

## **SBDF15      FREMINGTON TEST PIT 54**

**Owners:** Gordon Walker  
**Address:** Brambles  
**Date:** 21st June, 2015  
**Dug By:** Rob Nicholson, Anne Jowett, Sheila Ickringill, Jackie Snow, Ric Carter, Graham Smith, Nigel Bailey and Steven Miller

### **Position:**

- Latitude 54°23'16.42"N Longitude 1°55'52.06"W
- Pit location is in the field west of Brambles residence. The pit is approximately 80 yards west of the modern barns and on the terrace on a lower level than the lower barn. The location of this pit was determined by Miles Johnson based on the possibility that residential occupation would be more likely to be lower down the field than higher and in a more exposed location.

### **Pit Description:**

- The field west of Brambles residence is steeply sloping, with several distinct terraces or lynchets over the length of the field. The pit was placed on the second terrace west of the barns. The terraces have half circular protrusions or mounds of earth below them at even intervals. The owner Mr Gordon Walker stated that the flat area above the upper barn was found to be a cobbled floor or yard when they had dug the trench for the power line. They had found green glazed pottery in this location. The lowest terrace is composed of the spoil from the construction of the barns. There had been a wall across the field below the second terrace, and the land below this had been employed as a garden.
- The weather was cloudy with moderate wind. The team were assisted by several hens and two cockerels.
- The dig progressed quickly and was completed by 12 noon.
- The first context was mainly soil with a few small stones, the only find was a small piece of pipe stem.
- The second context had a layer of stone that followed the contour of the land, this was within the top 2 to 5 cm of the context layer. This was not thought to be a natural layer and seemed as though it had been laid to form a path, track or hard standing area. This area may have formed part of the garden as indicated by the land owner.
- The third context was a mix of soil and stones at a mix ratio of 50:50. The finds were very limited - black glazed pottery and unglazed red pot. The natural was reached at 30 cm - a very stoney layer with clay. Some pieces of red sand stone were found in this layer.
- To confirm that the natural had been reached a sondage was dug in the SW corner (corner 4). The mattock was used to break up the stone / clay mix to a depth of 40 cm and clay was found below. This confirmed the natural had been reached at 30 cm.

- The natural was reached at a depth of 30 cm

**Finds:**

*Test Pit 54: 28 sherds, 50 grams*

All but three small fragments of the pottery from this test pit came from context [2]. There was some indication of earlier 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century activity but fragments were very small.

**Conclusions:**

The conclusions that can be drawn from this test pit is that a layer of stone had been laid to form a track or path to hard standing area.

**Thanks:**

Thank you to Gordon Walker for allowing the group to excavate the test pit on his land

written by: Anne Jowett

date: 3rd July, 2015

## TP 54 Finds Catalogue

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	datin g	comment
1	pipe stem x1	1	0		missing!
2	black gl red	2	2		hard part reduced
2	brown gl stoneware	1	2	?	
2	creamware	2	2		
2	local pm	1	2	17th/ 18th	bit of sooting ext, greenish gl int
2	misc lpm	2	2		
2	pearlw?	3	13	18th/ 19th	part of rim flange
2	pipe stem x2	2	0	18th/ 19th	
2	red	2	3	? 18th	
2	red slipped	1	8		
2	tin glazed	3	2	17th/ 18th c.	pale blue gl
2	white salt gl stoneware	1	0	18th	tiny sliver
2	whiteware	1	1		transfer print
2	whiteware	1	1		
2	whiteware dec	3	5		2 with blue bands, one with brown line (rim)
3	black gl buff	1	3		small handle frag
3	red	2	4		not sure about this

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

Roman – 1<sup>st</sup> to mid 5<sup>th</sup> Century

Medieval – 13<sup>th</sup> and early 14<sup>th</sup> Century

Late Medieval - mid 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- *whiteware* refers to the refined table wares of 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards which can be transfer printed (eg. willow pattern), sponged etc.
- *yellow*, i.e. yellow ware refers to the 19<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> century. It is still around in the early 19<sup>th</sup> c. but is basically a mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> 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 18<sup>th</sup> century and continues into the early 19<sup>th</sup> 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