

SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT 8

Owners: Geoffrey Hope

Address: Becksides, Bottom of Mill Lane, Reeth

Date: 19th/20th July 2014

Dug By: Shirley Gale, Geoffrey Hope, Stephen Eastmead, Ben Wilkinson, Ben's grandfather Stephen, Joe, Richard Farmery and Andrea Dixon

Position:

- Becksides is situated on the south side of Mill Lane.
- Test pit dug in the lawn behind the property. This area had in the past been used as a market garden.
- Lat. 54° 23' 22.76" N, Long. 1° 56' 24.35" W

Pit Description:

- The pit was dug on a sloping lawn to the west of the property.
- Dark, small grained soil to depth of 20cm (contexts 1 & 2).
- Dark / brown soil along with some sand and flecks of charcoal to depth 30cm (context 3).
- Sandier soil with some small stones at depth 40cm (context 4).
- Encountered boulder clay at depth 50cm (context 5). Further contexts were dug to ascertain whether natural had been reached.
- Further context (6) dug at western half of the pit to depth 60cm consisted of clay with stones and sand.
- Further contexts (7 & 8) dug at north west quarter of pit to depth 80cm consisted of boulder clay, with stones and sand.
- Concluded that the natural had been reached at depth 50cm (context 5).

Finds:

Test Pit 8 : 145 sherds, 308 grams

Pottery was only recovered from contexts (1), (3) and (4). None was medieval but over 50% of the sherds were within the 17th/18th century date range as well as several clay pipe fragments. Sherds included two creamware plate rims and a Staffordshire type press-moulded rim. There were also three sherds of 'local' early post-medieval redware.

Conclusions:

This test pit highlighted the difficulties that can arise when digging on a sloping site, especially when raining.

Thanks:

Many thanks to Geoffrey Hope for allowing us to dig up his garden, and to Mrs. Hope for the refreshments.

written by: Richard Farmery
date: 16th October 2014

TP08 Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
1	brown gl stoneware	2	3	18th	1 may be Notts type
1	creamware?	16	12	?18th	
1	pearl?	1	4	e.19th	base with bit of handle
1	pipe stem x 2	0	0	17th/e.18th	
1	pipe stem x 6	0	0	?	
1	post-med ew	2	5	17th/18th?	light pinkish buff earthenware with some orange-brown gl, possibly an early post-med

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
					vessel
1	scratch blue	2	4	18th	bit of base, discoloured
1	tin-glazed	2	3	17th/18th	
1	white salt gl stoneware	3	3	18th	
3	blackware	3	7	18th?	
3	creamware	17	20	18th	frags of 2 rims and small bits of ring bases
3	pipe stem x 1	0	0	e. 18th?	
3	red	10	14	18th?	possibly some sherds same vessel as in (1) with some trailed slip dec
3	Staffs type	2	9	17th/18th	rim of press moulded dish and small piece of a hollow ves both slip dec
3	white salt gl st	5	18	18th	
4	creamware	2	3	18th	
4	local red	3	17	17th/18th	with green-brown gl.
4	pipe bowl frag	0	0	?18th	1 other v small bowl frag
4	pipe stem x 1	0	0	17th/e.18th	
4	red	2	1	18th?	?same ves as in other contexts
4	red slipped	2	9	18th	not the same ves, one has some brown swirls on the slipped surface, other is chipped rim
4	white salt gl st	2	1	18th	hollow ves

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