

A GLIMPSE OF MEDIEVAL ISLINGTON

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With contributions by Frank Meddens (pottery), Chris Phillpotts (archive studies), Philip Armitage (animal bone), Ken Sabel (ceramic building material), Helen Keeley (environmental studies), Charles French (soil micromorphology), Ian Riddler and Geoff Egan (small finds)

SUMMARY

An archaeological excavation at 7–9 Islington Green revealed the first major archaeological record of the development of medieval Islington. A dark grey silt ploughsoil dating to the 13th/14th centuries covered the site. Several cuts interpreted as field ditches were also attributed to this phase. The earliest structures on site consist of chalk foundations and an unassociated possible brickearth floor. From the 14th century onwards the remains of three tenements survived, consisting of Kentish ragstone, tile, and sandstone foundations for probable timber framed buildings with associated brickearth floors and a series of tile and reused millstone hearths across the site, including a pitched tile hearth 4m long and an oven. These buildings are interpreted as the industrial and service areas within the rear of copyhold plots or tenements fronting onto Islington Green. Towards the north of the site was a large E–W boundary ditch defining the building plots at the rear. The development of the properties continued into the post-medieval period with the subdivision of rooms, the continual replacement of hearths and repairs to the oven, and the insertion of two brick cellars into the middle tenement. The 4m-long hearth to the east of the site was replaced by a brick and Purbeck marble fireplace with a tiled floor. To the south a knapped flint courtyard was laid. The buildings were then demolished in the 17th century and the ditch was backfilled. Apparently brick housing was constructed at the front of the site, although no evidence survives due to truncation by modern foundations. The rear of the site was turned over to gardens with a series of postholes along the former property line being construed as a fence line. A series of cuts was interpreted as garden features and a well; brick drains and brick surfaces are consistent with

the excavation area being a garden during this period. Finally in the 19th century buildings associated with industrial processes were erected in the former garden area.

INTRODUCTION

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Sager Construction Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 7–9 Islington Green in the London Borough of Islington. The evaluation, which was carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd between 2 and 9 September 1998 (Beasley 1998), revealed the remains of medieval buildings. An archaeological excavation was thus undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd between 12 October and 20 November 1998 within the standing buildings whilst soft stripping and partial demolition was carried out by the contractors. To avoid undermining the foundations of the standing buildings, the trenches had to step in from the walls in each room, thereby making interpretation of the relationship between the medieval and post-medieval structures difficult, especially since the same property boundaries had to a large degree been maintained into the modern era.

The development lay on the north side of Islington Green and the east side of Collins Yard (see Figs 1–2). The site was rectangular in shape and covered an area of approximately 960m². The southern area fronting Islington Green had been severely truncated by the foundations of the 1950s standing building. The survival of

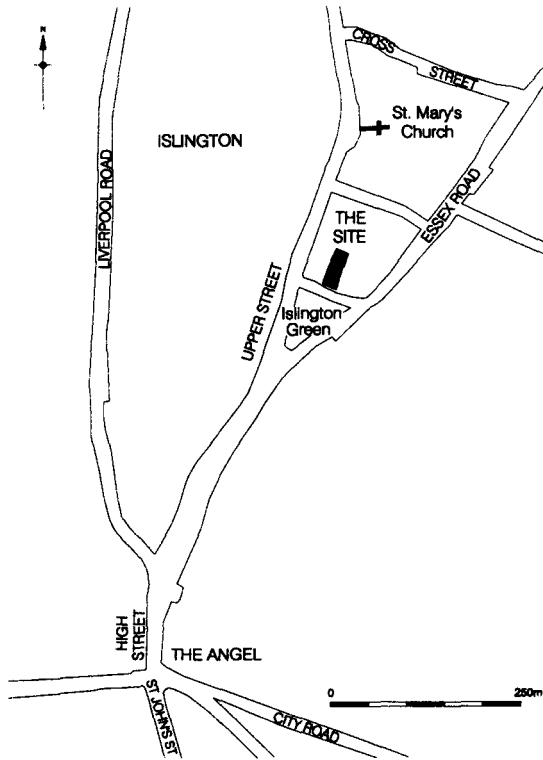


Fig 1. Site location

archaeological deposits to the rear of the development area was especially good because of the absence of basements or cellars; and it was in this area that all the archaeological remains were recorded.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Saxon

The earliest references to Islington are from a late Anglo-Saxon Charter of *c.*1000, when it was called *Gislandune* (Gisla's hill or down) and it supplied two men to man a ship. The name probably derives from its watery origins. The root probably means the Down of the *Ysel* or *Yssel*, the *Ysel* being the modern river Flect. *Ysel* is a diminutive of Ouse, meaning river or water (Harris 1974, 1). Other theories speculate that '*isen*' referred to the springs of water impregnated with iron that are widespread in the area (Nelson 1811) or that '*Iseldone*' originally meant lower fort

or camp from the root *ishel*, an old British word meaning 'lower'.

By the late Saxon period Islington was part of the great tract of land to the north of London held by the Bishopric of London. In the Domesday Book, 1086, the settlement was known as *Isendone*, *Iseldon*, or *Iseldone*; the area had been cleared of woodland and consisted of several estates or manors, including Highbury, Barnsbury, and Canonbury, some of which were assigned to the support of the Canons of St Paul's Cathedral (VCHM viii, 9). By the time of the Norman Conquest there were 27 householders in Islington, 9 villeins, 5 bordars, and 13 cottagers, who together owned land worth 92 shillings. Most of the land was under the plough, but there was ample pasture for the cattle of the village and pannage (forest grazing) for its 60 pigs in nearby Toletone Woods (Roberts 1975, 12–13). The rich gravelly loam soil made the area an ideal location for market gardening and dairy farming. The settlement developed along two droveways, Upper Street and Essex Road (formerly Lower Street), by which cattle were driven into the City markets at Smithfield.

Despite its Saxon origins archaeological evidence for this period is remarkably sparse. The original church of St Mary Islington, which stood on the same site as the present church, is mentioned in documents as far back as 1128 and it may have existed in Saxon times at the centre of the settlement, but nothing was identified as being earlier than the 15th century when it was demolished in 1741. The Angel public house was originally part of the Hydes, an estate almost certainly formed in Saxon times (Roberts 1975, 51), a *hide* being an early measure of land. The only archaeological find of this period was a single residual sherd of Saxon pottery recovered from waterlain deposits during an excavation at 71–85 Essex Road (Greenwood & Maloney 1993, 80).

Medieval

In the 1170s William Fitzstephen, the secretary and biographer of St Thomas à Becket, described the borough of Islington as being 'very pleasant, having both fields for pastures and open meadows into which the river waters do flow and mills are turned about with a delightful noise. Beyond them an immense forest extends itself, beautified with woods and groves, full of lairs and coverts



Fig 2. Location of excavation areas

of beasts and game; stags, bucks, boars and wild bulls'. He went on to talk of it as being 'a place of fountains of water, sweet, wholesome and clear streaming forth among glistening pebbles' (Roberts 1975, 13). Holywell, Clerkenwell and St Clement's Well springs were frequented by scholars and youths of London.

In the 13th century the village of Islington grew, extending along the lower courses of the Fleet valley. A new road, St John's Street, was built to transport the guests of the Knights Hospitallers to and from the priory of St John at Clerkenwell. This became the link stage between

London and the Great North Road, along which produce was sent to London. The area of Islington was dominated by religious communities who built country retreats there, and by the 14th century they were the principal landlords.

The excavation site was within the manor of Canonbury. The manor was triangular in shape and bordered on all three sides by roads: Upper Street to the west, St Paul's Road to the north, and Essex Road (formerly Lower Street) to the east (Fig 3). The land which became Islington Green was at its southern tip (Nelson 1811, 217; Lewis 1842, 76). The name was derived from the

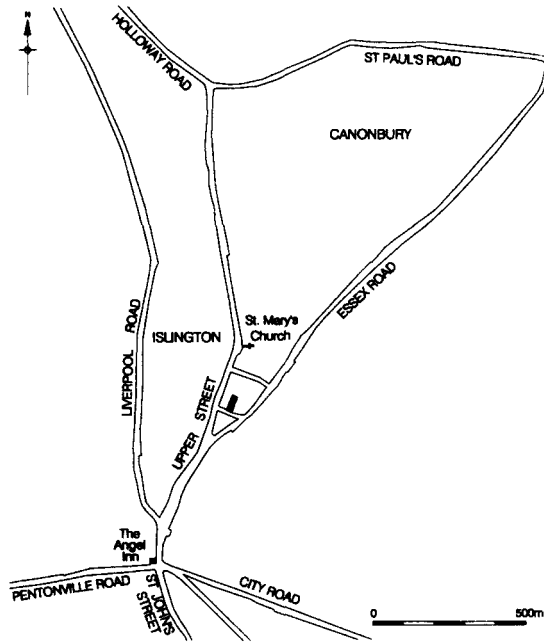


Fig 3. The manor of Canonbury

Canons of St Paul's and was originally applied to the manor house in the north-west corner of the manor. In the 12th and 13th centuries it was held by the Berners family. Ralph de Berners granted a manor here to the Priory of St Bartholomew at Smithfield before 1253 and they continued to hold it until just before their dissolution in 1540 (VCHM viii, 54, 55; Webb 1921, i, 341-2, 447; CAL INQ MISC iii, 340 no. 893).

There were small areas of manorial waste land in Canonbury, including the later Islington Green, where the tenants presumably had common grazing rights. In 1306 there were 18 customary tenants and one free tenant on the manor, mostly holding small pieces of land with their houses. The customary tenants owed labour days and rents of hens to the lord of the manor, and passed on their holdings by the custom of gavelkind, dividing their tenancies equally among their sons or daughters (Lewis 1842, 88; Webb 1921, i, 343, 447-9). The copyhold land held by the customary tenants included the vicinity of the excavation site. The location and development of the early medieval settlement of Islington are still not clear, but it is likely that the houses of the Canonbury customary tenants lay on their copyhold plots to the north of the site of the

later Green. Small ancillary agricultural structures probably lay in the rear part of the plots.

To the west, the road along High Street, Upper Street, and Holloway Road to Highgate was an important route from the City to the North in the later medieval period. The inhabitants of Islington and Highgate were granted the right to levy a toll called *pavage* to maintain this road for three years in 1377, and petitioned for a seven-year renewal when this term expired (CPR 1374-7, 476; PRO SC8/51/2529). Some of the houses of Islington village may have been inns serving the travellers using this road.

Post-medieval

Islington was famous in Tudor times for its ponds and wild fowl, and for its spas in later centuries, as the area was rich in natural springs. The water was chalybeate-laden, *ie* impregnated with lime, sulphur, and iron. In Elizabethan times Islington was a fashionable place, with the wealthy creating landscaped gardens around their country retreats.

Documentary evidence points to the western part of the site, Collins Yard and buildings to the west of the yard, being occupied by the White Horse Inn by 1599, when it was held by Thomas Miller. In 1552 there were 15 licensed victuallers in Islington and it is likely that the White Horse was one of these or even one of the earlier brewhouses, which were documented in the early 16th century. In 1510 there was a brewer in Canonbury called John Ynglond (PRO SC2/191/63 m3d) and in 1541 Sir Ralph Sadler owed rent to the manor for three-quarters of a copyhold brewhouse (BL Harley Roll B20 m1d). The White Horse probably evolved out of one or more regularly spaced late medieval copyhold tenements, each with its cottage, toft, and croft. The Millers held the White Horse until the middle of the 17th century when they were followed by the Bonyon family. The Millers let the inn to innholder William Swinnerton in the early part of the 17th century. The inn was described in 1674, 1684, and 1686 as having stables, buildings, a garden, and an orchard. Also in 1703 a chamber and garret were added to the description, overlying the hall or parlour. It appears to have still been there into the early 18th century (1720s).

The pasture to the north of the White Horse

was held with the inn for most of the 17th century and called White Horse Field. It was accessed by a covered passage through the inn (a predecessor of Collins Yard). This field later became a burial ground.

To the east of the inn a house existed from the early 17th century when it was occupied by William Swinnerton. To the east of this house John Hayne bought a piece of White Horse Field from John Miller in 1656 and built two brick houses by 1660, extending to three with gardens by 1687. In 1660 he also acquired the house to the east of the inn. In the 1690s all four houses to the east belonged to Hayne's son-in-law, Morgan Ryan, and it is apparently at this time that they acquired the name Major Ryan's Walk (ILHC Canonbury manorial records, roll A; roll 8 m1; LMA E/NOR/M/15, 82; Willats 1988, 171).

The White Horse Inn was rebuilt as a row of four houses between 1720 and 1735. Three of the houses lay to the west of White Horse Yard and the easternmost on its east side. The house to the east of the yard to its rear was converted into two dwellings between 1703 and 1717. By 1805–6 the rear yard contained three cottages, a smith's workshop, stables, and sheds (ILHC Richard Dent's survey no. 854, see fig 5 no. 854). The house to the east of the inn was held by the Ainge family for most of the 18th century and may have been divided in two in 1777, when it was inherited by two sisters. There was certainly more than one house in existence by 1802 (ILHC Canonbury Manorial records roll 8 m7; Richard Dent's survey no. 852; LMA E/NOR/M/1 ff 38–9; E/NOR/M/3 ff 272–5; E/NOR/M/4 f 385; E/NOR/M/5 f 624). By the end of the 18th century the whole row of houses along the north side of the Green was called Old Paradise Row and this was the name given to the road on the north side of the Green on the 19th-century maps. In the 19th century the Row consisted of 20 small houses and shops, including three pubs.

Before the mid 18th century the Green was an enclosed piece of ground used as the village laystall, where rubbish and dung were dumped. In 1777 the Marquis of Northampton, lord of the manor of Canonbury, made a grant of the ground to the parish trustees. Rubbish was cleared, railings were put up, and in 1797 trees were planted. On the Green was a cage, a pair of stocks, and a watch house, which was originally placed in the centre of the Green, but which was moved to the southern end in 1797.

White Horse Yard became known as Brewer's Yard by the middle of the 19th century and changed its name again to Collins Yard by 1938. The site was occupied by Nos 7–9 Old Paradise Row. The three properties had various tenants over the years, all were involved in some form of business which they conducted from the premises. The trade directories list the following among the tenants. In 1846 No. 7 Old Paradise Row was occupied by Henry Fownes, a corn and coal dealer, No. 8 by Thomas Watts, a currier, and No. 9 was a dairy owned by Samuel Hoskins. By 1859 No. 8 Old Paradise Row was occupied by William Gibbs, a currier, and No. 9 by John Jones, a dairyman. In 1876 Old Paradise Row was renamed Islington Green. For much of this time No. 7 also housed the 'Islington Hall', a venue for popular entertainments and lectures. From 1870–1920 No. 7 was occupied by W V Aldridge & Son, oilmen and wholesale drysalters. For 44 years after that it was Stoddart and Hansford's cake mix factory, until Andersons timber yard took it over in 1965. In 1877 No. 8 was occupied by Joseph Wise, a baker, and by 1901 Charles Cannon, a wholesale perfumer, was in residence. Thereafter it was occupied by Marlborough Tyre Company and later taken over by Andersons, which held Nos 7–11. In 1901 No. 9 was occupied by Walter Aldridge, a methylated spirits manufacturer, No. 10 became Collins Music Hall in the 19th century and continued its existence as a public entertainment venue in a variety of forms until the late 1950s (Kellys 1846; 1859; 1876; 1877; 1901; Connell 1989, 26–7).

