

SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT 32

Owners: Public space

Address: Reeth Green

Date: 18.5.14

Dug By: Mike Walton, John Russell, Ann Russell, Stephen Eastmead, and Philip Bastow

Position:

- On Reeth Green, between the quoits pitches and to the South of the bandstand
- 54°23'19.75"N 1°56'33.29"W

Pit Description:

- The pit was dug following HEFA guidelines
- 100% of spoil was sieved
- Context 1 when deturfed was uniform brown/ black topsoil with some burnt slag/ clinker and coal. Pot, animal bone, metal and lithics also found.
- Context 2 began as stone-free topsoil and included a cobbled surface made up of large stones which when removed went down to 30cm. There was an edge of stones 15-20mm higher, on the North side. The cobbles were well laid and there was a post hole in the SW part with timber section still visible.
- Context 4, below the cobbles, was soil. Finds included pot, bone and burnt shale/ coal
- Natural was reached at 60cm.

Finds:

Test Pit 32: 141 sherds, 150 grams

There were four fragments of medieval pottery from this pit, two each from contexts (2) and (4). Three sherds of tin-glazed earthenware and some of the clay pipe fragments present indicate 18th century activity but the great majority of sherds were 19th century or later although much of this was very highly fragmented.

Conclusions:

- This part of the Green was cobbled. The cobbles had been laid on the soil.
- The natural layer was reached at a relatively early stage.
- The layer below the cobbles [4] contained pot with a 17th/18th century date suggesting the cobbles were laid after this time.

Thanks:

Our thanks are due to Reeth Parish Council and the Green Wardens for allowing us to put test pits in Reeth Green.

written by: Sue Nicholson

date: 25.10.14

TP 32 Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
I	china	8	6		incl frags of a figurine
I	red slipped	1	3		
I	whiteware	2	2		

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
2	?	1	1		grey fabric with brown gl ext greenish int.
2	black gl red	2	3		
2	brown gl st	8	6		
2	china/porcelain	7	5		probably parts of same figurine as in (1)
2	medieval	2	7	14th	mid grey with orange int, brownish gl
2	pipe bowl frag	0	0	17th	
2	pipe bowl frag	0	0	?	
2	pipe stem x 1	0	0	17th/18th	
2	pipe stem x 7	0	0		one is decorated
2	red	4	8		
2	red slipped	20	41		
2	tin glazed	1	2	17th/18th	plain
2	ungl red	2	9		
2	whiteware	61	34		most very small
2	yellow	16	12		
4	late medieval	1	3	14th/15th	not classic reduced ware, grey int but rest is light firing
4	medieval gritty	1	4	12th/13th	orange surfaces, grey core, thin
4	tin glazed	2	3	17th/18th	with purple mottling
4	whiteware	2	1		

Pottery Analysis

Notes on the Pottery:

For the purposes of the pottery analysis, we have defined the following historical periods;

Roman – 1st to mid-5th Century

Medieval – 13th and early 14th Century

Late Medieval - mid 14th, 15th and 16th Centuries

Generally speaking a meaningful date bracket cannot be applied to a large proportion of the sherds recovered from the test pits. Other than the medieval material present there are other datable types such as tin-glazed earthenware, white salt-glazed stoneware and creamware, but red earthenware, of all types, for instance, has a long life and particularly when only small fragments are present, is not closely dateable. Where it is associated with say, creamware or tin-glazed earthenware it could well be 18th century. As far as plotting the distribution of sherds in date categories is concerned there are obvious problems with assigning the redwares and for most this has not been done. However, some Test Pit summaries may indicate how strong the earlier dating indicators are. Anything with no date against it in the catalogue falls into the general late post-medieval background noise category.

I have tried to keep abbreviations to a minimum in the catalogue to avoid long lists of explanation. Those that are there, or have crept in, I hope will be obvious (eg. gl for glaze or glazed, misc for miscellaneous, int (inside) and ext (outside)).

Some explanations of wording used in the 'types' column

- red slipped is the standard post-medieval kitchenware with internal white slip coating
- red on its own is any plain glazed red earthenware
- black glazed red is very difficult to date especially in small fragments as there are black-glazed redwares in the later 16th and 17th centuries as well as throughout the 18th and into the 19th century.
- whiteware refers to the refined table wares of 19th century onwards which can be transfer printed (eg. willow pattern), sponged etc.
- yellow, i.e. yellow ware refers to the 19th century type of pottery often found with white slip bands and sometimes 'mocha' decoration. Used for good quality kitchenware, and vessels such as chamber pots. Sometimes within this category are other non-white glazed fragments which appear to be generally the same type, i.e. the background glaze colour may be buff or pale pinkish-buff rather than yellow.
- local post-medieval and local red are, as the names suggest, wares probably with a fairly local source. Similar types elsewhere in North Yorkshire are called Ryedale wares. The fabric can vary from light red to orange and buff or be partly reduced grey. Glazes often have a greenish tinge. Typical vessels would be bowls, dishes and jars.
- creamware is as described! The date assigned is 18th century. It is still around in the early 19th c. but is basically a mid to late 18th type. There is a general chronological trend to a lighter colour glaze so small later fragments may just get included with 'whiteware' in the table. Conversely when only small flakes are present dating must be open to some doubt.
- pearlware begins in the later 18th century and continues into the early 19th gradually becoming 'whiteware' as the blue-grey tint to the glaze lightens - again a broad chronological trend. Mostly decorated, frequently with shell edge rim mainly in blue. It is not easy to identify in small fragments.

Jenny Vaughan October 2014