

SBDR15 REETH TEST PIT 45

Owners: William & Felicity Manning
Address: The Nook, Reeth
Date: 16th & 17th May 2015
Dug By: Shirley Gale (leader & recorder), Garry Taylor, Heather Taylor, Anne Russell, John Russell (geologist), William Manning, Philip Bastow

Position:

- Latitude 54°23'16.52"N Longitude 1°56'39.45"W
- Test pit sited in garden

Pit Description:

- Pit sited in grassland thought by owners to have been undisturbed since use as allotments during WWII 'Dig for Victory'.
- Pit dug and recorded in accordance with the HEFA guidelines.
- Context 1 excavated to an average depth of 6cm in turf and vegetable soil.
- Context 2 excavated to an average depth of 11cm in vegetable soil with a few small stones.
- Context 3 excavated to an average depth of 23cm in vegetable soil with a few small stones and a few flecks of charcoal.
- Context 4 excavated to an average depth of 32cm in soil with a few small stones and a few flecks of charcoal.
- Context 5 excavated to a depth of 40cm in soil with small stones and flecks of charcoal.
- Context 6 excavated to an average depth of 50cm in soil with clay, stones and flecks of charcoal.
- Context 7 excavated to a depth of 60cm in stony soil with clay.
- Context 8 excavated to a depth of 70cm in shale, clay and soil with medium sized stones.
- Context 9 excavated to an average depth of 79cm in shale and clay with stones and cobbles.
- Base of Context 9 comprised large boulder occupying northern half of pit with shale and clay to the south.

Finds:

Test Pit 45 : 125 sherds, 141 grams

Three sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from this test pit. There were also a few fragments of early post-medieval date but the rest of the assemblage was broadly 19th century though highly fragmented. Context 3 contained a button cap inscribed 'North Yorks Volunteers' and in Context 4 the backplate to the button cap was found.

Conclusions:

- The dig went well and was completed by mid-day on the second day.
- The team worked well together demonstrating an efficiency of methodology gained through joint experience from previous digs.
- Newcomers Garry & Heather were a great asset demonstrating both enthusiasm and aptitude – they clearly enjoyed their day with us on Saturday.
- All excavated material was sieved
- Finds were as summarised above and listed in the catalogue attached below.
- Consulting archaeologist Jim Brightman, who attended from time to time to advise and assist, was hopeful that cobbles found within Context 9 may comprise medieval landscaping, however -
- Resident geologist John Russell was able to confirm base of Context 9 as being natural base comprising deposits consistent with glacial river beds as found elsewhere locally.

Written by: William Manning

Date: 8th July 2015

TP 45 Finds catalogue

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	datin g	comment
2	pipe stem x1	0	0		
2	red slipped	3	3		
2	whiteware	11	5		some tp
2	yellow	2	1		
3	?	2	5		
3	black gl red	3	3		
3	brown gl stoneware	1	0		
3	china	2	6		tp
3	creamware?	14	10		small flakes mostly
3	pipe bowl fragx4	0	0		
3	pipe stem x9	0	0		
3	red	3	4		misc
3	red slipped	3	9		rim
3	Staffs type	1	1	18th c.	small hv slip trail ext
3	stoneware	1	1		pale buff
3	whiteware	34	19		misc
3	yellow	6	5		
4	?	3	3		
4	black gl red	2	15		
4	local pm	1	6	17th/ 18th c.	
4	pipe bowl frag 2	0	0		
4	pipe stem x5	0	0		
4	red	2	3		

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	datin g	comment
4	whiteware	21	17		
4	yellow	2	2		with white strips
5	?	1	1		worn red frag
5	china	1	2		
5	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
5	pipe stem x2	0	0		1 has spur and initials apparently JK
5	red?	1	1		has metallic gl as Cistercian, this ungl int
5	stoneware	1	2	18th?	thin base
5	whiteware	1	0		
6	late medieval reduced	1	7	14th/ 15th	buff surface, only patch gl
6	medieval buff	2	10	13th/ 14th	Everted jar rim and sherd prob sv
6	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
6	pipe stem x1	0	0		

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

Notes on the Pottery:

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. For most redwares a date category has not been assigned. 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 (lpm) background noise category.

A few more abbreviations have crept into the catalogue. I hope most will be obvious (eg. gl for glaze or glazed, misc for miscellaneous, int (inside) and ext (outside)). Let me know if not.

Some explanations of wording used in the 'types' column

- *red slipped* is the standard post-medieval kitchenware with internal white slip coating
- *red slip dec* means there is trailing or banding rather than an overall slip coat
- *red* on its own is any plain glazed red earthenware
- *black glazed red* is 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 kitchenwares, 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 wares probably with a fairly local source. Similar types elsewhere in North Yorkshire are called Ryedale and Osmotherley type 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.

Apart from the late reduced wares the medieval pottery present was mainly buff, buff/pink or more iron-rich orange/oxidised wares. Although there was much that was not clearly diagnostic most of this material can probably be described as Tees Valley ware.

Jenny Vaughan

September 2015