Behind the site to the north lay open land with gardens and a paddock during the post-medieval period (Willats 1988, 125). The ground was by tradition used as a plague pit during the Great Plague of London in 1665. In 1817 John Jones, minister of Islington Chapel, bought the paddock and converted it to a Non-conformist cemetery, popularly known as New Bunhill Fields. This was forced to close in 1853 after 120,000 burials, when the Burial Act closing all inner city burial grounds was passed.

NATURAL GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site lay on a significant slope from Collins Yard in the north-west down towards Essex Road in the south-east. According to the British Geological Survey map of the solid and drift

geology of the immediate area around the site, the natural geology is mixed. The site itself lies on a thin finger of London Clay between patches of brickearth immediately to the east and Bryn Hill Gravel, part of the Thames River Terrace, to the west (British Geological Survey 1994).

The natural deposits varied across the site with clayey gravel deposits being predominant. The deposits were more mixed with interleaving bands of brickearth and gravel to the north of the site. Clean clay was found above the gravel in Area F to the west of the site, whilst in Area A to the east sandy gravel was also present below the clayey gravel. A common occurrence was iron panning which formed a very hard crust up to 0.15m thick over the clayey gravels. The natural clay gravels generally sloped from the north-west down to the south-east with levels of 32.70m OD recorded in Area G in the north-west corner of the site, 32.28m OD in Area C to the north-east, 32.43m OD in Area D to the south-west, and 31.85m OD in Area H to the south-east.

The varied nature of the natural deposits is explained by the presence near the site of three different geological strata: London Clay, brickearth, and Bryn Hill Gravel. The thick crust of iron panned gravel was caused by the iron rich natural springs, which abound in the Islington area.

13th-/14th-CENTURY PLOUGHSOIL AND DITCHES (Fig 4)

The earliest archaeological activity in the development area comprised a series of cuts and a substantial mid grey silty deposit across the entire site.

Two highly irregular cuts [665 and 745], filled with light orange-grey-brown silty clay and grey-black waterlain silty clay, and grey-brown silty clay, were encountered in Area E to the west of the site apparently below the grey silt layer. These may represent tree root holes, although the waterlain fill may suggest a spring rising through the natural gravels.

Two linear cuts [668 and 755], aligned N-S and parallel to each other 0.90m apart with steep sides and bases sloping gently down to south, were encountered in Area A to the east. They were cut into the natural clay gravel and measured 1.80m by 0.85m wide by 0.32m deep and 1.30m by 0.80m wide by 0.36m deep. Both

were backfilled with mid grey silty clay gravel deposits and continued into the limits of excavation at north and south, but were not revealed in an E-W sondage cut along the southern boundary of Area A. Finds were sparse, consisting of three sherds of Coarse Border Ware (CBW) and one of London Ware (LOND), but suggest a 13th-/14th-century date. These ditches may be the remains of medieval field boundaries or possibly drainage ditches. To the north in Area B an E-W aligned linear cut [92] with a rounded base measuring 2.09m by 0.40m by 0.18m deep, backfilled with mid grey sandy silt, was observed and could represent another field boundary or a drainage ditch.

To the west of the site a large cut [739], measuring at least 3.00m N-S by 0.84m by 0.96m deep, was recorded on the north-east side of Area F. It was backfilled with several silty clay fills containing very few inclusions, suggesting that its primary purpose was not a rubbish pit. Although it was only revealed in a very narrow sondage and did not continue on the west side of the area, it might be an E-W aligned boundary or field ditch predating the later ditch situated further to the north (see below). The later ditch found to the north of the site also terminated towards the west of the site suggesting it was perhaps respecting a track or road. It was not possible to trace the feature further to the east because of the presence of modern foundations. Similar ditches of 14th-/15th-century date were found to the north of the site at 19-20 Dagmar Terrace in 1977 (Richardson 1978, 161).

A mid grey silt deposit 0.30-0.40m thick covered the entire site with the exception of Area G to the north-west, where it had been truncated by later features. The deposit contained much more gravel to the north of the site in Areas B and C and probably represents a mixing with the underlying natural gravels. This silt may represent the remains of medieval agricultural or ploughsoil. A similar deposit dated to the mid 14th to mid 15th century was recorded to the east at 10-12 Islington Green behind the Collins Music Hall (Miles 1997). A complete stone mortar made from a Purbeck tufaceous limestone and a spur, both of 13th-/14th-century date, were recovered from the ploughsoil (see Figs 16-17).

Discussion

The grey silt deposit which covered most of the excavation and the various cuts beneath and

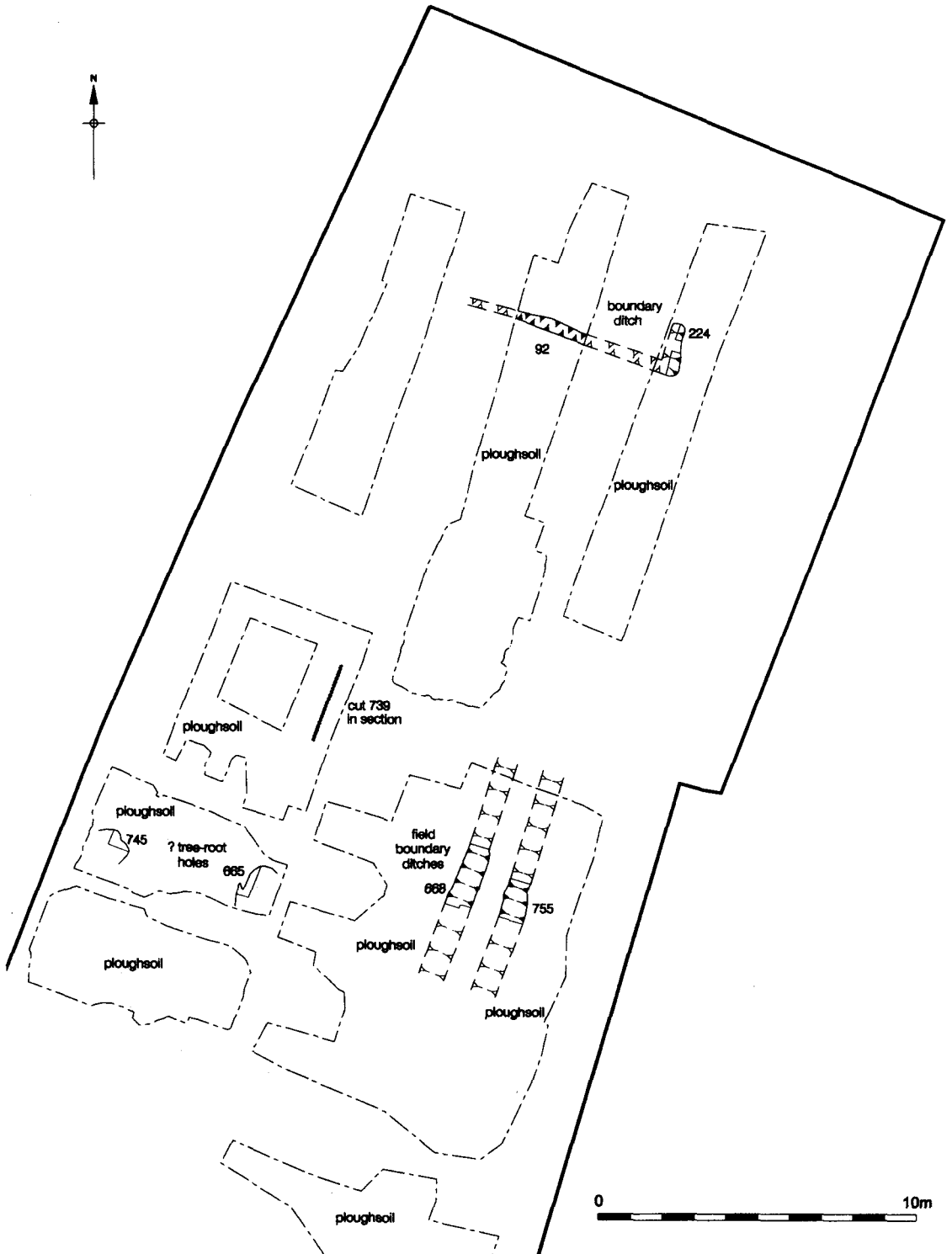


Fig 4. Medieval ploughsoil and field ditches

within it represent the first human activity on the site, the silt probably representing the remains of ploughsoil and the various cuts being field drains and ditches. Pottery from these deposits is consistently dated to between the late 13th and the 14th centuries. Residual finds consisted of one sherd of North French Grey Ware (NFGWD) AD 600–750, three sherds of Early Medieval Sandy Ware (EMS) 900–1050, two sherds of Ipswich Thetford type ware (THET) 1050–1150, and a sherd of Local Coarseware (LOCO) 1080–1200. Small quantities of roof tile of 12th-century fabrics 2273 and 3228 (London system of classification) appeared residually on site in later medieval and post-medieval contexts. Although relatively rare the pot and tile suggest an earlier presence in the vicinity of the site, possibly from the Middle Saxon period, but that no occupation of the immediate area took place before the 13th century, and that it was at first used for farmland. However, with the removal of all archaeological deposits in the southern part of the site by modern foundations, it is not possible to determine whether copyhold plots or tenements fronting the Green had been laid out at this time, or earlier, with the buildings not extending further to the north until later in their history.

A survey undertaken in 1306 revealed that the bulk of the lands of the manor, amounting to 157½ acres in demesne, were held under arable cultivation (Webb 1921, i, 447, 449). The ploughsoil on the site is probably part of this arable land or perhaps belonged to crofts cultivated to the rear of customary tenants' houses. In 1306 there were also 30 acres of sheep pasture and 4 acres of grazing around the arable fields for tethered plough-horses and cattle (Webb 1921, i, 447).

The arable fields and pastureland appear to have been bounded by ditches according to the available documentary evidence. These ditches were noted as not scoured at the view of frankpledge in 1405 (GL MS 25370). The ditches recorded on site would appear to be part of this network, but the two N-S ditches in Area A were more likely part of property boundaries between smallholdings fronting the area afterwards known as the Green.

MEDIEVAL BUILDINGS (Fig 5)

Covering the overall grey silt layer in the south-western part of Area A was a thin spread of

charcoal 5.34m by 5.30m in area. The charcoal may represent rake-out from early industrial activity or hearths from structures further to the south destroyed by modern foundations, or may be associated with the clearance of the land – the burning of trees, bushes *etc.* Sealing the charcoal was an extensive layer of silt and gravel up to 0.07m thick. The gravel layer may represent a rough yard surface or perhaps an attempt to consolidate the land before the erection of buildings. Further to the north was a 0.20m-thick slab of orange brickearth [641] set within a cut measuring 5.50m N-S by 2.20m. This represents a clay floor for a structure the walls of which have not survived.

Building 1

A chalk foundation [412 and 761] aligned N-S and measuring up to 4.34m long by 0.50m wide by 0.14m high, resting on a thin spread of brickearth, was revealed towards the southern end of Area A cut into the large brickearth slab [641]. A small feature [794] just to the north of the foundation filled with chalk rubble [793] may have been the remains of a posthole or a post pad to support a large timber post. To the south in Area H two lumps of Kentish ragstone [728] on the same alignment could represent a continuation of the wall.

Building 2

Similar wall foundations [148, 294, 319 and 497] constructed largely from roughly hewn lumps of chalk with occasional lumps of Reigate stone, Kentish ragstone, and tile bonded together with coarse yellow lime mortar, measuring 1.80m E-W by 0.32m wide by 0.20m high with a return of 4.90m N-S by 0.40–0.46m wide by 0.30m high, were revealed in Area D continuing into Area E to the north. In Area E the foundation [513] consisted of a course of Reigate stone blocks with a tile lacing course on top of a single course of roughly hewn chalk lumps.

Discussion

The earliest structures are only represented by consolidation layers, possible gravel yard surfaces, and a brickearth clay floor resting in a cut. All

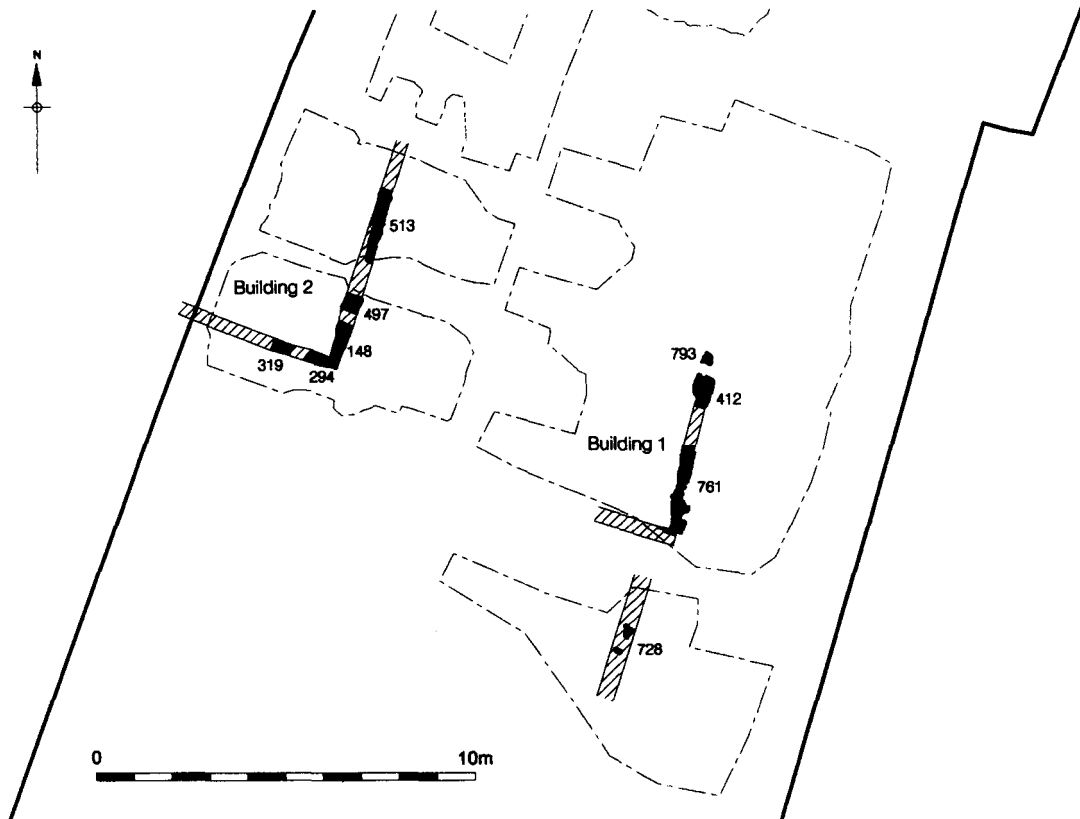


Fig. 5. Plan of medieval chalk foundations

trace of sill beams, post pads, and other structural remains had been truncated by later building activity. The first evidence of walls on site were chalk foundations, which were used to support the probable timber framed building constructed on these plinths. Finds recovered from within the fabric of the walls in Area D consisted of a fragment of roof tile dated to 1270/1360–1500 and two sherds of pot dated to the 13th/14th centuries; they are, therefore, consistent with a 14th-century date. These structures may have been outhouses or barns at the back of the smallholdings/copyhold plots/buildings fronting onto Islington Green. It is possible that Building 2 may have fronted onto a road or track, which was a medieval forerunner to the present Collins Yard.

