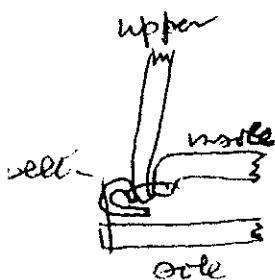


Copy sent to excavator

Southwark, Mark Brown's Wharf - Leather

- H (1) Welted Insole<sup>①</sup>, woman's, left foot, complete; medium round pointed toe, very narrow waist. That this is a welted insole and not a turnshoe sole is shown by (a) hardly any abrasive wear on the grain side (next to the foot) and what there is is evenly distributed, (b) the fairly coarse grain/flesh marginal stitching, not finer edge/flesh stitching, with a slight downwards moulding of the edge; stitch length c. 6.0mm., (c) a few small holes down the central axis showing where tacks were used to hold the insole on to a wooden last during the shoemaking operations. L: 185mm.; W (bread): 59mm.; W (waist): 16mm.; W (seat): 34mm. The present size is about size 10 children's (English)<sup>②</sup>. Assuming a shrinkage during burial of about 10%, the original size could have been about 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> children's.<sup>③</sup>



There is also a small fragment, L: c. 70mm., of welt. It is of the folded over type to accommodate (or give the appearance of) a "platform" between upper sole and was probably originally a different colour. It has the usual two seams (i) the welt/upper/insole seam, stitch length c. 6.0mm. (as on the insole itself); (ii) the welt/sole seam passing through the fold of the welt, stitch length 4.0mm. The sole seam is normally finer than the upper seam in a welted shoe. This fragment can be fitted to the insole, probably round the outside joint (little toe area).

The shape and construction suggest a date of 1570-95.

- 51 (176) Heel toppiece<sup>④</sup>, man's. It has diamond shaped peg holes c. 4.0mm. x 3.0mm. (variable) round the margin and one in the centre; some holes are wholly or partially filled (? identify material - it should be wood but may be earth). The back of the toppiece has been worn away but not more on one corner than the other suggesting, perhaps, it may originally have been on a riding boot rather than one used for walking. W (max.): c. 78mm. Possibly second half of the 17th century.

- H (72) Welted shoe, left foot; almost complete; made of calf skin, grain out, with a medium round pointed toe and a very narrow waist; reassembled. Upper: three-piece consisting of vamp and two quarters joined by two side seams and a back seam. The vamp is decorated near the toe with longitudinal slashes c. 25mm. long and c. 4.0mm. apart; there are at least 19 of these but as part of the left side of the vamp has now disappeared the number is not certain. Immediately behind these slashes (progressing from heel to toe) there is a row of very small

cuts, c. 1.0 - 1.5mm. long, more than 25, and not coinciding exactly with the slashes. Then, over the main area of the vamp on the instep there is a diamond-shaped arrangement of c. 64 similar small cuts; they appear to be formed in eight rows of eight each but it is not always clear what is a cut and what is a break in the grain of the leather. Across the vamp close to the throat there is another row of shorter longitudinal slashes, l: c. 10mm. and c. 2.0 - 3.0mm. apart. The resulting row of small strips now shows as a ridge across the throat, possibly an original fashion intention. Finally, the edge of the throat itself has a decorative scalloped top band, originally stitched on but now detached and incomplete; it was attached by a butted edge/grain seam, stitch length 4.5mm. The scallops on the binding are 10mm. deep from the top curved edge to the straight continuous stitched one and c. 7.0mm. wide. (none)

Each scallop has a central hole, diameter c. 1.5mm.


side seams. The backseam, joining the quarters together, is an edge/grain butted one, stitch length 4.0mm.

The top edge of both quarters has been scalloped so that at first sight there appears to be an attached binding as on the vamp throat. In fact the apparent break on the outside beneath the scallops has been produced by a row of grain/grain stitching, stitch length 2.5 - 3.0mm., pulling the leather up into a decorative indented ridge.

The top edge of the stiffener, which as usual is moulded with the grain side facing inwards, has been overstitched to the inside (flesh) of the quarters, stitch length c. 6.0mm. (variable) with resulting scalloping.

The lasting margin of the upper carries a grain/flesh seam, stitch length c. 7.5 - 8.0mm. where it was attached to welt and insole.

Bottom: as usual for a welted shoe there is an insole, welt and sole. There may originally have been a filling between insole and sole but it does not appear to be there now.

