

SBDRI4 REETH TEST PIT TP09

Owners: Mo and Julia Usman
Address: Burgoyne Hotel, Reeth
Date: 17th and 18th May 2014
Dug By: David Brooks, Ben and Hilary Grisewood, Nigel Bailey, Rob McDonald, Fiona and Emily Rosher, David and Joe Ogden

Position:

- Hotel sited at the northern end of Reeth Green.
- Built in 1783, and extended at the ends in 1875 and 1923.
- Occupied by the Medical Officer of the Work House
- During WW2 housed troops from the Reconnaissance Regiment at the Reeth Battle School Headquarters.
- The first pit dug at the Burgoyne Hotel, and located at Latitude 54Deg 23min and 22.63 sec North, 1Deg 56min 31.74sec West

Pit Description:

- Dug on the SE corner of the front lawn
- Inspection suggested that the ground had at some time been built up from the level of Reeth Green.
- Ground relatively easy to dig and sieve.
- Sections show three layers: dark brown top soil, grey rubble; mix of black soil and brown clay.
- Context 3 (30cm) revealed irregular slabs of sandstone, possibly remnants of an old path. No other features were encountered.
- Bulk of material in the pit appeared to comprise a mixture of earth, stones, mortar and plaster - "builders' rubble" - which was loosely packed (note hole in Section drawings) and what had possibly been used to level the ground.
- The rubble was unstable; at Context 8, pit dimensions reduced to reduce risk of walls collapsing
- Excavation was terminated at Context 10 (90cm); it appeared that a black "top soil" was again being encountered.
- An exploratory trench half the size of the pit was excavated from Context 10 in the northern half of the pit. No features and excavated material largely soil plus brown clay.

Finds:

Test Pit 9 : 96 sherds, 208 grams

There were only a handful of small sherds from this Pit which could be earlier than the 19th century.

- Small sherds of glass and pottery; butchered bone; metal; wire; clay pipe stems; coal found throughout the pit above context 9, thereafter nothing found.
- In Context 2 through 7, substantial quantities of lime mortar and lime plaster (some painted) were found, suggestive of the material being "builders" rubble."
- The Finds did not appear to be segregated by Context and date, further supporting the suggestion that the excavated material comprised some form of back fill.
- See Finds Catalogue for full analysis.

Conclusions:

The present front garden of the Burgoyne Hotel would appear to have been formed in stages through time, probably having at some point being built up from the level of Reeth Green using at least in part what might best be described as “builders rubble.” The rubble contained large amounts of lime mortar and lime plaster, in addition to sherds of pottery, and glass, pieces of metal, wire, clay pipes, etc. Finds were distributed through the contexts, without apparent segregation according to date; only a handful of the sherds could be earlier than the 19th century. Also, of course there is no evidence from the excavated material as to the origin of the rubble.

Thanks:

Our thanks go to Mo and Julia for permitting us to dig up their front lawn; to the staff of the Hotel for looking after us and to the residents for putting up with us whilst they had coffee in the sun, but we hope that they found what we were doing to be of interest. Thank you everyone.

Written by: David Brooks

Date: 15th October, 2014

TP09 Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
1	whiteware	5	6		transfer print
2	yellow	3	2		2 have white slip bands
2	whiteware dec	15	19		mainly transfer
2	whiteware	13	25		misc plain
2	stoneware	2	11	?	off white
2	scratch blue?	1	0	18th	sgrafitto dec
2	red slipped	4	28		
2	red	2	3		
2	porcelain	1	0		
2	pearlw?	1	1		painting dec
2	creamware	5	6	18th	
2	china	2	3		
2	black gl red	1	5		rolled rim
3	yellow	1	1		with blue band
3	whiteware	11	15		
3	ungl red	2	3	?	
3	stoneware	1	1		
3	refined red	1	0		small rim with white int slip and ext slip bands
3	red slipped	1	5		
3	red	4	7		
3	mottled gl	2	3	?	white fabric with light brown with darker brown streaks
3	black gl red	2	3		
3	?	1	0		
4	whiteware	1	1		rim - plain
4	white stoneware	1	1		not salt gl
4	red slipped	1	1		
5	creamware?	2	4		
6	whiteware	1	3		
6	ungl red	1	17		flower pot, or could be flake of tile
6	red slipped	1	2		
6	red	1	5		?chip of floor tile
6	brown gl stoneware	1	1	18th?	with impressed wavy lines
6	black gl red	1	3		
7	white stoneware	1	5		?jam jar
8	whiteware	2	16		flaked upper part of dish rim with blue marbling, late 19th

For the purposes of the pottery analysis, we have defined the following historical periods; Roman 1st to mid 5th C; Medieval 13th and early 14th C; Late Medieval - mid 14th, 15th and 16th C

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