

SBDR15 REETH TEST PIT 61

Owners: David Allinson
Address: 29 Langhorne Drive, Reeth
Date: 19th July, 2015
Dug By: Judith Mills, Stuart Baron, Anne Jowett, Hilary Fawcett, Dave Brooks, Becky Swift and Joan.

Position:

- Latitude 54°23'17.60"N Longitude 1°56'39.01"W
- Test Pit 61 was located in the garden of 29 Langhorne Drive. It was located to the east of the footpath leading to the property and east of the adjoining property 28 Langhorne Drive. The garden is south of Back Lane. The area was lawned surrounded by borders with shrubs.

Pit Description:

- The pit area was marked out and de-turfed. We had the assistance of a young Robin, who sat on a low branch of a shrub and supervised the operation. Once all the turf was removed it inspected the pit (see photographs). The Robin stayed in the local for the duration of the dig - being fed worms when we found them.
- The weather was mild, a few light showers passed through in the early morning. The wind was moderate causing some issues with finds trays until some larger stones were excavated.
- The home owner indicated that the area had been employed as allotments during the Second World War.
- The dig progressed quickly - with the benefit of the big sieve. The pit was composed of hard compact soil with lens's of clay interspersed throughout the contexts. There was very little stone in any of the contexts, number three having the most at approximately 5%.
- The finds were numerous in all contexts. There was a variety of glass, pottery, bone, metal items, coal and lime. Of particular note were medieval pottery - found in both context 1 and context 5, a clog iron in context 4, blue and white glass 4 and 5, clay pipe bowl with lettering and pattern in 4 and a partial skeleton of a kitten in 5. The finds were totally mixed throughout the contexts - more modern material being found below medieval. This suggested that the area was disturbed during the construction of the bungalows in the 1970's. It had been hoped we would find the route of Back Lane, but no cobbled surface was found.
- The natural was not attained, at 60 cm (start of context 7) we were still at black soil level and had run out of time to dig further. Section drawings were made and the data recorded. The pit then was backfilled.

Finds:

Test Pit 61: 180 sherds, 333 grams

There were two fragments of medieval pottery from this pit, both were rims. One had the external flange typical of Tees Valley types the other was a simple thick walled everted rim. A number of sherds were of earlier post-medieval types including some of the red earthenwares and white salt-glazed stoneware. However, later whitewares occurred in all contexts except the lowest level reached ([6]). It is possible that this was an 18th century deposit. There was a clay pipe bowl fragment of 17th century type in context [4].

Conclusions:

There was obvious habitation of this area indicated by the numerous finds - clay pipes, pottery and metal objects. As the area had been employed as allotments the mixed age of the finds supports this as the land would have been disturbed due to cultivation

Thanks:

We would like to thank Mr David Allinson for allowing us to dig the pit in his garden. Mr Allinson has supported the SWAAG big dig from its inception and for that we applaud him.

written by: Anne Jowett

date: 25th July 2015

TP 61 Finds Catalogue

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
0	pipe stem x1	0	0		
0	red	1	1		
0	red slipped	1	12		rim
0	stoneware	1	9		brown gl ?bottle
0	whiteware	3	2		
1	black gl red	2	6		both flaked, 1 with very little surface
1	china	1	1		
1	medieval buff	1	4	13th	thin walled rim with ext 'flange' as TVA
1	pipe bowl fragx2	0	0		
1	whiteware	4	3		
2	blackware	1	3	16th/ 17th?	hard reduced fabric
2	china	2	3		1 blue painted
2	pipe bowl frag	0	0		v small
2	pipe stem x5	0	0		
2	red	5	29		very misc, 1 refined
2	red slipped	2	4		rim
2	ungl red	1	2		
2	whiteware	15	13		various - most are flakes some dec, largest bit is sponge
2	yellow	3	3		
3	? whiteware	13	6		flakes - probably all whiteware

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
3	black gl buff	1	0		small rim - has red slip with black gl
3	early pm?	1	2	17th/ 18th	buff fabric with trace yellow gl 1 side and brown other
3	med?	1	6	?	orange with buff surface
3	misc lpm	4	4		i.e. not white gl
3	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
3	pipe stem x4	0	0		
3	red	2	2		
3	red slip tr	1	1	17th/ 18th	
3	red slipped	4	6		
3	stoneware	1	1		small brown gl buff
3	whiteware	12	11		various, most small and undiagnostic
4	? whiteware	10	6		flakes, prob all whiteware
4	black gl red	2	1		
4	china	1	0		
4	early pm white	2	4	17th	base (frags join) yellow gl
4	local pm	1	5	17th/ 18th	buff fabric green gl
4	misc lpm	3	6		
4	pipe bowl frag	0	0	17th	
4	pipe bowl fragx3	0	0		1 has moulded dec
4	pipe stem x8	0	0		1 looks early/large bore

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
4	red	3	4		
4	red slipped	5	14		
4	stoneware	1	1		brown gl
4	ungl red	1	1		
4	whiteware	19	18		misc - incl some tp
5	black gl red	2	14		1 thick 1 thin
5	brown gl red	4	5		all thin
5	burnt ? china	4	7		ring base
5	china	1	1		
5	medieval buff	1	40	13th/14th	thick everted rim, doesn't look TV
5	pipe bowl frag	0	0		
5	pipe stem x1	0	0		
5	red slipped?	1	3		not sure if slip coat or slip trail as most gone
5	white salt gl stoneware	2	3	18th	frag of small lid
5	whiteware	17	18		misc, many small flakes, 1 tp rim and bit of lid with lines. Some could be cream??
6	?	2	1		
6	black gl red	2	8		incl bit of strap handle
6	brown gl buff	1	0		
6	pipe stem x2	0	0	17th	large bore

context	type	Count	weight	dating	comment
6	pipe stem x7	0	0		
6	red	3	12	17th/ 18th	
6	red slip dec	5	9	18th	rim jar slip band
6	red slip dec	1	0	17th/ 18th	not sv as other slip trail
6	white salt gl stoneware	3	18	18th	dish rim (may have been a bit of this above but too small to ID on its own)

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