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**Molluscs from excavations at St Mark's Church, Lincoln
(SM77 DCG ss 58)**

by

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Summary

The molluscs from one sample from St Mark's church context DCG (ss 58) have been examined to determine the nature of this context. The examination supports the suggestion that the context was a ditch.

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Molluscs from excavations at St Mark's Church, Lincoln (SM77 DCG ss 58)

Introduction

The Mollusca from sample 58, context DCG from the St Mark's Church site, Lincoln (SM76) were examined to identify the habitats which they represented. The context was described as a Roman ditch, which it was thought dated from the mid to late second century AD. It was hoped that the identification of the Mollusca would clarify the nature of the deposit.

Methods

The Mollusca from the 2 1 flot sample were extracted and identified following Evans (1972).

Results and discussion

The Mollusca identified were all, with one exception, freshwater species or species closely associated with freshwater habitats (Table 1).

<i>Valvata cristata</i> (Müller)	14
<i>Bythinia tentaculata</i> (Linnaeus)	3
<i>Lymnaea truncatula</i> (Müller)	15
<i>Lymnaea peregra</i> (Müller)	22
<i>Planorbis planorbis</i> (Linnaeus)	392
<i>Bathyomphalus contortus</i> (Linnaeus)	2
<i>Armiger crista</i> (Linnaeus)	4
<i>Vertigo pygmaea</i> (Draparnaud)	1

Table 1. Mollusca from St Mark's Church context DCG

Valvata cristata and *Planorbis planorbis* were both classified by Sparks (1961) as ditch species, and would be typical of slow flowing or still water, possibly quite shallow, and where there was a lot of vegetation. These two species are the most numerous, and the presence of individuals of sizes ranging from small to adult suggests a breeding population. *Lymnaea peregra*, *Bathyomphalus contortus* and *Armiger crista* were classed as catholic species (Sparks 1961), and are common in a wide range of freshwater habitats. *Bythinia tentaculata* was classified as a species more typical of moving water, but of fairly slow-moving water. *Lymnaea truncatula* is a species commonly found on the mud by ditches and ponds (Ellis 1969).

The only land snail was *Vertigo pygmaea*, which is usually typical of drier grassland (Ellis 1969), and which in this instance is likely to be an accidental arrival.

The preferred habitats of these species taken together suggest that the context represents a ditch with some flowing water, and which contains, and may perhaps have been shaded by, vegetation.

References

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