little need for the repetition of this information.

The pottery was dated to the late 17th/early 18th centuries, with one sherd of residual Medieval Coarse Border ware (CBW). Table 1 shows the pottery-types present with Tin-glazed

earthenware (TGW) being the most frequently occurring fabric. The decoration styles of the Tin-glazed wares could be classified following Orton (1988) as plain white (TGW C), Orton style D (TGW D), Persian blue (TGW E), China men in grasses (TGW F), and Lambeth polychrome (TGW G). Additionally there are the plain pale blue tin-glazed wares (TGW BLUE) and miscellaneous styles mostly in blue and white designs (TGW). The second most common pottery type was Post-Medieval Redware (PMR) followed by Chinese Porcelain (CHPO) and London Stoneware (LONS), with all the other pottery types present as single examples. Except for the foreign imports all the vessels are probably provenanced to pottery industries in South East England, such as the local London stoneware and tin-glazed earthenware industries, or the coarse red earthenwares produced mostly in South London. Otherwise, pottery was present from Essex or Potterspurty, Northamptonshire, as Post-Medieval Black glazed ware (PMBL), and from the Surrey-Hampshire Border as white earthenwares (BORDB and BORDY). From further afield Midlands purple ware (MPUR) accounted for one sherd of pottery while imported pottery occurred only as Chinese porcelain (CHPO), quantified as 1.62 eves (6.75%) of the assemblage. German Frechen and Westerwald stonewares were absent, although Frechen stoneware was present in other deposits on the site.

The pottery is representative of a domestic assemblage, with the main activity of the vessels associated with medicinal/pharmaceutical containers, followed by sanitation, then kitchen wares, multi-functional wares, and storage (Fig 8). The range of vessel forms and the pottery-types they occur in are shown in Table 2 with the most commonly occurring type being chamber pots (17.75%), bowls (12.13%), pipkins (9.92%), albarrellos (9.88%), and ointment pots (9.50%), respectively. In describing the pottery forms present it is more interesting to look at their functions and the pottery types they occur in. Cooking and food preparation vessels were restricted to pipkins and a skillet all in PMR, while the only obvious vessel for serving food was a BORDB condiment dish. Tablewares for serving food include a service of plain light greyish blue TGW rounded bowls and chargers, although the bowls have been considered as multi-functional as are the PMR bowls. Plates for eating food were surprisingly absent, while

Table 1. OCR 97, Pit 97. Quantification of pottery present by fabric

Fabric-type	Sherd Count	Weight	% Weight	Eves	% Eves
BORDB	1	90	0.56	0.25	1.04
BORDY	13	842	5.24	0.88	3.67
CBW	1	6	0.04	-	0
CHPO	8	153	0.96	1.62	6.75
LONS	2	52	0.32	0.90	3.75
MPUR	1	16	0.10	-	-
PMBL	10	288	1.79	-	-
PMR	65	3494	21.72	6.04	25.18
TGW	241	11,142	69.28	14.30	59.61
TOTAL	338	16,083	100	23.99	100

table wares associated with drinking existed as cups (LONS) and (TGW), tea bowls (CHPO) and (TGW), saucers (CHPO), and jugs (LONS) and (PMBL). Medicinal vessels were restricted to TGW and consisted of two sizes of ointment pots, albarellos (possibly also used as general storage containers), and a bleeding bowl or porringer. Chamber pots were the only vessels with a sanitary function, with several vessels present in TGW and one example in BORDY was a Type 1 version (Pearce 1992). Ornamental vessels occurred in TGW, although some of

the bowls and chargers may have been multi-functional rather than purely decorative. Vessels associated with the garden were represented by flowerpots in unglazed PMR, but the Tin-glazed urn may have had a horticultural function for holding plants, either inside or outside the house (Archer 1997). The bird pot in PMR was placed under roof eaves to entice birds to nest for the collection of eggs and chicks (Stephenson 1991). An unusual find within the assemblage was the Chinese porcelain mouthpiece of a woodwind instrument (Fig 9:3).

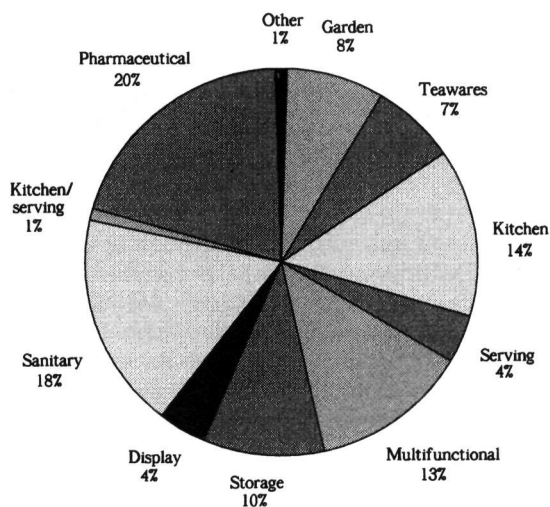


Fig 8. Pie chart showing relative functions of vessel types in pit [97]

Discussion

The pottery can be stylistically dated to the late 17th century and beginning of the 18th century, with some of the Tin-glaze decoration styles dating to this period, *eg* Persian blue (Orton style E), fashionable between 1680 and 1710. The 'bleu of Nevers' style (dark blue with white splashes) porringer/bleeding bowl dates to between c.1680 and 1700 (Fig 10:1), and a Lambeth polychrome (Orton style G) bowl dates to between c.1701 and 1711. A very dateable vessel was the William III (1694–1702) decorative charger (Fig 10:3); although royal personages could appear on plates after they died and therefore this charger could date as late as c.1710 (Archer 1982; 1997). Other notable vessels include the Chinese porcelain tea-bowl (Fig 9:1), decorated in the famille verte palette

Table 2. OCR 97, Pit 97. Quantification of vessel forms and the fabric types they occur in by eves

BORDB		PMR		TGW C	
condiment dish	0.25	bird pot	0.35	bowl	–
		bowl	0.45	chamber pot	1.35
BORDY		deep bowl	0.86	container	1.46
chamber pot	0.88	flower pot	1.00	ointment pots	2.28
		tripod pipkin	3.38		
CHPO				TGW D	
saucers	0.45			albarello	0.63
tea bowls	1.17				
LONS				TGW E	
cup	–	albarello	1.74	bowl	0.16
jug	0.90	bowl	0.45	porringer/bleeding bowl	0.63
		charger	0.61		
		jar	0.11	TGW F	
		urn	1.00	bowl	–
MPUR					
?butter pot	–	TGW BLUE			
		bowl	1.56	TGW G	
PMBL		chamber pot	2.03	bowl	0.29
jug	–	cup	–		

(c.1690–1730), with the commendation mark ‘Elegant collection of holy friends’. A blue and white saucer (Fig 9:4) has a central design with scrolls and ‘auspicious objects’ and is marked with a flower spray on the underside; these designs are common between the late 17th and early 18th century (Krahl 1986).

