

ILA79

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ILA79

Miles Lane, 132–137 Upper Thames Street, EC4

L Miller

NGR: TQ 32800 80740

SMR: 043523–32

A Roman building with timber terracing to the S was observed in construction trenches for a building in 1920. The remaining archaeology was sealed beneath the slab of the previous 19th c building and this awaited an opportunity for excavation. The site was opened at the beginning of September 1979 and was available, from Land Securities Ltd, for four months. The medieval layers were truncated by the 19th c slab but the bottoms of several Saxon pits survived. The building observed by Frank Lambert in 1920 (Lambert 1921) was found in two parts, with the northern end being completely of tile and the southern of dressed rag with tile courses. Floors of *opus signinum* were found associated with the northern part but very patchy mortar floors with the southern. An eaves drip gully ran down the outside wall bordering a gravel pavement on the further side. A drain ran down the other side of this pavement. A fragment of timber-lined drain 2m deep was found preserved below the water table. Of Hadrianic date, this cut through the timber terracing, which consisted of two beams side by side running at right angles to the front which was parallel with the front of the building. The timber boxes formed were then packed with dumps of mortars and clays.

Subsequent excavation on the E side of Miles Lane showed that the Roman building excavated in 1979–80 was Flavian in date. During the watching brief following the demolition of a large area to the W of the lane several further Roman buildings were traced, with more of the Flavian quayfront (Fig*ILA). Foundations and cesspits of medieval buildings fronting onto both Upper Thames Street and St Martin's Lane were also recorded.

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