Insole: similar to  with a grain/flesh seam on the turned down margin, stitch length, c. 7.5 - 8.0 mm. There is some foot impression and at the inside waist, particularly on the right side where there was only little pressure. Under the arch of the foot, the grain is clearer.

Welt: this still remains in situ except where the maximum wear has taken place at the outside toe end and outside heel seat. The edges

The edges of the welt, which passed right round the shoe, met at the inside waist and were joined to each other. The welt is of the normal flat kind (cf. 2) with the usual two seams:

- (i) uniting welt/upper/insole, stitch length 7.5-8.0mm.;
- (ii) uniting welt/sole, stitch length 6.0 - 7.0mm.

Sole: similar to the insole in shape but larger (as normal).

The maximum wear is at heel seat and toe. The sole stitching was "in channel", set in c. 5.5mm., from the edge (7.5mm. at the waist) and this is still visible where least wear has taken place - the inside waist; elsewhere it has disappeared with only the holes remaining - stitch length as for the welt (ii) c. 6.0 - 7.0mm.

L: c. 240mm.; W (tread): c. 85mm.; W (waist): c. 35mm.,

The present size is about 1 adults' (English).

This remarkably well-preserved heel-less shoe with its welted construction and slashed decoration is an excellent example of late Tudor, high quality fashion.

(Draw - top and bottom)

R (145)

249

Welted shoe sole, right foot, very deteriorated and showing evidence of repair. It has a medium rounded toe (as 216) and a fairly narrow waist. The original grain/flesh marginal seam, stitch length c. 5.0mm was in a channel as usual, set in c. 5.0mm. from the edge and still visible at the inside waist; only the holes survive elsewhere. Additional holes round the margin of the forepart indicate a repair addition and there is also a transverse line of holes across the toe where a toe-piece was added. As usual, the outside back of the heel seat has worn away.

L: c. 188mm.; W (tread): c. 80mm.; W (waist): c. 37mm.

Same period as 2 and 216

B (105)

253

Welted shoe sole, child's; toe-end now missing, apparently cut off. It may be a right foot but this is not positive. The grain/flesh stitch holes through which the sole was attached to the welt have a stitch length of c. 6.5mm. and were originally set in channel (still visible in the waist) c. 4.0 - 5.0mm. from the edge.

The original toe was probably rounded and the shoe nearly "straight" (neither left nor right). The flesh side shows the impression of the welt and upper lastin margin. The toe end may have been cut away for a repair to be added.

L: 125mm.; W (tread): 50mm.; W (waist): 35mm.; W (seat): 45mm.

B 102

266

Welted shoe, left foot; complete except for the right quarter; **it** is in poor condition. May be a child's or a small woman's. Partially reassembled.

Upper: vamp and two quarters (originally - one now missing) joined by two butted side seams at the wings, stitch length c. 5.0mm., and a backseam, the details of which are now obscure. The toe-end of the vamp has disappeared and the throat is now a rough torn concave curve and not the original edge but taking into consideration the top edge of the remaining quarter it would seem probable that the shoe was of the simple pull-on or "casual" type typical of the late Tudor period. Part of the heel stiffener remains inside the quarter and as for 216 it has its front edge taken in with the side seam and has scalloped overstitching along its top edge where it was attached to the flesh side of the quarter, stitch length c. 7.0mm.

Insole: complete, and with a very narrow waist. It is thicker than the insole of 216 and the marginal welt sewing seam is an edge/flesh one, stitch length c. 6.5 - 7.0mm.

Welt: some still remains round the waist and seat and is of the normal flat or unfolded type with the two seams as before (i) welt/upper/insole, stitch length 6.5 - 7.0mm., (ii) welt/sole, stitch length 4.5 - 5.0mm. The remaining quarter is still attached to the insole, perhaps by traces of thread although the welt has broken away but is still attached to the sole.

Sole: medium round-pointed toe, fairly narrow waist; worn away at toe end and inside (~~left~~<sup>right</sup>) corner of heel seat, which is unusual for a left shoe. The original grain/flesh stitching was in a channel set in c. 6.0 - 8.0mm. from the edge and this is still visible in the waist where less wear has occurred; stitch length (as in welt): 4.5 - 5.0mm (somewhat variable).

L: 175mm.; W (tread): c. 65mm.; W (waist): c. 34mm.; W (seat): c. 46mm. The present size is about size 6 children's (English).

