

1809

LINCOLN - LUCY TOWER - SHOES

As requested I visited the Old City School headquarters of the Lincoln Archaeological Trust on Monday, 12th May, 1975, to inspect the excavated shoes which had been over-heated during conservation with (?) polyethylene glycol. The specimens were very hard and "glued" together, especially where there were folds in the leather; they could not be unfolded for examination. In many cases this did not matter since they were small fragments, cutting scrap, etc. and of no special importance in themselves but only collectively in that they indicated the presence of a shoemaker's shop.

The larger sections, shoe soles and parts of uppers, had been successfully restored by the staff of the L.A.T. and in fact were in excellent condition being soft, lightish brown in colour and probably something like the original leather. I did not take precise details of the method used for restoration but I think that whatever it was it could/well<sup>1</sup> applied to other excavated specimens. Trials should be carried out to see whether it is necessary to give the initial over-heating treatment first. It may be a case of "out of evil cometh good"!

I examined one or two of the restored specimens in detail to show Miss Jenny Mann, the conservator, my own routine and offered to vet the final report which is produced. There were two distinct periods involved, 12th- 13th centuries and 16th century. The latter, Tudor, group of shoes was identifiable by the sole shapes and certain constructional features and came from a deposit similarly dated. The earlier group containing the majority of the shoes is an extremely important one since for almost the first time in my experience we have a large number/<sup>of</sup> specimens from the 12th and 13th centuries (dated by pottery), a hitherto very elusive period for shoes compared with the 14th and 15th centuries.

There are very close connections ~~xxx~~ with shoes of the same period found in York; the extravagant toe shapes of the 14th and 15th centuries have not yet arrived and in some cases the soles are almost symmetrical. Those I looked at were made by the turnshoe method using thread and not thonging as noted in the Lincoln Saltergate shoes of the Saxon period.

On this visit I met Miss Christine Colyer, Miss Kate Foley, Mr.

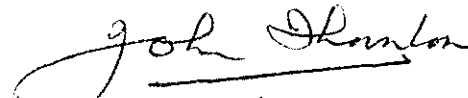
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John Wilford and as mentioned, Miss Jenny Mann who is responsible for finds. I was rather amused to find that Mr. John Wilford, administration, had previously worked for SATRA, the Shoe Trades Research Association at Kettering, but hadn't told anybody!

6.7.75

  
(John Thornton)