LATE MEDIEVAL/POST-MEDIEVAL BUILDINGS (Figs 6–10)

Following the first building phase represented by the chalk foundations, three tenements, which

probably fronted onto the Green, were constructed. Any business/shop and main living areas of the buildings would have been at the front of the houses towards the Green; since this was the area most severely truncated by modern foundations no trace of these areas survived.

Building 3

To the west of the site the earlier chalk foundations were destroyed and spread across the area as a levelling layer. The earliest wall in the new building phase would appear to be the eastern wall [163], which consisted of a Kentish ragstone and chalk foundation, at least 1.56m long by 0.36m wide by 0.17m high, heavily truncated to the north, where only two lumps of stone [804] remained (Fig 6). An apparently later E–W wall [131] constructed of Kentish ragstone, chalk, and tile and measuring 4.06m long by 0.30m wide by 0.20m high, abutted this wall and formed two rooms. The room to the north

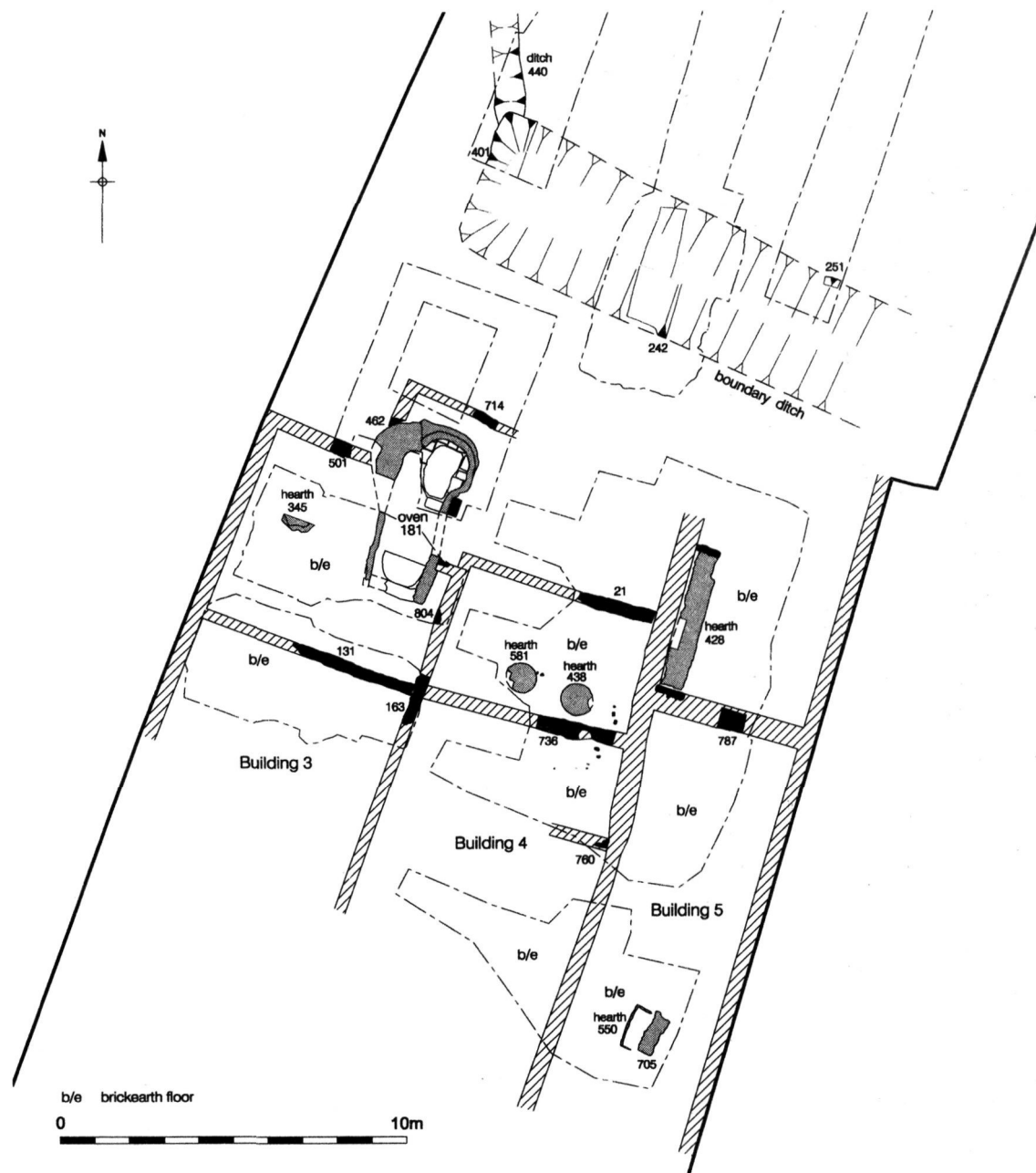


Fig 6. Plan of late medieval buildings (earliest development)

measured at least 6.4m E–W by 5.5m N–S. The western walls of the building were not revealed within the excavated area and probably were removed by the foundations of the standing building since property boundaries seem to have remained fairly consistent over time.

To the north a circular oven [181] with an

opening facing south was revealed (Fig 7). It was constructed of curved, closely fitting blocks of Reigate stone bonded together with soft, creamy white lime mortar. The oven measured 2.00m by 1.46m internally and survived to a maximum height of 0.40m. The Reigate stone walls of the oven were placed on a closely fitting floor

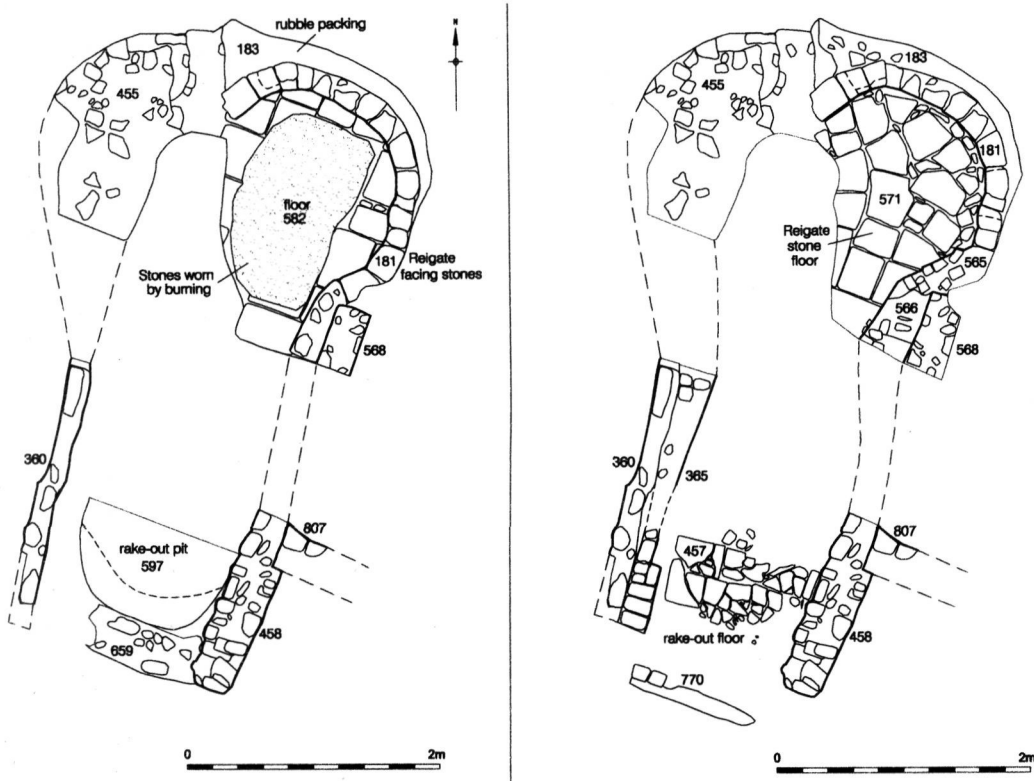


Fig 7. Detail of oven showing two phases of development (Building 3)

[582], also constructed from Reigate stone, which was heavily burnt and worn in the centre. Surrounding the oven was an apparently trench-built wall [183 and 455], constructed of Reigate stone, brick, Kentish ragstone, and chalk, up to 0.75m thick on the western side of the oven. Three courses of roof tiles were laid flat to partially block the opening to the south.

Later the well worn floor of the oven was replaced by another well fitted Reigate stone floor [571] up to 0.18m thick laid on a bedding layer of a mixture of ash and sand. The eastern side of the oven opening, which had become worn and damaged from the constant heat and dragging of material through it, was also replaced by a brick [565] and then tile [566] insertion.

Associated with the oven to the west was a Reigate stone wall foundation [501] on an E-W alignment, measuring 0.40m wide by 0.13m high and set back 1.50m to the south of the northern face of the oven. This remnant of masonry was heavily burnt and may represent the remains of a hearth used in tandem with the oven to the

east and perhaps even sharing the same chimney. Together with a N-S aligned Reigate stone and brick rubble foundation [568] on the east side of the oven and an E-W return [807], also constructed from Reigate stone, it would suggest that the oven projected from the northern wall of the building. This was a common occurrence in London and elsewhere with large ovens of this type and was obviously intended to reduce the risk of fire to the rest of the timber framed building. Examples include those at Pie Corner, Giltspur Street in London (Schofield 1995, 56, 116) and at Michelham Priory in Sussex (Stevens & Stevens 1991, 53-4). To the south in Area E the stoke hole of the oven was revealed. The original rake-out pit consisted of a sub-rectangular cut, 1.32m wide by at least 0.78m long by 0.35m deep. This was lined with up to 30mm of brickearth clay [597]. Covering the clay was a 20mm-thick deposit of ash and charcoal rake-out material from the oven to the north. To the south were the scanty remains of masonry [659], constructed from fragments of brick, limestone,

and chalk bonded with hard yellow lime mortar. This could be the back wall of the rake-out area or perhaps an associated surface.

The original pit was backfilled with a mixture of ash, mortar, and brickearth and capped with a layer of brickearth, which may have also been used as a working surface. Cut into the brickearth was a series of stakeholes forming a semi-circular pattern at the rear of the rake-out area. Two larger postholes were probably also associated; these stakeholes may have formed some sort of wattle back wall to prevent the rake-out deposits spreading beyond the stoke-hole area, and it is probable that they were replaced by the later masonry back wall.

The stoke-hole pit was replaced by masonry walls to east and west constructed from Kentish ragstone, brick, and tile [360 and 458], with the wall on the west side [360] tapering in size and having a wholly brick rebuild [365] on its interior face. Associated with these walls was a heavily worn Reigate stone floor [457], and the remnants of a back wall [770] constructed from unfroged brick bats. The floor was covered with a charcoal and ash rake-out deposit.

Pottery finds were remarkably sparse from the oven and brickearth floors surrounding it; however, bricks and tiles recovered from the fabric of the oven and its rebuilds are consistent with it being in use between the mid 15th and possibly as late as the 17th century. The difficulties in assigning uses to such structures have been discussed by Schofield & Vince (1994, 101, 119). Not all were ovens, vat bases would have had a similar plan to a bread oven as for example at Swan Lane, Upper Thames Street, where the hearths were used in dyeworks (Schofield 1995, 218). Others, such as a 16th-century example at Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire, were used for brewing (Schofield & Vince 1994, 119). It is documented that there was an inn (the White Horse) on the site from at least 1599. It is possible that the inn may have occupied the site from a much earlier period and that these building remains were part of it. Therefore, it is possible that it may represent the base of a brewhouse. Nevertheless, this example is most probably an oven used for bread and pies for domestic use, or it may have belonged to a professional baker. The latter are known to have existed in towns and their ovens were of sufficient size to warrant mention in property deeds (Schofield & Vince 1994, 101). The oven at Islington Green was of sufficient size to be

comparable to that of Pie Corner at Giltspur Street/ Cock Lane (Schofield 1995, 56 fig 62a, 116) where it was suggested that professional baking was taking place. The most remarkable feature of the example at Islington Green is the size of the stoke-hole and rake-out area. This suggests that the oven was in almost constant use and points to a professional bakery or kitchen for more than just domestic use, *ie* the kitchen of an inn, which would have to provide food for a large clientele.

To the north of the oven the remnants of a N-S aligned tile and brickearth foundation [462] were found with an E-W return [714] (Fig 6). This may have been the remains of a shed or lean-to against the outside of the oven, but as the construction of the foundations was different to all others on site, they may represent an earlier structure heavily truncated by the later oven.

In Area E masonry wall foundations, a series of brickearth floors, and occupation deposits of charcoal and ash rake-out material were probably associated with the oven and stoke-hole. The earliest wall consisted of two large lumps of Kentish ragstone [804] aligned N-S. This was later replaced by a well-constructed foundation [767] with a basal course of alternate squared blocks of chalk and Reigate stone and then two courses of bricks above, 0.21m high. Later a very scrappy E-W aligned brick and Reigate stone wall was inserted. To the south, the east wall went out of use and was covered by successive brickearth floors. Finally the scanty mortar remains of a N-S wall [132] to the south of the E-W wall suggest that the room was subdivided to the south at a later stage (Fig 8). Fragmentary remains of a chalk and tile foundation and a brick wall to the north of wall [131] provide further evidence of periodic changing of room sizes and probable uses.

