



Fig. 1: (left) site location map and (right) areas of investigation, showing the alignments of the 17th-century drainage channels

Development of the Thames waterfront at Bermondsey during the 17th and 18th centuries

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Introduction

Between May and June 2009, Museum of London Archaeology undertook archaeological investigations on a site to the south of Chambers Street, Bermondsey at NGR 534288 179675 (Fig. 1). The investigations comprised seven trenches and a small area excavation that subsequently extended two of the trenches (Trenches 6 and 7). The discoveries dated to the post-medieval period and provide a typical sequence of activity in the Bermondsey area during the 17th and 18th centuries. A series of north-south aligned ditches or channels were excavated, originally in assumed open ground, which would have facilitated general drainage of the area, altering the site from marginal,

periodically flooding land to firmer ground on which construction could occur. These ditches were revetted with timber structures in the form of wattle hurdles; possibly used as a working platform during the construction of the revetment. Further consolidation dumps were added to provide a foundation for early post-medieval buildings.

The former topography of northern Southwark comprises a number of eyots (small islands) of alluvial sands and gravels overlying the London Clay, and intersected by stream channels. The site is on an area of low-lying Thames alluvium to the east of the higher ground of Horselydown Eyot, and north of that of Bermondsey Eyot. On the western side of the site naturally-lain

alluvial silts were seen at 0.90m to 1m OD, and at c. 1.28m to 1.70m OD across the central and eastern areas of the site. St Saviour's Dock on the mouth of the River Neckinger lies 300m to the west, also indicating the low-lying local natural topography. Modern street level on this site lies at 2.91m OD.

The development of the site is dominated by its proximity to the Thames waterfront. Documentary sources¹ suggest that some form of river defences existed along the low-lying Thames frontage between Vauxhall, to the west, and Deptford, to the east, in the late Saxon period. Archaeological excavations at Bermondsey Wall West, adjacent to the north-west of the site, found a timber-revetted embankment,

dated to the 13th century.² It was identified as the Bermondsey Wall and was sealed by deposits dated to between the 16th and 17th centuries. At this time wharves and other waterfront structures appear to have developed along the frontage at Bermondsey, as found at Adlards Wharf,³ and probably reflect the development eastward from Southwark as London's importance as an international centre for trade and commerce increased.

In the 1720s, Daniel Defoe⁴ described a road that extended along the route of the former river defences. The Newcourt and Faithorne map of 1658 shows a road parallel to the waterfront, which is depicted as a well-developed pattern of linear development with irregular clusters of buildings, gardens and orchards to the south. At Bermondsey Wall West, the remains of a late 17th-century timber-framed house was the earliest identified building to the south of the present Chambers Street, immediately to the west of the present site.

Throughout the 18th century the area developed into more formal terraces, interspersed with industrial activity indicated by rope walks, a cooperage and a large fish pond which existed on the present site.

The site archive and specialist analysis reports will be deposited at the London Archaeological Archive Research Centre (LAARC) at 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED under the

sitecode CHJ06.

Early 17th-century land management and drainage (1630–1680/1710)

The earliest activity across the site consisted of ground consolidation (compacted gravels and building debris). An undefined feature cutting this consolidation in Trench 1 contained a small collection of sherds from 21 pottery vessels; notably London-made tin-glazed wares and coarse red earthenwares, including the substantial remains of a chamber pot and a rounded bowl. Also present are up to three London-made tin-glazed ware chargers (or dishes) decorated in a fashion common to c. 1630–80.⁵ A particular feature of this ceramic assemblage is a small quantity of pottery from the continent, including the upper portion of a Westerwald stoneware tankard, a Seville-sourced olive jar and a fragment of a polychrome painted maiolica jar with an internal grey-blue glaze from the Tuscan town of Montelupo.

Four parallel drainage channels were constructed in this period (S1, S2, S3 and S4; Fig. 1), presumably to drain the marshy ground. They would have flowed into the Thames to the north, possibly through a series of water management channels (see discussion). The most significant remains belonged to Structures 1 and 4, because of their surviving revetment and finds assemblages respectively.