The function of certain pottery items is often difficult to define as they can generally represent multi-functional usage. Chargers were often used as display items in middle class societies whilst also doubling up as fruit dishes or food servers (Archer 1982). However, the William III charger probably represents a display piece while the other decorated chargers could have doubled as both show and serving pieces. Similarly, albarrellos could have functioned as storage containers as well as receptacles for drugs (Archer 1997).

Two plain, off-white, Tin-glaze shallow circular vessels have parallels at the kiln sites of Norfolk House (Bloice 1971, fig 55.90) and Lambeth Bridge House (Pre-Construct Archaeology 1998). Bloice and Dawson offer no interpretation for the use of these vessels; however, they are similar to examples of mid to late 18th-century char pots for pickling fish (Archer 1997), and are therefore possibly associated with food processing. An analogy can be made with 19th-century fish paste pots and more modern pâté and meat product containers. The Post-Medieval Redware deep bowl (Fig 9:2) could have served as a container for merchandise, as its rim was suited for a cloth covering secured by string, although this example is slightly smaller than a Border ware version (Pearce 1992, figs 24,93). Bowls are infamous for the problems they cause in being multi-functional: used for cooking, food preparation, serving, and eating as well as storage. Tin-glaze pottery is too fragile for heavy-duty activities and therefore the bowls in this assemblage are best suited as either storage, serving, or eating utensils. The Post-Medieval Redware bowl, however, may have been designed as a display item because of the applied band of rouletted decoration, either as tableware, storage, or possibly as a plant holder.

As well as being indicative of activities within a household, pottery assemblages may also indicate the primary function of a pit. In this instance the frequent occurrence of chamber pots suggests usage as a cess pit. Similar examples have been noted at Aldgate (Pearce 1992) and Leytonstone (Jarrett 1997b), where the larger proportion of the pottery assemblage was made

up of chamber pots suggesting that they were dropped while being emptied. Several non-sanitary vessels were also covered in cess concretions indicating that the cess pit doubled up as a general refuse pit.

Few pottery assemblages from the London area of a c.1700 date have been published. One was an unstratified ceramic group from Arundel House associated with a quality housing development. The collection consisted of c.1680–1700 high status table wares of which a larger than normal proportion was Chinese porcelain (Hammerson 1975). Another assemblage of a similar date, published and quantified in a similar manner to that of the Old Church Street pit group, is the c.1700–20, Phase 3, Building VII cellar at Aldgate (Orton & Pearce 1984) that yielded an cvc of 55.4 compared to 23.99 at Old Church Street. The assemblages from Aldgate and Old Church Street are similar in that the Tin-glazed earthenware was the most important pottery type present at both sites for the same period. However, Border ware, coarse, then fine (PMFR), Post-Medieval Redware, stoneware and imports occur in that order at Aldgate, while at Old Church Street coarse Post-Medieval Redware, imports, stoneware then Border ware are present in that frequency. Aldgate vessels were classified slightly differently to those from Old Church Street, with an emphasis on plain or decorated bowls and dishes at Aldgate. Almost the same range of vessels occurs at both sites but with a more diverse range at Aldgate. Chamber pots and bowls are the most frequently occurring vessels at both sites, although chamber pots predominate at Old Church Street, whereas bowls are the most important vessel type at Aldgate; plates and cups have the third and fourth highest occurrence at Aldgate, while at Old Church Street pipkins, albarrellos, ointment pots, and containers occur in that order. Functionally, the most important class of pottery at Aldgate is table/decorative wares while at Old Church Street it is pharmaceutical vessels followed by sanitation and kitchen vessels.

The differences between the two sites may be due to socio-economic reasons; fine Post-Medieval Redware and Border wares may represent the cheaper fine wares chosen at Aldgate whereas Chinese Porcelain and London Stoneware were affordable at Old Church Street where the coarse Post-Medieval Redware was largely confined to the kitchen or garden related activities. The variation of vessel shapes at both sites may be linked to function, but both are indicative of