All the rooms had floors of brickearth with associated charcoal and ash occupation deposits. Evidence of hearths was also present to the north-west of the area. A shallow pit filled with charcoal may represent the earliest hearth in the area. This was replaced by a brickearth floor, which was burnt black in places, showing evidence of a hearth in the near vicinity. A later brickearth floor with heavy burning [345] suggested that the hearth was located in the north-west corner of the room and had been continually replaced with each deposition of brickearth floor. However, the presence of these hearths in such close proximity

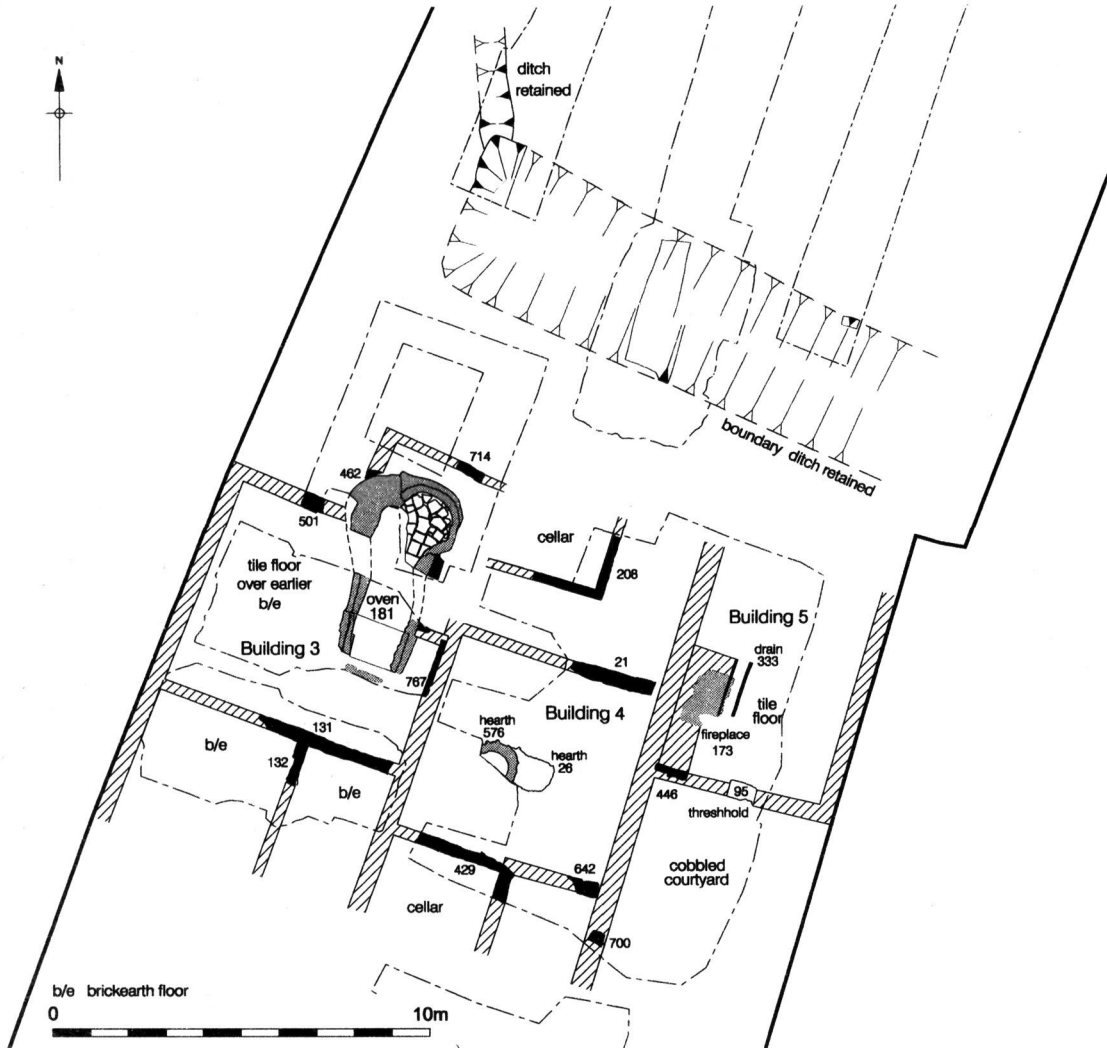


Fig 8. Plan of late medieval/post-medieval buildings (latest developments)

to the large oven raises two possibilities, either that these brickearth floors and associated hearths were part of an earlier phase of building before the construction of the oven or else some other perhaps industrial or occupational activity was taking place in the room, as they would obviously not be needed to provide heat with such a large oven in such close proximity, *ie* there was another hearth used for cooking.

Micromorphological analysis

Micromorphological analysis of a 0.20m-thick sample taken from the brickearth floors in

Building 3 in the south-west corner of the excavated area provided interesting results. In thin-section there proved to be at least seven floors within the sequence, five more than on-site field observation indicated. Thin-section analysis indicated the repeated nature of floor make-up, compaction, and trampling during construction and the minor accumulation of organic debris during the use of the floor, possibly indicative of floor coverings such as reed mats, in an otherwise quite clean living environment. Thin lenses of pure clay suggested the presence of freshwater either from spillage or perhaps a leaking roof.

The dating of the earliest brickearth floors is difficult. The floors were kept remarkably clean,

and dateable finds were very few and far between. The few fragments of pot and tile recovered from the earliest floors and fire pit, and the burnt floor showing evidence of a hearth in Building 3 were consistent with a 14th-century date. This might suggest that the oven which dated to at least the 15th century was a later insertion or part of a later building, the floors of which have been lost with the insertion of the modern concrete slab.

To the north of Area E beneath the northern internal wall of the standing building were the heavily truncated remains of a floor constructed from 30mm-thick tiles. These tiles dated to 1600–1800 and may represent the latest floor associated with the room containing the oven and possible hearth to the north. They were 0.20m above the surviving brickearth floors, suggesting that the later floors of all the rooms to the west of the site had been truncated and removed by the concrete slab and foundation of the standing building.

Building 4

Area A to the east contained the main concentration of late medieval/early post-medieval buildings with the remains of two further tenements, Buildings 4 and 5. Again the main living accommodation and any shop units which would have been fronting onto Islington Green were removed by the foundations of the standing building.

The ground was prepared for the new phase of building by the laying down of dumps of silty brickearth with building rubble, grey silt, and gravel to provide a firm working surface. The main N–S wall of the building was robbed out upon demolition. However, the remains of three E–W aligned foundations, which abutted the robbed out wall to the east, were revealed forming elements of Building 4 (Fig 6). The foundation to the north [21] was constructed from roughly faced blocks of chalk and Kentish ragstone with occasional brick fragments bonded together with yellow-brown sandy lime mortar. It measured 2.25m by 0.38m by 0.19m high and continued beyond the western limit of excavation. To the south was a similarly constructed foundation [736] measuring 1.30m by 0.52m by 0.38m high; together they formed a room measuring at least 3.40m N–S by 2.40m E–W, but projected to be 5.5m E–W. To the south lay

the remnants of a foundation [760] also built of similar materials, measuring 0.36m by 0.30m by 0.20m high, which suggests a room to the south measuring at least 2.60m N–S by 2.70m (projected to be 5.5m) E–W.

Foundation [736] was soon dismantled and the room was extended to the south to form a working space of at least 6.00m N–S by 5.5m E–W. Associated with the new room were occupation and floor surfaces. A gravel consolidation layer may also have been used as a working surface, as a thin spread of charcoal and ash covered it. Successive floor surfaces were laid, consisting of a 0.10m-thick brickearth layer with tiles on the top with charcoal occupation debris, replaced by another brickearth and tile deposit 0.06m thick, covered in turn by a hard-packed brickearth surface 0.10m thick, which was finally replaced by another brickearth floor.

Set into the brickearth floor near the centre of the enlarged room was a circular millstone of German basalt lava [581], 0.90m in diameter and up to 0.06m thick at the centre thinning to 0.03m at the edge; 0.90m to the east was the circular impression [438], 0.03m deep, of another millstone of similar size (0.92m in diameter) (Fig 6). Ash and charcoal rake-out deposits suggested that they had apparently been used in tandem as hearths for some possible industrial purpose. Apparently associated with the millstones was a circular series of 13 stakeholes which may have constituted some timber structure around the hearths.

These millstones were the first in a sequence of four separate hearths laid on top of each other with remnants of associated brickearth floors and extensive deposits of rake-out material of ash and charcoal. Above the millstones was laid a sub-rectangular hearth [26] with rounded corners, measuring 1.30m by 0.90m, constructed from thin roof tiles laid on edge. This was later partially destroyed on its western side by the insertion of another re-used millstone [576], 0.90m in diameter, with bricks, tiles, and a re-used moulded stone surround set radially around it, bonded with creamy white lime mortar. This hearth re-used the remains of the pitched tile hearth [26] to form a larger fireplace 2.00m long and 0.90m wide (Fig 9). Finally this was superseded by yet another re-used millstone of which only fragments remained.

The basalt lava millstones probably belonged originally to the late Saxon or Anglo-Norman period because of their broad, essentially flat

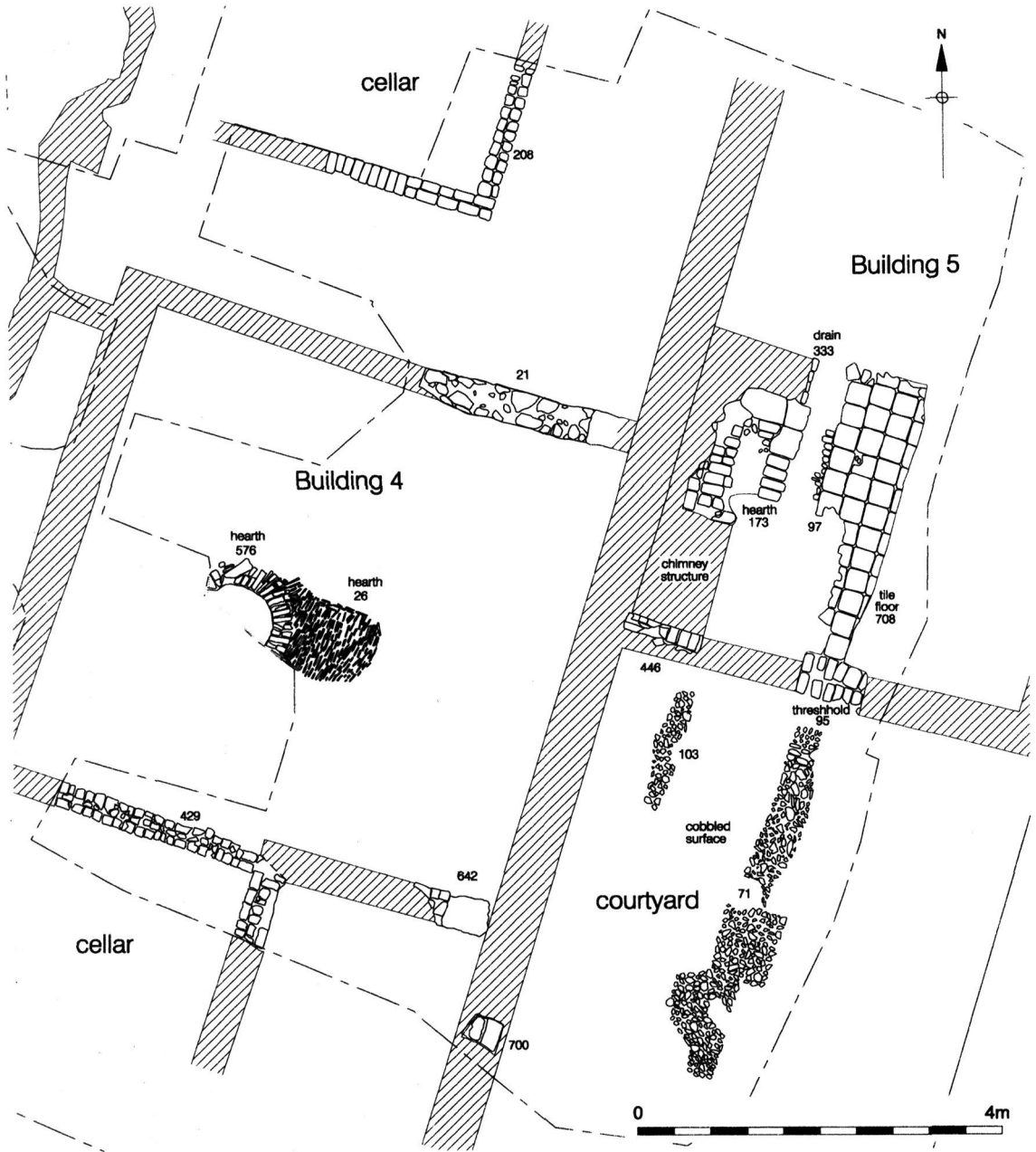


Fig 9. Detail of medieval/post-medieval buildings in Area A (latest development)

form and, since hand-mills were generally obsolete by the end of the 12th century, it is unlikely that many basalt lava millstones were in use from the 13th century onwards. The re-use of such millstones as the base of hearths and

ovens would have been common in areas where no other stone was available (eg at Wood Hall, Metcalf & Tomson 1999, 366-7), although it is unclear whether these particular ones derive from an opportunistic use of a source close by or

whether they reflect a more organised trade in these items. Considering the sequence of replacements encountered at the Islington Green site the latter appears a more likely model for their presence at the site.

During this period the scanty remains of a chalk foundation [700] and a Kentish ragstone and brick foundation [642] to the south suggest further sub-division and altering of the room over the years.

The latest development of the western side of the area was the probable insertion of brick-lined cellars to the north [208] and south [429] (Fig 9). Both continued beyond the limits of excavation but measured internally at least 1.70m by 1.20m and 2.30m by 0.70m, respectively. Remnants of a brick wall aligned N-S on the line of the eastern walls of the cellars point to another later sub-division of the rooms. Just when the cellars were inserted is impossible to say, but both were constructed from the same bricks dated to between the late 15th and 17th centuries, suggesting a contemporary date. No contemporary walls or floor surfaces associated with the cellar to the north survived. The cellars and the remnants of brick wall linking them on their eastern side may represent the easternmost part of the White Horse Inn which is documented as having extended *c.*8.5m to the east from White Horse Yard.