Drainage channel (S1)

In Trench 1, a north-east to south-west aligned drainage channel (S1; Fig. 2) consisted of a ditch and a revetment, although decayed wattle work found in the base of the ditch could have been from an earlier structure. The ditch was 2.2m wide and at least 0.90m deep. Between the revetment and ditch edge was a grey clay packing which contained pottery dated 1590–1700. There was cursory evidence that the channel was demarcated by two fence lines, each indicated by two stakes set back from the edge of the ditch.

Waterlogged plant remains indicated drainage channel (S1) would have been wet and muddy, as opposed to being permanently saturated with free-flowing water, with willow (*Salix* sp.) trees growing nearby.

Woodwork from drainage channel (S1)

The revetment was a simple pile- and plank-type structure, with the uprights retaining planking set on edge on the land-fill side. It could have been built by semi-skilled labour using a light piling rig or 'ringing engine'. Some of the planking was sparingly nailed to the piles with iron nails. However, the pressure of the land-fill would have wedged the planks in place and eventually pushed the structure over slightly towards the centre of the channel. Up to four courses of planking survived in places. The lowest were preserved well enough to show saw marks. They were identified as tangentially (or through) sawn softwood and of very slow grown dense timber, almost certainly a pine. The density of the timber is so high that it might even be one of the 'hard pines' from the south-east USA, which were frequently used for ship-building purposes. If correct then the material may be early examples of what was to become a major trade in the 19th century. The planks varied in width and thickness from c. 190mm to over 250mm wide and c. 20–40mm thick.

The retaining piles were mainly rectangular-sectioned varied timbers set on 0.5m to 0.9m centres. Those extracted showed that they had roughly-made axe-hewn tips, for example pile [25] which was roughly hewn, boxed-heart log from a young, fast grown softwood log. Its rectangular



Fig. 2: drainage channel (S1) under excavation (also showing later trestle (S6)) looking north-east

cross section was c. 150 x 100mm. Another example appeared to be a reused scaffold pole ('fur powell') hewn mainly on two sides with most of the bark peeled. These are typically found reused in 16th and 17th century sub-ground structures in London. It is quite likely that this imported timber was obtained from an adjacent timber yard.

A group of small timbers were used as chocks for the lowest planking of the revetment. The timbers all had the 'howel' and 'croze groove' of coopered staves, the croze being the groove for cask or tub head pieces to engage in. However, they were not all from the same stave-built vessel and the two lifted examples, [60] and [61], showed unusual features. Both were of softwood rather than the commonplace oak. Stave [60] was a complete radially-cleft and shaved stave from a small cask, very heavily burnt on the inside, as if the cask had been used for a temporary fire container. Stave [61] was tangentially cleft and hewn and had strange axe hack marks on the concave inside face, whilst the outside had been shaved convex and smooth. Stave [61] may well have derived from a bucket probably made in an area where the usual oak was scarce, such as parts of North America or northern Europe. The material here is likely to derive from broken-up tar containers, passed on from adjacent shipyards.

Drainage channel (S4)

In Trench 7, another drainage channel (S4; Fig. 1) probably consisted of an earlier unrevetted ditch, over 3.30m wide, that was recut when later revetted. The evidence for this revetment consisted of two rectangular voids for timber posts on the eastern edge of the ditch with the stain of a rotted plank. This 'upgraded' channel had a depth of 1.10m.

Finds and environmental evidence from drainage channel (S4)

The sherds of 72 ceramic vessels, among the various fills, comprised both tablewares, chiefly of London-made tin-glazed wares in a range of forms and decoration characteristic of 1680–1700, and utilitarian coarse red earthenwares and stonewares. The coarse red earthenwares mostly comprise the substantial remains of a large two-

handled bowl. There were also two Midlands purple stoneware cylindrical storage jars and two north Devon gravel-tempered ware jars. The last wares are widely traded but uncommon in London.⁶ Among the better preserved tin-glazed wares are an octagonal plate, tea-bowl and rounded bowl painted in the 'Chinaman among grasses' style.⁷

As seen elsewhere in this period, there is a small selection of pottery from the continent, including a possible Spanish green-glazed ware jar or costrel in a white friable fabric with few visible inclusions. It is partially lead-glazed on the upper part of both surfaces, with a contrasting unglazed ribbed lower part. Another continental import is the base fragment of a blue and white faience dish painted in Chinese landscape decoration and a three-point crown applied to the base.

