

Excavation Round-up 1987, Part 1: City of London

JENNY HEATHCOTE

THIS ARTICLE has been prepared from reports submitted by individual site supervisors and collated by John Schofield. WC at the end of a report indicates that work continues. Reports on work in the London Boroughs will be included in the Summer issue.

Aldermanbury House, 58-63 Aldermanbury TQ 3243 8149 (G. Brown)

After demolition of a post-war building on the S side of Aldermanbury Square, an archaeological investigation was funded by Heritable City Investments between June and mid-September 1987. 300 sq m (3200 sq ft) were excavated. Basement slabs had destroyed all archaeological features except for intrusions: pits, wall foundations, postholes and wells. The highest surviving fragment of natural brickearth was at 11.11m OD and this too had been truncated.

Intrusive features of various functions were recorded from Roman, medieval, and post-medieval periods; many of the medieval pits were cesspits. Foundations for two structures were also recorded, their alignments reflecting the pre-war street pattern. They appear to have been established after 1350. Several near-complete pottery vessels dating between 1550-1750 were recovered from the fills of a post-medieval well.

An extensive watching brief was conducted on underpinning holes around the N and E perimeters of the site. While features similar to those in the excavation trench were recorded, there was no evidence for the E defences, including the E gate of the Cripplegate Roman fort, thought to be located at this point on the perimeter.

12 America Square TQ 3359 8090 (A. Stephenson)

Preliminary excavation work, funded by Central and City Properties Ltd, underneath the railway viaduct leading out of Fenchurch Street Station was completed in the summer in two areas, each measuring c 25m² (270 sq ft), to a depth of 2-2.5m (6½-8ft) below the warehouse basement slab.

In the S area the internal face of the Roman city wall was exposed immediately below the concrete slab, standing to a height of c 1.7m (5½ft) to the top of its clay, flint and *opus signinum* foundations and showing the usual pattern of dressed ragstone blocks and tile courses. A series of deposits of sand, gravel and brickearth, tipped from E to W, were banked against the wall. They represented the rampart formed from material upcast from the digging of the wall's foundations and external ditch, and contained pottery of mostly mid 2nd c date. Below the 1.5m (5ft) of rampart deposits was a layer of very hard rammed gravel containing ragstone chippings and pottery, up to 0.20m (8in) thick and with a distinct camber down towards the wall, presumably a road built either as part of the construction sequence of the defensive system or predating it. Below it lay a further 0.30m (1ft) of dumping containing earlier Roman pottery.

In the N area, the Roman wall's external face was exposed to a depth of slightly less than 2m (6½ft) to foundation level. Above natural ballast lay a dump of material containing Roman tiles, chalk and ragstone fragments, through which a cut had been made to take the curving foundations of a later projecting bastion abutting the wall. The foundations were of gravel below undressed stone rubble, apparently built and mortared in very rough stepped courses, above which up to 1m (3ft) of relatively

neat masonry superstructure survived. None of the masonry was dismantled, but it could be seen that the core of the bastion contained a coping stone and another partially moulded stone. Above this lay a series of dumps containing material dated to 1650-1800, through which was cut a bricklined cesspit abutting both wall and bastion and containing material provisionally dated to the same period.

In a large test pit in the adjacent car park to the N, the wall was shown to survive intact to a height of c 12.00m OD or 3.00m (10ft) above foundation level. Large-scale excavation is in progress. WC.

2-6 Austin Friars TQ 3293 8133 (O. Beazley)

Excavations inside the building in August and September, funded by Guardian Royal Exchange, recorded 0.50-0.70m (1ft 8in-2ft 4in) of stratigraphy in three areas.

Natural, consisting of river gravels to the W (areas A and B) and brickearth to the E (area C), was overlain by redeposited natural deposits. Residual finds of a significant number of flints from subsequent dumpings include blades and a fabricator and may suggest nearby prehistoric activity.

The paucity of structural or building evidence suggests that much of the site continued in use as an external area throughout the Roman period. Dumps and pitting representing the earliest activity across the site were sealed by deposits indicative of internal activity but only in Area B. During the 2nd-3rd c an oven was constructed, replaced by possible surfaces, and thereafter overlain by a second oven/hearth.

Later Roman and medieval horizontal stratigraphy was truncated by recent activity. There were medieval pits in all areas; finds from them provide an 11th-14th c date range and include a bone skate.

19-25 Birchin Lane TQ 3290 8106 (E. Shepherd and A. Westman)

An excavation, funded by City Merchant Developers Ltd, was conducted during February - March 1987. The depth of archeological deposits was considerably greater than anticipated. As the length of the excavation could not be extended, the site was excavated on a two shift system.

No excavation was undertaken in Nos. 19-21, as the insertion of basements had removed all archeological levels. The six trenches dug in Nos. 24-25 provided little information, also due to heavy truncation. Only a number of pits (of differing dates) and ragstone foundation (of unknown date) survived.