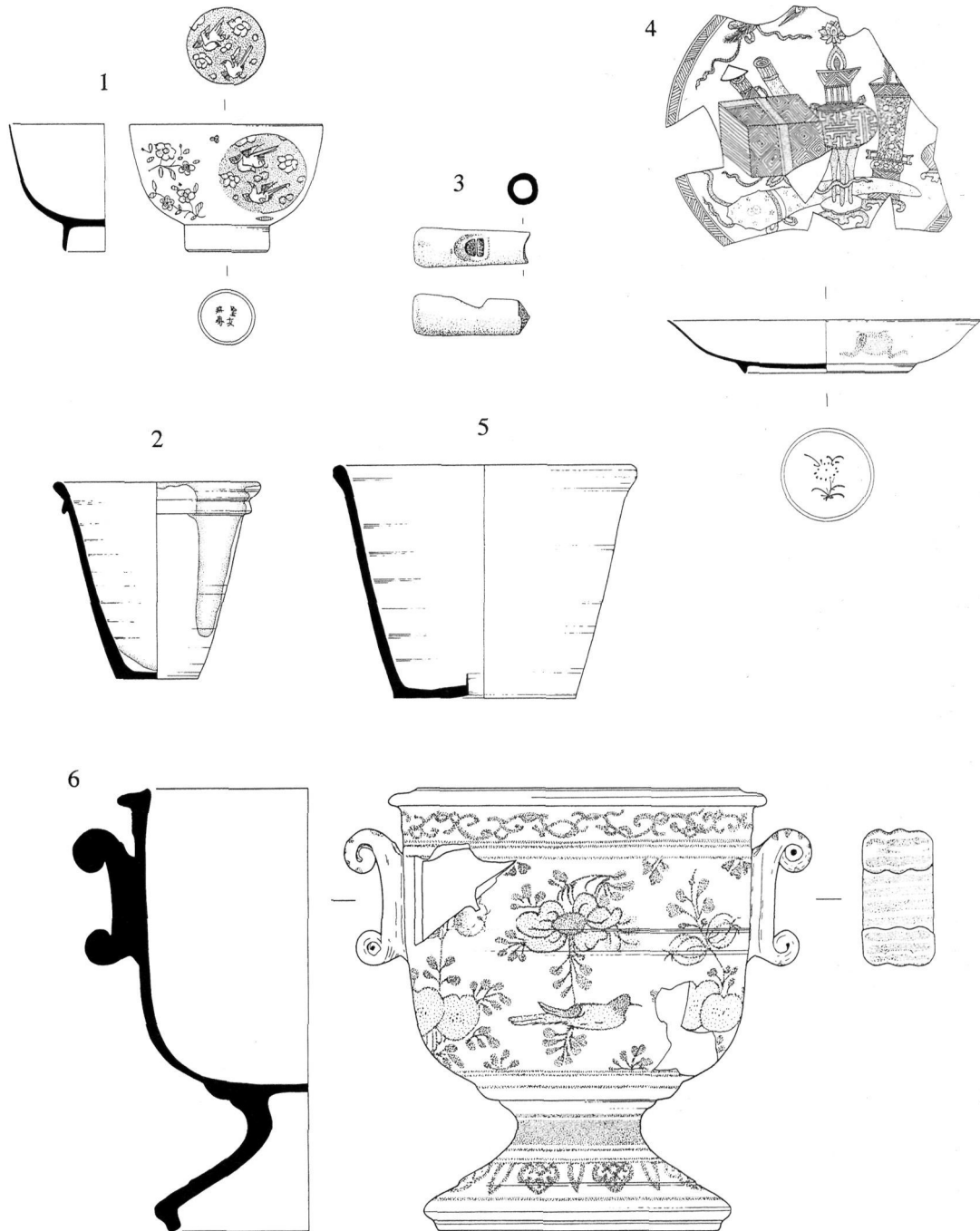


Fig 9. Post-Medieval pottery assemblage from pit [97]. Scale: Nos 1, 4, 6 (1:3); Nos 2, 5 (1:4); No. 3 (1:2)

domestic household utensils; however, the absence of plates at Old Church Street is considered an anomaly. The high occurrence of medicinal related vessels at Old Church Street could be

related to a profession, such as an apothecary or doctor. A high occurrence of ointment pots was also noted in the c.1720–1740 cess-pit at Thorne Close (Jarrett 1997b).

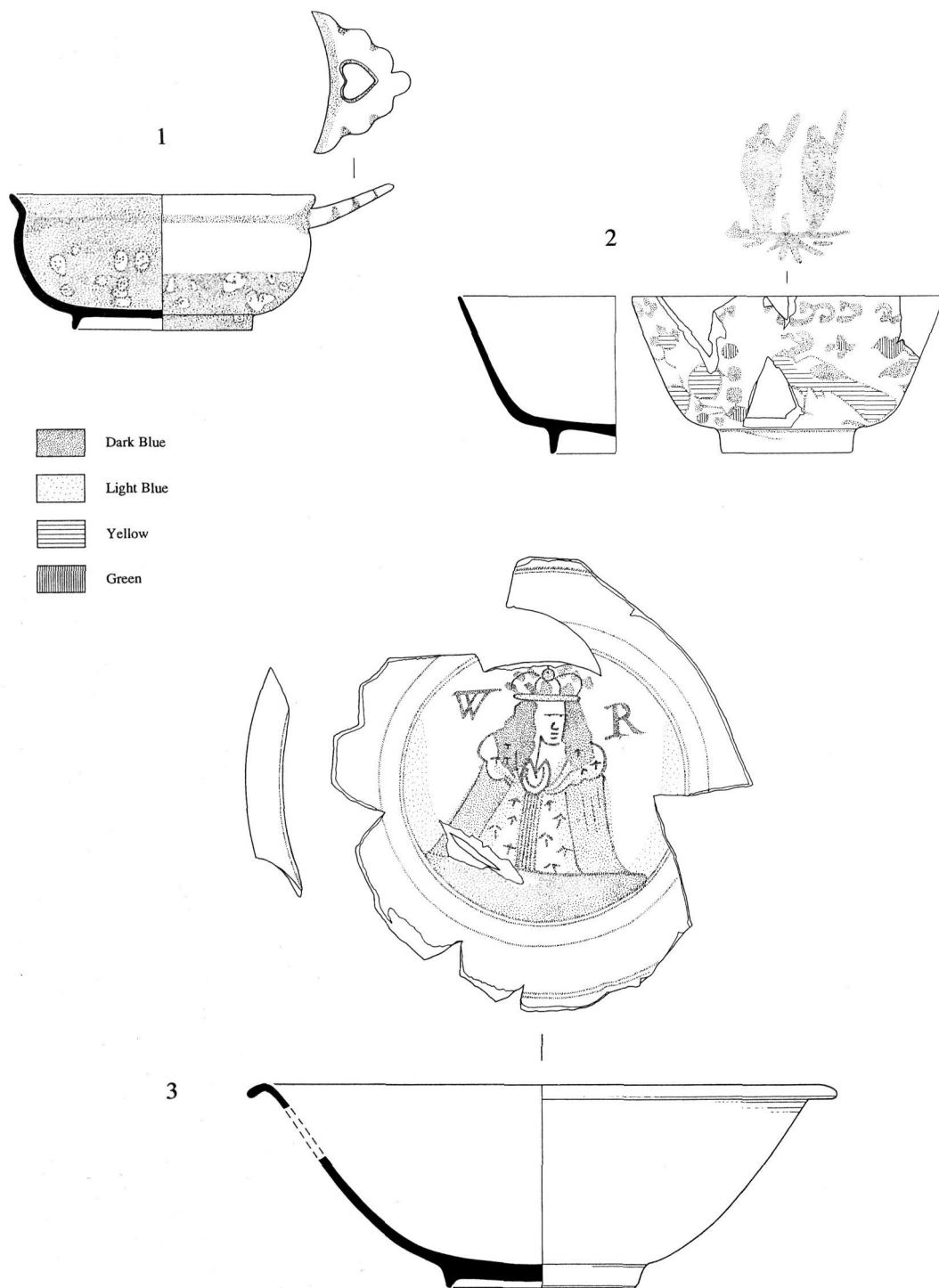


Fig 10. Post-Medieval pottery assemblage from pit [97]. Scale 1:3

The clay tobacco pipes

Chris Jarrett

The clay tobacco pipes were classified according to Oswald (1975) and further referenced to Groves (1984). A total of 82 fragments of clay pipes was recovered from pit [97], of which 37 were bowl fragments consisting of 36 bowl type 10, dated to 1700–40, and one bowl type 8, dated to 1680–1710.

Discussion

All of the 36 type 10 bowl fragments were undecorated but six (17%) were initialled by the manufacturers. Three bowls were initialled with H.C, two bowls had a crown above the initials I.R, and one bowl was initialled with either T.O or T.C. The initials H.C probably refer to Henry Corderoy (1713), and the crowned initials J.R refer either to John Reynolds (1718–30), John Roome (1696–1717), or his son, James Roome (1730). No manufacturers initials of T.O could be assigned to the period of 1700–40; however, there were many alternatives for the initials T.C. These were Thomas Corderoy (1) (1693, 1706, 1716), Thomas Corderoy (2) (1706–30), Thomas Cleland (1711), Thomas Carr (1719), Thomas Crawley (1729 or 1731–52), or Thomas Corderoy (3) (1731). With so many possible manufacturers for the initials on the bowls, the clay tobacco pipes cannot be used on their own to date the deposition of the refuse in the pit and should be used in conjunction with the pottery evidence. The pottery appears to have been rapidly deposited with predominantly late 17th-century forms; ceramics produced after c.1720 are noticeably absent. The bowls initialled H.C, possibly for Henry Corderoy, suggest a date after c.1713 and therefore a date of c.1710–20 is argued for the final deposition of refuse.