Building material includes an abraded biscuit-fired floor tile. This waste material from the manufacture of tin-glazed floor tiles probably dates to the first half of the 17th century, and so it may have originated from the Pickleherring tilery to the west of the site. A purple on white tin-glazed 'delft' wall tile <88>, with either a landscape or biblical scene set in circular border with barred ox-head corners, was found with the waste floor tile. The corner decoration, along with the dating of the associated pottery and clay pipes (1680–1710) suggests that the wall tile is an early-18th-century Dutch import.⁸

Food waste including grape (*Vitis vinifera*), mulberry (*Morus nigra*) and blackberry (*Rubus cf. fruticosus*) pips, was seen in one of the fills of Structure 4. Seeds and buds from hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.) and willow (*Salix* sp.), and remains of marginal wetland plants, again showed that trees and shrubs grew close to the periodically water-filled ditch.

Drainage channels (S2 and S3)

In Trenches 5 and 5b, drainage channel (S3) consisted of a north-east to south-west aligned ditch, 4.25–5m wide and excavated to 1.80m deep. Remains of possible revetment consisted of a small post and a timber, both poorly preserved. Their function remains unclear and no other revetment, planks or posts were located in the ditch to help interpretation. Seeds of several

aquatic plants, including pondweed (*Potamogeton* sp.), rigid hornwort (*Creotophyllum demersum*) and horned pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*), as well as the more marginal species seen in drainage channels (S1 and S2), suggest drainage channel (S3) contained water on a more permanent basis.

Evidence for a fourth possible drainage channel (S2) was seen in the southern end of Trench 2/4, but the damage caused by modern building made it impossible to confirm.

Dating evidence for the use of these channels comes from their primary fills. These comprised dark black brown clayey silt, formed during the slow silting up of the feature and dated 1680–1710 by clay tobacco pipes.

Late 17th to 18th-century occupation (1680/1710–1730/50)

About the turn of the 17th and 18th century, the first building appeared on the site, although most of the site would have still been open, with drainage channel (S1) still in use and potentially drainage channels (S2 and S3) for some time at least.

The north-west corner of a brick building (B1; Fig. 3) was recorded in Trench 7 and the extended area. It was built over the former drainage channel (S4) and comprised a wall aligned north-east to south-west for 4.3m long and its return north-west to south-east for 1.9m wide. The wall was made of re-used unfrosted red brick with a yellow sandy mortar. There was no real foundation for the building, which is why the wall slumped down to the east over the soft ground of the earlier infilled drainage channel (S4). A narrow, shallow gully lay to its western side, 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep, but was at a slightly different alignment to Building 1. Pottery broadly dated the gully to 1600–1750.

Land management

Evidence for the continued drainage of land in the vicinity of Chambers Street in the early 18th century can be seen in the repairs made to drainage channel (S1) in this period. They consist of a repair to the earlier revetment of a series of four posts driven into the structure on the western side. Fluvial silting up of the channel suggests the date 1730–50, derived from clay

tobacco pipes. Demolition debris comprising gravel, sand and frequent amounts of brick and tile was deposited over the fluvial silt and may have formed part of a consolidation surface placed around the edges of the channel in an attempt to consolidate the surrounding area in preparation for new buildings.

A remarkable survival from the demolition debris was a complete pewter baluster measure <1> (Fig. 4). It is cast from low-quality pewter with a high lead content, and has a jug-like 'baluster' body-shape, hollow pedestal base and decorative rams-horn thumb-piece to open the hinged domed lid. There is an incomplete maker's touchmark below the rim (a sun/star and initial 'I' within a circle) compares well with the mark of John Kenton of London, a pewterer of some note who was active between 1684 and 1717⁹ and traces of the owner's initials ('W') beside the touch mark. The capacity of the measure is unusually small (approximately 2 fluid ounces or half a gill), and the size and possibility that it is a 'cobbled up' piece, with components made for a larger vessel, suggest that it may have been made as a

special order, possibly as a miniature for display or for a child, although it is larger and more intricately-made than most children's toys.¹⁰

Baluster measures have a long history, dating back to the 15th century, and were used in taverns, gin shops and other drinking establishments to carry standard quantities of alcohol to the customers. Some also carry a verification mark to show that they had passed inspection (e.g. AR below a crown) or a housemark, indicating the establishment in which they were used. This measure probably originated from a local tavern or gin shop.

