

SBDF15 FREMINGTON TEST PIT 50

Owners: Mr & Mrs Rob Wood

Address: Rowan Cottage, Fremington

Date: 20th June 2015

Dug By: Heather Wilson, Gary Taylor, Nigel Bailey, Rob Wood, Graham Smith, Philip Bastow.

Position:

- Latitude 54°23'13.88"N Longitude 1°55'45.30"W

Pit Description:

On site at 10am, damp start to the day, it became a day of coats on, or coats off!

Test pit position chosen to go in a level grassed area 12mtr x 3mtr, on the North side of a gravel path heading East to the front porch door of Rowan Cottage, hopefully this chosen position would be the least disturbed area, Rowan Cottage built on a North-South alignment which runs with the slope of High Fremington, therefore there has been plenty of landscaping and levelling over the years.

Advised all of the area had been originally gravelled, the grassed area laid approximately seven years ago.

First and Second context, 0 to 20 cm, was made up of levelling sand/silt with part gravel layer under 20cm, [old gravel layer prior to sand level for the grass turf].

30 to 40 cm consisted of large and medium size stones, square edged, subsoil /clay mix.

50 to 70cm still large and medium size stones but now rounded set within orangey compact clay.

Test pit had the turf back in place by 3:30pm, and finally it was bright and sunny!

Finds:

Test Pit 50: 9 sherds, 35 grams

Finds were recovered from only three contexts in this test pit. Most of the sherds recovered were medieval although none were particularly diagnostic.

A possible worked flint was recovered but no finds located in the last three contexts.

Summary:

Grassed area laid on modern sandy/silt bed, with part mix of old gravel surface, overlaid on a disturbed subsoil stony clay level, this area of ground has been landscaped

creating a level area to the front of the West facing aspect of Rowan Cottage, levelling cutting into the glacial stones and natural clay level.

A big thank you to Mr and Mrs Rob Wood for offering to let Swaag test pit their lawn, Rob was an enthusiastic member of the digging team and Mrs Wood kept us all well supplied with tea and cakes!

Written by
Philip Bastow
23rd June 2015-10-27

TP50 Finds catalogue

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
1	late med?	1	3	15th ?	dull buff with greenish ext gl
2	medieval orange/buff	2	6	13th/ 14th	
2	medieval oxidised	1	15	13th/ 14th	base
3	black gl red	2	4		
3	medieval buff	1	5	13th/ 14th	
3	medieval orange	1	2	13th/ 14th	
3	ungl red	1	0		small chip

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

Notes on the Pottery:

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. For most redwares a date category has not been assigned. 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 (lpm) background noise category.

A few more abbreviations have crept into the catalogue. I hope most will be obvious (eg. gl for glaze or glazed, misc for miscellaneous, int (inside) and ext (outside)). Let me

know if not.

Some explanations of wording used in the 'types' column

- *red slipped* is the standard post-medieval kitchenware with internal white slip coating
- *red slip dec* means there is trailing or banding rather than an overall slip coat
- *red* on its own is any plain glazed red earthenware
- *black glazed red* is 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 kitchenwares, 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 wares probably with a fairly local source. Similar types elsewhere in North Yorkshire are called Ryedale and Osmotherley type 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.

Apart from the late reduced wares the medieval pottery present was mainly buff, buff/pink or more iron-rich orange/oxidised wares. Although there was much that was not clearly diagnostic most of this material can probably be described as Tees Valley ware.

Jenny Vaughan
September 2015