

KILN MATERIAL FROM THE THAMES FORESHORE IN THE CITY

G. EGAN

Items from tinglazed ware and stoneware kilns recently recovered by the Department of Urban Archaeology of the Museum of London from the foreshore of the Thames in the City were first noticed on the naturally accumulated shore. Greater quantities of items from both groups have subsequently been found next to revetments, behind which dumps of rubble had been deposited to form level mooring places adjacent to the wharves. Tidal action was probably responsible for scattering the kiln material over a wider area from the original location behind the revetments.

TINGLAZED WARE

The tinglazed ware items come from a small area of the foreshore 35 metres west of Southwark Bridge on the north bank. Saggars, wasters and tiles which may have been kiln furniture are represented. The saggars have U-shaped or triangular apertures (Bloice¹ types 1 and 2) and support pins to fit the latter have been found also. Internal diameters vary between 180mm and 240mm. The vessel fragments mentioned here are all in the biscuit state. Glazed sherds which might be part of the group have not been included to avoid confusion with domestic refuse items from the same area.

Sherds with diagnostic base or rim profiles indicate that the following forms are present:

Albarello- or cauldron-type containers with hollowed bases and straight-sided feet, also a larger example with a chamfered foot (*cf.* nos. 81, 96 and 98).

Storage vessels. (*cf.* nos. 89 and 90)

Dishes (type 2) or bowls with footrings.

A dish with a thick footring. (type 3)

Plates without footrings. (type 1)

A lid. (*cf.* no. 75)

A bowl handle (similar to no. 57 but with a spade-shaped perforation.)

A cup.²

Pale yellow tile fragments bear occasional drops of white or blue tinglaze. Most of the items have patches of a grey concretion adhering, within which are pieces of charcoal, tile, pitch, stones and biscuit ware. The significance of this is uncertain.

Although most of the vessels can be paralleled by finds from Norfolk House, it must be remembered that there were a number of contemporary factories producing a similar range. Too few items have been recovered from the foreshore to establish the relative quantities of the rarer items manufactured. It is this pattern of overall production levels³ which might help in attributing the group to a particular kiln. The dominant forms in the group are the common albarello- or cauldron-type vessels.

By analogy with the Norfolk House finds, the group can be dated broadly to the late 17th century and to the first half of the 18th century, although it cannot be matched exactly with any of the three chronological groupings suggested for the production period there. Saggars with U-shaped apertures seem to be 17th century in date⁴ while those with triangular pegs are usually 18th century. The assemblage may be from rubbish that was accumulating at a kiln over a long period prior to dumping on the foreshore.

The discovery of tinglazed ware kiln items on the same general area of the foreshore, presumably part of the same group, has received mention in the past,⁵ though no details have been published.

The group is explained more easily as the remains of an eroded dump, having been brought to the site for use as hardcore, rather than as evidence of an industry in the immediate locality. The fragments are water-worn, and the posts of a revetment immediately north of the findspot probably indicate the site of the dump. A scarcity of fresh-water snail shells in the shore where the group was found, compared with the numbers found nearer to the low-tide point provides further evidence that the shore here is not a natural build-up. Unless the possibility of a tinglazed ware production site in the area of the Steelyard⁶ proves more likely than it now appears to be, the present group's origins are to be found over the river among the south bank kilns.

STONEWARE.

The stoneware kiln material has been found *in situ* behind a revetment immediately west of the entrance of Queenhithe Dock and, presumably subsequently scattered by the tide, on the surface of the foreshore in the dock itself.

The group comprises fragments of saggars and vessels, items of kiln furniture, and irregular lumps of saltglazed fired clay bearing fingerprints from being squeezed while still malleable.

The saggars have U- or tear-shaped apertures and internal diameters of 60-65mm. Few vessel sherds are diagnostic; a piece of a round-shouldered jar, similar to bung jars illustrated in sales catalogues of 1873,⁷ came from behind the revetment, and a piece of a waster jar with an angled shoulder and a plain vertical rim was found in the dock. Kiln furniture includes crude flattened roundels and rodlike bars which could have acted as separators or supports.

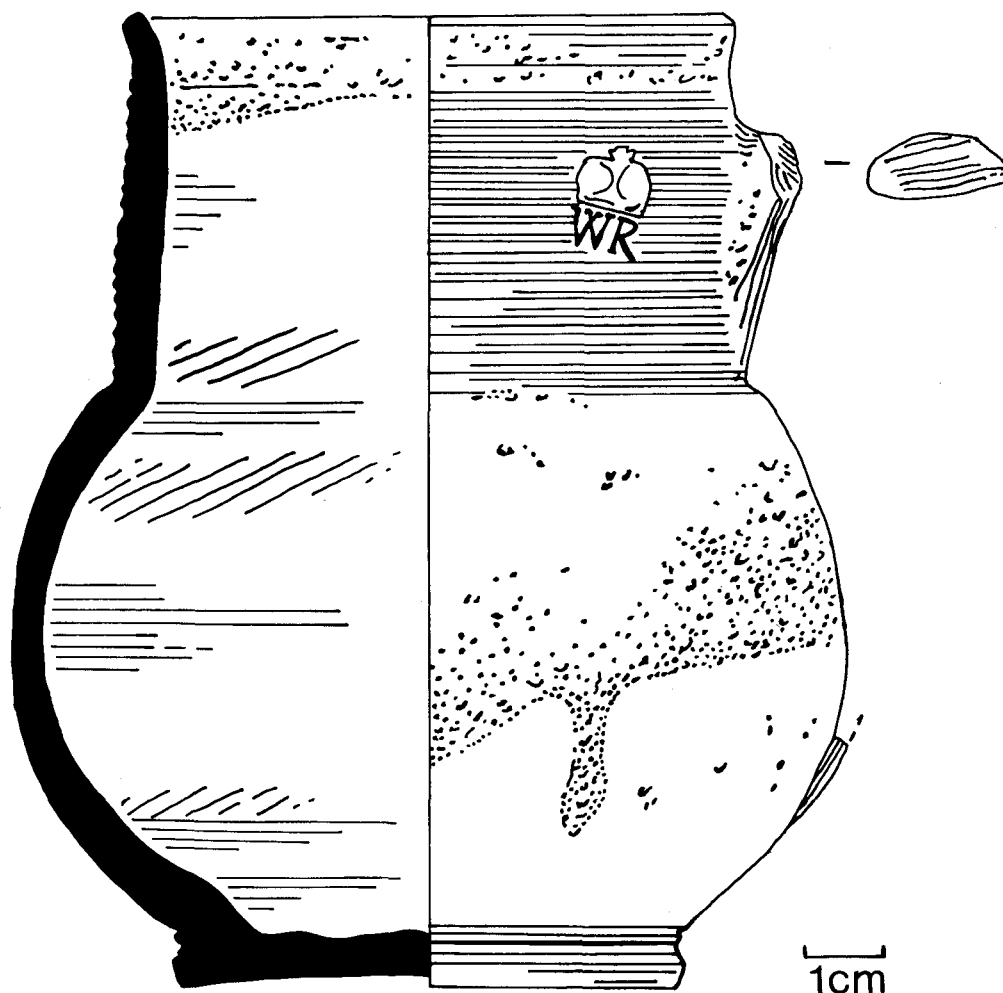
Fragments of 18th and 19th-century pottery and pipe bowls have also been recovered from the dump behind the revetment.