Drainage channel (S5)

Towards the western end of Trench 7, drainage channel (S5) was over 2.60m wide and 1.40m deep. Posthole voids for now rotted wooded posts on the western edge suggest the ditch was revetted. The primary fill consisted of fluvial deposits and gradual silting up, and was dated 1740–80. Therefore this structure was probably still in use into the next period and contemporary with Building 2. It is interpreted as a replacement of Structure 4 when it was built over by Building 1. A sample from



Fig. 4: pewter baluster measure <1>

the primary fill contained abundant remains of aquatic plants, indicating Structure 5 was permanently filled with water.

Mid-18th to early 19th-century occupation (1730/50–1800)

Building 1 was demolished and replaced by another building (B2; Fig. 3). Building 2 consisted of a 4.3m length of brick wall, a half-cellar and a U-shaped brick structure, interpreted as the footing of a stairwell or chimney.



Fig. 3: 18th-century houses in Trenches 6 and 7 and extended area



Fig. 5: glass, pottery<P1–P4> and tiles <85, 86, 87> from the fill of the half-cellar in Building 2 (context [158])

All these features were defined as part of the same building because of north-east to south-west alignments that appeared to form a house or terrace over 17m long.

Building 2 was defined as later than Building 1 as the length of wall overlay the western wall of Building 1; at a slightly different alignment. The wall probably reused the bricks from Building 1, which were bonded with a fine white mortar. There was a partial foundation to stop the slumping over the soft ground. The wall was aligned with the western side of a half-cellar, to the north. With what little pottery that could be retrieved, the construction phase of this wall was dated 1700–50 and the robber cut 1780–1820.

The half-cellar had an internal brick floor lay *c.* 0.40m lower than the base of the footing of the wall; hence its interpretation. Up to five courses of the walls survived, which used red-orange unfrogged brick, with no sign of reuse, and a mortar similar to the wall to the south. The height of the brick floor varied between 1.55–1.37m OD, which was worn and uneven. Pottery from under the floor suggests the building was constructed between 1730 and 1740. A drain was cut into the south-east corner, consisting of an exterior rectangular pit filled with the remains of a wooden barrel. The drain was knocked through the south wall of the building and given a small brick wall

surround. The remains of a ferrous grate were found broken within the silted up fill of the drain.

To the north of the half cellar three courses of a U-shaped brick structure have been interpreted as the footing of a stairwell or chimney. Several postholes between the room and the stairwell/chimney footings suggest all these structural elements are part of the same building.

Finds from the half-cellar in Building 2

The fill of the half-cellar contained sherds from 49 ceramic vessels, six glass bottles and clay tobacco pipes (73 bowls and 6 stems). The range of pipe-makers suggests the half-cellar, at least, was in-filled in the 1750s. Indicative of material used in an ale-house or tavern, these wine bottles, well-smoked pipes and tableware ceramics sustained a range of entertainment and socialising functions (Figs 5 and 6).

Among the large collection of clay tobacco pipes are three dominant bowl types¹¹ (AO26, OS10 and OS12) in contemporary use. Several pipes survived with a large part of the stem extant. A large proportion is either decorated or has makers' marks. Royal Hanoverian arms are common to the decorated range, applied to 15 AO26 bowls <63–66>, <69–70> and <75> with the remaining example bearing the feathers of the Prince of Wales <74>. The dominance of two local makers

adds to a chronologically coherent pipe assemblage, with the initials IS (six local makers possible) and RP present in relief on the heel or as crowned initials; either Robert Phipps (recorded 1740) or Robert Pattison (1755) of Gould Street, Bermondsey.¹² The group is completed by two pipes with both decoration and maker's initials. Providing the opportunity to tie a manufacturer to a particular decorative range, although <72> is the only one of the royal Hanoverian arms pipes to bear the initials IS, this links this individual to this royal decoration. Similarly <74> decorated with the feathers of the Prince of Wales and marked TW indicates pipe maker Thomas Woollard of Southwark (1757), who employed this decorative style.

Also present is a selection of glass wine bottles of mallet shape (Fig. 5) with their distinctive sloping shoulder, short necks and single string rims with tooled finishes dating to the second quarter of the 18th century. Contemporary with the pipes, the six or so bottles principally contained wines and fortified wines although they could be filled with a range of other alcoholic beverages, for example brandy or gin.