Given the poor quality of the clay pipe assemblage as compared to the higher status nature of the table glass and ceramics, it is more likely that the clay pipes belonged to the servants than the householders.

The glass

Peter Moore

A total of 126 glass fragments was recovered from pit [97], consisting of 27 jar fragments, 38

phial fragments, 7 wine bottle fragments, 7 vessel fragments, 27 drinking vessel fragments, and 20 window pane fragments. The collection was sufficiently well preserved to enable identification of most pieces.

Three jars were represented. The first is a tall storage jar in decayed light green soda glass with a well finished pontil mark and a strong everted rim partly folded downwards to allow for a tie-on cover (Gooder 1984, 226). It is 197mm high by 138mm basal diameter and 68mm inner neck diameter and, although this example is much larger, its shape resembles jars from Temple Balsall (Gooder 1984, 226, nos 34, 36–7, fig 40) and from Norwich (Haslam 1993, 103, nos 645–6, fig 68). The second is the base of a jar in almost colourless but decayed glass with a high kicked base and a diameter of 72mm. This is comparable in size and form to the bases of storage jars from Norwich (Haslam 1993, 103, nos 645–6, fig 68). The third is a mould blown storage jar (Fig 11:9) with spirally arranged drop-shaped ribbing and everted rim comparable to mould blown jars from Norwich (Haslam 1993, 103–4, nos 649–50) and London (Charleston 1984, pl 18d).

The large collection of phial fragments represents one almost complete phial and the tops of ten and the bases of four others. The almost complete example (Fig 11:8) is Phial Type 1a (Gooder 1984, 221), in pale sea green glass, measuring 60mm high, with base diameter 31mm and max. rim diameter of 22mm. The ten phial tops are all of Phial Types 1a, 2b, and 3 (Gooder 1984, 221). Nine of these tops have flat, if sometimes partially irregular, rims (diameter varying between 23 and 33mm), short straight necks onto pronounced shoulders and vertical sides. One has a mould-blown ribbon decoration extending down from below the rim. The colour of these phials varies from pale to darker bluish-green. The maximum reconstructable height of these examples is 77mm and the surviving vessel bodies vary in diameter between 38 and 50mm. One phial top in smoky-grey glass has a very slightly everted rim similar to an example from Norwich (Haslam 1993, 103, no. 628, fig 67), with a rim diameter of 20mm, a body diameter of 30mm, and a maximum reconstructable height of 80mm. The four phial bases are in pale bluish-green glass, one has a pronounced high kicked base while the others are more rounded, the diameter varies between 41 and 45mm.

Two wine bottles are represented, one nearly

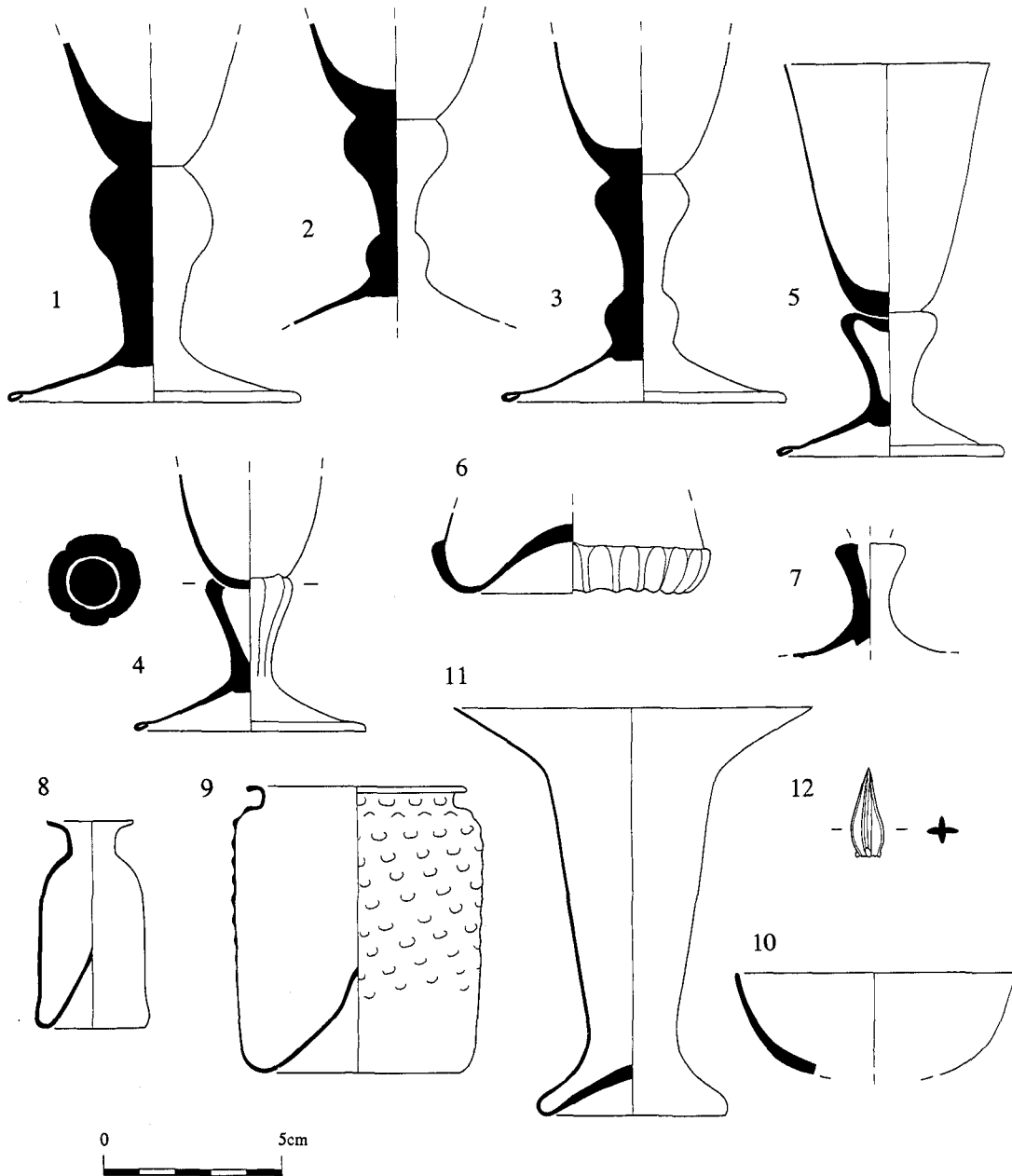


Fig 11. Post-Medieval glass assemblage from pit [97]. Scale 1:2

complete, the other represented by fragments only. The nearly complete one is a small onion wine bottle with a diameter of 116mm dating to 1682–1727 (Drumbrell 1983, 59, fig 32; 60, fig 40; 62, fig c).