In contrast, archaeological deposits survived to a depth of over 3m (10ft) in Nos. 22-23. The earliest feature (mid 1st c) was a band of gravel 6m (20ft) wide (running E-W), retained within timber posts and planking. Its function is uncertain, although it may have formed an alleyway. It was flanked by external yards. A complex sequence of Roman clay and timber buildings followed, spanning the late 1st/2nd c. The discovery of two ovens and carbonised grain within the rooms of one of these buildings suggests that it was a bakery. It was destroyed by a major fire in the early/mid 2nd c. Late Roman buildings were truncated, although two pits and large masonry and piled foundations may have been of this date.

Roman pottery included some rare types such as marbled samian, a glazed flagon, and a face pot. There was also a large

Antonine group and a large, high quality group of mid/late 4th c wares. A shale platter of the late 2nd c century was also recovered.

Later features, which were few, included cesspits, a chalk-lined well and a brick drain.

St Helen, Bishopsgate TQ 3321 8127 (R. Lea)

Archaeological recording took place in December 1986 to February 1987, when the exteriors of the S wall of the nave and the W wall of the S transept were stripped of render and the mortar joints raked out before repointing.

Areas of early 13th c masonry were identified in both elevations. The masonry included wall facings, a lancet window and a relieving arch for a door in the S wall of the nave, together with facings and two lancet windows in the W wall of the S transept. The lancet windows correspond to those in the S wall of the S transept.

Probably in the 14th or early 15th c, the elevations were altered by the addition of knapped flint at parapet level, probably replacing eaves. The easternmost lancet window in the S wall of the nave was blocked, and a two-light window was inserted at a low level. A wall, probably the churchyard wall, was constructed to abut the SW corner of the S transept and a two-storey building was constructed against the S half of the W wall of the S transept, ie in the SE corner of the churchyard. This building incorporated a piscina at first floor level and squints at ground and first floor level into the S transept.

The body of the church underwent major alteration late in the 15th c, when the nave was heightened and the walls were refenestrated with plain three-light windows moulded without cusping. The present S door, inscribed with the date 1633, was inserted on the site of the earlier door in the S wall of the nave. Various brick buildings were constructed against the W wall of the S transept in the 17th and later c. The S wall was rendered in the 19th c with Parker's Roman Cement.

The Warehouse, Apothecaries Hall, Blackfriars Lane TQ 3173 8103 (B. Pye)

A three-month watching brief in the basement during refurbishment of this Grade I Listed Building during February-April 1987 was followed immediately by a three-month standing building survey.

The site is also a scheduled Ancient Monument, as Apothecaries Hall was built on the site of the Dominican (Blackfriars) Friary. However, no buildings of medieval date were found under the Warehouse. This area, outside the Roman city wall, was used for digging of rubbish pits in the medieval period. The Society of Apothecaries purchased it in the 1630s, but their buildings were destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. In the 1670s building work was carried out on the site, with the evidence of a smaller three-roomed basement with brick floors and associated brick rubbish pits. This was recorded in the basement of the present building, which was built in 1783. Incorporated in this later building was a 17th c brick vaulted cellar under Playhouse Yard.

43-44, Cloth Fair TQ 3191 8179 (D. Bentley)

A watching brief was carried out during the refurbishment of this pair of late 18th c houses in June 1986. The internal timber structure, supported by an outer brick wall, showed no evidence for re-use of materials and no trace of decorative features *in situ*. The houses had similar plans and elevations; in both instances chimneys and staircases were located against flanking walls. Basement fire places were marked by modern blocking although in one instance a series of finely chamfered limestone fragments were used, which must have come from a grander structure, as must an unusually decorated block of Caen stone retrieved from the basement floor make-up and attributed on stylistic grounds to the 17th c.

9-13 Crutched Friars TQ 3354 8099 (A. B. Thomas)

Between December 1986 and March 1987 excavations funded

by Hartstreet Properties Ltd were carried out at the site of 9-13 Crutched Friars, just inside the line of the Roman city wall.

Excavations suggested that the earliest activity on site was related to the construction of the defensive wall of c 200. The area appears to have been levelled with dumps, and later sealed by a compacted mixed mortar/gravel surface, aligned roughly N-S. To the E a small section of surviving Roman wall revealed in the main property boundary of the site gave clear indications that the gravel/mortar surface was constructed after the lower courses of the wall. Above this surface the internal bank survived to a height of c 1.4-5m (4½-5ft), and a width of 8.5m (28ft). The bank was constructed using alternate dumps of brickearth/gravels, the tip lines of which suggested that the dumping sequence was from S to N; the bank tended to slope down from E to W. Apart from the defensive wall and bank little late Roman activity was noted.

