

THE BRICKWORK AT NOS 6-9 MARKET PLACE

Ken Sabel

(The cross-references denoted 'CQ' in this paper relate to *Charter Quay, The Spirit of Change*, Wessex Archaeology 2003)

The bricks were analysed using the London archaeological system of ceramic building material classification. Each fabric number specifies the composition, form, approximate method of manufacture and date range of the material. A description of the fabrics appears at the end. Examples of the fabrics can be found in the archives of the Museum of London and Pre-Construct Archaeology.

Brickwork dating to before the construction of the department store survived in the basement, and on the third floor. The brickwork in each building is discussed by building and period (see CQ p.54; Fig. 107).

Pre-c.1700

6 Market Place

Many surviving wall elements in the basement at the front of 6 Market Place were built with roughly faced chalk blocks and a small quantity of red brick of fabric 3033 (222x110x46-58mm). These elements probably date from 1450/1480 to the early 17th century (see CQ p. 39; Fig 71). Although the size range of the brick indicates that they could date to as late as 1666/c.1700¹, the extensive use of chalk and the sparing use of brick suggests that the walls were probably built when bricks were still a relatively high status material. The proximity of Hampton Court, a consumer of large quantities of brick, would have ensured their relative local availability, so that their sparing use in the basement probably confirms this early date range.

The front basement wall of 6 Market Place (pierced by service ducts) was built in brick of fabric 3033, 112-121mm wide and 59mm thick. Some of the brick was of the late 17th century variant of fabric 3033 – 3033 near 3032². This wall is likely to be late 17th century in date and represents the re-building of the front wall, possibly facing onto a light well at the front of the building.

7 Market Place

The bottom 0.58m of the east-west wall dividing the front room of No 7 Market Place's basement (situated between the two light openings to the street) is built with chalk on its northern side and brick of fabric 3033, which is 110-111x52-59mm, on its southern face. The wall base is likely to date to 1450/1480-1666/c.1700 and seems to represent the base of the wall which, higher up, on the ground floor, divided the entrance hall/passageway to that building from the front room to its north. It is possible that the wall is only faced in brick on its southern side because it originally faced onto an alley to its south, which provided access to a range of rooms set back along the burgage plot, as seems to have been the case in Nos 6 and

8 Market Place, and which was a common entrance form in medieval and early post-medieval town houses³.

Another late 15th to 17th century element was found behind some later broken brickwork in the north wall of the second most eastern basement room. This was built using chalk blocks and bricks of fabric 3033, 110-115mm wide and 46-51mm thick.

8 Market Place

In the basement of No 8 Market Place there is evidence of a range of buildings/rooms extending back from the market along the burgage plat and accessed from an external passage to the south. All of the east-west walls along the southern edge of the basement (except at the west end of the westernmost surveyed room, to the west of the doored recess in the south of that room) were built using brick of fabric 3033 (220-226x87-107x52-61mm) laid in an irregular approximation of English bond. These walls were often pierced by blocked light openings, set high on the walls, which originally faced onto the external passage. The brickwork dates to the mid-16th century (when brick use started to become relatively common in inconspicuous locations) until c.1700, when bricks of fabric 3033 of this size range and form went out of production. The identical brickwork was observed on the east-west walls along the north edge of the basement of No 8 Market Place, towards its western end, from 1.8m east of the stepped change in level to 1m to the west of the step, and in the westernmost surveyed room.

The front (eastern) wall of the basement in No 8 Market Place was also built with bricks of fabric 3033, 209x107-111x57-61mm of a similar date range. The stone floor is probably contemporary with this phase of occupation.

9 Market Place

In the basement of 9 Market Place the east (front) wall and the eastern 7.15m of the north wall is dated to the 16th or 17th century and was built of bricks of fabric 3033, 230x110x55-59. The walls are built in English bond and the consistency of size suggests a late 16th to 17th century date. The construction of these walls is characterised by the presence of butt joints part way along both walls. These have no dating or phasing implications as the mortar used is identical in all four wall elements.

18th-19th century

Much of the brickwork in most of the basement walls had to be identified by fabric rather than form, as the degree of frogging on the bricks was not often visible. This has sometimes resulted in relatively wide date ranges having to be allocated to brickwork built in fabric 3032.

6 Market Place

The external brickwork beneath the semi-hipped roof on the southern elevation of No 6 Market Place is of fabric 3033 and dates to the 17th or 18th century

In the basement the east-west running wall elements in the south of the front room date to this period and are built using frogged brick. That on the longer stretch of east-west wall is of fabric 3034, is 228-230x108-109x65-66mm and is laid in Flemish bond (probably post-dating the 1729 Act), while the smaller area of brickwork, on the south side of the narrower area in the east room is built with bricks of fabric 3032, which are 72mm thick, a size suggesting a later 18th to 19th century post-brick tax date. The projecting brickwork to the east of the doorway of No 7 Market Place is identical to that on the longer stretch of wall and is part of the same phase of construction (post-1729).

7 Market Place

Most of the brickwork in the basement dates to the 18th to 19th century and is of fabric 3032. This is frogged where visible and is generally 224-231x95-102x60-66mm. It probably post-dates c.1730 and is built in English bond. An area of brickwork in the north wall of the second easternmost room probably dates to post-1770 and was built with frogged bricks of fabric 3032, 216x100x60mm⁴. Another 18th century or later element on the north wall of the two westernmost basement rooms was built with bricks of fabric 3033, 63-66mm thick, and the truncated chimney base separating the two westernmost rooms was built with frogged post-1770 bricks of fabric 3032, 222x100x62mm. The floor in the south east corner of the basement is paved with bricks of fabric 3047. This fabric became common in the mid-18th century and continued in use during the 19th century.