Building 5

To the east of the area within Building 5 there was a 4.00m long by 0.75m wide hearth [428], constructed from tiles laid on edge showing evidence of intense burning (Figs 6 and 10). It was built on the eastern side of the large robbed-out N-S wall. To the east and west were remnants of a possible tile surround. To the north was a fragment of an E-W aligned wall [445], 0.69m by 0.16m by 0.13m high, constructed from up to seven courses of tile laid flat, bonded with lime mortar. To the south was a brick wall [446] 0.86m by 0.32m by 0.20m high. Both these walls seemed to be integral to the hearth, which was set into a 0.06m-thick brick-earth floor, which was covered by charcoal and ash rake-out towards the east. The large size of the hearth suggests that it was probably a kitchen fireplace, although industrial use cannot be ruled out. The fact that the hearth was set against the large N-S wall suggests that this wall

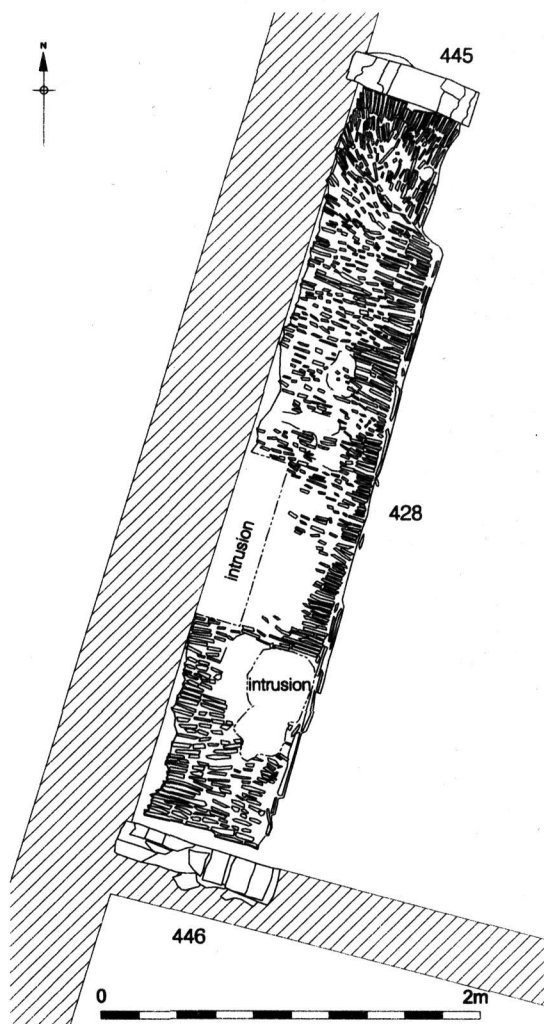


Fig 10. *Detail of hearth (Building 5)*

was probably made of stone or brick, or that there was a large chimney within a timber framed building.

The hearth went out of use and was replaced by possible smaller hearths. It was covered by a brick-earth floor which showed signs of burning towards the west, suggesting the presence of perhaps a smaller hearth. This in turn was replaced by levelling dumps and another brick-earth floor in which a small shallow cut, filled with ash, may be the remains of another hearth.

The latest development of the building consisted of a room formed by the substantial, robbed out N-S wall to the west, a brick wall to

the south, and a tiled floor [97] (Figs 8 and 10). Within this room was the base of a hearth/fireplace [173], constructed from brick and Purbeck marble, resting on burnt make-up material and mortar bedding. The E–W part to the north of the fireplace had been robbed out, suggesting that it was originally surrounded by a brick or stone chimney. Beneath the hearth and along the west side of the tiled floor were bricks [333], aligned N–S within a cut. This may have been the remains of a drain set into the tile floor. The brick wall was partially robbed and part of the tile floor adjoining had been removed and then replaced to form a threshold/doorway by the insertion of a layer of bricks [95], which were one course high and 0.37m wide.

To the south of the room was an open area covered with a hardcore of broken tiles and mortar. Cut into this deposit were two postholes and an E–W linear cut, perhaps associated with the construction of Building 5 to the north. Covering this were levelling dumps for a well laid, knapped flint and Kentish ragstone cobbled yard surface [71 and 103], with a small linear gully running parallel to the building to the north. This area seems to have always been an open yard area as there was no evidence of walls or internal surfaces within it.

In Area H to the south a 0.43m-thick layer of brickearth was revealed to the west, which was either a floor surface or preparation for a floor. To the east a similar brickearth deposit was only 0.11m thick and had been repaired by the insertion of a slab of brickearth within a cut. This was covered by a brickearth floor, 0.05m thick, into which was set a heavily damaged pitched tile hearth [550], originally measuring 1.38m N–S by 0.40m, with tiles [705] laid flat to form a surround measuring 1.20m N–S by 0.40m to the east. Charcoal, ash, and burnt brickearth rake-out material was present to the east of the hearth. Unfortunately the severe truncation of Area H meant it was not possible to determine if these floors and hearth were first in use during the chalk foundation phase of occupation to the north of the site, and then continued in use during the later medieval and post-medieval periods or whether they were part of the later development of the buildings.

E–W boundary ditch

A large, E–W aligned linear cut [242, 251 and 401] with steep sides was observed across the site

in Areas B, C, and G (Figs 6 and 8). It measured up to 4.20m wide by at least 1.51m deep and was traced for 11.00m across the site before ending to the west in Area G. Its earliest fill was dark grey-black waterlain silt and gravel suggesting that it was at least partially filled with water during its lifetime. Thereafter it was backfilled with a mixture of silty clays and gravel, which may represent collapse from the sides of the ditch. A thin band of dark grey-brown humic silt which sealed this may represent a period when the ditch filled with leaves and fallen twigs. Covering the humic deposit were fills of grey-brown silty clay with gravel and brick and tile fragments, representing deliberate infilling of the ditch. Finds from the earlier fills would suggest a late 14th/early 15th-century date for the ditch, with deliberate backfilling taking place in the late 16th/17th century. Environmental analysis on two column samples taken from the lower fills of the ditch in Area G identified the presence of cess and suggested that it was filled with water. It was located to the north of the buildings observed on the site and probably represents a boundary ditch separating the houses from the fields to the north. The presence of cess within it suggests that the ditch was a major outlet for the dumping of human waste; the complete absence of identifiable cess pits or indeed rubbish pits on the site suggests that this material was either dumped into the ditch to the rear of the properties or onto the Green itself which was known for being the village laystall, where rubbish and dung was disposed of, prior to the 18th century (Willats 1988, 124).

A smaller linear cut [440] aligned NNW–SSE appeared to be contemporary with the E–W ditch and led into its western end, although its relationship with the larger feature was far from definite. It was filled with similar mid grey-brown silty clay and could be for drainage leading into the large ditch or perhaps a roadside or field ditch.

A late medieval silty gravel layer and two shallow rectilinear cuts possibly associated with the buildings to the south were found within the garden area to the rear.

Discussion

The masonry plinths suggest that the majority of buildings would have been timber framed. The rooms revealed in the central part of the site all show evidence of industrial use or cooking with

several sequences of hearths. This would seem to conform to the general development of burgage plots, with the shop and domestic parts of the tenements at the front of the house and outbuildings, kitchens, and industrial parts at the rear, often connected with yards to prevent the spreading of fire. It is most likely that the buildings on the site represent three separate tenements or burgage plots extending northwards from a frontage onto Islington Green, as the property boundaries seem to have been largely respected into the present century. However Building 5 to the east would seem to have been of higher status than the others, with its large 4m-long hearth and later fine tiled floor with a fireplace constructed from Purbeck marble. The well laid, knapped flint yard also shows a certain style. However, it is important to note that the frontage of the properties with the shop and domestic quarters, such as the hall, has been lost due to the truncation of the south of the site possibly by the foundations and cellars of the 18th-century buildings and definitely by the foundations of the 1950s office block and its loading bay.

Although Islington would have been no more than a village in the medieval period – indeed the first population return in 1708 reported only 325 houses in the parish of St Mary's, Islington – the area of the site appears to have been laid out similarly to 'burbage plots'. Because most people wanted a frontage onto one of the main streets to attract customers for their goods, produce, or services, house plots were long and narrow giving everyone at least a short frontage onto the main streets. Each plot would usually have a house on the street frontage with outhouses, workshops, livestock enclosures, and gardens to the rear (Hindle 1990, 51). Most plots seem to have been laid out in standard widths using the perch as a unit, although rods and poles which are strictly units of area were often mentioned. A standard pole measured 16.5ft (c.5.00m) but could vary locally between 10 and 24ft (3.0m to 7.3m) (Hindle 1990, 52–3). The three plots on the excavation site would appear to conform to a measurement of c.6.00m wide by 32m deep (50m to the rear).

The buildings seem to be laid out as 'right angle, narrow plan' as described in Pantin's typology with the hall filling the entire width of the building plot and the rooms stretching out at right angles to the street, with often a shop at the front and service areas to the rear (Pantin

1962–3, 204). Examples include buildings at 36 North Street, Exeter and Fox Inn, Low Petergate, York (Pantin 1962–3, 230–3, fig 74).

Building 5 to the east of the site would seem to conform to a known pattern with the kitchen separated from the rest of the structure across a courtyard. In his analysis of the surveys of Treswell of 1607–14, Schofield has listed seven different locations for the kitchen in London buildings. The kitchen as a separate building across a small courtyard he describes as the third position (Schofield 1995, 69). Whilst admitting that this position is a comparative rarity in London, examples exist at 10–11 Abchurch Lane (Schofield 1995, 46 fig 50), 28 Pudding Lane (Schofield 1995, 209 fig 241), and 11–12 Fenchurch Street (Schofield 1995, 56 fig 62b). A medieval example at 28–34 Watergate Street, Chester is also a possibility (Grenville 1997, 187 fig 6.18).

Most of these examples had a shop at the front with a hall, parlour, or warehouse behind, and a kitchen separated from the main building by a courtyard. It is possible that the eastern building at Islington Green followed much the same pattern. Unfortunately the front of the site, where the shop would have stood, has been destroyed by modern foundations, but the room in Area G with the hearth may be the remains of the parlour or hall situated behind the shop. The proportions of the existing rooms are very similar to those at 11–12 Fenchurch Street where the building plot extended back from the road for a distance of 23m; that at Islington Green can be estimated to extend back at least 26m from the postulated medieval street front. As at 28 Pudding Lane there was likely to have been access to the courtyard at the back down a narrow alley or passageway to the east of the site.

Buildings 3 and 4 to the west of the site are likely to have followed a similar pattern. The rooms as excavated would appear to have been service or light industrial use areas. Building 3 with the large oven was most likely the kitchen range whereas Building 4 with its sequence of re-used quernstone and tile hearths could have been a kitchen but may have had an industrial use. Whatever their primary functions, these rooms involved a lot of heat and therefore were positioned to the rear of the building plots in order to minimise the risks of fire. It is probable that the rear wall of the room with the oven was constructed from stone or brick with a chimney

incorporated within it because of the dangers from fire.

Dating

There is almost a complete lack of pottery dating material from this building phase. The few finds from make-up layers and brickearth floors from the western building date from the 14th century. Finds from the layers used to prepare the ground for building in the area of the middle tenement are dated to the 15th century. Bricks and tiles used in the construction of the buildings are dated from the 15th century to the end of the 17th century. The tile floor [97] in the last phase of the Building 5 is dated to *c.*1600–1666/*c.*1700. This would suggest that this building phase dated from perhaps the 14th century, with Building 3 being the earliest element and the construction of the central and eastern tenements, Buildings 4 and 5, belonging to the 15th century. It is obvious from the changes made to room sizes and the replacement of hearths that the buildings were occupied for a considerable time. Levelling layers for the cobbled courtyard to the east of the site contained three sherds of pottery dating to the 17th century. Evidence from the demolition debris points to the buildings perhaps surviving into the 17th century. This compares favourably with the documentary evidence, which mentions the White Horse Inn as occupying the western part of the site from at least 1599; it may have evolved out of the original 14th/15th-century tenement. To the east of the Inn, a house is known to have existed at least as early as the first part of the 17th century when it was occupied by a William Swinnerton. This may perhaps be Building 5, represented by the tiled floor, Purbeck and brick floored fireplace, and cobbled courtyard.

DEMOLITION OF BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION OF GARDEN FEATURES (Fig 11)

The main N–S wall between Buildings 4 and 5 in Area A and an E–W wall of Building 5 were robbed out and backfilled with debris from the demolition of the buildings, which was also spread across the whole area. The dating evidence for the robber cuts was very sparse, amounting to bricks dating to 1450/80–1666/

*c.*1700 and tile fragments dating to 1480/1520–1900, with only two sherds of pottery, the latter including a fragment of Cistercian Ware dating to 1480–1600. The robber cut was cut through a destruction layer dated to around the middle of the 17th century (again dated from only two sherds of pot and a clay tobacco pipe bowl dated to 1640–60). The demolition of this phase of buildings to the east of the site would, therefore, seem, based on the slim evidence, to have occurred some time around or after the middle of the 17th century. Building work was documented as having been carried out in the vicinity in the mid 17th century. The house to the east of the inn was known to have existed in the early part of the 17th century and two brick houses were built to the east of this house by 1660. To the north of the buildings the large E–W ditch was also finally backfilled during this period.

To the west of the site the oven was partially demolished and the walls of the stoke-hole robbed out. The remains of the stoke-hole and the oven were backfilled with brick, stone, and mortar rubble from the demolition of the buildings and the site was levelled. Again dating material was largely absent being confined to brick and tile rubble dating to 1480–1900. A date of late 16th/17th century is possible. The oven and associated buildings may have been demolished before the construction of the White Horse Inn, which is known to have existed by at least 1599, or may be part of it. However, there was a distinct lack of late 17th/early 18th-century finds, the date when the Inn was supposedly pulled down and replaced by four brick houses, three to the west of present day Collins Yard and one to the east, between 1720 and 1735.