Ceramic drinking vessels are not common in the half-cellar, with pewter tankards and glassware having replaced the ceramic black-glazed wares and Frechen stoneware *Bartmann* jugs that characterise 17th-century dated groups



Fig. 6: clay tobacco pipes decorated with the Royal Hanoverian arms <62–75> or feathers of the Prince of Wales <74> from the fill of the half-cellar in Building 2 (context [158])

from London's drinking establishments. Nevertheless, most of the better preserved ceramics in this cellar are in this functional category with the profiles of two combed slipware mugs with sooted bases demonstrating their use for serving warmed ales and a Nottingham stoneware loving cup supplying a decorative vessel.

Two faience/maiolica dishes are from continental Europe. The first of these well preserved dishes (Fig. 5; <P1>) is Portuguese sourced with a panelled rim border of alternating floral motifs and Chinese symbols copied from *Kraak* style Chinese porcelain. The second (Fig. 5; <P2>) appears dated to the later 17th century, with the similarly panelled rim border displaying either floral panels in the *Kraak* style or seated Chinaman among rocks and flowers that frame a central garden theme. The whiteness of the glaze and the well executed decoration is more akin to Dutch maiolica dated to second half of the 17th century. It is therefore likely that these two dishes were in circulation for 50 to 75 years before being discarded, and signify well-kept heirloom pieces or wall-mounted pots. London-made tin-glazed ware plates dated to the first quarter of the 18th century provided the tablewares. Unusually for tin-glazed wares in the archaeological record, this small selection includes two plates (Fig. 5; <P3> and <P4>) with matching decoration (intersecting arc or chain rim

borders framing a central spiral floral motif) with matching aesthetics clearly a priority when purchased.

Two blue on white tin-glazed 'delft' wall tiles, possibly part of the same tile, were found in demolition debris in the drain. Both show what appear to be landscape scenes set in a circular border with barred ox-head corners (Fig. 5 <86 and <87>). The barred ox-head corners are more similar in style to those used on Dutch rather than English delft tiles.

Two more delft wall tiles were found in the general 18th-century demolition debris associated with Building 2. One tile shows a purple-on-white landscape scene set in octagonal border with what have been called 'feathered' or 'quarter flower head' corners which in appearance seems to be midway between a flower and a leaf (Fig. 5 <85>). Similar landscape tiles made in Rotterdam in the Netherlands in 1740–80, are illustrated by Pluis¹³ and van Dam.¹⁴ This tile is unusual in having the central stems of the corner design with lines of dots rather than the more normal short horizontal bars. It has also been cut to a breadth of 65mm after firing. Tiles were frequently cut or trimmed so they could be fitted into the appropriate wall area. In London this was often a fireplace surround, although delft tiles were occasionally used in other positions, such as skirting as at Ham House, Richmond, or as panelling in a tiled dairy as at Rainham

Hall, Rainham.¹⁵ Dutch delft tiles were often preferred where trimming was required as they had the reputation for being easier to cut than London-made tiles.¹⁶

The second delft tile shows a small area of an unusual blue on white vegetal design on a blue background. Tiles with a similar blue background were made at Harlingen, Netherlands in 1750–1800,¹⁷ although the leaves lack the internal light blue shading of the other example. The tile also has part of a letter or number painted in black on the base.

Soakaway (S7)

Cutting the infilled drainage channel (S5) and to the west of Building 2, a soakaway (S7; Fig. 3) was found. It was constructed from re-used, unfrosted light red brick. It was c. 1m diameter and only 0.7m deep. The disuse was dated 1770–1800 by a pearlware plate. A late 16th or 17th-century glass bead (<91>) was also found in the soakaway infill. The bead is cylindrical with rounded ends, and striped, with three light reddish-purple stripes alternating with three darker reddish-purple on white stripes over a layered dark blue and brick-red core.

Drainage channel (S1)

Drainage channel (S1) was re-cut sometime between 1780 and 1820. However a new revetment was constructed on the eastern edge of the

recut, suggesting the continued use of the former revetment on the west. This new revetment was less solidly built than the earlier western revetment, with irregular piles and sheathing. The sheathing comprised a softwood plank set on edge surviving 110mm wide for the northern part and at the south end the sheathing was made of narrow vertical pales (identified as softwood) which were battened together using a 20mm thick softwood cross batten secured with turned iron nails. This later assembly was probably a reused piece of fencing and would have had little strength.