The areas incorporating later brickwork are described in more detail below.

8 and 9 Market Place

In the basement the northern wall separating Nos 8 and 9 Market Place and the brickwork along the western wall of No 9 Market Place were built at the same time in the late 18th or 19th century using brick of fabric 3032, 222x96x 65mm. The brickwork at the western end of the westernmost surveyed room in the basement of 8 Market Place may also have been built at this time as the brickwork is similar.

Late 19th-20th century

On the second floor the brickwork of the front facade, where visible, is of this period and is built with a mixture of bricks of fabric 3032 and 3033, with some Fletton bricks and some lime/sand bricks.

6 Market Place

In the basement there are two phases of brickwork dating to this period, both bonded with cement mortar. A projecting brick support in the north west corner of the front room is built with frogged brick of fabric 3032, 60mm thick. Similar brickwork is visible behind the wall facing the stairs which provide access to the basement. The later phase is built using Fletton bricks, which line the corridor leading from the stairs into the front room of the basement.

7 Market Place

There are two late 19th to 20th century phases of construction in the basement.

One was built using bricks of fabric 3032, 235x110x60mm bonded with Portland cement based mortar. The brickwork of this phase is located in two projecting elements on the west wall of the easternmost room placed either side of the passage leading into the second easternmost room; either side of the niche which lies on the south side of the passage and on a projecting area of brickwork to the north of the doorway between the second easternmost and the second westernmost rooms.

The second, but not necessarily later phase is built using bricks of fabric 3035, 228x102x65mm, also bonded with cement based mortar. The areas in this phase are located to the west of the doorway leading from the south basement room into the second easternmost room to its north, the northern ends of the two walls either side of the recess in the south of the second westernmost room and in a supporting plinth in the middle of the front, easternmost room.

Brickwork dating to this period was also extant on the second floor in the wall separating Nos 7 and 8 Market Place and in this wall's continuation, visible from the rear doorway to the roof. The bricks were of fabric 3032 (212x100x63-66mm, with shallow frogs) with some Fletton bricks.

8 Market Place

The brickwork in the basement dating to this period can be divided into three phases, all bonded with Portland cement based mortar.

The areas of projecting north-south orientated brickwork were built using bricks of fabric 3032. The probable later brickwork, built with Fletton bricks, was to the west of the stepped change in floor height and separating the front room closest to Market Place from the rear basement areas. The area of wall in the north west corner of the front room was built separately using machine made bricks of fabric 3033. The floor at the northern end of the front basement was paved later with bricks of fabric 3035.

9 Market Place

In the basement there are four phase of construction dating to this period.

There are two separate builds using bricks of fabric 3035, one of which is a stepped foundation, in the plinth towards the north west corner of the basement, both bonded with Portland cement based mortar. The similarity of this brickwork with that on the first floor suggests a contemporary date for at least two of these elements.

The short wall extending to the west of this plinth is built with machine made red bricks, also bonded with cement mortar. The slightly recessed brickwork in the north west corner of the basement is built with Fletton bricks.

The two projecting brick plinths on the north wall and the one-brick deep extension to the south of the brick feature in the north west corner of the basement were inserted to bear the RSJs which support the ground floor of the department store.

On the first floor the western wall, overlooking the roof to the rear, probably dates to the 20th century and is built using bricks of fabric 3035, 231mm long and 65mm thick, bonded with cement mortar.

The brickwork of the fireplace visible on the first floor may date from the period before No 9 Market Place was incorporated into the department store. It is built using lime mortar and may date to the 19th or 20th centuries.

Fabrics

- 3033 This fabric represents soft orange brick, locally produced from local brickearths. It first appeared in the medieval period.
- 3032 This fabric represent hard purple brick which generally hads yelow speckled surfaces. It has iron oxide inclusions and varying other inclusions and voids. It first appeared in the late 17th century.
- 3034 This is similar to fabric 3032 except that it is interlensed with silt. It first appeared *c.*1690
- 3033 near 3032 This represent an earlier form of 3032 which shares many characteristics with 3033. It dates to *c.*1664 to *c.*1700.
- 3035 This fabric represents yellow London stock brick from north Kent, which is hard and has many inclusions. It occasionally contains pink lensing, although this is rare. Although firth appearing in Kent in the 1720s, this fabric only came into widespread use in greater London in the late 18th century.
- 3047 This fabric is orange, often sandy with few inclusions except a scatter of iron oxide. It is mainly distinguished by the impression of fine moulding sand on its surfaces. The bricks are often thicker than those of other contemporary orange fabrics. The fabric became common in the mid 18th century and continued in use during the 19th century.

Notes

- ¹ The dates of the fabrics (except in the case of fabrics 3047 and 3033 near 3032) generally refer to I. Betts, Brick and Tile dating, unpublished document, Museum of London, 1995.
- ² This variant has been found to have commenced production by *c.*1664, by its inclusion in the phase of Trinity Almshouses, Deptford, which pre-dates 1664 (excavated by Pre-Construct Archaeology, publication forthcoming).
- ³ R.W. Brunskill, *Illustrated Handbook of Vernacular Architecture*, 1978 edition, pp. 166-169.

⁴ Roughly conforming to the size stipulations of the 1770 and 1776 Acts of Parliament (see Nathaniel Lloyd, *A History of English Brickwork*, 1934, (abridged edition) p.10.