

SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT 22

Owners: Public space

Address: Reeth Green

Date: 12.6.14

Dug By: SWAAG Schools Team and children of Arkengarthdale School and Richmond Methodist School

Position:

- In front of the bus stop on NW corner of Reeth Green
- 54°23'21.60"N 1°56'32.41"W

Pit Description:

- The pit was dug following HEFA guidelines
- 100% of spoil was sieved
- The pit was dug and supervised by a SWAAG team plus a maximum of 6 children per shift in four one-hour shifts over the course of the day
- The children were actively involved in digging, sieving and washing finds, with constant adult supervision
- Context 1 was grass on the surface then soil with some clinker which was discarded.
- Context 2 was soil with some coal and clinker. Finds included a 1928 penny and a clog iron.
- Context 3 was soil, 5% stone. Finds included 2 clog irons and some bone pieces.
- Context 4 was 70% soil, 30% stones. There was a patch of gravel
- Context 5 was 70% soil with some gravel and a large stone. A hole appeared in the base of the trench at this point which excited much speculation.
- We continued digging down around the hole and discovered a large number of flat stones forming a construction of some kind (see detailed drawing)
- When we carefully removed the largest flat stone a structure resembling a field drain or culvert was revealed.
- We carefully explored the space to left and right of the opening. It was empty apart from a little soil and a large piece of butchered animal bone.
- The feature was photographed and drawn before the pit was back-filled.

Finds:

Test Pit 22: 30 sherds, 67 grams

There is no clear evidence of anything earlier than the 19th century from this pit.

Conclusions:

- Finds suggested domestic refuse.
- Contexts 3-6 seemed to consist of previously-dug soil, consistent with the building of a drain or culvert.

Thanks:

Thanks to children, teachers and staff of Arkengarthdale and Richmond Methodist Schools for their enthusiastic participation in today's activities, of which the actual dig was a part.

Our thanks are also due to Reeth Parish Council and the Green Wardens for allowing us to put test pits in Reeth Green.

written by: Sue Nicholson

date: 17.10.14

TP22 Finds Catalogue:

| context | type | count | weight | dating | comment |
|---------|-----------------------|-------|--------|--------|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | whiteware | 17 | 27 | | some transf some sponged stamped |
| 2 | red slipped | 1 | 12 | | rim |
| 2 | whiteware | 1 | 4 | | possibly utilitarian jam jar type ves |
| 2 | mottled | 1 | 2 | | pale fabric |
| 2 | brown gl stoneware | 1 | 0 | | tiny |
| 2 | pipe stem x 5 | 0 | 0 | | |
| 3 | black gl red | 5 | 18 | | chunky |
| 3 | red | 2 | 2 | | |
| 4 | red | 1 | 2 | | tiny trace of slip dec |
| 4 | whiteware | 1 | 0 | | |

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