

## Assessment of the finds from Mill Mount, York (OSA02 EV12)

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One hundred and fifty-three sherds of pottery, fragments of four glass vessels and ten fragments of ceramic building material from an evaluation at Mill Mount, York, were submitted for identification and assessment (OSA02 EV12). The majority of the material was of Roman date, probably in the main late 2<sup>nd</sup> to mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Superficial deposits produced sherds of medieval and later date, including an unusual lid in Beverley ware.

### Description

#### Ceramic Building Material

##### Romano-British

Nine fragments of Roman tile were recovered. All have a similar fabric (tempered with abundant subangular quartz sand, with fragments of fine-grained sandstone and streaks of lighter-coloured clay. Only one of these was identifiable, as a tegula flange. None of the remainder were curved and only two had complete thicknesses, 28mm and 19mm. The former may have been a brick, used either as a pilae tile in a hypocaust or structurally as a decorative/levelling course in walling. The latter might be another piece of tegula.

These fragments were found in the grave, 2022, and the overlying ploughsoil and were similar in size and condition. They indicate that debris from Roman structures, with tile roofs and possibly hypocausts and masonry walls, were present.

##### Medieval

A single fragment of a flat roof tile was recovered from context 1007. The characteristics of the fabric (salt surfacing and a rounded quartzose sand) suggest that it may have been made in the Humber estuary, for example at Beverley or Barton-upon-Humber.

#### Pottery

##### Roman Pottery

One hundred and forty-two sherds of Romano-British pottery were recovered. Twenty-seven of these were from the backfill of the grave, 2022. Eighty-nine were found in the 'ploughsoil' levels above the grave. Twenty-three were unstratified and three were residual in modern deposits in Trench 1 (Table 1).

**Table 1**

Broad name	grave	ploughsoil	us	Tr1	Grand Total
Grand Total	27	89	23	3	142
BURNISHED	9	27	12	2	50
COLOUR-COATED	6	22	4		32
GREY	4	17			21
SAMIAN	4	7	4		15
EBOR	4	9			13

SHELLY	4	4
MORTARIA	2 1	3
AMPH	1	1
CALCITE	1	1
OXID	1	1
'WHITE'	1	1

The range of wares present and their relative frequencies are typical of mid Roman deposits in York. The majority of the sherds found were burnished greywares of various types including Dorset BB1, BB2, a single sherd of Crambeck greyware and sherds of unknown, local, origin, followed by colour-coated wares, most of which were from the Nene Valley but which included one Rhenish vessel. Samian wares were the next most common type. Within this group, single sherds of south Gaulish (S1) and Les Matres-de-Veyre (S2) were identified but the majority were central Gaulish wares (S3). There were also two sherds of East Gaulish Samian ware. Greywares were the next most common type, of which equal quantities came from York and unknown, British sources. Thirteen sherds of Ebor ware, four sherds of Dales-type shelly ware, two mortaria (one from Crambeck and the other from Mancetter/Hartshill and a single amphora sherd, probably of Italian origin (containing black volcanic sand) complete the assemblage from the stratified Roman levels. Single sherds of Calcite-tempered ware, oxidized ware and white ware were present but not stratified.

A wide range of forms were represented (Table 2). However, sherds of Jars, dishes and beakers predominated.

**Table 2**

Broad Class	Nosh	Weight
Amphora	1	18
Beakers	31	101
Bowls	1	4
Castor boxes	1	3
Dishes	35	386
Flagons	1	5
Jar/Beaker	3	42
Jar/Bowl	1	4
Jars	38	274
Mortaria	3	98
Samian	6	85

## Medieval Pottery

Five sherds of medieval pottery were found. The earliest of these is a thick-walled lid (or perhaps a pedestal base) in Beverley ware. The vessel has knife-trimming on the underside and a plain splash glaze on the upper surface, over a series of deep corrugations. The vessel is unusual and should be illustrated in the hope that it can be positively identified if more complete examples of the type come to light.

The remaining sherds are unremarkable jug sherds of Brandsby-type ware (13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century) and Humber ware (mid 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century).

