

BROADMEAD EXPANSION ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS - Update 3



Members of the Public gather for the Open Day



Excavations in trench 3 are now close to completion, and a successful open day was held on 18th March 2006, with over 1000 people turning out to view the results despite freezing conditions.

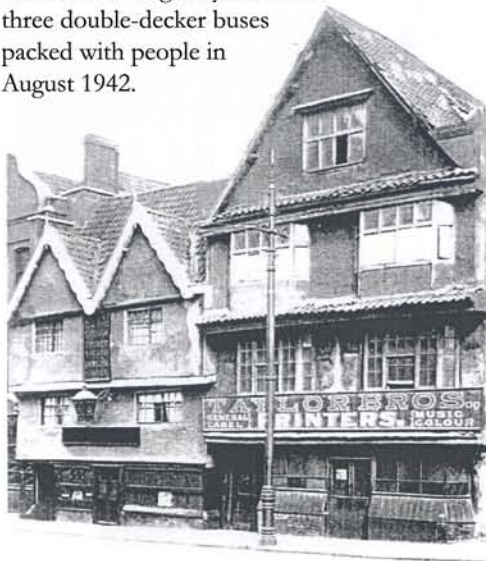
Delving into historic documents is also helping us fill in the picture of how the area was used for tanning from as early as the 15th century. The area of trench 3 closest to Broad Weir was occupied specifically by whiteawers in the 17th century, and subsequently by tanners. A whiteawer prepared leather with salt, alum, eggs, lime and various other things to make supple "white leather", i.e. its natural colour not tanned. This was usually done to the hides of sheep, goats, calves and pigs, rather than cattle, and the white leather was used for saddles, gloves, garments, shoe uppers, laces, etc. Documentary evidence confirms that the rear of these properties was occupied by the skimmers' yards, and there were also lime pits, drying lofts and stables.



19th-century pots being excavated



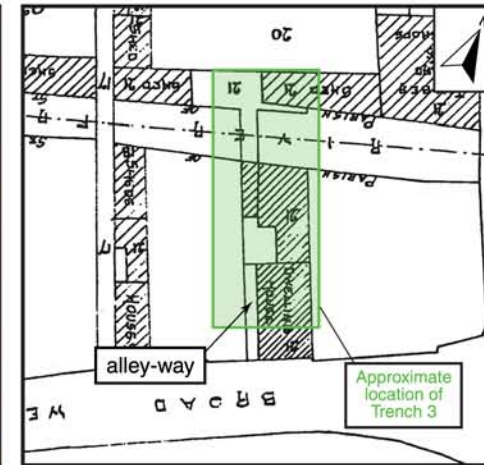
In the 20th-century the site was occupied by timber yards and 'Taylor Bros' Printers, and the buildings fronting this side of Broad Weir were eventually demolished after a 500lb bomb tragically set fire to three double-decker buses packed with people in August 1942.



From the Riecke Winstone collection



Medieval walls with possible alley-way between



A look at the historic maps shows how features revealed in the trench can be identified: this image shows a roughly cobbled alley-way between the walls of two buildings which can be clearly identified on this 1883 plan of the area.



By the 19th-century the Broad Weir street front was occupied by bakeries, eating-houses and pubs, including the Old Crown public house, which lies partly within the eastern half of the trench, and many artefacts of this date have come to light during the excavations.

Follow the progress of the excavation of trench 3 through our regular updates, which will be posted both on the hoarding along Broad Weir and on the Cotswold Archaeology website www.cotswoldarch.org.uk

For further details on the Broadmead Expansion development please visit: www.bristolcitycentre.com

