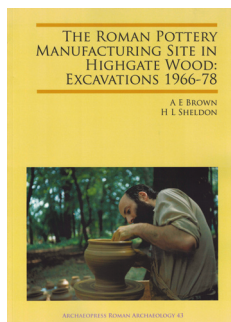


A good read – everyone is a winner!

The Roman Pottery Manufacturing Site in Highgate Wood: excavations 1966–1978



A E Brown & H L Sheldon

Archaeopress, 2018

Reason for nomination:

The rare discovery of the Highgate ware kilns site allowed a full examination of the process aided by experimental kilns. The printed version gives the forms and fabrics and, most usefully, is also available as a free download.

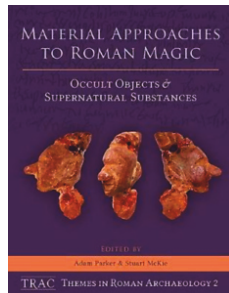
Judges' comments:

It is great to see this important site on Roman pottery published. This long-awaited report on the Highgate kilns is well worth the wait. It draws together the excavations over more than a decade with added information on other pottery manufacturing nearby, the adaptation of pottery for the Roman market, the exploitation of the north London clay and the importance of wood in the firing process.

It presents the results of fieldwork and analyses of an important Romano-British kiln site in London, updating some elements that had been published previously, and adding new material. The publication brings together different strands of work and will be a useful reference for this series of excavations.

Reviewed in LA 15.12

'Rubbing and Rolling, Burning and Burying: the magical use of amber in Roman London'



G Davis

Oxbow, 2018

Reason for nomination:

Unusual amber artefacts are put into context, both in terms of the academic literature on magic and materiality and of their detailed archaeological context. It shows the research potential of London's archaeological archives.

Judges' comments:

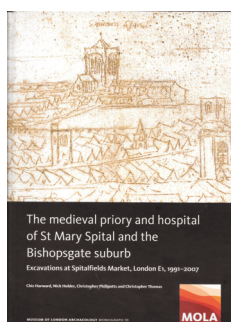
A well-written and well-edited paper, challenging the reader to consider the tactile, physical, and olfactory qualities of certain finds, in particular those of amber, and to reconsider earlier assertions about the 'lone' experience suggested for 'magical' acts indicated in certain finds assemblages.

This is a well-referenced paper, using two main examples but incorporating other constituents used in ritual contexts. This is an interesting theoretical approach to material studies, and a good use of artefacts from the archive.

Published in *Material Approaches to Roman Magic: Occult Objects and Supernatural Substances*

A Parker & S McKie (eds)

The medieval priory and hospital of St Mary Spital and the Bishopsgate suburb: Spitalfields Market, 1991–2007



C Harward, N Holder, C Phillpotts & C Thomas

MOLA, 2019

Reason for nomination:

One of London's largest excavations, resulting in the most intensively investigated medieval hospital in Britain, with information showing how it cared for London's sick poor. After a decade's research, it is deservedly published in full.

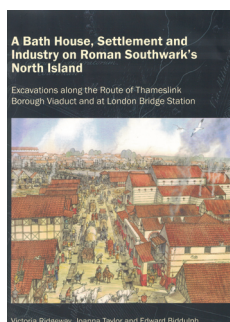
Judges' comments:

This was an eagerly anticipated, well-researched and well-written monograph on this important and large site excavation. With clear and informative text, it is copiously illustrated with good-quality photos, plans, and drawings. It is told through a combination of remarkable evidence – archaeological and documentary – supported by architectural reconstructions and graphics showing precinct development.

The figures, set out with clear diagrams, finds photos and drawings, complemented and illustrated the text very well. It was liked that, rather than having to flick backwards to compare diagrams relating to one or several periods, they were all together on one page for easy comparison.

Reviewed in LA 16.02

A Bath House, Settlement and Industry on Roman Southwark's North Island: London Bridge Station & the Thameslink Viaduct



V Ridgeway, J Taylor & E Biddulph

Oxford Archaeology/PCA, 2019

Reason for nomination:

This focuses on Roman remains across Southwark's North Island. It includes an important bath-house, and the detailed findings are discussed in the context of earlier evidence, infrastructure and topography.

Judges' comments:

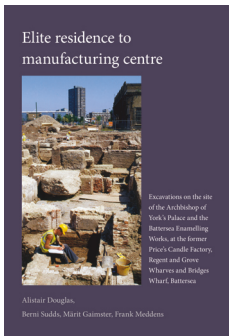
This is a great synthesis of Roman Southwark, a rare bite of the cherry for surviving Roman Southwark under this huge infrastructure project. It is well-written, with informative text, and is well-illustrated, with clear tables and graphs. It combines the Thameslink excavation, other sites in the Thameslink project, and evidence from previous interventions with analysis as part of the wider Roman occupation of northern Southwark to present a comprehensive story of this fascinating area.