17th-century garden features

To the north of the site a series of cuts, postholes, and other features of 17th-century date were encountered. To the west of the site a large shallow rectangular cut [371], 2.80m by 1.30m by 0.17m deep, backfilled with grey-brown sandy silt clay, was recorded. This was sealed by a grey-brown silty gravel layer up to 0.30m thick which covered the entire area and represented a mixing of the garden soil and the natural gravel below. Cut into this was a single posthole 0.40m by 0.30m by 0.13m deep. Covering this were mounds of clay, 0.13m thick to the north and

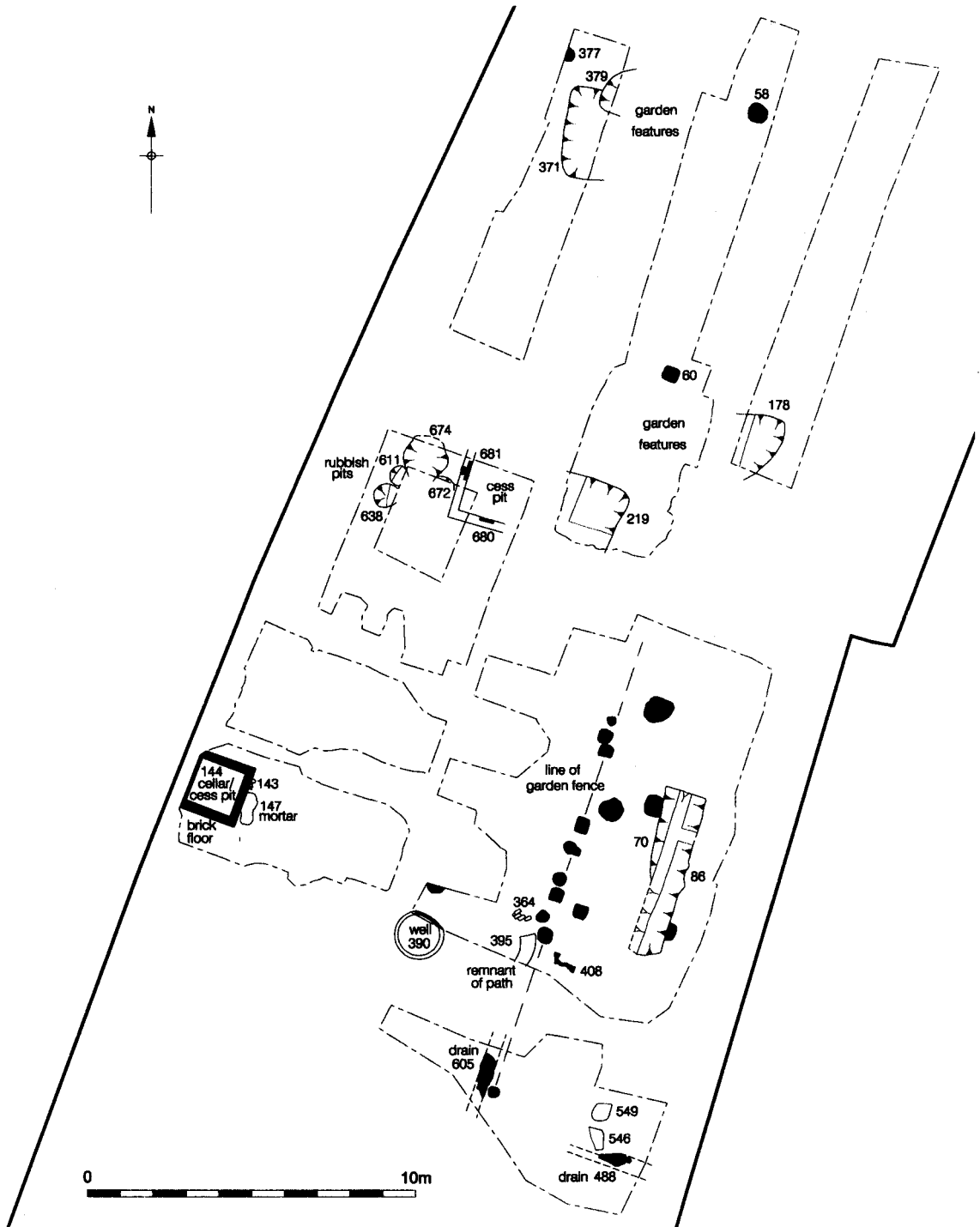


Fig 11. 17th-/18th-century garden features

0.21m thick to the south, perhaps part of man-made banks and landscaping of the garden area. A thin lens of oyster shell suggests dumping of at least some rubbish within the garden. Sealing these features was a deposit of dark grey garden soil up to 0.25m thick. Cut into the garden soil was a rectangular cut [379], 1.30m by at least 0.45m by 0.51m deep, perhaps representing a flower bed. All these cut features are probably garden features to the rear of the inn or brick buildings succeeding it, all of which are dated to the 17th century.

Four pits [611, 638, 672, and 674] were observed to the south just outside the western building complex. All continued beyond the limits of excavation and appeared to be sub-circular in shape, measuring up to 1.39m by 0.90m by 0.54m deep. They were backfilled with dark grey sandy silt containing frequent brick and tile fragments. These were most probably rubbish pits. To the east of these pits were the heavily robbed remains of a brick-lined cut, measuring at least 1.70m by 1.50m. Only two courses of reused bricks [680 and 681] remained with the backfill of the construction cut which dated to the 17th century. This most likely represents the remains of a brick-lined cess pit within the garden area.

A similar sequence of rubbish pits and garden features was revealed to the north-east, where a square cut [219], 1.48m by 1.40m by at least 0.60m deep, was filled with brick and mortar rubble. Two postholes [58 and 60], aligned N-S and both backfilled with brick rubble, were most likely the remains of other garden features. Deposits of grey-brown sandy silt, grey-brown silty clay, and dark grey-brown loam represent dumping/garden deposits.

18th-century garden features

Several features of 18th-century date were revealed to the north-east of the site and in areas previously occupied by the service areas to the rear of buildings fronting the Green.

To the north and east in Area C an ovoid cut [178], measuring 1.83m by 1.04m by at least 0.34m and filled with building material, and a rectangular cut, measuring 1.66m by 0.30m by 0.35m deep filled with grey-brown clay silt, could be the scanty remains of a rubbish pit and a flower bed respectively. Both were sealed by a dark grey-brown silt deposit of garden soil.

To the south in Area A a line of large, mainly square postholes aligned N-S continued across the site and similar postholes were present in Area H further to the south. They ran parallel to, and were just to the west of, the property boundary of the medieval and early post-medieval houses and perhaps represent the remains of a garden fence delineating the property boundaries after the construction of the brick houses by Hayne in the 17th century. Suggestions of E-W returns may be part of garden structures or fence divisions. The slight shift in alignment between the postholes and the earlier buildings could suggest a wholesale development of the block, not respecting previous boundaries.

Other possible garden features or outhouses in Areas A and H to the east of the site are represented by a heavily truncated brick wall [408]. A curved surface [364 and 395], constructed from bricks and large floor tile fragments laid on a bedding of sand, may be the remains of a garden feature or a possible path. Two fragments of brick drain [488 and 605] and a rough brick surface also suggest features outside the buildings within the garden area. A large rectangular cut [70/86] may represent either a large flower bed or a rubbish pit. A well [390] constructed from 18th-century bricks in the south-west corner of the area supports the assertion that most of the eastern part of the site was turned over to gardens with the houses fronting the Green not extending as far to the north as their medieval and early post-medieval counterparts, which had occupied long building plots with outbuildings and industrial usage to the rear.

Several features associated with the standing 18th-century building in Areas D and E to the west of the site were also revealed. In Area E a rectangular cut with a flat base measured 1.16m by 0.60m by 0.20m deep and was backfilled with silty ash, brickearth, and mortar. It may have been associated with the construction of the late 18th-century standing building, as were a shallow posthole and levelling layers in Area F and make-up gravel layers in Area E.

In Area D to the south, and built into the standing west wall, was a brick-lined cut [144] measuring 1.94m by 1.78m by 0.90m deep. To the east were the remains of mortar bedding [147] and tiles laid on bed [143]. This was a very small cellar or more likely a cess pit with the remnants of a tile surround. To the south-west were the vestiges of a brick floor associated with the standing walls.

Discussion

The demolition of the late medieval/early post-medieval buildings and the backfilling of the associated large ditch to the north seem to have occurred sometime in the 17th century. This process may not have occurred at the same time in each of the three building plots. The presumably largely timber framed houses must have been pulled down and replaced by brick town houses which did not extend as far back as their medieval predecessors. It is documented that the White Horse Inn was in existence from at least 1599 to the early 18th century. However, it may have been rebuilt on more than one occasion. Indeed the archaeological evidence supports this or at least suggests significant modifications to the building during its lifetime. It may have developed out of the original timber framed building on the eastern copyhold plot. The archaeological evidence does not contain enough dating material to determine precisely when the original medieval timber framed buildings were demolished on the three building plots. However, the evidence from Buildings 4 and 5 suggests a possible mid 17th-century date, which would tie in with the documentary evidence which relates that by 1660 John Hayne had acquired the house to the east of the inn and also built two brick houses to the east of it, which, with the erection of a fourth in 1687, became known as Major Ryan's Walk by the 1690s. The backs of the plots were turned over to gardens, as can be seen on 18th- and early 19th-century maps. Most of the surviving features appear to be parts of the gardens of the later brick buildings, although some of them apparently date to the first half of the 17th century, suggesting that part of the site to the north may have been turned over to gardens before the demolition of the early post-medieval buildings, once the large E-W ditch had been backfilled.

It is documented that the White Horse Inn was rebuilt as a row of four houses between 1720 and 1735. Three of the houses lay to the west of White Horse Yard and the easternmost on its east side. However, there are no 18th-century demolition dumps which can be dated to this period to the east of the site. It is, therefore, possible that the building remains that were revealed date to an earlier period and were demolished even before the construction of the inn in the late 16th century. This would mean that all demolition debris relating to the

demolition of the White Horse Inn had been truncated by the 19th-century floor and make-up.

19th-/20th-CENTURY INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY (Figs 12-13)

Building 6 and industrial area

In Area A brick foundations of the late Victorian buildings, which immediately preceded the standing building, were revealed (Fig 12). They consisted of a 0.70m-wide wall [54] aligned N-S with E-W returns to the west [54] and further walls to the east and the south [52 and 53]. Associated with these foundations was a rectangular brick soakaway [63], 0.70m by 0.50m by 0.30m deep. Upon demolition of these walls the area was covered with dark grey silt dumps to prepare the area for the standing buildings.

To the north a complex of brick-built walls and platforms with an industrial function was observed beneath the concrete slab in the southern end of Area B (Figs 12 13). The structures measured up to 6.00m N-S by 3.20m E-W and were up to 0.60m high, but continued beyond the limits of excavation to the south, east, and west. To the north they consisted of two parallel E W walls [08], 0.50m and 0.44m wide, with remains of brick-lined flues between them to the east and west. To the south was the mortar impression of another flue or chimney [128]. Further to the south between two E-W walls [116 and 120] was a flagstoned surface [119]. Set into the floor was a 0.24m by 0.16m posthole, which, together with the deep grooves cut into the flagstones, suggests the presence of a door. It may represent a small alley or passage between two different buildings. Further to the south was a working brick floor associated with wall [120] with the remains of square pillars 0.24m by 0.24m constructed from heat resistant 'fire clay' bricks stamped with the name 'COWEN'. Identical bricks produced by the same manufacturer have been found in the late 19th- to early 20th-century furnaces at the Royal Doulton Works in Lambeth and they originate from the North of England (Brown 1999). To the east was a flue at least 1.00m deep backfilled with charcoal, ash, and sand. The whole structure showed signs of great heat being involved. This may be associated with the distillation of wood to form methanol, used in the manufacture of

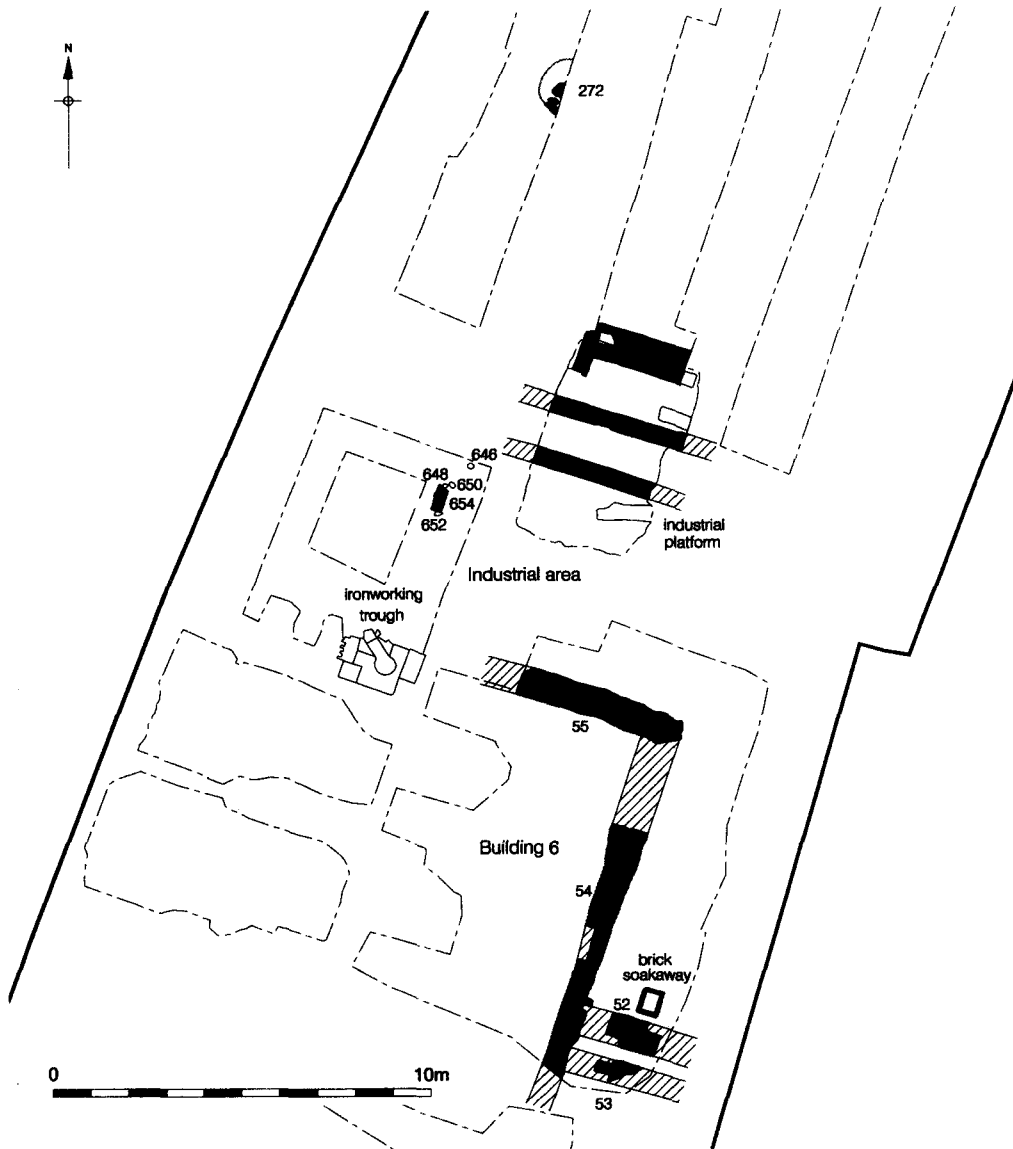


Fig 12. Plan of 19th-century building and industrial structures

methylated spirits, which was known to be one of the products sold by William Valentine Aldridge & Son, wholesale oilmen, who occupied No. 7 and later No. 9 in the period 1870-1920. The distillation vats may have rested on the pillars of heat resistant bricks.

To the west in Area F a 0.70m-length of N-S brick wall, one course high, was found sitting on a flagstone floor [654], but was truncated to the east by a modern foundation. Together with four postholes [646, 648, 650 and 652] up to 0.54m

deep, it may have had an industrial function associated with the platform to the east. These features were cut into the backfill of a robbed out cess pit, the top fill of which contained several iron objects including horseshoes, suggesting perhaps iron waste from a blacksmith's.

