

## **SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT 11**

**Owners:** Mike and Sheila Keenan

**Address:** School House, Reeth

**Date:** 17 May 2014

**Dug By:** Mike and Sheila Keenan, Graham Smith, Gael, Ruth and Kathryn Lindsey, Noah and Charlotte

### **Position:**

- In the north-east corner of the cultivated rear garden of School House, Reeth.
- School House is adjacent to the (originally Quaker) Reeth primary school at the top of the steep hill on the road leading west out of Reeth village towards Healaugh. Like the school, the house was inserted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century into steeply sloping fields enclosed from the former Reeth West Field where traces of lynchets are visible above, below and alongside the building and gardens.
- 54°23'16.83"N, 1°56'29.78"W, altitude 237m AOD.

### **Pit Description:**

- The pit was dug and recorded in accord with the HEFA guidelines.
- Ground easy to dig and sieve.
- Contexts 1-3 showed mainly soil (60-70%) with loose natural stones and mainly modern waste (small-to-medium fragments of firewaste, mortar, brick, glass and ceramics).
- The northern part of Context 3 showed a slight change in fill towards a denser concentration of small-to-medium stones and a change towards light-brown soil.
- Natural clay was reached at Context 4 (80% clay, confirmed by an additional 10cm part-spit in a corner of the TP which yielded only clay).

### **Finds:**

Test Pit 11: 51 sherds, 114 grams

Most of the pottery sherds from this test pit were unglazed red earthenware, probably flower pot. There was one small fragment possibly of an early post-medieval redware.

Other finds were consistent with household waste and builders rubble.

The finds did not appear to be segregated by Context and date, supporting the hypothesis of a well-dug garden context.

### **Conclusions:**

- The dig went well
- The rear garden of School House, originally dug into lynchett fields would appear to have been cultivated to a reasonable depth over time, and possibly built up over the natural clay, resulting in a top-soil and sub-surface with finds and household/building waste distributed through Contexts without apparent segregation by type or date.

**Thanks:** to Mike and Sheila Keenan

written by: Peter Denison-Edson

date: 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014

## TP II Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
1	black gl red	1	2		
1	ungl red	18	33		some maybe cbm, otherwise flower pot!
1	whitew	2	1		
2	early red?	1	2	17th/18th	rather worn, dark brown gl ext and some thin yellowish/green int.
2	floor/wall tile?	1	9		white gl
2	late pm	2	5		buff fabric with cream coloured gl but not creamware.
2	ungl red	20	56		some maybe cbm, otherwise flower pot!
2	whiteware	5	4		
3	ungl red	1	2		

## 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

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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