By the medieval period the area of the bank was being encroached upon by a large foundation, aligned N-S, possibly for a stone building to the W. To the E of this building a series of post holes, aligned N-S, showed a possible lean-to structure or covered area between the building and the defensive wall. Once this timber structure went out of use, a yellow tile path was laid down between the building and the wall. In the post-medieval period the path was incorporated into a larger cobblestone surface which covered most of the excavated area. It is possible that by this period the defensive wall had been demolished, for in the cobbled surface were stone fragments similar to those noted in the Roman wall.

Later a large red brick wall, aligned N-S, crossed the site. This building had internal rooms to the W, but still incorporated the yellow tile path and its cobblestone surrounds to the E.

9-10 Cutler Street TQ 3341 8142 (S. Cole)

A watching brief of October 1986-January 1987 revealed one crushed chalk inhumation, not datable, cut into natural brick-earth, together with evidence of others disturbed by modern building works. Test pits and ground reduction showed extensive post-medieval pits sealed by a brick floor and foundations for the standing building.

14-16 Dowgate Hill, Dowgate Hill House TQ 8082 3252 (M. Shea)

A watching brief was conducted on site from the beginning of November 1986 until early February 1987 to oversee piling operations at Dowgate Hill House. A reasonably detailed survey of c 140 pile-borings was undertaken. It provided site-wide topographical information on the levels of the natural clay and subsequent siltings, as well as a 3-dimensional record of the position of the site. The latter operation included the retrieval of about 50 samples for dendrochronological purposes.

From late January to late March 1987, excavations, sponsored by London and Edinburgh Trust, were conducted in the NE area of Dowgate Hill House in the proposed lift-shaft, c 8.5 × 5.5 × 5m (28 × 18 × 16½ft). A natural streamlet or man-made channel cut through the N portion of the site, diagonally NE-SW. After this water-course had filled with successive sand and gravel deposits, probably in the early Roman period, the ground was terraced into a slightly sloping surface to allow construction to commence. A large E-W clay bank (possibly with timber lacing) was thrown up with a timber-piled channel running along its N flank; the latter fell into disuse and was superseded by an drainage-channel, aligned NE-SW, just S of it.

This apparent embankment of the Thames, with successive drainage-channels running along its N flank, later fell into disrepair and was bisected by a large erosion cutting, which ran diagonally (NE-SE) through the bank. Later, the site was completely sealed by a thick horizon of waterlain material; and the area witnessed the dumping of at least 2m (7ft) of material, probably within a relatively short period (late 3rd-early 4th c). This substantial dumping, very probably land reclamation, produced an exceptional collection of artefacts (even by Walbrook standards), including late Roman ceramic types. This

apparently later Roman land reclamation could conceivably be associated with major public works in this area of the mouth of the Walbrook.

Later activity was represented by several cut features which may originally have been for masonry walls of building(s) running E-W across the site, and a circular group of cluster-piles which probably served as footing for an arched foundation. Environmental column samples were taken through the stratigraphy to complement the archaeological data.

Following the excavations, a second watching-brief was carried out between late April and the end of May 1987. It oversaw the reduction of the site to 2m OD to make way for pile-caps and the lift-shaft (-2.25m OD) of new British Telecom offices. The work largely entailed the recording of numerous sections of chalk and ragstone walls, often resting on timber piles and/or chocks, very likely representing medieval tenement buildings, running along the N side of the precursor of modern-day Upper Thames Street.

The excavations produced a large assemblage of finds of the late Roman period. Most of the material was recovered from dumping horizons. A large proportion of the pottery from the dumps dates from the late 3rd to early 4th c. Oxfordshire, Colchester and Nene Valley wares are present, along with sherds of late Roman glazed ware thought to be of eastern Mediterranean or Italian origin. Several crucible fragments of oxidised ware were also recovered. Of the 177 Roman coins found during excavations, 82% were recovered from the dumping levels. All the coins which have so far been identified date to the late 3rd c. The site also produced over 100 leather shoes and sandals, also of later 3rd c date. This assemblage is particularly important as it provides evidence for the continued use of one-piece shoes into the 3rd c, a style which was previously thought to have gone out of fashion by the end of the 2nd c. As well as nailed shoes and evidence for shoe-making there is a unique example of the upper strapwork of a sandal. Other Roman finds include bone and jet pins and shale bracelets. Metalwork includes knives, locks, finger rings, a stylus and a fragment of a lead dish or platter.

River Plate House, Finsbury Circus TQ 3283 8160 (P. Askew & D. Lees)

During April 1987 an excavation funded by the Hammerson group took place inside a standing building. Its purpose was to investigate evidence of prehistoric activity, Walbrook tributaries, a Roman road, possibly the continuation of one found at Cophthall Avenue in 1980, any evidence of a Roman cemetery, a marsh deposition and later medieval and post-medieval dumping activity.

