

SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT 23

Owners: Paul and Judy Roger

Address: Victoria Cottage

Date: 21.6.14

Dug By: Shirley Gale, Paul and Judy Roger, Emma & Christopher Watson, James & Jonathan Binns, Ann Russell and Brian Dunn.

Position:

- In the back garden, lawned area to the SW corner of the outbuilding
- 54°23'20.22"N 1°56'37.40"W

Pit Description:

- The pit was dug following HEFA guidelines
- 100% of spoil was sieved
- Context 1 was grass and soil. Finds included glass, solid fuel briquette, plastic toys, clothes peg, metal, animal bone, mortar coke and charcoal.
- Context 2 was soil with a few small stones, no features. Animal bone, nails, clinker, coal, wall plaster, mortar, and pot were found. One sherd appeared to be Medieval.
- Context 3 had no features, dark and stony topsoil. On the NE side was a mass of small bones suggesting a cat or small dog. There was lots of burnt material on the W side as well as glass, clinker, coal and plastic plant pot.
- Context 4 was mottled in colour, 30% clay. Some charcoal was found with sheep bone and a variety of pottery
- Context 5 was becoming more clay-like. Glass, pipestem, fire waste and lime mortar were found as well as pottery. One sherd tentatively identified as Medieval.
- Context 6 was 70% clay, no features. Glass, coal and charcoal were found.
- Context 7 was 80% clay. Glass, corroded metal and fire waste.
- Context 8 was glacial orange in colour, 90% clay. There was a piece of glass 2cm long, some charcoal and coke.
- Context 9 had no features and was 74% clay, 25% stones. One stone was the size and shape of a cobble. There was a hammer stone of millstone grit and a possible microlith as well as slates, charcoal, coke and animal bone.
- Natural was reached at 100cm

Finds:

Test Pit 23: 129 sherds, 292 grams

Nine of the sherds were medieval of broadly 13th century date, six of them coming from context (5). Creamware and a few other sherds of probable 18th century types occurred, particularly in context (3), so it is possible that some of the less closely datable sherds are also 18th century. Two fragments of heavily patinated green bottle glass from (3) could also fit into this date range. Otherwise a range of transfer printed wares and other broadly 19th century 'refined' whitewares were present.

Conclusions:

- Pottery evidence suggests habitation since Medieval times.
- The distribution of the pot, 13th Century in context 2 and 18th/19th Century dates in context 5 suggest that the garden has been well cultivated over the years

Thanks:

We would like to thanks Paul and Judy Roger for allowing us to put the pit in their garden and the very welcome refreshments.

written by: Sue Nicholson

date: 26.10.14

TP 23 Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
1	red slipped	2	2		flakes
1	creamware	4	3	18th	
1	red	3	2		
1	whiteware tp	4	8		transfer printed, same vessel in (2)?
1	miscellaneous	10	9		i.e. misc late post med
1	ungl red	1	1		
2	medieval	1	4	13th	orange buff fabric
2	black gl red	3	8		
2	red slipped	2	14		
2	creamware	6	7	18th	
2	whiteware tp	10	26		transfer printed, rim with classical profile.
2	whiteware	16	31		
2	china	2	7		
3	creamware	12	50	18th	
3	whiteware	18	30		
3	whiteware	1	7		base, painted dec
3	black gl red	1	19		handle ?tea pot
3	water worn	1	7		very worn
3	red slipped	4	12		1 main bit
3	white salt gl	1	2	18th	
3	mottled gl	1	1	18th	red fabric
3	slipware	1	2	18th	red fabric with slip dot
3	ungl red	2	3		
3	Local red?	1	1	17th/18th	red fabric with greenish gl
3	?	1	1		
3	pipe stem x 3			18th/19th	
4	medieval	2	7	13th c.	quartz gritted
4	creamware	5	5	18th	
4	red	3	3		1 has slip
4	black gl red	2	2		
4	whiteware	1	0		
4	pipe stem x 1			19th	
5	medieval buff	3	8	13th	one also with some grey
5	medieval pink	3	9	13th	
5	whiteware	1	1		
5	creamware	1	0	18th	
5	pipe stem x 1			18th/19th	

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.