A minimum of eight lead wine glasses, one soda wine glass, and one beaker were recovered although only one vessel has a complete rim to

base profile. These include: a heavy lead baluster goblet (Fig 11:1) with ball knob over plain stem. The bowl is a probable round funnel and the foot is folded. It is similar in form to a goblet dated c.1690–1710 (Charleston 1984, pl 33a). A heavy lead baluster goblet (Fig 11:2) with a knob proper (Haynes 1948, 202), a basal knob, and round funnel bowl is similar in form to a goblet

dated 1701 (Charleston 1984, pl 33b), as is a heavy lead wine glass (Fig 11:3) with an inverted baluster knob, basal knob, round funnel bowl and folded foot. A heavy lead wine glass (Fig 11:4) with a four-sided mould-pressed pedestal stem with uneven internal tear drop and folded foot was present. Such stems came into usage in England about 1710 (Charleston 1984, 145). A heavy lead goblet (Fig 11:5) with hollow blown stem in inverted baluster style with round funnel bowl and folded foot dating to 1670–1730 was identified. A stem of a heavy lead wine glass (Fig 11:7) with hollow inverted baluster, possibly a basal knob, and a bowl of a corroded soda wine glass (Fig 11:10) in the style of a Roemer glass were found. This was similar to the bowls on glasses from Hannover (Geschichte 1984, 367, 370, nos 54, 56). A base from a colourless lead tumbler (Fig 11:6) with mould blown ribbing dated to the late 17th to early 18th century and fragments from the foot of one and the bowls of at least two lead wine glasses were present (not illustrated).

Other vessels fragments included the finial of a stopper or lid (Fig 11:12). The sides were deeply incised forming four prominent ridges with one end drawn to a point. It is made from amethyst glass with applied white canes along the ridges and blue basal balls in the style of *façon de Venise*.

There was also a spittoon (or cuspidor) in opaque white glass (Fig 11:11), with a very wide flaring rim considerably wider than the base, a funnel body, and a base with a high kick. Spittoons were usually made of porcelain or pottery but glass examples are found in Persia in the 18th and 19th centuries (Newman 1977, 290–1). White opaque glass was being widely manufactured in England and elsewhere by the late 17th century (Charleston 1984, pl 31b and c) and this new material may have been utilised.

As a collection of glass this pit group mostly represents two elements: a reasonably affluent collection of tableware and medicinal ware. The tableware consists of a group of lead glasses of two basic forms, solid balusters and hollow blown stems, with a group deposition date shortly after 1710. The tumbler also fits this date but the Roemer type bowl may belong to an older glass. The *façon de Venise* finial top belonging to a stopper or lid may represent a prestigious tabletop item possibly made in the Netherlands. Considering the large number of glasses it is surprising that there are so few wine bottles. The

large number of phials may show the end usage of a number of medicines/lotions, or together with the unusual presence of a spittoon may possibly represent part of the equipment of a medical practitioner. The storage jars could be for either domestic or medicinal contents.

The small finds

Peter Moore

The small finds from pit [97] consist of five bone rings, a large flat whetstone, two lead weights, a coin, a jetton or casting-counter, a pair of iron scissors, and a possible padlock key. Fragments of a lead tube, a nail, iron corrosion products and copper alloy wire were also recovered.

The bone rings consist of one complete ring and four broken fragments which were lathe-turned and quality work. They vary in diameter from 16 to 24mm with three of them having a diameter of 18mm. They are similar to unclassified ivory examples from Norwich (Margeson 1993, 230, nos 1873–4, fig 177). The similarity between these bone rings and the copper alloy examples also from Norwich (Margeson 1993, 82, nos 522–4, fig 47) described as being suspension rings, possibly for curtains, suggests a similar purpose. The fact that such bone rings appear less frequently in the archaeological record and that both the Norwich bone rings and four out of the five Chelsea examples are broken suggests that they were replaced by a material more suitable for suspension.

The two lead weights are circular without markings. They measure 34mm diameter by 8mm thick with a weight of 84gm, and 29mm diameter by 7mm thick and a weight of 48gm which makes them of a type similar to a lead weight from Aldgate (Thompson *et al* 1984, 116, no. 96, fig 58).

The coin is a William III sixpence in poor worn condition but dated to 1696 7 giving a *post quem* date of 1696 for the backfilling of pit [97]. The jetton or casting-counter is also in a poor worn condition but the following is legible:

obv: LVDOVICVS. MAGNUS REX = bust
rev: VETERES.RE.....MDIICIA.REGIA

This is probably a French gaming piece of the late 17th or early 18th century depicting Louis XIV. They were very popular in France and many of the descriptions on such counters are

semi-illiterate (Hobson & Obojski 1984, 274; Doty 1982, 208).

A pair of scissors was identified under x-ray from a lump of corroded and oxidised iron. Measuring 136mm long they are similar to an example of Post-Medieval scissors from Norwich (Goodhall 1993, 136, no. 924, fig 101).

An unusual item present in this collection is a fine grained micaceous sandstone block – a material suitable for stone moulds – (Fig 12) measuring 147mm long by 87mm wide by 32mm high. It shows signs of very poor mould cutting or graffiti (Riddler 1997). One side has four scratches surrounding a 'V'-shaped gouge with two sides of the gouge cut smooth but with the third side formed and left with gouge and peck

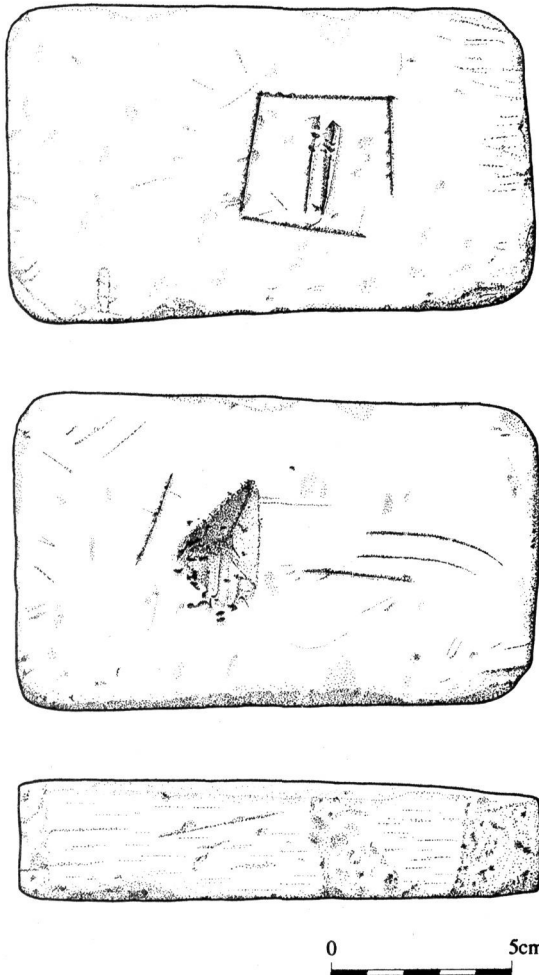


Fig 12. Sandstone block with poor mould cutting or graffiti from pit [97]

marks. The reverse side has two 'i'-shaped marks within an unfinished roughly scratched pentangle.