The sole 253 may be from the fellow of this shoe.

B 102

267

Welted insole, left foot; the toe is rather more pointed than for the previous shoes; heel seat now missing; distorted. It has a marginal edge/flesh welt sewing seam, stitch length 6.0 - 8.0 mm. variable both in length and positioning, a not unusual feature of an internal and therefore hidden welt seam as distinct from a visible sole seam. Three holes in the forepart may show where the insole

was attached to the last during the shoemaking operations.

L: c. 190mm.; W (tread): c. 70mm.; W (waist): c. 28mm.

Although the end of the heel seat is now missing so an accurate estimate of the original length cannot be made, it seems probable that the present size is about 11 children's (English)

136

#### Six leather fragments

(a) A large roughly rectangular piece with one end rounded, c. 100mm. x 90mm. (max). The two longer sides are slightly concave and cut with a slight, but not positive, suggestion of a seam. The broad straight end has stitch holes and some scalloping, stitch length c. 4.0mm.; the round end also has evidence of coarse stitching, stitch length possibly c. 8.5mm., near the edge and with a second row further in. The piece is deteriorated and although it may be a repair patch for the waist and seat of a shoe bottom this is by no means certain.

(draw)

(b) Heel seat and part of waist of a welted insole, poor condition and the details are somewhat masked by conservation treatment. The piece has an edge/flesh welt sewing seam, stitch length c. 7.5mm. There appear to be some traces of heavy thread in situ but these may be from later repairs. Several nail or peg holes in the seat may also indicate where sole repairs were made. The seat is still cupped from foot heel pressure. L: 87mm.; W (seat): c. 46mm.

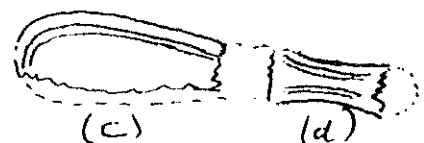
(c) Fragment of welted insole, probably from the toe end (see (d) below). The identifying feature is the welt sewing rib set in down each side c. 3.0mm. from the edge and c. 3.0mm. wide. Through it the welt sewing holes pass side to side, stitch length 4.5mm.

Welt sewing through a flesh rib rather than edge to flesh suggests that this fragment is rather later than the previous ones, possibly into the 17th century. L: 75mm.

(d) Fragment of welted insole waist; from a narrow-waisted shoe. The welt sewing ribs either side are similar to those on (c) above and it would seem possible that (c) and (d) are part of the same insole and that (c) is the forepart and not the seat.

(Draw (c) and (d) together)

Also two small unidentified fragments.



Notes

(4)

The "toppiece" is the final or bottom layer of a heel which actually rests on the ground and takes the abrasive wear in walking. If of leather it has to be <sup>of</sup> the same quality at least as the sole whereas the remainder of the heel (the "lifts" if the heel is of the built or "stacked" type) is normally of inferior material. Normally the toppiece wears away most at the back left corner of the left shoe and the right back corner of the right shoe. Before shoes acquired heels as a separate component (c. 1595) the heel seat of the sole itself wore away at these places and it would seem logical to assume that heels first appeared as repair additions.

(2)

The English shoe size scale begins at  $4\frac{1}{3}$  in. for size 1 (children's) and then increases by  $\frac{1}{3}$  in. for each size to  $8\frac{1}{3}$  in. for size 13 (children's); it then starts again at  $8\frac{2}{3}$  in. for size 1 (adults) and continues upwards in  $\frac{1}{3}$  in. increments as far as required.

(Easy) Fixed points to remember are: children - size 6 = 6 in.; adults - size 5 = 10 in.

(3)

Unpublished experimental work by the writer in which samples of leather have been buried in wet earth since 1959 and examined at intervals of 1, 2, 4, 8, 16 years suggest that after a period of about 16 years the leather is reaching its maximum shrinkage, possibly about 10%. This means that a size 5, adults', shoe would shrink to size 2 in burial.

1st August, 1981

*John H. Thornton*  
 .....  
 (John H. Thornton)

(1)

In a welted shoe the lasting margin of the upper is sandwiched between the welt and the edge of the insole and then the three are sewn together. The sole is then stitched to the protruding welt by a second seam. For a description of this <sup>and other</sup> methods of shoe construction see: J. H. Thornton "Excavated Shoes to 1600" in Trans. Museum Assistant's Group 12, for 1973 (1975) 2 - 13.