## Post-medieval Pottery

A sherd of Midlands Yellow ware (MY) is probably of late 16<sup>th</sup> to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century date. A sherd from a Staffordshire slipware posset pot has an external brown slip which was probably decorated with slip trailing. It could be of late 17<sup>th</sup> to mid 18<sup>th</sup> century date. A fragment of a tin-glazed bowl is probably of similar date, as is a sherd of an unidentified slipware (made from Coal Measures white-firing clay but probably not from Staffordshire).

## Early Modern Pottery

A small sherd of a creamware vessel, possibly a chamber pot, was found. Such vessels are of late 18<sup>th</sup> century or later date.

## Glass

### Romano-British

Fragments of two vessels were present in context 2022. One is a clear glass bowl with an added foot-rim. The other is another bowl, in a light blue glass, with a fire-rounded rim. This method of rim-finishing started to replace grinding during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and became standard in the late Roman period.

Although only small sherds of each vessel survive they would repay study by a specialist in Romano-British glassware if the grave and its contents are to be published.

There is no evidence for these vessels being deliberately-deposited grave-goods in this grave and they must either be disturbed from earlier graves or, like the pottery, they may be domestic refuse. The lack of glass fragments in the overlying ploughsoil is probably a result of the harsher soil conditions to be found there.

### Post-medieval

Two fragments of dark green bottle glass were recovered from context 1007. Both come from the shoulders of bottles of indeterminate size and shape. However, the weathering of the glass suggests a late 17<sup>th</sup> to mid 18<sup>th</sup>-century date.

## Assessment

### Site history

The earliest stratified deposit excavated was the filling of an inhumation, 2022. The pottery from this deposit is, however, identical in character to that from the overlying deposits, which are interpreted as a Roman ploughsoil. Both groups contain some sherds of 2<sup>nd</sup>-century date but the majority are of 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>-century date and both contain definite mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century types. Thus, the activity which gave rise to the pottery pre-dates the ploughing or horticultural activity which, it is suggested, is the origin of the overlying deposits. It is possible that the pottery was associated with grave-side activities: feasting and the pouring of libations, but it includes vessels used in food preparation and there is nothing in the character of the pottery assemblage which would suggest that it was anything other than a typical assemblage of 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century domestic debris from the *colonia*. However, at some stage it would be

worthwhile making a formal comparison of the various pottery assemblages collected from sites to the south of the *colonia* and comparing them with those from 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup>-century sites within the *colonia* and fortress.

None of the pottery requires further study or treatment but the two fragments of glass, which may be disturbed grave goods or simply more domestic debris, ought to be submitted to a specialist in Romano-British glass for identification and assessment.

An unstratified example of calcite-tempered ware is the only evidence for activity after the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century whilst the earliest medieval type present is the Beverley ware lid, of mid 12<sup>th</sup>-century or later date. This may either indicate a long hiatus during which there was little activity on the site or it may be that deposits have been truncated.

### **Further work**

The two Roman glass vessels should be examined by a specialist on Roman glassware if it is intended to publish the results of this evaluation.

The Beverley ware “lid” should be illustrated to aid future identification of the vessel.

### **Costing**

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Roman glass specialist	1 hour	£25.00
Transport of glass (courier)		£3.00
Illustration of Beverley ware “lid”	1 hour	£10.00

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Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
US		ZDATE		CP3B			
US	ceramic B1			D	BASE	1	9
US	ceramic B1			D	BASE	1	21
US	ceramic B1			DF2	RIM	1	16
US	ceramic B2			JC	BS	1	7
US	ceramic B3			D	BASE	1	4
US	ceramic B3			DD	RIM BASE PROF PLAIN WMADE NO DEC	1	59
US	ceramic B3			D	BS	1	2
US	ceramic B3			D	BSS	2	18
US	ceramic B3			DD3	RIM GIRTH	1	10
US	ceramic B6			DF2	RIM GIRTH BS; WMADE WEL SOR 02. SA Q	2	23
US	ceramic C1			KF	BS	1	2
US	ceramic C1			K	BS	1	6
US	ceramic C1A			KF?	RIM FUNNEL PLAIN	1	2
US	ceramic C1A			K	BS	1	14
US	ceramic K2?			J	BS	1	29
US	ceramic M14			MH	RIM GIRTH	1	31
US	ceramic O0				FRAG	1	1