Similar sequences were recorded in all areas. Natural sands and gravels were located between 8.9-8.1m OD; a few fragments of late Iron Age pottery were found in one area. Immediately above lay brickearth, which showed evidence of naturally-formed silted up stream beds cutting into it. A brown fibrous organic marsh deposit c 0.2m (8in) deep containing freshwater snails had formed over the brickearth. This phase marks the last naturally-formed deposition and probably represents the Roman and medieval marsh deposits which had built up outside the N perimeter of the Roman wall in the 2nd c. The final sequence of deposits consisted of medieval and post-medieval dumps; in one of the dumps a few fragments of a Valencian Lustre Ware altar vase (1380-1650) were found, the form of which is quite rare in Britain.

During this phase of excavation six underpinning holes, 8m (26ft) to the S of the excavation and fronting onto Finsbury Circus, were investigated. Waterlogged black silts and organic material underlay the post-medieval dumping sequence; one hole bore certain evidence of a V-shaped channel 1.20m (4ft) wide filled with these waterlogged deposits, cut into brickearth and gravel. This was the only evidence of a possibly man-made channel cut to divert or drain one of the Walbrook tributaries in the vicinity.

A further excavation took place to the N of the first, fronting onto South Place. The same sequence of medieval and

post-medieval dump deposits was located on top of the brown organic 'marsh' deposit as found earlier. In the area to the S, redeposited brickearth was found to overlie a cobbled and metalled surface consisting of gravel and coarse ragstone and chalk blocks with broken red tiles. A slight camber on the surface may indicate a road surface and it could possibly be the continuation of the Roman road found at Cophthall Avenue in 1980. Unfortunately further investigation was not possible due to lack of time.

The area to the N contained three inhumations which had been truncated by the deep foundations, and a cremation within the underlying brickearth. Grave cuts were impossible to see, possibly because of later marsh flooding which had re-sorted the deposited brickearth. Associated with one of the burials was a Verulamium Region White Ware flask with bands of rouletted decoration around the rim, neck and shoulder which probably dates to the mid-late 2nd c. No other vessel of this type has been found in London.

Cellar at Wine Office Court, 145 Fleet Street TQ 3144 8120 (A. Westman)

An archaeological examination of a cellar adjoining The Old Cheshire Cheese public house, Wine Office Court, was made in December 1987 for the proprietors, Samuel Smith Brewery. The brick cellar, built with cast iron columns of early 19th c type supporting iron beams and shallow brick ceiling vaults, was added to the E of existing 18th c cellars and standing building, now occupied by the public house. Original entrances to the cellar were from the W and S; the latter, possibly leading to the ground floor, was later blocked and another doorway was inserted in the N wall, giving access to further cellars.

40-41 Furnival Street TQ 3121 8154 (K. Tyler)

Between May and July 1987 excavations were funded by Prudential Assurance plc. The earliest activity, of medieval or earlier date, was the quarrying of natural gravels. The quarry pits had been backfilled with brickearth. A series of 13th-15th c rubbish pits and chalk-lined cesspits post-dated them. The remains of the basement, ground floor and three upper storeys of a late 17th c L-shaped building were identified on the S half of the site. In the basement three brick vaults survived with fragments of brick flooring. One fireplace was recorded on the first floor, and two on the second. The original height of this building is unknown. N of it was a contemporary brick-lined well and the remains of a brick-lined cesspit.

Guildhall Art Gallery, Guildhall Yard TQ 3251 8136 (N. Bateman)

Following the demolition of the Guildhall Art Gallery in June 1987 an excavation was sponsored by the Corporation of the City of London. To date (January 1988) two large areas have been opened up; in the N, an E-W trench 22 x 6m (72 x 20ft) has been excavated to natural brickearth at about 10.5m OD; to the S an area of about 100 sq m (1100 sq ft) has been excavated to reveal natural at about 9m OD. The following is a provisional description of the sequence.

In the early to mid Roman period, substantial cellared masonry buildings were constructed by cutting into the gently-sloping hillside to the W of one of the Walbrook tributaries. The site appears to lie at the junction of two different sets of topographic constraints since the buildings in the N were aligned NW-SE and those in the S were aligned E-W. A sequence of internal and external (?yard) surfaces were recorded.

In the SW of the site the earliest Roman feature is a substantial timber structure with a plank floor. It appears to overlie a tributary of the Walbrook. Only the edge of the structure has been observed, but it is hoped that the remainder will become available for controlled excavation after the developers' reduction of the rest of the site.

At an as yet unknown date in the Roman period, the masonry walls were robbed and the building remains sealed under about

1.5m (5ft) of dark earth which was itself sealed by a thick early medieval dump. This was penetrated by numerous early medieval pits of differing dimensions and orientation. A group of interconnecting medieval gullies and trenches in the S of the site may have been used for an industrial purpose. A number of substantial but isolated chalk foundations which may have been part of the buildings associated with the 15th c Guildhall Chapel were recorded; and substantial foundations of the Chapel itself, comprising the foundations of all four outer walls and of the N and S arcades, survived up to 3m (10ft) high. All contemporary ground levels, internal and external, have been truncated by the insertion of the 19th c basement of the former Art Gallery. WC.