Beneath the modern concrete slab of Areas D, E, and F a floor was revealed constructed from dense grey engineering bricks laid on edge. Set into this floor and constructed from the same bricks was a keyhole-shaped trough [320]

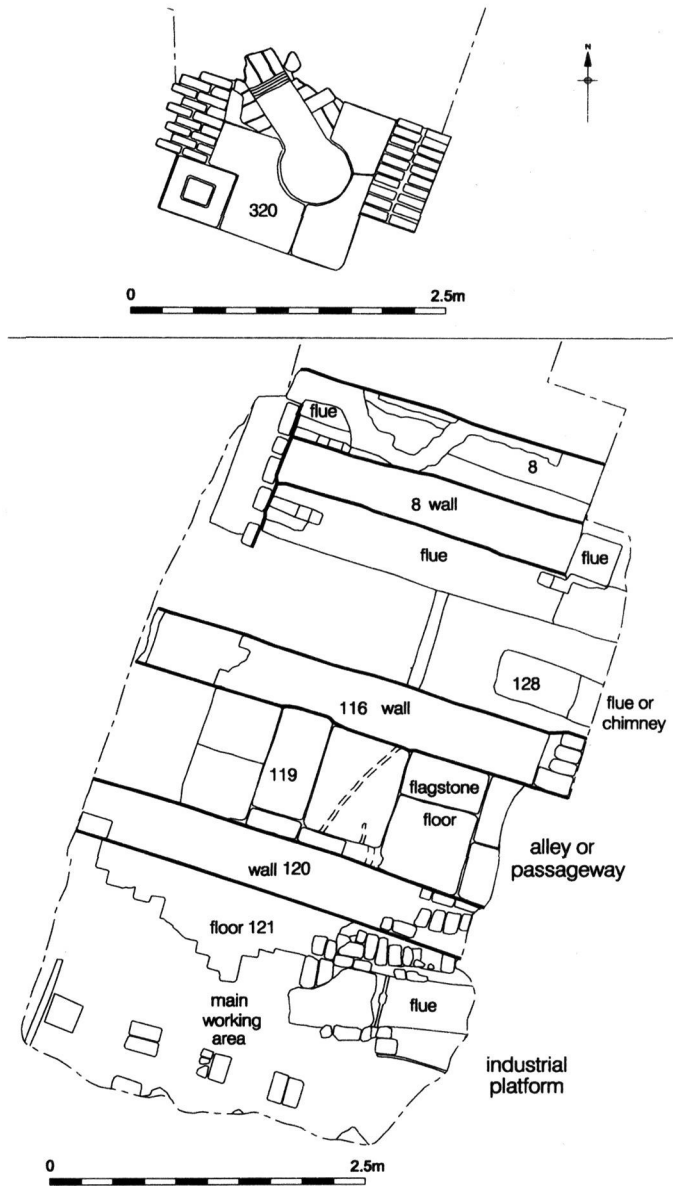


Fig 13. Detail of industrial structures

measuring internally 1.11m by 0.56m by 0.38m deep (Fig 13). This had a flagstone surround and incorporated a gridded drain to the south, to take the overspill of water when hot objects were immersed into the trough. This was most likely associated with some form of smithing or iron working. This together with the industrial brick floor suggests some industrial use of No. 7 Islington Green in the 19th/20th century. The

trough later went out of use and was filled with cess and brick rubble.

Other 19th-century features

In Area G to the north of the site outside the area occupied by the buildings a large circular cut [272], 1.60m in diameter by 1.15m deep,

was observed. It was backfilled with dark grey silt and up to 0.97m thickness of sticky yellow-brown clay used as packing. Cut into the clay packing were three postholes, two of which were sub-circular and set vertically, the other set at a steep angle. It may have been part of some ornamental garden feature or perhaps had some industrial use. In the north-east corner of Area A a rectangular cess pit and other deposits full of domestic debris were present.

Discussion

During the 19th century the back of the site was largely turned over to industrial use involving the production of a great deal of heat. Some of these structures may have been associated with the occupation of the site in the late 19th century by W V Aldridge, wholesale oilman and methylated spirits manufacturer. There is documentary evidence that the rear yard in 1805-6 contained a smith's workshop, stables, and sheds (ILHC Richard Dent survey no. 854; fig 5 no. 854) and that in the 19th century there was a wheelwright's workshop and smithy with a shoeing forge on the east side of the yard (LMA E/NOR/M/132, 147-9, 269) with which the trough and iron waste must have been associated. The frontage of these units at the rear of the building was probably off Brewer's Yard (present day Collins Yard). During the 19th century new brick buildings, most of which seemed to be industrial in use, extended into what had previously been garden areas in the 17th and 18th centuries.

FINDS

Pottery

Frank Meddens

A small number of the items identified merit more detailed description. Three of these derive from context [75], the fill of a pit, possibly a cess pit, of 19th-century date. The fill was not fully excavated, as this would have undermined the standing structure. The latest material from this fill comprises the rim of a small plate (*c.*14cm in diameter) with a flat base and transfer printed decoration on the interior. The design is a blue on white, 'willow' pattern, dating *c.*1825-1875.

This motif was first produced in the first decades of the 19th century and is impossible to identify to individual producer without a maker's mark (Coysh & Henrywood 1982, 402). The particular version found here dates to the middle of the 19th century which is also therefore the probable deposition date of the deposit.

The three pieces of special interest are all of mid 18th-century date and reflect pottery which either went out of use or was part of a clearance exercise. The first is a small English porcelain tea-bowl with a blue on white transfer printed design from Worcester (Fig 14.1). The bowl is on a foot-ring and the design consists of a 'bird in a bush', both on the interior and exterior of the bowl. It is marked on the base with a standard Worcester mark, a blue crescent with hatching, and dates to *c.*1760-1783 (Cushion & Cushion 1992, 88-90, 97; Godden 1990, 136). The diameter is 7cm and it has a rim Eve of 0.18.

A rare find comprises six fragments of a small red unglazed stoneware teapot, which came from the same context (Fig 14.2). This type of pot was highly prized, with specialist firms operating to repair damaged vessels (Emmerson 1992, 41). Tea was fashionable and its use widespread by the middle of the 18th century and the drinking of the beverage had reached all social classes by this time; indeed its use by the lower classes was viewed as a sign of physical and moral decline (Emmerson 1992, 9). This particular vessel was slip cast. The diameter is 5cm, and Eve equals 0.55. The spout is moulded as a gnarled branch in a form known as 'crabstock', typical for English stoneware teapots of the time (Emmerson 1992, 49). There are four holes in the body rather than a single one, where the spout is attached, and recessed seating for a lid. The base is also recessed, with the vessel wall extending down, forming a ring, which is the continuation of the vessel wall itself. The vessel is decorated with a 'boy in a tree' pattern derived from a Chinese original design; in addition there is a reclining male figure. The decoration was die cast and applied to the main ceramic body. This combination of form and design dates to *c.*1750-1760, and comes from one of the quality Staffordshire potteries of this time.

A further find to note is a small saucer with a foot-ring comprising a Chinese imitation of Imari porcelain (Fig 14.3). The design on the interior shows a rural scene with houses and a traveller on a bridge in blue on white with a single overglaze element in red, the exterior has a

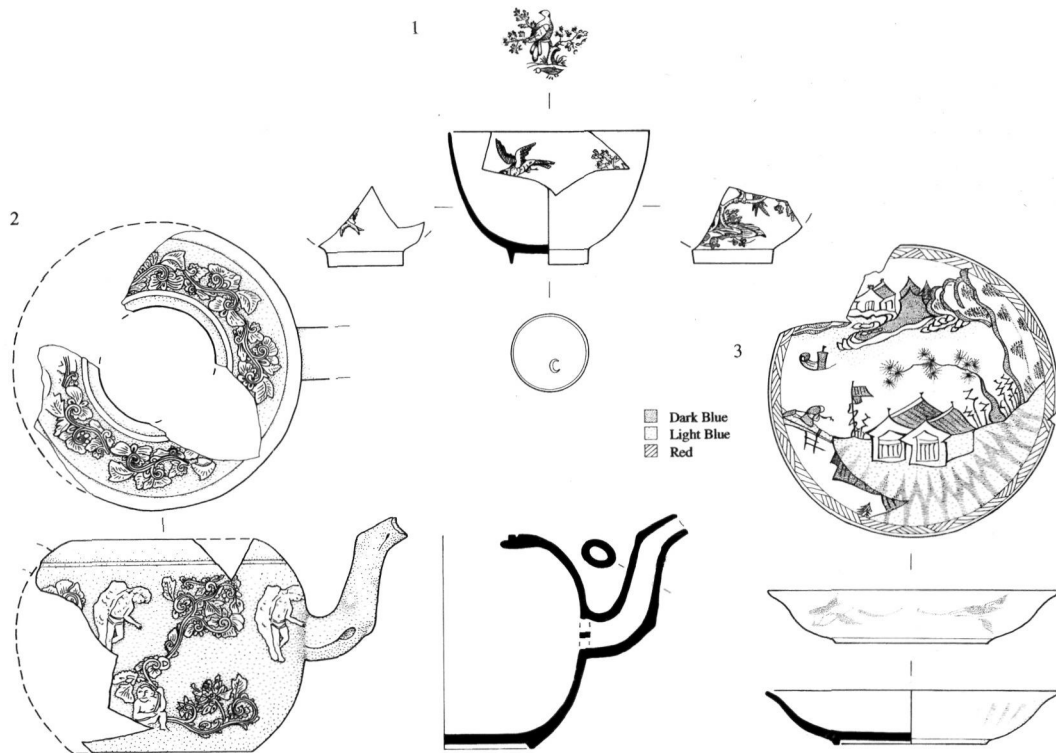


Fig 14. The pottery: 1. English porcelain tea-bowl (Worcester c.1760-83); 2. Red unglazed stoneware teapot (Staffordshire c.1750-60); 3. Saucer with footring (Chinese imitation of Imari porcelain c.1680-1800) (1:3)

stylised bamboo shoot design. The exterior and interior of the vessel wall from the lip to the inflection to the base are scalloped. The diameter is 11cm and it has a rim Eve of 0.80. The date range of this ware is c.1680 to 1800, but this particular form can be dated to the middle of the 18th century.

The degree of completeness of the three vessels described above and the lack of abrasion indicates that they were not re-deposited in the context in which they were found. These items were all between 70 and 100 years old by the time they were disposed of. Their discarding therefore is likely to have been the result of a house clearance type event.

Building material

Ken Sabel

A significant feature noted on four of the medieval peg tiles was a diagonal finger or thumb score applied before firing, which ran across the

width of the tile on its uppermost surface. The fact that this feature was recorded on a number of fabrics (fabrics 2271, 3090, 3216, and 2586), and consequently from a number of sources, suggests several possible explanations, or combinations of explanations. The marks may have indicated the destination of the tiles, specifying either the site or the tiler who undertook the building work. They may have been applied by various manufacturers at the request of the purchaser, or a single supplier may have made the tiles at a number of locations. The diagonal scoring may have been a method of batch marking, as it is absent from most of the tile in the assemblage. The purpose of these scores remains uncertain and has a parallel in the signature scores found on Roman tile. The scored tile was found in a variety of contexts, including two eastern hearth contexts, with other tiles which were mortared in the characteristic pattern demonstrating previous use on a roof. This suggests that the finger or thumb scored tiles may also have been re-used in the hearths from a demolished or repaired roof close by.

Small quantities of medieval brick of fabrics 3042 and 3045 appeared in the chalk foundations of Phase 3. The appearance of these and other medieval brick fabrics (fabrics 3031, 3030, 3040, and 3043) in small quantities in later medieval and post-medieval structures probably results from the site's relative proximity to London. Brick was a high status material as late as the 17th century and the location of Islington Green on the fringes of the City of London and its suburbs meant that building materials could be re-used from high status buildings nearby. Yellow brick, such as fabric 3031, was manufactured around London from the mid to late 14th century, although brick manufacture in the area started in earnest in the 15th century (Schofield 1995, 151). The risk of fire in the City was acknowledged in legislation from at least 1212, when tiles were specified as the prescribed roof covering (Schofield 1995, 33-4). In a fire conscious environment the firing of clamps and kilns, which accompanies brick and tile manufacture, is unlikely to have been tolerated within the confines of the City. The manufacture of bricks around the periphery of London has been identified from the 15th century (Betts 1995), and Ray specifically cites Islington and surrounding districts as being sources of bricks in the 17th century, suggesting that bricks would probably have been available (both newly made and re-used from dilapidated or demolished structures) in the Islington area (Ray 1965, 7-8). The small quantities of brick found in the surviving masonry plinths probably reflect the opportunistic collection of bricks for use in many of the medieval structures on the site.

This pattern of procurement can also be seen in the use of Kentish ragstone and Reigate stone in the medieval, predominantly chalk walls. Although the chalk in these walls appears in sufficient quantities to have been brought from a distance to the site, the other stone types appear in small quantities in random sizes. The Reigate stone in the oven and other walls was probably procured commercially. The only example of re-used worked building stone was an architectural fragment of Reigate stone recovered from hearth context [576]. This fragment was burnt and appears to have originated from a stone which formed the junction of two right-angled surfaces. If it derives from a window it would have formed the junction of a mullion or architrave with a sill, transom, or lintel. It may also be a fragment of architrave from a door,

fireplace, or niche. A slight splay is visible on the surface of its thicker arm. Its presence in a hearth context probably accounts for the burning.

Fabric type descriptions mentioned in the text

- 2271: Roof Tile, orange fine textured fabric with occasional quartz, iron oxide, and calcium carbonate with the impression of coarse moulding sand.
- 2586: Roof Tile, similar to 2271, but with a higher quartz content.
- 3090: Roof Tile, orange fabric with frequent quartz (up to 0.5mm), occasional red iron oxide and clay inclusions (up to 1mm) and frequent very fine black iron oxide (up to 0.15mm).
- 3216: Roof Tile, orange fine sandy fabric (quartz up to 0.05mm) with a scatter of mica and occasional iron oxide.
- 3030: Brick, light brown, hard fine sandy fabric.
- 3031: Brick, off-white sandy fabric with some red inclusions.
- 3040: Brick, light red fabric with lensing of white clay, occasional black iron oxide.
- 3042: Brick, maroon fabric with fine yellow speckling, occasional quartz (up to 0.6mm) and occasional calcium carbonate.
- 3043: Brick, light brown fabric with frequent yellow speckling (some in lenses), occasional shell and quartz (up to 0.6mm).
- 3045: Brick, maroon fabric with cream speckling, occasional mica and red iron oxide (up to 2mm).

