

SBDG15 GRINTON TEST PIT 60

Owners: Grinton Parish Council
Address: The Green, Waterford House
Date: 18th July, 2015
Dug By: Judith Mills, Stuart Baron, Anne Jowett, Hilary Fawcett, Ben Wilkinson, Heather Wilson, Gary Taylor

Position:

- Latitude 54°22'49.50"N Longitude 1°55'44.95"W
- Test Pit 60 was located on the green south of Waterford House and west of the cottages - Burnside and Cross Beck Cottage. The pit was north of the public footpath that is thought to be the original track giving access to the village of Grinton, and west of the current footbridge over the stream.
- The site was chosen to be as in line with the footpath and what appears to be a shallow wall adjacent to the stream (possibly an abutment for the old bridge) as possible without impeding the footpath and public right of way.

Pit Description:

- The pit area was marked out and de-turfed.
- The weather was mild, a few heavy showers caused the participants to take shelter under the trees. The wind was moderate.
- The owner of Waterford House (Keith Webster) indicated that the house was a barn conversion and the river level is much lower than it had been historically. Another local resident whose family had owned the barn indicated that we were digging at the back of the building and the only access into the barn on this side (the south side) was a fork hole. The midden and doors were all on the north side of the building.
- The dig progressed quickly - with the benefit of the big riddle. There were few finds in context 1 - some bone, pottery (transfer print) and glass. Context 2 had similar small number of finds - including bone / glass / metal / pottery and coal. Context 3 - had similar number and type of finds. Context 4 had very little - some white pottery, context 5 had no finds.
- The pit was finalised when 40 cm was reached. The composition of the ground was natural stone and subsoil with some clay present. As this did not appear to be the natural layer, a sondage was dug in the SE corner of the pit. No finds were excavated and the ground was becoming increasingly rocky. It was decided that this would be the extent of the dig, the context and sections were recorded and the pit back-filled.

Finds:

Test Pit 60: 311 sherds, 645 grams

This test pit produced the largest assemblage of pottery both by count and weight. None of the pottery could be confidently dated to earlier than the 19th century although there was one piece of clay pipe stem with a large bore suggesting a 17th c. date. Nearly 60% of the sherds were refined whitewares, the majority with some type of decoration (e.g. transfer printing, sponging etc) although with such fragmented material small, apparently plain, sherds are highly likely to be from decorated vessels. TP 60 also produced the largest group of white china (as opposed to white-glazed whitewares).

Conclusions:

The finds indicate some degree of habitation. We had hoped to find the edge of the ancient trackway and may well have been right on the northern edge of the track. On section 3/4 - the southern edge of the pit - adjacent to the footpath a line of stone is visible at the 20 to 25 cm level.

Thanks:

Thank you to the Parish Council for allowing SWAAG to dig the pit on the Green adjacent to Waterford House

written by: Anne Jowett
date: 25th July 2015

TP 60 Finds Catalogue

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	datin g	comment
1	black gl red	2	4		
1	brown gl buff	1	1		sl speckled, thin walled
1	china	15	23		plain
1	misc lpm	2	3		pinky buff
1	mottled ware	2	21		1 v small, other ?T pot rim brown mottled
1	pipe bowl frag	0	0		tiny
1	pipe stem x2	0	0	17th	one is tiny section, other is large bore
1	red	1	1		
1	red slipped	7	14		
1	stonew are	3	11		misc late pm (brown gl and buff)
1	tile	0	0		2 frags white gl tile
1	ungl red	3	13		1 is base
1	whitew are	26	38		plain
1	whitew are	20	39		other dec, mainly sponged
1	whitew are dec	28	46		tp, some v small
1	yellow	9	13		base, some blue bands
2	?	1	1		?ungl porcelain has imp N

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	datin g	comment
2	black gl red	2	3		
2	burnt	2	6		
2	china	19	63		1 is thick chunk with? lug handle but looks like china as opp to ew
2	cream ware?	1	1		
2	misc lpm	4	7		pinkish buff ext gl
2	mottled ware	3	7		
2	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
2	pipe stem x2	0	0		
2	red	1	2		bright orangey red rim ?ves type
2	red	1	0		tiny
2	red slipped	5	12		
2	stonew are	3	40		misc late
2	ungl red	6	12		
2	whitew are	26	35		plain
2	whitew are dec	27	46		tp
2	whitew are dec	24	22		sponge and painted, some sv as in [1]
2	yellow	13	25		
3	black gl buff	1	1		

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	datin g	comment
3	china	5	8		incl bit of 'Chelsea sprig'
3	cream ware	1	1		
3	red	1	0		tiny, trace of slip band
3	red slipped	5	62		rim and base (part reduced) others small
3	whitew are	10	10		plain
3	whitew are dec	15	27		
3	whitew are dec	6	8		mainly sponge
3	yellow	8	16		
4	whitew are	2	3		looks like rim of util jar

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