St Martin Orgar Churchyard, 24-32 King William Street TQ 3282 8082 (D. Power)

In addition to pre- and post-excavation watching briefs, excavations were undertaken between February and May, funded by Lazard Property Unit Trusts. The use of the site as a churchyard since the Fire ensured the preservation of a rich variety of deposits.

In the NW area, cut into the natural brickearth, were two associated shallow features which were overlain by a deposit containing several LBA/Iron age pottery sherds and a number of flint flakes.

Site-wide levelling preceded a mid 1st c building to the SW. It was truncated by pits representing quarrying, and by a ditch running N-S through the W part of the site and containing the semi-articulated skeleton of a pony or mule. A rubbish dump associated with one phase in the sequence of later 1st c clay and timber structures that followed produced a bronze figurine of the Goddess Victory. In the E area, layers representing a similarly intense period of Roman building activity were sealed by a deposit of 0.30m (1ft) of dark earth. This was truncated by medieval pitting which was in turn sealed by a series of horseshoe-shaped tile and clay hearths, dated to the 13th c, and cut by insubstantial chalk foundations.

Deposits later than the Roman period to the W were destroyed by the E end of a church. The flint and gravel foundations of the E apse of a church of Saxo-Norman date were replaced in the 13th c by a square-ended building founded on arches of chalk and ragstone. A number of alteration and extensions on the S and E were made in the medieval period. Overlying a vaulted crypt in the area of the S chapel, a portion of the floor surface survived. It consisted of large lead[?]-glazed Flemish tiles arranged to form a chequer board design around a series of moulded greensand bases. The church was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666.

Little Britain TQ 3210 8160 (M. Nally)

Between October 1986 and January 1987 excavations, funded by Wimpey Properties Holdings, were undertaken following the first phase of demolition in the Little Britain development. Four areas were investigated, three along the Aldersgate frontage and one in the angle between Aldersgate and Little Britain.

Extensive truncation by modern buildings meant that in some areas only intrusive features dug into natural brickearth survived, including three medieval wells, one of which was barrel-lined.

Effort was concentrated on the northernmost trench, where horizontal stratigraphy survived to a depth of up to 1m (3ft). Here two well-built chalk foundations were found. One of them formed the side of a cellar, the backfill of which contained a medieval glass urinal. Another prominent feature of this trench was the wattle and plank-lined pits which produced textile fragments and leatherwork, including one nearly complete shoe with decorative silk stitching down the central vamp. All or some of this N area may have been within the precinct of St Bartholomews Priory.

Despite the proximity of the site to the N-S Roman road along Aldersgate, the only potentially Roman features were two linear ditches running E-W and similar to the ditches found at Museum House to the N of the site in 1979.

Further work will take place at Little Britain after demolition to the N and W of the 1986 excavations. WC.

Lombard Street near St Mary Woolnoth TQ 3278 8106 (P. Rowsome)

The sinking of a sewer diversion shaft as preparatory work to the extension of the Docklands Light Railway allowed a small area excavation in March and April, funded by DLR, which recorded 4m (13ft) of stratified deposits.

Natural gravel at 10.00m OD was overlain by a sequence of 1st and 2nd c structures interpreted as clay and timber buildings aligned to the main E-W Roman street 36-40m (120-130ft) to the S. Towards the end of the 2nd c, extensive dumping of dark soil sealed the building sequence. Masonry structures forming part of a later Roman building overlay the dumping and were sealed by further dumps of dark soil.

A series of street metallings of 9th to 12th c date may be part of Saxon Lombard St, an early E-W route across the city to the post-Roman crossing of the Walbrook. Street metallings of medieval date followed. There was no evidence of discontinuity in the street sequence, all of which were on a similar alignment to the present Lombard St.

Lee House, London Wall TQ 3238 8159 (G. Brown)

As part of the Lee House redevelopment a small trench was dug in the middle of Wood Street just to the N of the junction with London Wall. The contractors removed all material from the trench to the depth of the lowest modern service trench. An archaeological excavation for 4 weeks was funded by MEPC. The trench measured 7 x 3m (23 x 10ft), the E third having been totally truncated by a deep Victorian cellar.

Cutting through the natural brickearth was a very disturbed Roman sequence which included several elements of a timber structure. There was no evidence of a road leading to the N gate of the Cripplegate fort.

Overlying the Roman features was a deposit of dark earth. Directly over the dark earth was the first of at least seven building phases, represented within the trench by clay floors and occupation debris. Each floor surface had a hearth built on it in the N, more or less occupying the same position in each instance. The pottery from these surfaces had a date-range of c 1000-1150.