The kiln furniture and saggars are similar to the material from Fulham⁸ which has been dated to the beginning of the 18th century. The two jars seem to belong to the 19th century, giving a broad date range for the group, which was probably manufactured at the Fulham kilns.⁹ Presumably it was dumped in the latter half of the 19th century.

Further isolated fragments of saggars have been recovered from the foreshore near London Bridge in the City, and at several points between Blackfriars Bridge and Waterloo Bridge on the south side. These and similar finds upstream¹⁰ may well be from further dumps of hardcore, now eroded or covered with other deposits.

A STONEWARE MUG FROM THE FORESHORE

Fragments making up the greater part of a globular pint-sized mug with a WR capacity mark have been recovered¹¹ from a small area in the foreshore just east of Queenhithe



Dock. Several imperfections indicate that the vessel is a waster. The handle was broken off at the kiln, since there is glaze over the stub on the neck. Below this, on the body, is a circular patch of darker glaze (some fragments are missing from this area) of a similar diameter to the mug's neck. This patch is partly bounded by a rough ridge where an object has come into contact and fused during firing. Opposite the handle the neck and the body are slightly distorted as a result of pressure from a flat object which again partially fused with the glaze. It is likely these marks are the result of the collapse of a stack of similar vessels in the kiln and that the neck of another mug came to rest against the body of the present one after the handle had broken off.

Similar mugs, dated to the late 17th century and 1730-1750, and a fragment with a WR capacity mark¹² in an oval surround are known from a kiln site at Fulham.¹³ A closer parallel, *i.e.* without a surround to the letters, is provided by examples found in a dump at Bankside, possibly derived from the Gravel Lane Potteries of *c.* 1694-1750.¹⁴

How this waster (or usable second?) came to be on the foreshore is not clear. It does not seem to be connected with the stoneware dumped on the other side of the dock, since it was found in a sealed layer of mud, dated by clay pipes and other items, that apparently built up in the 18th century.

NOTES

1. All the type numbers and comparisons in the tinglazed ware section refer to B. J. Bloice with G. J. Dawson 'Norfolk House, Lambeth; Excavations at a Delftware Kiln Site 1968' *Post Med. Archaeol.* 5 (1971) 99-159.
2. Similar examples are illustrated by I Noël Hume *Early English Delftware from London and Virginia* (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation 1977) Pl. 15.
3. B. J. Bloice *op. cit.* in note 1, 150.
4. Noël Hume *op. cit.* in note 2, 103.
5. Noël Hume *ibid.* 104.
6. Noël Hume *ibid.* 114.
7. Doulton and Watts Lambeth Pottery *Price List of General Stoneware 1873*; James Stiff and Sons, Manufacturers, High Street, Lambeth, May 1873 *Price List* (both at Shepherd's Bush Library, under *Fulham*).
8. V. R. Christopher, D. C. Haselgrove and O. H. J. Pearcey *The Fulham Pottery* Fulham and Lambeth Historical Soc. (Archaeology Section) Occasional Paper 1 (2nd Impression 1977) 9 saggars Nos. 2 and 3.
9. I am grateful to Mr. O. H. J. Pearcey for this opinion.
10. 'Wandsworth Mudlarking' *London Archaeologist* 1 no. 11 (1971) 248.
11. I am grateful to the finder, Mr. P. Elkins, for lending the mug for comment, and to Chris Green for the drawing.
12. See M. Bimson 'The Significance of Ale Measure Marks' *Post Med. Archaeol.* 4 (1970) 165-6 for the apparent dating anomaly.
13. G. Canvin 'Some Archaeological Work in the Borough of Hammersmith' Fulham and Hammersmith Historical Soc. (Archaeology Section) Occasional Paper 2 (1975) Site A, Nos. 1-5.
14. A. Oswald 'A Stoneware Pottery, Recent Excavations at Bankside' *The Connoisseur* 126 (Dec. 1950) 183-185 Fig. 1.

I would like to thank Mr. D. Haselgrove, and Philippa Glanville, Chris Green and Clive Orton of the Museum of London for many valuable suggestions made during the preparation of this paper. Any remaining faults are my own.