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
US	ceramic	S3		31R	BS BASAL	1	17
US	ceramic	S3		D	FLAKE	1	4
US	ceramic	S3		31R	BS BASAL	1	32
US	ceramic	S3		31 ETC	RIM	1	9
1001		ZDATE			CP2B-3B/POSTRO?		
1001	ceramic	B2?		JC	BS	1	26
1001	ceramic	BEVO		LID	KT UNDERSIDE;RIBBED UPPER SURFACE;MORTAR COATED	1	26
1001	ceramic	BRANDSBY		JUG	MORTAR COATED	2	7
1001	ceramic	CSTN		CUP	MORTAR COATED;WHITE BLOB	1	3
1007		ZDATE			CP2B-3B/POSTRO?		
1007	CBM	MTIL	BEVO? RQ >1.0MM;CALC BODY	FLAT	ONE END VITRIFIED	1	53
1007	ceramic	B1		D	BS	1	6
1007	ceramic	BRANDSBY		JUG	CLOSE-SET HORIZ GROOVES ON SHOULDER	1	19
1007	ceramic	CREA		CHP		1	2
1007	ceramic	HUM		JUG		1	13
1007	ceramic	MY		JAR		1	6
1007	ceramic	P0		CLSD	BS	1	4

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
1007	ceramic	STSL		POSS	BROWN SLIPPED EXT	1	20
1007	ceramic	STSL?	CMW BUT POSS NOT STAFFS	POSS?		1	4
1007	ceramic	TGW		BOWL	EXT BLUE DEC	1	4
1007	PMGL	PMGL	DK GREEN	BOT		2	15
2013		ZDATE			CP2-3		
2013	ceramic	E1		CLSD	BS	1	6
2013	ceramic	G1		J	BS	1	4
2013	ceramic	G1?		J	BS BRN MARGINS LTGRY CORE	1	2
2015	CBM	RTIL		-		1	3
2017		ZDATE			CP2B-3B		
2017	ceramic	B1		D	BS	1	7
2017	ceramic	B2		D	BS	1	9
2017	ceramic	B2		JC	RIM FRAG	1	3
2017	ceramic	B3		D	BASE	1	21
2017	ceramic	C2		F	HANDLE 2R	1	5
2017	ceramic	C3		K	BS	1	3
2017	ceramic	C3		K	BS	1	6
2017	ceramic	G0			SCRAP	1	1

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
2017	ceramic	S4		D	BS	1	1
2018		ZDATE			CP3B-4		
2018	CBM	RTIL		-		1	4
2018	CBM	RTIL		-		1	70
2018	CBM	RTIL		TEG		1	43
2018	CBM	RTIL		-		1	76
2018	ceramic	AA		A	BS BLACK SAND ITALIAN	1	18
2018	ceramic	B1		D	BS BASAL	1	21
2018	ceramic	B1		JC	RIM	1	5
2018	ceramic	B1		JC	BS SMALL JAR	1	1
2018	ceramic	B1?			FLAKE	1	2
2018	ceramic	B16?		D	BSS	2	33
2018	ceramic	B3		D	BS BASAL	1	12
2018	ceramic	B3		D	BASE	1	11
2018	ceramic	B3?		JC?	BS PART BURNISHED	1	14
2018	ceramic	B6?		JC	BS UNBURNISHED ZONE	1	2
2018	ceramic	C3		K	BSS CHIPS; POSS KL	8	10
2018	ceramic	C3		J;K	BASE; POSS LGE BEAKER	1	29



Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
2018	ceramic	E0			FRAG	1	1
2018	ceramic	G1		J	BS BODY GROOVE	1	5
2018	ceramic	G1		J	BS	1	3
2018	ceramic	G1		J;B	BS	1	4
2018	ceramic	G1		J;K	BS	1	8
2018	ceramic	G1		JE	RIM NECK	1	13
2018	ceramic	H0		CLSD	BS THICK REDN	1	11
2018	ceramic	M1		MC	RIM FLANGE FRAG	2	67
2018	ceramic	S3		K	BS; POSS DE 68	1	3
2018	ceramic	S3?			CHIPS	2	1
2018/2020		ZDATE			CP3		
2018/2020	ceramic	H1		J	BSS	2	36
2018/2020	ceramic	ZZZ			PROB CP3B		
2019		ZDATE			CP3-4		
2019	ceramic	C1		YB	BS	1	3
2019	ceramic	E1		CLSD	BSS	2	5
2019	ceramic	E1		K	BS V THIN	1	1
2019	ceramic	G0		J	BSS	2	10

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
2019	ceramic	G1		J;K	BS; FINER FAB	1	5
2019	ceramic	G1		J	BSS	3	14
2019	ceramic	G8		J	BS	1	3
2019	ceramic	H1		J	BS	1	5
2020		ZDATE			CP2B-3B		
2020	ceramic	B1		D	BASE	1	5
2020	ceramic	B1		JC	BS	1	2
2020	ceramic	B3		D	BS <*> TRIMMED FOR A COUNTER	1	6
2020	ceramic	B3		D	BSS;BASE	4	20
2020	ceramic	B3		DP5	RIM UPPER WALL	1	23
2020	ceramic	B3		JC	BSS; UNBURNISHED ZONES	2	4
2020	ceramic	C1		K	BS PROB BAVE	1	1
2020	ceramic	C1B		K	BSS	3	28
2020	ceramic	C24		K	BSS FLAKES	4	5
2020	ceramic	E1		J	BASE	1	21
2020	ceramic	E1		J	BSS	2	7
2020	ceramic	G1		J	BS FINER FAB	1	20
2020	ceramic	S3		36	RIM	1	7

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
2020	ceramic	S3		D?	FLAKE	1	1
2020	ceramic	S4?		31 ETC	RIM LWR WALL	1	19
2021		ZDATE			CP3B		
2021	CBM	RTIL		-		1	3
2021	ceramic	B1		DF2	RIM FRAG	1	7
2021	ceramic	B2		JC	BS	1	3
2021	ceramic	B2		D	BASE	1	18
2021	ceramic	C1B		K	BS	1	5
2021	ceramic	G1		B	BSS BODY GROOVES;POSS JB BUTT-JAR	1	4
2022		ZDATE		D	CP3B		
2022	CBM	RTIL		-		3	17
2022	ceramic	B1		D	BS TRIMMED? FOR COUNTER	1	3
2022	ceramic	B1		JC	BS	1	1
2022	ceramic	B1		JC	RIM	1	2
2022	ceramic	B11?		J	BS	1	4
2022	ceramic	B11?		DD3	RIM	1	8
2022	ceramic	B2		JC	BSS	2	14
2022	ceramic	B3		JC	RIM FLAKE	1	2

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Description	Nosh	Weight
2022	ceramic	B3		D	BS	1	8
2022	ceramic	C1B		K	BSS	1	1
2022	ceramic	C1B		K	BSS	3	9
2022	ceramic	C1B		KF	BSS	1	2
2022	ceramic	C1B		KF?	RIM	1	3
2022	ceramic	E0			BS	1	6
2022	ceramic	E1			BSS	3	6
2022	ceramic	G0			RIM INTURNED CF 4071	1	4
2022	ceramic	G1		CLSD	BS GROOVE	1	1
2022	ceramic	G1		J	BS	1	3
2022	ceramic	G2		J	BS	1	9
2022	ceramic	S1?			BS	1	1
2022	ceramic	S2?			FLAKES	2	1
2022	ceramic	S3		30-37	BS DEC	1	1
2022	GLAS	GLAS	CLEAR		BOWL/JUG APPLIED FOOTRING	4	3
2022	GLAS	GLAS	LIGHT BLUE	BOWL	FIRE-ROUNDED RIM	1	1
2024		ZDATE			CP1B-3A		
2024	ceramic	E1			BS	1	1