Constructed directly onto the final building remains was the first of a long sequence of road surfaces, the majority of which were recorded only in section because of the depth of the service trenches. However the earliest road levels were recorded in plan, and rut marks cut into the surface were orientated N-S. These were the earliest surfaces of Wood Street and pottery evidence shows it was established in the late 12th/early 13th c. The top of the section showed the tarmac of the modern road, and between the top and bottom were recorded the road surfaces of the intervening centuries.

Billingsgate Roman Bathhouse, Lower Thames Street, St Mary at Hill TQ 3313 8069 (N. Jaffa)

Recording and surveying of the Roman remains was carried out in August-September 1987 for the Corporation of London. The site, originally excavated in 1968, now lies in the basement of a modern building. Despite previous consolidation the Roman structures need restorative treatment. Recording was to prepare for this, and for possible eventual public display.

41-43 Ludgate Hill, 8 Pilgrim Street TQ 3177 8114 (W. A. McCann)

An archaeological investigation between September and November, sponsored by Crown Estate Commissioners, recorded 3m (10ft) of stratigraphy in three areas on the basement in this later 19th c building.

Natural sands and gravels survived to a maximum height of 7.16m OD. In the E, the truncated remains of a N-S oriented

ditch were cut into them. Flat-bottomed and 5m (16½ft) wide, it seems to have been a re-cut of an earlier, possibly V-shaped, ditch. A small area of surviving primary fill contained 10th/11th c pottery.

In the S, a 7m (23ft) length of the N face of the E-W late 13th c extension of the City Wall around the Blackfriars was uncovered. It was constructed of faced ragstone blocks with occasional blocks of greensand and chalk and irregular tile courses, possibly re-used Roman material. An 0.25m (10in) -wide offset delimited the foundation from the wall, the latter surviving to a height of 9.12m OD, 0.9m (3ft) above the level of the offset. The foundation had a maximum depth of 1.9m (6ft) and had five irregular and narrow offsets. A foundation arch was used to carry the wall over the E bank of the earlier ditch, whose W bank lay outside the limit of excavation. Partial excavation of the arch showed the wall to be 3.12m (10ft 3in) wide.

No evidence of a ditch associated with this wall was found. However, a series of dumps, which contained late 13th c pottery and a complete jet chess piece, were laid so as to produce a steep incline from the Ludgate road to the base of the wall.

Evidence of later occupation consisted of the N, E and S chalk foundations of a medieval building. Associated with them were a small chalk-lined well and a chalk-lined cesspit which used the ragstone wall as its S limit. This occupation made substantial use of gravel dumping to eliminate the incline from Ludgate Hill to the city wall. A series of timber and brick foundations represented occupation on the site immediately before the construction of the present building.

110-116 Middlesex Street TQ 3344 8165 (R. Brown)

Following the demolition of the Salvation Army Hostel, an excavation and watching brief was conducted on the site in August and September 1987, funded by Amec. Five test pits and three areas of controlled excavation were investigated.

There was apparently little activity in the area before the 3rd c, when the site was levelled with dumps of brickearth. The expected Roman extra-mural cemetery was represented by one 3rd c inhumation in poor condition, possibly indicating that the site was on the fringe of the main burial-ground.

A series of parallel gullies running NW-SE across the W of the area and large pits and hollows to the E were succeeded by another site-wide levelling with a brickearth slab. Later, a second series of gullies of indeterminate date appeared in the E; they preceded post-medieval pit activity.

There was no structural evidence of any period before the 19th c, and all the surviving material had been truncated by modern basements.

118 Minorities TQ 3364 8092 (R. Brown for P. McCulloch)

Archaeological investigation funded by Wimpey Property Holdings consisting of 5 test pits, one controlled excavation (c 10m × 10m, 33 × 33ft) and a watching brief were carried out between October and December 1986 in advance of redevelopment.

Natural deposits were recorded up to 8.8m OD; they were truncated by a large N-S medieval ditch which was backfilled and recut, probably in the 17th c, to accommodate a line of stakes. The fill of the second cut was itself truncated by a series of features which were succeeded by a humic ground surface. Later dumping and cut features were surmounted by another ground and dumping surface through which a large trench was cut. A timber structure housing a brick furnace was discovered in the trench. Backfilling over the destroyed furnace allowed another cut and fill phase.

Later shallow brick footings indicated the presence of at least one structure immediately preceding the Victorian basement of the latest building.

Monument Street/Fish Street Hill TQ 3290 8079 (M. Burch & P. Rowsome)

A five week excavation sponsored by the Docklands Light Railway, was carried out from the end of August 1987, before work on a new station at Monument. The area had been an open space since the construction of King William Street (1831) and was used as parish burial ground until 1851.

