

SBDR14 REETH TEST PIT25

Owners: Jackie and Jim
Address: Buck Hotel, Reeth
Date: 21st June 2014
Dug By: Ric Carter, Jackie Snow, Sue Nicholson, Mike Walton, Linda Parrot, Andrea Dixon, Richard Farmery, Graham Smith, David Brooks plus advice and guidance from Miles Johnson and veterinarian guidance from Paul Roger.

Position:

- The Buck Hotel is located north of Reeth Green on the corner of the Silver Street and the Arkengarthdale Road.
- It was originally a coaching inn and dates back to 1760
- The Test Pit was in the back garden of the Hotel near to the wall at the south side.
- The garden backs on to the Hotel and onto the old buildings that run along the north side of Silver Street.
- The garden may at some time have been an orchard.
- We were advised that in the past (18th/19thC?) a butchers shop and yard had been adjacent to the Hotel garden, and possibly, in part incorporated into it
- The Test Pit was located at 54 degrees 23 minutes 23.86 seconds North and 1 degree 56 minutes and 37.61 seconds West.

Pit Description:

- The Pit was easy to dig and sieve throughout its depth.
- The earth was consistently a mixture of sand, soil and clay, and not a lot of stone.
- A gravel layer was evident in the northern half of the Pit in contexts 2/3. It was interpreted as being the remains of a (20thC?) path
- From the first context there were indications (soil colours) that the Pit contained areas of soils of differing compositions.
- Excavation of the Pit suggested that the earth had been worked over time.
- Dog and cattle bones were revealed in contexts 6 and 8 respectively. See the enclosed record and detailed description of the Pit, written by Miles Johnson, YDNPA
- Excavations were stopped at context 8 (plus a little) as it was became evident that the Pit was a in an area of well worked soil, and possibly even on the edge of an animal disposal area.

Finds:

Test Pit 25: 16 sherds, 46 grams

There were ten sherds of medieval pottery from this pit including a jar rim of the 'bifid' form typical of Tees Valley wares. All the other sherds, except one from (3) were, or are likely to be, 18th century.

For a full analysis of the finds please refer to the enclosed Finds Catalogue

- A selection of sherds of pottery, glass, clay pipe stems, were distributed throughout the Pit.
- The distribution of the sherds was random throughout the Pit, confirming the view that the area had been worked over time.
- Two pieces of worked flint, plus other flint (chert?) fragments were found.
- The enclosed report from Miles Johnson describes more fully the structural arrangement of the Pit and the bones which were found.

Conclusions:

Pottery Finds ranged from 13th century up to and including the 18th/19th century distributed more or less randomly through the Pit column, suggesting that the ground had been reworked at some time(s).

The Pit contained bones from a dog and from cattle. The near identical size of the cattle bones and their placement in the pit suggests they were derived from the same animal. Disposal of articulated cattle remains (at least in a post-Medieval context) leans toward the suggestion that they were unfit for human consumption. The bones might add weight to the suggestion that the Hotel garden had at some time been associated with the butchers yard.

Pieces of worked flint were found in the Pit; these are considered to be indicative of prehistoric activity in the area.

Thanks: Our thanks to Jackie and Jim for permitting us to dig up their garden, and to Miles Johnson and Paul Roger for their help with the analysis of the Pit and the bones.

written by: David Brooks

date: 26th October, 2014

TP 25 Finds Catalogue:

context	type	count	weight	dating	comment
2	tin-glazed	1	1	17th/18th	blue on blue
2	medieval buff	2	3	13th	
2	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
3	whiteware	1	1		blue inside so poss mixing bowl
3	pipe stem x 2	0	0		
4	late medieval reduced	1	2	15th	
4	medieval buff	1	5	13th	
4	medieval misc	3	9	13th/14th	worn
4	black gl	1	2	?18th	seems to be a mix of red and white clay so may be marbled
5	medieval	1	2	13th	pale orange fabric
6	red	1	1		
7	medieval buff	1	2	13th	
7	pipe stem x 2	0	0	17th/e. 18th	
8	Tees Valley	1	16	13th	'Bifid' rim in pinkish fabric with ext margin/surface buff, typical TV.
8	white salt gl stoneware	1	1	18th	
8	creamware	1	1	18th	

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