Overall this group of finds is small. It should be noted that only the bone suspension rings are likely to be solely domestic in nature while all the other objects could be used in the practice of a trade or commerce.

Summary conclusions for the assemblage from pit group [97]

Although there is no documentary evidence relating to the owners of the finds assemblage from pit [97], the material shows a certain degree of affluence and could be ascribed to middle to high status artisans or professionals residing on Old Church Street. This prosperity was indicated by higher status pottery such as specialised kitchen vessels, the Tin-glaze urn (Fig 9:6) for holding flowers (Archer 1997), the commemorative William III charger (Fig 10:3), the Chinese porcelain tea bowls and saucers (Figs 9:1/4, 10:2), a service of Tin-glaze tableware bowls (Bloice 1971, fig 53.50), part of a porcelain wind instrument, and possible receptacles for mercantile meat products. High status items were also represented by the large collection of wine glasses and the finial from a high quality stopper or lid. The pursuit of leisure was represented by the presence of flowerpots and the bird pot. On the other hand the clay pipe assemblage appeared to be of poor status comparative to the rest of the collection and may represent the presence of servants in the house. The relatively high proportion of medicinal items such as phials, the bleeder and spittoon suggests the presence of either a doctor, apothecary, or an invalid in the household.

ROMAN AND SAXON POTTERY

Malcolm Lyne

All of the sherds were counted and weighed as per fabric, although amounts are so small as to make any form of quantification fairly meaningless. Roman fabrics were recorded, where applicable, using the codes formulated by the Study Group for Roman Pottery (Tomber & Dore 1996) and Saxon fabrics by the MoLAS system (Blackmore 1988, 1989). All fabrics were identified with the aid of a x8 handheld lens with

built-in metric scale for determining the size of inclusions.

The earliest pottery from the site consisted of two abraded pottery sherds with coarse calcined-flint filler. One of these sherds was unstratified and the other was residual in context [98]. The pieces are probably Late Bronze Age and indicate that there was Prehistoric occupation in the vicinity of the site.

Due to the degradation of the alluvial deposit [130] and [19] and the consequent difficulty in tracing features cutting this layer, a mixed pottery assemblage was recovered from it. This layer contained 396gm of Roman pottery (31 sherds) as well as some Medieval material. The Roman pottery included pieces from four vessels consisting of: a developed beaded-and-flanged bowl in black DORBB1 fabric with burnished external arcading *c.A.D.* 240–300+ (Fig 13:2); a small jar in very fine blue-grey HADRE fabric (Fig 14:1); a developed beaded-and-flanged bowl in similar fabric with burnished horizontal bands on its internal surface (Fig 14:6) – its rim form is similar to that of Verulamium Type 2475, which is also in HADRE fabric (Wilson 1984) *A.D.* 265–300; a flagon rim in grey ALHRE fabric with polished surfaces and four notches on the rim edge made after firing (Fig 14:5) (not in Lyne & Jefferies 1979) – the rim section suggests a late Antonine or early 3rd-century date. Also found in this assemblage were twenty-nine sherds consisting of Coarse London-type ware (LCOAR), London-type ware (LOND), and Unglazed Saintonge ware (SAIU).

The fill of pit [141] yielded 264gm of Roman pottery from two vessels: a cordoned jar with down-turned and flattened rim in self-slipped grey ALHRE fabric (Lyne & Jefferies 1979, Type 1-30) *c.A.D.* 200–300 (Fig 13:1) and a large body sherd from a similar vessel with double girth cordon but in reddish ALHRE type fabric (Fig 14:4).

The Roman pottery from ditch [158] derived from an upper and lower fill. The upper fill produced 620gm of pottery (28 sherds) and the lower fill contained 98gm (7 sherds). These sherds represent a minimum of ten vessels including: an Alice Holt Cl.10 beehive; a pre-*A.D.* 270 Alice Holt Class 1A liquid storage vessel with a band of combed laticing on its shoulder (Fig 14:3); an obtuse-latticed DORBB1 cooking pot of Gillam Type 145 (1970) *c.A.D.* 225–300 (Fig 13:4); a cordoned jar in reddish-brown Kent CLIBB2 fabric fired black with external burnished decoration (Monaghan 1987, Type 4A-2) *c.A.D.* 120–250 (Fig 13:5) – similar vessels were represented at the quay site at St Magnus House, London (Richardson 1986, fig 1.200) which were dated *c.A.D.* 209–244; and a fragment from a flask with a short neck in a similar fabric (Monaghan 1987, Type 1B-6) *c.A.D.* 150/180–230 (Fig 14:2). This ditch also produced a samian fragment: Dr.37, Rheinzabern; the motifs around the base of the decoration represent a hare (Ricken & Fischer 1963, T154a), a hound (probably RF.T130b) and what may be the trunk of a tree (RF.P2a). All of these motifs were used by Julius II–Julianus I *c.A.D.* 225–250.