The remains of 27 burials were removed for re-burial, and the site thereafter consisted only of features cut into the brickearth levelling on the gravel terrace. After two shallow brick-lined wells were excavated, the surviving features were mainly of early Roman date. Though very little of them remained, the pits, wells and foundations provided a clear record of properties associated with a frontage beneath the standing buildings on Fish Street Hill, the main access route from the Roman bridge to the Forum. There were at least two phases of building, and the pattern of square-cut wells aligned with the street to the E.

One of the wells was 6.5m (21ft) deep with some of the timber lining surviving at the bottom. The lining had partially collapsed and the well had quickly filled with rubbish. A coin of Vespasian AD 69-79 was found on the primary silting and the fills above contained glass and pottery from the Flavian period. One of the lower fills, 1.5m (5ft) in depth, consisted almost entirely of bird and fish bones.

The well also contained substantial parts of several glass vessels including a rare form of beaker and a very fine bowl; the largest group of 1st c glass to have been found in a single deposit in the city in recent years. It contains a mixture of utilitarian containers, tableware and fine decorative ware. The pottery assemblage includes Highgate ware (mainly bowls and lids), Verulamium wares (mainly flagons and large 2-handled jars), and large-necked jars from Alice Holt.

55-61 Moorgate TQ 3268 8149 (J. Drummond-Murray)

The site, excavated between May and August 1987, was funded by Pearl Insurance. A total of 3m (10ft) of archaeological deposits were preserved. Nine trenches were excavated, varying in size between 8 × 4m and 2 × 2m (26 × 13ft and 6½ × 6½ft).

The earliest recorded features were designed to control drainage. A timber-lined drain led to a timber-lined structure, possibly a tank. Two phases of post and plank revetment running N-S were found, the later provisionally dated to AD 120-140. They appear to have revetted the banks of a Walbrook tributary.

In the central area, a brickearth and timber Roman building, provisionally mid to late 1st c, had at least three rooms, in one of which was a timber tank, which may have had an industrial function. After the abandonment of this building another similar structure, in use until AD 120-140, was built on the same site. An important collection of Roman glassworking debris, including part of a 'tank' furnace, was found associated with this building.

In the N part of one trench a large dump of Roman leather shoe-making waste was found. The leather and glassworking material are likely to provide considerable new insights into the industry of Roman Britain. The most spectacular individual find, associated with a metal yard and timber tank, was a damaged stone statue of a god, possibly Mercury. The metallurgy has a provisional date of AD 100-200. S of the yard lay the robbed foundations of a large masonry building, which fell into disuse by AD 120.

The Roman occupation of this site finished with a phase of deep dumping in the late 2nd to early 3rd c. Evidence of medieval activity, truncated by the recent basements, consisted of a well and a series of wattle-lined pits. The pits appeared to lie along a property boundary parallel to the modern line of Nun Court. Several post-medieval features were also found.

The City Wall, Noble Street TQ 3222 8149 (A. Westman)

Archaeological examination of a standing monument W of Noble Street, EC2, part of the NW sector of the city wall, was undertaken in May-June 1987 for the Corporation of London. The W wall and SW corner of the 2nd c fort, with internal turrets, was reinforced when the city was enclosed by defences in about

AD 200. The new city wall ran W from the corner of the fort over a tile-lined drain. The foundations of these features and portions of the medieval rebuild of the city wall, including a fragment of Bastion 15, excavated and identified 1949-63, were recorded in conjunction with a photographic survey by the Department of Civil Engineering of the City University.

Poultry, Thames Water Authority Main TQ 3262 8111 and 3245 8114 (D. Bentley)

Observations were made during March-April 1987 in a service trench along Poultry and Cheapside by Thames Water. Archaeological deposits were recorded at two points; outside Mappin and Webb in Poultry and at the Queen Street junction with Cheapside.

At the former site chalk foundations, probably representing buildings on the S frontage of Poultry, were interrupted by a substantial and very worn ragstone-lined culvert. Documentary sources show this to be a branch of the medieval Walbrook which is recorded as running beneath St Mildred Poultry immediately to the N. The culvert was found to cut 12-13th c road surfaces, while restoration of the fabric in the 17th and again in the 19th c show the important role that this stream played until fairly recently. Roman levels were not reached.

At the N end of Queen Street a succession of seventeen road surfaces extended down to at least 4m (13ft) beneath Cheapside. The earliest of them were cobbled, re-using Roman building material and were accompanied by E-W roadside drains. They appear to represent an uninterrupted sequence of medieval Cheapside although the earliest surfaces produced exclusively Roman dating.

To the S, several phases of medieval chalk walling cut through 12th c deposits, the earliest levels reached here. The walls represented a building which stood on the S side of Cheapside at the junction with Soper Lane before the construction of Queen Street in the 17th c.

