

SBDG15 GRINTON TEST PIT 56

Owners: Leo and Margaret Macknight
Address: Manor House, Grinton
Date: 18th July 2015
Dug By: Shirley Gale, Judith Staples, Jim Rollinson, Nigel Bailey, Miles Johnson, John Earl, Fiona and Emily Rosher

Position:

- Latitude 54°22'44.00"N Longitude 1°55'44.66"W
- The pit was situated in the field adjacent to the Manor House towards the northern boundary fence. It was the second pit dug in this field and the following notes were written by Sheila Ickringill for TP62
- Manor House is understood to date from 1670 and to have been built by the lord of the manor of Grinton East (North Yorkshire and Cleveland Building Study Group Report vol 18). It provided a very pleasant setting for digging and contemplating the historical development of Grinton.
- To the west of the field is a drystone wall and, beyond that, the main road between Leyburn and Grinton. To the south and east is pasture separated from the field by a stone wall, though still allowing occasional visits from the grazers. To the north is a wire fence separating the Manor House from the field.
- The field slopes from the south-east to the north-west.
- In the south west corner of the field is a water course which enters a small pond and then follows an underground route.
- Lidar image of the area suggests a deserted medieval settlement with what appear to be tofts and crofts.
- On walking the field the visible features are suggestive of house platforms at right angles to the Leyburn-Grinton road and with gardens to the south.

Pit Description:

- The pit was set out and de-turfed as usual. Physical planning of the precise location was difficult due to lack of readily locatable features nearby and so in common with one or two other pits the GPS location was exclusively used.
- Although the pit was excavated to a depth of 70cms, the natural layers had started to appear earlier and finds were only recovered up to a depth of c40cms with the earlier contexts being remarkable similar and rather lacking in features as they only contained a few small stones.

Finds:

Test Pit 56: 44 sherds, 170 grams

Only a few small sherds from this test pit were clearly later than the 18th century. Twenty seven were medieval, including an abraded fragment of rod handle. One fragment from the lowest level reached may be prehistoric.

Conclusions:

A good assemblage of medieval pottery with very little later material supports the theory of a deserted medieval settlement on this site.. The presence of one, potentially prehistoric, sherd from the lowest level of the pit is noteworthy.

Thanks:

Leo and Margaret Macknight were excellent hosts and in addition to refreshments brought out a series of interesting objects (including shell cases) that they had recovered from their land over the years. Thanks are also due to the diggers of the pit.

Note:

The images for TP56 have been recorded as SBDR15 rather than SBDG15

written by: Rob Nicholson
date: 28th October 2015

TP 56 Finds catalogue

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	dati ng	comment
2	black gl red	6	10		could be 18th century as there is little definitely later in this TP
2	med	1	3	13th/ 14th	orange/mid grey
2	med	2	5	13th	worn brownish
2	med gl	2	3	13th/ 14th	oxidised with yellow gl, buff with green gl
2	medieval buff	2	3	13th/ 14th	
2	ox med	1	6	13th/ 14th	flat, from base
2	pipe stem x4	0	0		all small thin frags
2	red	4	7	17th/ 18th ?	
2	white salt gl stonewar e	1	2	18th	hv
2	whitewar e	4	3		
3	blackwar e	1	22	16th/ 17th ?	in fact dark purplish brown, hard fired reduced poss iron gl early pm
3	med hard	4	43	14th ?	very hard mid/light greyish fabric
3	med misc	7	13	13th/ 14th	
3	medieval buff	1	6	13th/ 14th	
3	TVB type	5	22	13th/ 14th	bright pinkish orange, yellow gl over a thin white slip, bit of worn rod handle, paler pink with buff m

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	dati ng	comment
4	TVB type	2	3	13th/ 14th	
5	?	1	19		Possibly prehistoric

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