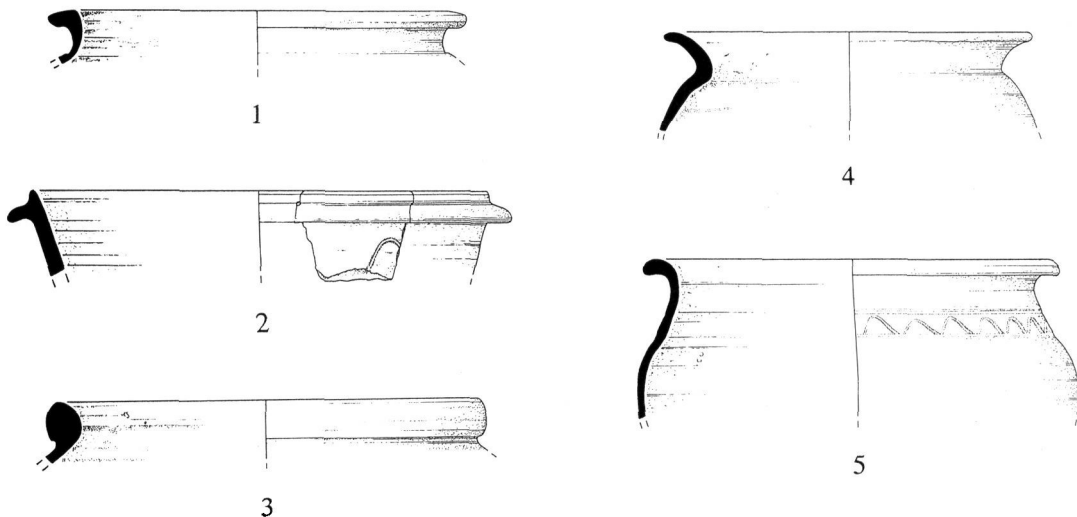


Fig 13. Roman pottery assemblage. Scale 1:4

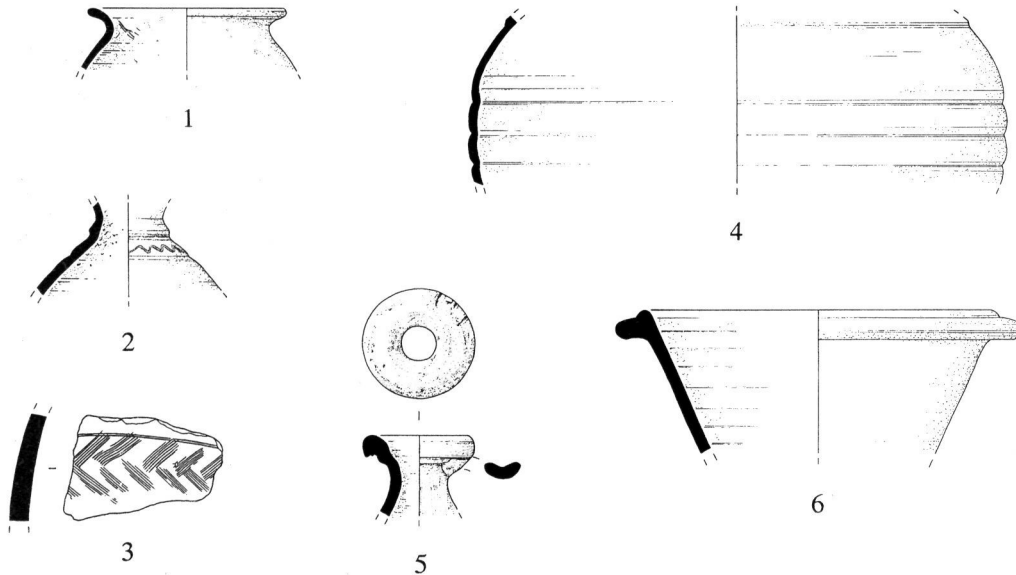


Fig 14. Roman pottery assemblage. Scale 1:4

A total of 961gm of residual Roman pottery was recovered from later features, including a DORBB1 straight-sided dish and cavetto-rimmed cooking pot of the mid to late 3rd century, and a Thameside jar of Monaghan's Type 4A-2 *c.A.D.* 110–200 (1987). Much of this residual pottery was from the fill of the Saxo-Norman ditch [39] and probably from the end of Roman ditch [158] which was cut away by that feature. The pottery from ditch [39] included a number of sherds from a storage jar with high pointed vertical bead rim in ALHRE fabric variant, fired buff and with external bands of blue-grey slip (Lyne & Jefferies 1979, Type 4-42) *c.A.D.* 270–350 (Fig 13:3).

There was a considerable variety of Middle and Late Saxon fabrics represented at the site, but they were seldom represented by more than one sherd each. Context [1] yielded a sherd of handmade chaff-tempered ware (CHAF) fired black and a sherd of handmade irregular fabric (MFSGB). There were two sherds of handmade friable fabric (CHQF var.). Context [99] yielded a sherd of handmade fabric, fired polished black; a sherd of handmade/tournetted fabric fired black with rough surfaces; and a fragment of wheel-turned pale-grey/off-white fabric (NFGWG), North French import of 7th–9th century. A sherd from context [2] was a handmade fabric and one small sherd from pit [178] was a handmade fabric with surface

brushing. Context [148] yielded a sherd of wheel-turned, high-temperature fired blue-grey, possibly another Continental import.

Discussion

Nearly all of the Roman pottery can be dated to *A.D.* 180–300 and probably more precisely to *c.* *A.D.* 200–270. There are no sherds which need be later than *A.D.* 300 and only one, a mica-dusted sherd in a pinkish-brown fabric, possibly Staines fabric, from the fill of ditch [189] could be earlier than *A.D.* 180.

The Alice Holt type storage-jar from context [2], a fragment of another one from context [1], and the cordoned girth sherd of a Class 1 cordoned jar from pit [141] are in a buff to brown sandy ware closer in appearance to the late 4th-century Overwey fabric than the normal 3rd-century Alice Holt greyware products. These vessels may have been produced by an Alice Holt/Farnham industry potter operating at an outlying kiln site on the heaths of West Surrey and making use of local clays and sand filler similar to those employed by the late 4th-century Overwey potters.

Although the quantities of pottery from the site are small, it is clear that as much as half of all the wares originated in the Alice Holt/Farnham kilns on the Hampshire/Surrey border.

Other early 3rd-century pottery assemblages from sites on the river immediately west of London also include appreciable percentages of Alice Holt pottery. Pre-A.D. 270 Alice Holt wares made up nearly three-quarters of all the coarse pottery from Pits Y8 and 10 in the 1974 Brentford excavations and more than half of all such wares from the Bemish Road ditch fills BD3 and 5 at Putney across the river (Lyne 1994, 121–6). Alice Holt wares are, however, very rare or totally absent from contemporary assemblages at the Walbrook Mithraeum and other sites within the walls of *Londinium* only a very short distance to the east. This suggests that there was some kind of barrier to the Alice Holt potters distributing their wares within the boundaries of the city at this time, although they were able to sell large quantities of pottery to the suburban population outside the walls.

The significant amounts of BB1 from Chelsea almost certainly emanated from London, where BB1 makes up nearly half of the coarse pottery from mid to late 3rd-century assemblages and was imported by sea direct from the Dorset producers (Lyne 1994, 121). It was not until c.A.D. 300 that the BB1 suppliers lost much of their share of the London pottery market to products of the Alice Holt/Farnham pottery industry, now distributed in large quantities within the walls for the first time since the late 1st century (*ibid.*, 162).

Quantities of Saxon pottery are very small and there are no closely datable fragments. The absence of Ipswich ware sherds may, however, indicate that the occupation dates to c.A.D. 650–750 and was followed by a period of abandonment. Ipswich ware was in common use in *Lundenwic* between c.A.D. 750 and 850 (Blackmore 1989, 105).

THE MEDIEVAL AND LATER POTTERY

Chris Jarrett

The Museum of London Archaeology Service pottery type codes were used to classify the Medieval and Post-Medieval pottery. With the exception of the Post-Medieval phase, the pottery largely occurred as small numbers of sherds within contexts and therefore sherd counts were used to quantify the pottery with fresh sherd breaks discounted.

