

CNL81

Courtesy of LAARC - 1998

CNL81
68–72 Cornhill, EC3
P James

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SMR: 040784

An area 6m x 7m on the site of no. 68 was excavated in plan, adjacent to the N side of the second Roman basilica, and four contractor's trenches were also monitored. In Period I a linear flat-bottomed ditch, 3m wide by 0.6m deep, ran for at least 9.5m W-E across the site. To the N of it lay an area of accumulated tread with two small (? domestic) hearths. The ditch was infilled and the whole area levelled up with redeposited brickearth in c 85 AD. In Period II groups of stake-holes within rectangular cuts (c 0.6 x 0.5 m) are thought to have been pile foundations for a timber building. The lack of survival of the Period II building remains is attributed to a large-scale horizontal truncation which marked the beginning of Period III. Immediately following this truncation the second Roman basilica was built. A previously unrecorded 3.5m length of its N wall, part of an internal partition wall and an external buttress, were uncovered and destroyed by the contractors, and showed the foundations to have been 2.4m deep. At the same time a metalled Roman street, c 5m wide, was laid down along the N side of the basilica. This street had flanking drains on either side N-S, and fronting onto its N side were timber buildings. A sequence of five superimposed street surfaces, several drain recuts, and ? 4 phases of timber buildings to the N survived, dating from AD 85 to c 120. The later Roman and post-Roman material had largely been truncated by Victorian basements (Period V) but a late 3rd/early 4th c drain in the same position as earlier ones on the N side of the Roman street provided evidence for continuity of that street. Further N, however, the timber building remains had been cut through by two late Roman wells. The medieval period (Period IV) was represented only by a large refuse pit and part of a stone and brick built cellar.

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