The uprights were varied and included a pile that was a pit-sawn waste slab from sawing out a slightly curved beam. It was *c.* 250mm wide, and most likely left over from making a ship frame of oak. It had clear pit-saw marks on one face, an axe hewn tip and much sapwood and wane on the other face. Such shipyard off-cuts have often been found used in drains and similar features. A timber, described as a 'baseplate,' was a *c.* 70mm diameter log used as a chock supporting planking in the base of the revetment. At the south end, the revetment appeared disturbed, incorporating two large flat-bottomed posts; 250mm by 160mm and *c.* 300 x 270mm respectively. One was a large, boxed-heart carvel ship frame with a 38mm diameter oak treenail piercing it. These posts were far too large to have been inserted to support the revetment of a drain alone. It seems most likely that they supported a small over hanging building. A narrow building overhanging a watercourse such as this is likely to have been a privy. These structures are well illustrated in many backyard views of buildings adjacent to water channels in 17th- to 19th- century London, particularly in Southwark. Overall this structure gives an impression of cheap work built by semi-skilled people.

Samples from the silts in drainage channel (S1) in this period indicate that it was regularly filled, if not permanently, with water, and willow trees growing nearby.

Trestle (S6)

Once the drainage channel (S1) was at least partly filled, a trestle-like construction (S6) was built across the

channel. It rested on a pile and truncated the top edges of the 'new' revetment. Similar structures, excavated on wet sites in Southwark, have been found in lines, often joining at right angles. Dating from the 18th to early 19th centuries, these structures were foundations for timber framed buildings in which the sills would have rested on the heads of the trestle posts, quite possibly just above ground-level.¹⁸ This trestle-like assembly measured *c.* 2.5m east-west, and consisted of a substantial tenoned post timber set in a crudely mortised plank-like plate or sill beam, equipped with two truncated diagonal braces. It is therefore likely that a timber framed building sill rested on the top of the post (at least 1m higher up) and that it was oriented either east-west or north-south. Many of the timbers found reused in these trestle foundations were of ship origin, as they would have been widely available because of the local ship-breaking industry and of durable species such as oak likely to last longer in contact with the ground than cheaper building timbers. Being recycled they were also relatively cheap. The sill beam here was made from a section of ship deck planking with redundant iron spike holes countersunk below the surface. The sill rested on a large, slightly curved, oak pile timber that was a recycled carvel ship frame timber (a 'futtock') pierced by many oak treenails *c.* 35mm diameter. The original dimensions of the ship frame were probably *c.* 210mm by 300mm indicating the timber came from a large ocean going vessel. It had been originally pit-sawn from a curved log and then, following the breaking of the parent ship, it was re-sawn lengthways. As the sill beam was so thin, two tenon pegs were set below it rather than through it. Of the two braces, one was made from a section of oak taken from a larger slab. It was cut to form a simple bare-faced tenon, which also protruded below the sill beam where it was secured with one peg. The other brace was apparently pegged through the sill in the conventional way.

Discussion

Evidence for the management of land drainage using parallel channels has been found at Bermondsey Wall West,¹⁹ to the north-west of the site,

where a natural stream channel was reinforced in the 12th century with rammed chalk cobbles in the base, and timber stakes. However this channel was blocked in the 13th century when the Bermondsey Wall was constructed. Indeed it might have been the effect of the river wall that later led the need to drain the land to the south; as evident on the site by the five drainage channels (S1-S5). These channels may have fed a "back" channel, that was cautiously identified behind the Bermondsey Wall at Bermondsey Wall West and Adlards Wharf,²⁰ which would have drained into key tributary channels further along the riverside, such as the Neckinger to the west.

At Chambers Street there is no clear chronological pattern to the construction of these five drainage channels, but a more haphazard pattern emerges of construction as and when needed. Drainage channel (S5) was dated later than 1680 by the disuse of drainage channel (S4) and drainage channel (S1) was dated later than 1590, but probably later than 1630, by pottery in construction deposits and cutting the surrounding consolidation layer. However, as the wattle work in the base of the channel suggests, it could have been an earlier structure. It is entirely possible that drainage channels (S2, S3 and S4) were also earlier drainage channels, possibly cut at different times, just as their disuse was not a single event because of the piecemeal way the area developed in the 17th and early 18th centuries.