Tin glazed tiles

Ken Sabel

Fragments of five tin glazed wall tiles were recovered from the site. One, from Phase 6, was a late 17th- to 19th-century plain glazed tile, 121mm wide and 8mm thick. The rest were earlier decorated examples and consisted of two fragments from context [547] (Figs 15.1 and 15.2), two fragments of one tile from context [519] (Fig 15.3), and a single fragment from [544] (Fig 15.4). Except for one example (Fig 15.3), which had a damaged corner, all of the decorated tiles bore nail impressions near their corners from the nails driven through the template around which the clay of the tile was cut to size and shape during manufacture. The nails prevented the clay from moving during cutting (Pluis 1998, 78). Although there was an indigenous London tin glazed tile industry, it was a 'sporadic affair' (Ray 1973, 42) until the late 17th century, which was still experiencing difficulties with materials and firing techniques as late as the 1670s (Ray 1973, 35). As none of

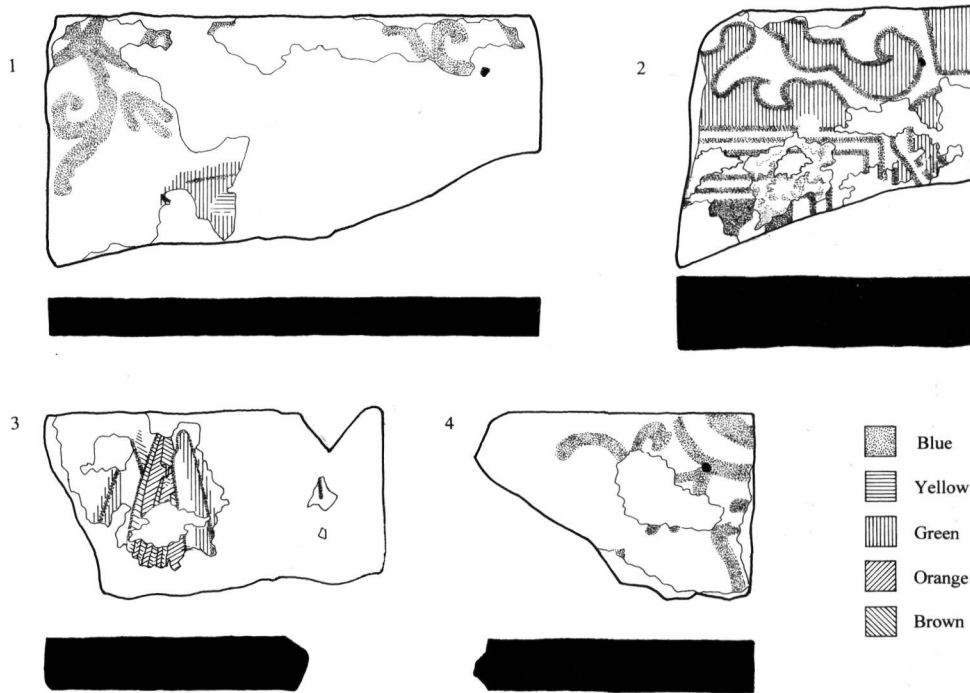


Fig 15. Tin glazed wall tiles (1:2)

the designs found at Islington Green are similar to other known products of the local tin glazed tile industry, the tiles are likely to be Dutch imports. Although 16th- and 17th-century English tiles are difficult to identify positively, being copies of Dutch designs (Horne 1989, 5), the thin almost matt finish of the glaze also suggests a Dutch origin (Horne 1989, 9).

Fragment 1 (Fig 15.1) was from a yellow, green, and blue painted polychrome tile, 130mm wide by 11–12mm thick. Although little of the decoration could be discerned it consisted of a central design without a border (according to Pluis's system of classification, Pluis 1998). It bore oxhead pattern corner motifs, which is the most commonly occurring corner motif on Dutch tiles (Pluis 1998, 537) and its size suggests a date of manufacture between *c.*1625 and *c.*1650, according to Pluis's study of size trends in the manufacture of Dutch tin glazed tiles, which are used to date the other fragments discussed here (Pluis 1998, 71–4).

Tile fragment 2 (Fig 15.2) was 17–19mm thick with only blue and green decoration visible on a white background. Its base is unusually uneven. Tiles of this thickness could have been floor or wall tiles (Britton 1986, 170). Tin glazed floor

tiles, otherwise known as maiolica floor tiles, although first imported to England from the Low Countries in the early 16th century, did not become generally available until late in the century (Lemmen 1986, 5–7) and had given way to thinner wall tiles by the early 17th century, which suggests the probable dating of this example. The tile seems to have had a small central design set within a rectangular banded border, 20–21mm wide, consisting of five concentric squares. The edge decoration outside the border is 25mm wide on one edge and 30mm wide on the adjacent edge, suggesting that the tile may have been rectangular and consequently possibly a border tile. The outer edges are elaborately decorated in an abstract pattern, painted using the reverse technique (or in negative, that is with the decorative pattern in white, defined in blue on a green background), without corner motifs. The use of decoration in reverse is thought to have originated from the design of medieval floor tiles where the decoration was picked out in white clay inlay on a dark background, and represents an early development in tin glazed tile decoration (Pluis 1998, 535). The mortar on the tile's top surface may indicate its reuse, laid horizontally in a wall that the tiled

wall surface was rendered over, or that a tin glazed tile floor was covered over with a different floor surface.

Tile 3 (Fig 15.3) was from an orange, brown, green, and blue painted polychrome tile, 12–13mm thick, which was found in two badly abraded fragments. Despite the abrasion there were extant traces of a blue corner motif. The tile did not have a border and there was a tulip's head, the top of which was 4mm from the tile's edge. The tulip's head would have been located centrally along the edge of the tile, assuming that the tile was 130mm wide. The size suggests a date from the 1620s to c.1650 and it is unlikely that the design extended across more than one tile.

Fragment 4 (Fig 15.4) is 14mm thick. Enough of the tile survives to surmise that it was without a central border and that a blue oxhead corner motif survives. The thickness of the fragment suggests that it is likely to date to between the mid-1580s and the 1630s.

These tiles are indicative of high status domestic housing in the area. Their variety suggests a number of different tile walls/wall panels spanning a period from the late 16th century to the mid 17th century.

The millstones

Ian Riddler

The remains of several probable millstones were found set into the brickearth floor of a structure in Area A. A complete example of an upper stone [581] was set into the brickearth floor [656]. This stone was 0.90m in diameter, and 60mm in thickness at the centre, thinning to 30mm at the edge. It included a central perforation but there were no other distinguishing features. The imprint of a second millstone of a similar size [438] could be seen 0.90m to the east. Both stones appear to have been re-used as hearth bases. Above these lay three further sequences of hearths. A sub-rectangular hearth [26] constructed from roof tiles was positioned immediately above the millstones and another millstone [576] had partially destroyed this arrangement on its western side. This example was relatively small, with a diameter of 0.90m. Fragments of another millstone [575] lay on top of this hearth.

All of these millstone fragments have been

made from basalt lava. The precise source of this lava stone is uncertain, although they are likely to have come from the Mayen quarries in the Rhineland (Biddle 1990, 881). All of the millstones are relatively flat and they appear to have come from upper stones. No traces of any additional holes were seen around the edges, which would define the millstones as *pendelmühlen*, or oscillating querns (Röder 1953; Frere & Stow 1983, 183 and fig 72.5). They were evidently used, therefore, as rotary stones.

The surviving stones have diameters of around 0.90m, which suggests that they were originally used as millstones rather than querns. The two forms of grinding stone are not always easy to distinguish, but one important factor is their size. The Islington stones are twice the diameter of the average early medieval quern, of around 330–470mm (Biddle 1990, 881). For the Roman period, size is one of the major determining factors in distinguishing querns from millstones (Spain 1984, 124). Few of the querns from medieval deposits at Winchester exceed 400mm in diameter (Biddle 1990, 884–90). Larger pieces of basalt lava stones are known from medieval deposits at Bedford, and one of these is likely to have been a millstone (Baker *et al* 1979, 267 and fig 167.1150). A further example, with a diameter of 685mm, is known from a medieval deposit at Canterbury and a larger millstone, 880mm in diameter, comes from Beverley (Blockley *et al* 1995, 1210 no. 1396; Foreman 1991, no. 53). Both querns and millstones are mentioned in medieval contexts at Norwich, but their dimensions are not given (Margeson 1993, 202).

The millstones had been re-used as hearth bases, a circumstance which can be seen elsewhere in late medieval contexts. One parallel for the re-use of millstones in this way is provided by House 7 at St Peter's Street, Northampton, where the Phase 6I building, of 15th-century date, incorporated a millstone in a hearth (Williams 1979, 285). The Beverley millstone had also been re-used as a hearth base (Foreman 1991, 106). In addition, two unfinished basalt lava querns or millstones were used in the foundations of Building 3 at Pudding Lane in London (Pritchard 1991, 162 and fig 3, 47–8; Horsman, Milne & Milne 1988, 39 and fig 26). Others were simply thrown away, as with an example from Alms Lane, Norwich (Atkin, Carter & Evans 1985, pl XXXV).

The Islington millstones are sufficiently large to have been used in a water mill, rather than

acting as simple hand-milling stones. Their original location would have been somewhere nearby and they would have been discarded when the lower surface became too worn to grind grain efficiently. As thin, discoidal upper stones, it would not have been possible to re-dress them in order to use the other face.

The mortar

Ian Riddler

A complete mortar of Purbeck burr-stone, with four prominent external ribs and a flat rim, was recovered from the ploughsoil (Fig 16). It is relatively small, with a height of just over 92mm and a maximum diameter of 195mm. It is made from the yellow Purbeck burr-stone, rather than the grey marble (Dunning 1961, 279; Biddle 1990, 296). The interior of the bowl is smoothed from use and there are no traces of pounding marks, suggesting perhaps that it had been used for grinding. The mortar corresponds with Dunning's description of those of burr-stone, having curved sides and a flat rim, and it can be assigned to his type 2 (Dunning 1961, 282). It belongs to a late medieval type which has a curved bowl and solid ribs extending from the rim to the base, forming a cradle for the bowl. There are no obvious signs of external pecking, tooling, or facetting, which are characteristics of earlier groups of mortars of Purbeck marble,

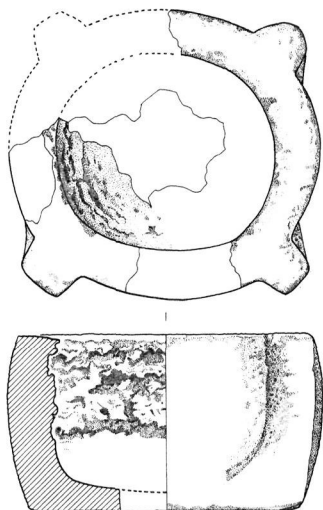


Fig 16. *Purbeck tuffaceous limestone mortar (1:2)*

most of which possibly belong to the 13th century (Biddle 1990, 890–3). The base is plain and is not moulded and the ribs are solid and expand to the base; they are not pierced. This latter characteristic also suggests a 14th-century date, which is likely to have been the period of use of this type (Dunning 1977, 321).

The spur

Geoff Egan

A corroded and incomplete fragment of an iron spur was recovered from the ploughsoil (Fig 17). The curved branches' terminals are broken off, leaving a surviving span of *c.*65mm. The spur apparently has an angled crest at the heel, with a straight neck *c.*25mm long. The spiked disc, or rowel, is slightly incomplete, with a diameter of *c.*25mm and eight spikes, each rabbeted on both sides towards the tip. It appears, from examination of X-rays, to be coated.

Rowels are known from the late 13th century onwards, becoming prevalent in the second quarter of the 14th century and growing longer from the late 1300s (Ellis 1995, 128ff; *cf* nos 345 *etc*). The length of the present find suggests a date in the late 14th/early 15th century is most likely.

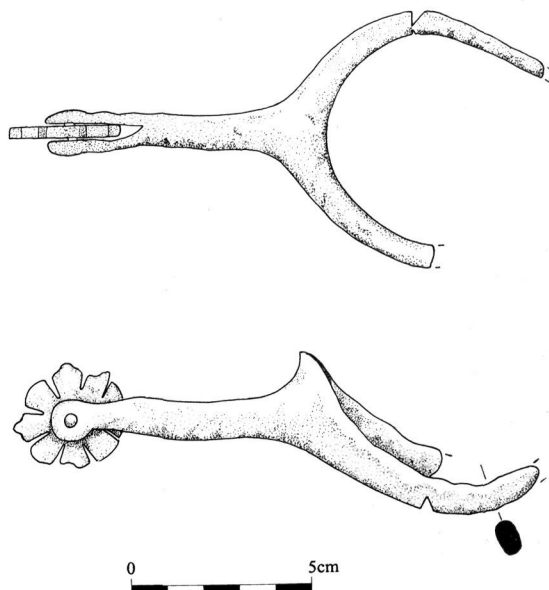


Fig 17. *Iron spur*

Animal bone

Philip Armitage

Apart from the horse and cat bones, the bulk of the animal bone from the site has been identified as discarded household (kitchen and table) waste and provides an insight into the diet and foodways of the inhabitants of Islington. Throughout the medieval period and into the 18th century beef was by far the most important item in the diet, with mutton second, and pork making a lesser contribution. Variety was provided by hares, rabbits, geese, domestic fowl, and the occasional duck. Only two fish bones were identified on the site but this may have more to do with sampling methods than the absence of fish from the diet.

This picture of a diet of limited variety but 'solid sufficiency', especially for the post-medieval phases, fits well the documented foodways of ordinary urban households during that period, which is best summarised as 'infallibly' comprising beef, mutton, fowls, and pigs supplemented by rabbits and hares (as discussed by Tannahill 1973, 29 and Wilson 1973, 100-1).

CONCLUSION

The excavation at 7-9 Islington Green provided the first archaeological evidence of the development of medieval Islington. The site afforded a record of the continuous history of the site from the 14th century until the Victorian age and is an important contribution to the understanding of the evolution of Islington from a small village to a thriving urban centre. As in many medieval towns property boundaries became fixed at an early date and were maintained with little change until the present day. The medieval ploughsoil encountered across the site was the remains of arable fields and crofts to the rear of plots of land inhabited by the customary tenants of the manor of Canonbury. The chalk foundations were probable barns and ancillary buildings associated with these crofts. Although the front of the building plots, which contained the main shop/living accommodation, facing onto the Green has been lost, the growth of the service and industrial areas into the rear of the area survived largely intact and provided important information concerning the room layout of buildings in medieval Islington. Thereafter, the

archaeological record combines with the available documents to provide a history of the site into the post-medieval period concentrating on the development of the western part of the site into the White Horse Inn. The plot to the west may have developed from earlier beginnings as a brewery or tavern to become the White Horse Inn, which was first documented on the site in 1599. The service areas associated with the original medieval building plots to the east of the inn had been demolished by the second half of the 17th century to enable John Hayne to erect two brick houses, later to become four when the site was owned by his son-in-law Morgan Ryan in the 1690s. By 1735 the White Horse Inn had itself been demolished to make way for a row of four houses, the eastern one being within the western part of the site. The gardens of these properties fell within the areas of archaeological excavation. More recently, in the 19th century, the site was occupied by a variety of artisans and manufacturers and the rear of the plots reverted to use as industrial and service areas reflecting their earlier medieval use.

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