

SBDR15 REETH TEST PIT 46

Owners: Reeth Parish Council

Address: Reeth Green

Date: 17th May 2015

Dug By: Alan Mills, Judith Mills, Shirley Gale, Lesley Wolsey, David Brooks, Sue Nicholson, Rob Nicholson, Ann Russell, John Russell, Andy Jarvis, Jan Jarvis

Position:

- Outside what is now Garden House Pottery and formerly one of at least two smithies in Reeth, to the north east of the Congregational Chapel
- Latitude 54°23'17.60"N; Longitude 1°56'30.98"W

Pit Description:

- The pit was dug and recorded in accord with the HEFA guidelines
- All soil was sieved.
- Contexts 1 – 4 produced a large amount of slag and corroded metal, with much less in the lower contexts.
- Several of the metal finds were identifiable as horse shoes, nails, cleaver.
- There was glazed pottery in all contexts with glass and animal bone present in most.
- Context 4 produced a significant amount of lime mortar.
- Context 5 produced a shallow layer of rough cobbles, identified as a possible surface.
- The dig was stopped at a depth of 70 cm due to time constraints. It is believed that we were still in a redeposited layer.

Finds:

Test Pit 46 : 127 sherds, 414 grams

There was no medieval pottery from this test pit but, although sherds were small, there were clear indications of activity earlier than the 19th century, e.g. 18th century type stoneware, tin-glazed earthenware, Staffordshire type slipware. It is possible therefore that some of black-glazed redware which was a fairly large component of this group, is also in this date range.

Conclusions:

There is no evidence of any activity in the medieval and late medieval periods. Thereafter there is good evidence of occupation or other significant activity in the 17th century and through into the modern period. Context 4 produced a significant amount of lime mortar, suggesting the demolition of an earlier building nearby, possibly in the 18th C; this would be consistent with the deeds of the nearby Congregational Chapel which indicate that a two-roomed dwelling-house was partly demolished between 1759 and 1797 to become the

blacksmith's. It is possible that, as the natural was not reached, earlier dating evidence was below the excavated level.

Thanks: To Reeth Parish Council and the Green Wardens for permission to dig.

written by: Judith Mills
date: 20th October 2015

TP 46 Finds catalogue

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	dati ng	comment
1	black gl red	1	4		
1	cbm	0	0		numerous flakes of red cbm - tile/ brick
1	china	7	7		
1	stoneware	1	1		flake util
1	wall tile?	2	4		chips coarse fabric with blue- green painting
2	black gl red	4	19		
2	china	3	5		
2	pipe stem x2	0	0		
2	ref black	2	12		joining ring base
2	stoneware	3	31		misc util
2	stoneware coarse	5	38		
2	whiteware	5	12		misc
3	black gl red	5	28		
3	brown gl stoneware	1	31	?	
3	china	1	1		
3	pipe bowl frag	0	0		plain except for along mould line ? 18th
3	pipe stem x4	0	0		small
3	red slipped	1	2		
3	whiteware	13	24		some tp some sponge and blue edge rim
3	yellow	12	16		with white and blue bands
4	black gl red	1	3		
4	creamware?	1	3		

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	dati ng	comment
4	stoneware?	1	1		
4	tin glazed	1	3	18th ?	rim of hv, light blue with blue painting and red brown line
5	?	1	7		thick light red with some gl x1, flat ?pot
5	black gl red	18	52		
5	brown gl stoneware	1	2		
5	china	1	1		rim
5	Notts type stonew?	1	4	18th	mug handle
5	pipe stem x2	0	0	17th	
5	pipe stem x4	0	0		
5	red	3	5		
5	red slipped	1	3		
5	whiteware	13	18		some could be creamw
5	yellow	2	4		joining flakes small handle
6	black gl red	4	25		base
6	local pm	2	5	17th / 18th	
6	pipe stem x1	0	0	17th / 18th	
6	pm reduced	1	23	?	base glx2
6	red slip dec	1	4	17th	light red with trace of slip trailing
6	red slipped	1	3		
6	whiteware	2	2		
7	black gl red	1	1		

cont xt	type	Cou nt	weig ht	dati ng	comment
7	pipe bowl fragx2	0	0	17th	
7	red slip dec	2	7	17th / 18th	1 with trailed dec, 1 rim with band of slip
7	Staffs type	1	2	18th c.	rim
7	white salt gl stoneware	1	1	18th	

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