Bermondsey was not a wealthy stretch of the south bank in the 17th and early 18th centuries. It was an industrial area, noted for its tanning, ship-building and repair, and delftware production. The presence of everyday domestic pottery suggests much of the material discarded here was derived from nearby households. However the high proportion of decorative wares, both London delftware and imported faience and maiolica, does not reflect the everyday tableware of a poorer, industrial area. Sequences of ceramic use identified nearby from Platform Wharf,²¹ Magdalen Street²² and Bombay Wharf²³ also show domestic debris was discarded alongside fine, decorative imports.

A possible explanation could come

from the material from the fill of the half-cellar in Building 2. Here the pottery is of good quality and is associated with other artefacts with a connection with socialising and pleasure. Clay tobacco pipes, the most common of artefacts related to the smoking and the consumption of tobacco, were frequently enjoyed together with wine and meals taken on tin-glazed ware plates. The limited range of pipe makers and the well-used condition of this material suggest that Building 2 was an alehouse or tavern. Archaeological evidence has shown that pipes used in such premises tended to be supplied by only one or two local pipe makers.²⁴

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6. I. Noël Hume *A guide to artifacts of colonial America* (1969) 133–4.
7. *Op cit* fn 5, Style F, 327; F.H. Garner *English delftware* (1948) plate 26b; F. Britton *London Delftware* (1987) 135.

8. Purple and white Dutch biblical tiles with very similar corners are illustrated in Sabben and Hollem (1987, 111, no. 371, bottom-left) and Schaap et al (1984, 119, no. 147).
9. Roger Barnes *pers comm*.
10. Roger Barnes and Geoff Egan *pers comm*.
11. A. Oswald *Clay pipes for the archaeologist* BAR 14 (1975).
12. *Op cit* fn 9, 143.
13. J. Plus *The Dutch tile: designs and names* (1997) 381, A.03.05.06, 568, C.18.00.02–03.
14. J.D. van Dam *Nederlandse Tegels* (1991) 106, no. 127.
15. I.M. Betts and R.I. Weinstein *Tin-glazed tiles from London* (2010) 40, 79.
16. A. Ray *English Delftware tiles* (1973) 38.
17. *Op cit* fn 13, 135, no 49; I. Betts 'The tin-glazed wall tiles' in J. Lyon (ed.) *Within these walls, Roman and medieval defences north of Newgate at the Merrill Lynch finance Centre, City of London* MoLAS Archaeol Studies

- Ser, 33 (2007) 158, fig 164 <T28>.
18. K. Heard and D. Goodburn *Investigating the maritime history of Rotherhithe* MoLAS Archaeol Stud Ser 11 (2003); D. Goodburn *Timber and roundwood structures excavated by PCA at Greenwich reach, Deptford*, 2009 (nd).
19. *Op cit* fn 2.
20. *Op cit* fn 3.
21. R. Stephenson 'Platform Wharf imported pottery: potters' inspiration or stock-in-trade?' *Medieval Ceramics* 22–23 (1998–99) 152–3
22. S. Chew and J. Pearce 'A pottery assemblage from a 17th-century channel at 12–26 Magdalen Street, Southwark' *London Archaeol* 9 no. 1 (1999) 22–9.
23. J. Pearce 'An assemblage of 17th-century pottery from Bombay Wharf, Rotherhithe, London SE16' *Post-Medieval Archaeol* 41 (1) (2007) 80–99.
24. J. Pearce 'A late 18th-century inn clearance assemblage from Uxbridge, Middlesex' *Post-medieval Archaeol* 34 (2000) 144–86.

Letter to the editor

I have just read Colin Bowlt's delightful article on the other farm buildings at Manor Farm, Harmondsworth and would like to make three corrections to what he says. The trivial points are that the then owners were Wiltshier plc (not Wiltshire) and that the dog kennel was under the SE corner of the granary (you can see the excavated area to the W of the Stables in the background). The more important point is that while the granary is no longer in its original position (to the west of the Farmhouse) it was moved complete as part of the building works in 1988. It sits near to the church (to the south of the now-demolished Barn/cattle Shed). Its floor joists are a mix of softwood and re-used oak timbers from older buildings. The photo of the granary was taken by James Adkin as it was being moved.

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Harmondsworth*

