

SBDR15 REETH TEST PIT 49

Owners: Reeth Congregational Church
Address: Congregational Church Garden Reeth
Date: 16th June 2015
Dug By: SWAAG members and Richmond Methodist School

Position:

- Latitude 54°23'16.90"N Longitude 1°56'31.27"W
- Garden of Reeth Congregational Church

Pit Description:

- The pit was dug following HEFA guidelines
- 100% of spoil was sieved
- Context 1 was grass and subsoil with a variety of materials present including pottery, tobacco pipe stem, modern electrical plugs indicative of various periods.
- Context 2 was fine garden soil. Finds included coal, clinker, glass, slate, pencil lead, bone and plaster/render
- Context 3 was also soil and had around 5% small stones. Finds included glass, coal, mortar, fruit stone, slate, a clay tobacco pipe (CTP) bowl, partly burnt, metal and clinker
- Context 4 was similar ie worked garden soil. Finds included coal, a lead object, bone, a tooth, mortar, glass, some pot (possibly Medieval) a buckle, fragments of a CTP bowl and charcoal.
- Context 5 was the same worked soil to begin with but as the context progressed the soil became more yellow in colour. We found charcoal, mortar, coal/ clinker, Med/ post Med pot and some metal objects.
- Context 6 was clayey soil. We found one piece of pot, charcoal and coal.
- At this point the children had to leave to get back to school in time for transport home.
- Context 7 was 30% clay, 65% soil, 5% stones. Finds included a piece of galena, some roof tile, charcoal and pot.
- Context 8 was 95% clay and there were no finds.
- Context 9 was also clay and there were no finds. At this point the decision was made to close the pit. as we considered the natural layers had been reached.

Finds:

Test Pit 49 : 160 sherds, 434 grams

Although the great majority of fragments were late post-medieval (i.e. broadly 19th c.) most of them were very small, whereas the medieval component (15 sherds) consisted of some quite substantial fragments. Only one was a rim but this was of the 'bifid' Tees Valley type. The group probably ranged in date from broadly 13th to 15th centuries. However, there were also several

fragments of local early post-medieval wares and one or two sherds of 18th century types indicating a degree of continuity not so evident in other test pits.

Conclusions:

The finds assemblage and distribution reflected the previous use of the land as a vegetable garden. From the children's perspective this was a great pit to dig with lots of interesting finds. They all worked hard and were enthusiastic about what they found. We were also helped on the day by Jane Sammells of Curriculum Kitchen (an Educational re-enactor) who supervised finds washing and kept up a lively dialogue with the children.

Thanks:

We must thank the children and teachers from Richmond Methodist Primary School, those SWAAG members who came and helped out and also Tracy Little for organising our access to the Garden and Hall facilities on the day.

written by: Sue Nicholson
date: 27.10.15

TP 49 Finds catalogue

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
0	TV iron rich	1	13	13th/ 14th	flaked bifid rim, red brown
1	black gl red	2	2		
1	china	1	1		
1	creamware	3	3		
1	medieval	1	2	13th/ 14th	dk grey with white ext
1	medieval buff	1	1	13th/ 14th	thin
1	pearlw?	1	3		moulded flake of rim
1	pipe stem x2	0	0		
1	red	1	3	17th/ 18th	epm
1	red	2	4		misc ?date
1	red	2	4		rim
1	stoneware	1	3		util
1	whiteware	12	7		most with some dec, some v small
2	?	5	3		
2	black gl red	2	7		
2	late medieval reduced	1	8	14th/ 15th	
2	local pm	2	10	17th/ 18th	1 is abraded base, both have greenish gl and orange fabric
2	red	9	9		2 have traces slip
2	scratch blue?	1	0	?18th	poss 18th c. stonew
2	stoneware	1	3		thick chip

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
2	whiteware	29	22		misc, incl some transf p and other dec
3	?	1	7	early pm?	pinkish fabric with white surfaces, splayed base
3	black gl red	2	12		incl small handle
3	local pm	3	10	17th/ 18th	pinkish buff with dull greenish brown gl
3	oxidised	2	4	?	not sure
3	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
3	pipe stem x2	0	0		1 has totally illegible mark
3	red	2	2		
3	red slipped	2	3		
3	white salt gl stoneware	1	6	18th	1 is tiny other is base with some scraffitto and colour
3	whiteware	14	25		re. wgt - 1 sh has concretion
4	black gl buff	1	0		tiny
4	black gl red?	1	1		burnt/reduced
4	brown gl stoneware	1	7		rim - 'modern'
4	late medieval reduced?	1	4	14th/ 15th	chip
4	late pm	2	3		misc
4	local pm	1	13	17th/ 18th	pale orange/buff
4	local pm?	4	9	17th/ 18th?	light red with greenish gl
4	orange	1	2	17th/ 18th?	

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
4	pipe bowl frag	0	0		small
4	pipe stem x1	0	0		
4	red	6	7		brown gl
4	red slipped	1	3		
4	Staffs type	1	2	18th c.	
4	stoneware	2	1	18th?	v small
4	ungl red hard	1	4		rim
4	whiteware	15	8		misc - some tp and sponge
4	yellow?	1	7		
5	black gl red	1	4		
5	Cistercian?	1	1		burnt
5	late medieval reduced	1	15	14th/ 15th	pale with black int surface
5	medieval reduced - coarse	2	19	15th?	
5	mottled ware?	1	0		small flake
5	whiteware	1	1		
6	?	1	0		
6	early pm?	1	8	17th/ 18th?	oxidised, flat frag with green and brown gl 1 side
6	late medieval reduced	2	13	14th/ 15th	
7	late medieval reduced	2	76	14th/ 15th	

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
7	late medieval reduced?	1	45	14th/15th	worn, part oxidised from a base
7	medieval oxidised	2	4	13th/14th	1 ?TVB

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