St Bartholomew's Hospital Catering Block TQ 3194 8161 (D. Bentley)

A brief examination of this site on the W side of Little Britain in January 1987 revealed traces of cellared 15th-16th c chalk-walled buildings within an area largely destroyed by modern foundations. These buildings probably fronted onto medieval Duck Lane and the earlier W continuation of Little Britain before their destruction in the 18th and 19th c. No evidence of Roman activity was found.

Bible House, Queen Victoria Street TQ 3189 8097 (B. Pye)

A six week excavation in November-December 1986 was followed by an intermittent watching brief during May-August 1987. Although all horizontal stratigraphy had been terraced away in the 1860s during construction of Queen Victoria Street, interesting cut features were recorded.

The most important feature ran the entire length of the site N-S, 10.5m (34½ft) wide E-W and 2.0m (6½ft) deep with a base at 6.0m OD. It was filled with a series of waterlain silts; pottery from them has been provisionally dated to AD 1000-1100. This cut appears to be a drainage ditch running S to the Thames. (For further information see D. Bentley 'Western Stream reconsidered: an enigma in the landscape' *London Archaeol* 5, no 12, Autumn 1987).

Other features recorded included medieval, post-medieval and Victorian wells, Roman rubbish pits and the foundations of St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe church to the W of the site.

74-82 Queen Victoria Street TQ 8101 3239 (H. White)

A small excavation and watching brief, funded by Rowntree Mackintosh, took place in February-March 1987.

In the W corner, the earliest activity recorded was a 1st c building with brickearth sills and a floor of *opus signinum*; an associated cesspit on its E side contained an assemblage of rare vessels, almost all complete, from c AD 55-70: a large

two-handled flagon in Sugar Loaf Court ware, represented an early form of native grog-tempered ware made in or close to the City. Samian cups and plates included a rare example from the Montans kiln.

Later, a substantial masonry building was constructed. It comprised a N-S wall with a room to the E containing a concrete floor. In the external area to the W lay a robust platform of rammed gravels, mortar and ragstone overlain by tiles set in brickearth. Running E-W through it lay a scorched channel or furnace, suggesting that the platform could have supported a water tank. The furnace was rebuilt twice in a reduced form and inside a shelter. The furnace was later dismantled and part of the tile platform adapted into a small room.

After destruction by fire, a gully was built to the W. Its disuse, represented by spreads of mortar, may indicate robbing of the adjacent building. This was followed by pits and an accumulation of dark organic dumps. Medieval activity was represented by the base of a N-S chalk foundation.

Former City of London Boys' School, Victoria Embankment TQ 3154 8092 (C. Spence)

Between October 1986 and February 1987 excavations in the playground of the school were funded by the Morgan Bank. Natural deposits across the site consisted of alluvium; one contained eroded tile and pottery fragments of Roman date. The earliest well-dated material (12th c) was recorded at the N end of the site; it was composed of a series of dumps and naturally accumulated flood deposits. A gravel bank which ran from the NE to SW probably represents the confluence of the Fleet River and the Thames at this period.

In the main trench the earliest structural activity was dated to the mid 14th c. It consisted of a massive reclamation dump, associated with a Thames riverside wall constructed in chalk and built on the contemporary foreshore. The construction of the wall was aided by the digging of a shallow foundation trench which was shored with a large wattle fence. The dumping and the wall construction were of the same date. The reclamation activity extended the Thames waterfront towards the S by about 50m (165ft).

Sporadic features recorded on the top of the dumped deposits were sealed by a fire horizon of late 17th c date, probably the Great Fire. The area to the S of the site appeared to have been reclaimed around this period with a timber revetment recorded at the S limit of excavation. This revetment and associated reclamation is thought to represent the construction of new quays during the post-Fire rebuilding of this area of the waterfront. The area behind the revetment was reclaimed and consolidated by the driving of more than 700 timber piles. The timbers were identified as being re-used and were thought to have come from one or more 17th/18th c vessels. Many of the timbers were painted and several were moulded.

On the reclaimed land a series of post-medieval brick walls, foundations and cellar floors was recorded. One later cellar floor included three brick built (baking?) oven bases. In the early 19th c the City Gas Works was constructed on the site; several structures associated with the gasworks were recorded. Completing the sequence was a forgotten Second World War public air-raid shelter.

Waterfront dumps produced several important groups of medieval organic material. The shoes and patters are an important addition to the collection of medieval footwear from London. One of the shoes was stuffed with seeds of *cannabis sativa*. Scabbards, a glove and some highly decorated fragments from unidentified leather objects were also recovered. Copper-alloy material appearing to come from a later medieval workshop included a coil and a rod, which may be the forms in which the metal was traded in the medieval period. An important related find was a pilgrim's badge of Saint Eloi, the patron saint of smiths and other metal workers. Pottery includes late medieval imports from Spain and the Southern Netherlands.