

SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT XX

Owners: Ray and Jane Davies
Address: Garden House, Back Lane
Date: 17th/18th May 2014
Dug By: Saturday - Edward and Oliver Durham, with mum, Charlotte, young Loveday and labrador Hugo; Joe Ogden with dad David; Doug Waugh.
Sunday - Andrew Neate with dad Jeremy, Mandy Beckwith and Doug Waugh. Assisted by Mike Walton, Miles Johnson, James Spry, Rob Nicholson and Philip Bastow.

Position:

- In the Orchard of Garden House, 60mtrs below the house, in a garden that stretches from Back Lane down towards the river Swale.
- The site was selected to be reasonably central, avoiding proximity to orchard trees, and relatively undisturbed. There was a shed to the NW, a wall to the E, a vegetable garden to the W and a greenhouse/potting shed to the S.
- The adjoining field contained a disused well and unattributed earthworks.
- Lat: 54°23'13.92"N Long: 1°56'38.03"W

Pit Description:

- Digging and progress according to the ACA step-by-step guide.
- An easily-worked darkish soil changed to a lighter colour in the third context (after 30cms.)
- The fifth context was the only one to contain any significant stones (15%).
- Charcoal and small pieces of coal were found throughout the dig, to greater and lesser degree (each context recorded as 1% bar number 2 where it was estimated at 3%)
- A mattock was used on occasion, but mainly to educate diggers in its use.
- Roots did cause some issues, including misleading us as to what they were and difficulties cleaning the pit.
- The natural was reached at a depth of approx. 55cm.

Finds:

Test Pit 14 : 86 sherds, 155 grams

There was a fragment of late medieval reduced ware from (5). Context (4) produced two fragments of creamware, and some black glazed redware which could also be 18th century, as are a small fragment of tin-glazed earthenware from (3) and one of scratch blue stoneware in (2). Two clay pipe bowls with cross-hatched hearts indicate later 19th century activity.

Conclusions:

- The dig was conducted in good weather and finished on the afternoon of the second day.

- Most of the diggers were young Archaeologists and their families. The dig was kept as informal as possible and used as an educational experience so that each digger enjoyed as varied a number of activities as possible. This, of course, included completing the reports.
- It was difficult to reach significant conclusions over the finds. The finding of nails and small bits of ironwork in contexts 2 and 3 along with the ever-present small pieces of charcoal gave rise to speculation this might be associated with a blacksmiths.
- However the area has obviously been cultivated over many years and remains may often simply be the detritus of human occupation.

Thanks:

- We were extremely lucky in that we could not have been better looked after than we were by Ray and Jane, for whom nothing was too much trouble.
- Not only were we given access to a splendid outside toilet with all the facilities, but very special home-made refreshments arrived just as they were needed. Our apologies for the toilet being undoubtedly left in a worse condition that we found it!
- Ray and Jane also took a keen interest in what we were doing and finding: it is always good to be able to repay site owners with information.

written by: Doug Waugh
date: 14th October 2014

TP 14 Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
1	whiteware	1	1		
1	china	2	5		1 has applied sprig
2	whiteware	24	22		
2	ungl red	3	4		
2	stoneware	1	2		grey, probably jam jar
2	scratch blue	1	2	18th	rim ?bowl
2	red slipped	1	2		
2	pipe stem x 7	0	0		
2	pipe bowl frags x 6	0	0		2 have cross hatched hearts so later 19th c.
2	other	1	1		type of yellow?
2	factory slip	1	4	post 1810	rim of ves with wormed dec
2	china	1	2		
2	black gl red	2	3		
3	yellow	2	2		
3	whiteware	15	9		incl bit of shell edge rim
3	tin glazed	1	1	18th	
3	stoneware	1	4		
3	red slipped	2	4		
3	red	5	8		strap handle, thin frags
3	pipe stem x 3	0	0		
3	pipe bowl frag	0	0		possibly 18th
3	china	1	6		plain

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
3	black gl red	5	4		
4	whiteware	1	1		
4	red slipped	1	2		
4	red	2	1		
4	pipe stem x 2	0	0		
4	creamware	2	8	18th	flaked moulded rim
4	brown gl stoneware	1	24		
4	black gl red	7	23		2 rims and handle, probably 18th
5	late medieval reduced	1	9	15th/16th	
5	burnt white	1	1		

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