The innovative and useful placing of two location maps in the endpapers for easy reference should be copied by other publications. It will become one of the standard references for future work in the area.

Reviewed in LA 16.01

There was no shortage of good and important works for consideration for the best book of 2018–2019. While the winning authors are interviewed in this issue, the judges' comments for the other eight nominated books are presented here.

Elite residence to manufacturing centre: Archbishop's Palace, Battersea Enamelling Works and Price's Candle Factory



A Douglas with B Sudds, M Gaimster & F Meddens

PCA, 2019

Reason for nomination:

Three Thames waterfront sites revealed both prehistoric activity and an insight into the late 15th-century ecclesiastical household of the Bishops of York. The moated house was succeeded by a prison and Battersea Enamelling Manufactory.

Judges' comments:

This report was clear, thorough, well-written and structured, with clear intelligible plans and drawings, and explanations of complex stratigraphy. It is a good example of how to present the combination of historical and archaeological information. In particular, it disseminates the results from a late medieval/Tudor Bishop's country house with the inclusion of historical information on its development.

It also investigates an experimental 18th-century enamelling industry, which should change attributions by art historians of artefacts outside the archaeological community. In addition, there are interesting and well-laid out 'digressions' into connections to Admiral 'Grog' Vernon and the Anti-Gallican society.

Reviewed in LA 16.03

Identifying the pottery of the Thames foreshore



R Hemery

e-publication, 2019 [Available from: <https://tinyurl.com/y6775ktq>]

Reason for nomination:

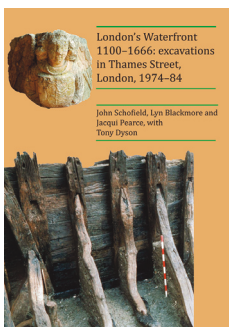
Now anyone can be an expert in identifying pottery from London's past – amateur archaeologists, mudlarks and historians alike. User-friendly and accessibly priced, this brilliant little E-book does what it says on the cover.

Judges' comments:

It is easy to read, informative and well-aimed for its target audience. It uses innovative modern dissemination: the digital file is sold very cheaply on eBay! Just what you'd want in your pocket (or rather on your smartphone) as you explore the foreshore. It is focused successfully at a specific, non-academic, audience (metal-detectorists and mudlarks) with clear, simple, language and vast numbers of clear digital photos closely integrated with the relevant text allowing zooming in on photos. It will be useful for newer field archaeologists, volunteers, etc.

Based on a practical, first-hand knowledge of identifying pottery while on the foreshore, it is an impressive piece of work and invaluable as a spotters' guide for Thames mudlarks. It will also be incredibly useful for anyone digging in London.

London's Waterfront 1100–1666: excavations in Thames Street, London, 1974–84



J Schofield, L Blackmore, J Pearce & T Dyson

Archaeopress, 2018

Reason for nomination:

It presents four pre-PPG16 medieval waterfront sites that are the basis of many aspects of archaeological research. It provides a cohesive account of the archaeology and history of a stretch of the waterfront over the last 40 years.

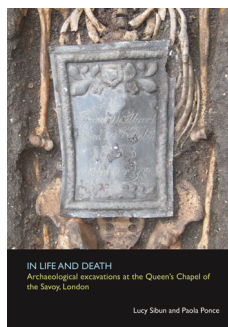
Judges' comments:

This is a wonderful synthesis of important excavations along the City's waterfront. It presents the results of not just these sites, but also of the extensive integrated documentary and historical data to produce a cohesive and full account of the development of this stretch of the river frontage. The extensive site summaries are divided into four periods and contain a table summary of development. The isometric drawings were particularly liked. The highly unusual 'acoustic evidence' – a video clip of the playing of a reproduction of the unique Billingsgate trumpet – was much appreciated.

The report is to be commended for its up-to-date method of dissemination: hard copy and currently free digital versions, plus supporting files as more free downloads.

Reviewed in LA 15.11

In Life and Death: archaeological excavations at the Queen's Chapel of the Savoy, London



L Sibun & P Ponce

ASE/Spoilheap Books, 2018

Reason for nomination:

The complex, used over time as a hospital, barracks and prison, provided a rare opportunity to examine its archaeological and historical development. Over 600 individual burials were related to specific periods.

Judges' comments:

This is a thorough consideration of the historical and social background to illuminate the archaeological findings at this site. The remains of 612 individuals were related to the later stages of the burial grounds' use by the barracks and prison, as well as later by the 19th-century civilian population.

By the time you reach Chapter 6 and the burial archaeology, you have a good understanding of the history of the individuals who could be identified, and the conditions in which they lived and died. It presents a large amount of data from osteological analysis and burial registers, with good quality photographs, plans, and drawings. It is clearly-written, albeit with the usual osteological technicalities.

The book offers a fascinating glimpse into the socio-historical background – the population, society, health and much more.