Fifteen Saxo-Norman sherds were recovered.

The fills of ditch [39] contained single sherds of Early Medieval Flinty ware (EMFL) and Early Surrey ware (ESUR). Fills of ditch [154] contained single sherds of Early Medieval Sandy ware (EMS), North Middlesex Coarseware (NMDX), and South Hertfordshire ware (SHER). London-type ware (LOND) and Early Surrey ware (ESUR) were present in ditch [189] and an oval pit [117] contained fragments of Early Surrey ware (ESUR) and Coarse London-type ware (LCOAR). Two small sherds of Early Medieval Shelly ware (EMSH) were recovered from feature [60].

The deposition of the Post-Medieval pottery indicated two periods of late 17th–early 18th and early 19th century activity.

Late 17th-century features [26], [84], and [89] contained sherds of Tin-glazed earthenware (TGW) with two sherds of Post-Medieval Red earthenware (PMR) found in both the fills of cuts [24] and [85]. The fill of a soakaway [10] contained TGW, Staffordshire Butterpot (STBU), and an unglazed PMR flowerpot. Residual single sherds of Early Medieval Chalky ware (EMCH), EMSH, and CBW occurred in feature [84] together with two TGW pots, which were noted to have sherd links with vessels in pit [97].

The pottery from linear ditches would suggest that ditch [103] was of 17th-century date as it contained sherds of Medieval CBW, Frechen Stoneware (FREC), BORDY, and PMR. The 19th-century boundary ditch [121/129] contained residual Medieval and Post-Medieval sherds of SHER, CBW, LOND, TUDB, and BORDG. The material is interpreted as residual as this boundary feature was stratigraphically later than ditch [143] which contained single sherds of Siegburg Stoneware (SIEG) and 19th-century Pearl ware (PEAR).

19th-century pottery occurred in the fill of a soakaway [109] and consisted of Refined White Earthenwares (REFW), predominantly with transfer printed designs (TPW), Nineteenth Century Buff ware (NBW), and Mocha ware (MOCH), with an earlier sherd of Staffordshire Slipware (STSL). The fill of a rectangular pit [135] contained the same fabrics as [109] with the addition of English Porcelain (ENPO), one sherd with an example of lustre decoration (LUST), PEAR and Sunderland Slipware (SUND). An oval pit [94] contained within its fill LONS and Denby stoneware (SBLB) blacking bottles and PEAR with earlier CHPO, PMR and Staffordshire flatwares with combed slipware decoration (SCOM).

Discussion

The Saxo-Norman pottery occurred mostly as small body sherds with one rim sherd present in EMSS, and it was therefore difficult to assign vessel shapes and functions to the pottery. The small body sherds would indicate that the pottery had been subject to possible plough action before final deposition and suggest the periphery of settlement. The presence of later medieval pottery in ditches [154] and [189] would imply a silting of these features during the late 13th to the middle 14th century. Residual Medieval pottery in the Post-Medieval phase indicated Medieval settlement close to the site and included fragments of white slip London-type ware jugs. The 1997 MoLAS excavation at 61–62 Cheyne Place, adjacent to the Old Church Street site, found greater quantities of the same and similar fabrics to Old Church Street dated to c.1080–1200 and later 12th- and 13th-century pottery (Partridge forthcoming). Pottery of a similar 12th-century date was also recovered from excavations at Earls Terrace associated with a structure (Jarrett 1998).

The early Post-Medieval pottery appeared to be late 17th century to early 18th century in date and was present as refuse in pits. The absence of distinctive 18th-century ceramics, notably Staffordshire White Salt Glazed Stoneware, indicated a cessation of refuse disposal during that century until the early 19th century when contemporary pottery began to appear in features.

THE CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Ken Sabel

The building materials were examined using the London system of classification. A fabric number was allocated to each object, specifying its composition, form, method of manufacture, and approximate date range. Examples of the fabrics can be found in the archives of Pre-Construct Archaeology and/or the Museum of London Archaeology Service.

The presence of Roman buildings near to the site was suggested by discrete assemblages of Roman building material. The material in features [114], [157], [181] and [188] mostly dated to the first two centuries A.D., though one fragment of *tegula* dated to A.D. 120/160–late 2nd/3rd century. Residual Roman building

material was recovered from later deposits and the mixture of fabrics indicates that buildings in the vicinity stood at least until the mid 2nd century and perhaps into the 3rd century. Only local fabrics, of fabric group 2815, were found in the Roman deposits. Additionally fabrics 3006, 2459C, and 3060 appeared residually. *Tegula*, *imbrex*, and brick were collected. Four *tegula* fragments showed the complete profile of a flange, though they were all differently shaped. One tile fragment (in [157]) bore a manufacturer's signature. A comb-scored flue tile fragment was found in context [40]. The fragment was too small and damaged to distinguish the style of combing, though its presence suggests that the tile was derived from, or meant for, a heating system.

Both splash glazed and unglazed Medieval roof tile were represented in fabrics 2273, 2271, 2586, 3090, 2587, and 3216. One roof tile fragment in context [91] (of fabric 2586) may have been a fragment of roof furniture such as a finial or louvre, though it is more probably a fragment of a curved or hip tile. As fabrics 2586, 2587, and 3090 emerged during the mid to late 13th century and continued in use at least until the middle 14th century it can be assumed that building activity of this date took place close to the site.

The Medieval floor tile included a green copper-glazed sandy tile fragment in context [96]. As this tile fabric (2273 near 3228) dates to 1135/36–early 13th century and this type of glaze is a 13th-century innovation, it can be assumed to date to the early 13th century. Late Medieval to early Post-Medieval plain glazed Flemish floor tile was found in deposits [132] and [120]. They were both of fabric 2318. Deposit [128] contained a Post-Medieval unglazed example of this fabric.

Post-Medieval peg and pan tile was retrieved. The pan tile was present in fabrics 2275 and 2279. One example of fabric 2275 (in deposit [85]) contained frequent very fine calcium carbonate. Contexts [10] and [120] contained late 17th-century brick, of fabric 3046 near 3032 and 3065 near 3032. The other brick in [10], of fabric 3046, was probably also late 17th century.

Possible Tudor brick fragments, dating to before c.1700 occurred in deposits [120] and [142]. As there is a quantity of late 17th-century brick in the assemblage however, it is possible that these fragments also date to the late 17th century.

The 18th-century to 19th-century brick was all

of purple fabrics 3032 and 3034. Those in contexts [17], [36], and [61] may date to between c.1690 when this fabric first appeared and c.1729 when regulations dictating the thickness of bricks started to be enforced. The rest are probably later.

A fragment of Bath Stone was found in deposit [128] and a coarse grain sandstone fragment occurred in context [91].

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