

## **Assessment of the finds from 8, Westgate, Ripon, North Yorkshire (OSA03 EV05)**

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Seventy-two objects from an archaeological evaluation at 8, Westgate, Ripon (Site code OSA03 EV05) were submitted for identification and assessment. They consist of a collection of medieval, post-medieval and early modern pottery, medieval or post-medieval flat roof tiles, daub from a timber-framed structure with lath-infilled panels and fragments of mould from the manufacture of copper-alloy cast vessels or bells.

### **Description**

#### **Ceramic Building Material**

Three fragments of flat roof tile of medieval or post-medieval date were recovered, from contexts 1012 and 2014.

#### **Clay Tobacco Pipes**

Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe stem were recovered from context 2007. Their bore diameters suggest that they are of 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>-century date.

#### **Fired clay**

Fragments of burnt clay were recovered from five contexts, 1001, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2023. They are have three fabrics:

- a) abundant fine-textured organic inclusions in a silty, micaceous groundmass.
- b) abundant fine-textured organic inclusions in a calcareous groundmass
- c) abundant coarse straw inclusions in a calcareous groundmass.

The fragments come from daub and copper-alloy vessel or bell moulds.

#### **Daub**

Daub fragments come from contexts 2014 and 2023 and in both cases are of Fabric C. That from context 2023 consists of a lump of daub with impressions of two wooden laths and a gap of about 30mm between them. The body of the fragment is hardly burnt but the flat surface has been burnt in an oxidizing atmosphere. There is no evidence for carbonisation of the straw inclusions as it is possible that by the time the daub was burnt these had decayed. The fragments from context 2014 are too small for positive identification but the similarity in fabric suggests that they come from a similar structure.

The use of laths suggests that the daub was used as infilling in a timber-framed structure. There is no evidence for any plaster or s-skimming of the surface.

## **Moulds**

Fragments of mould were recovered from contexts 1001, 2011, 2012, and 2023. They have smooth whitened surfaces where they were in contact with the metal and in one case there is a green concretion on the surface which may contain metal.

The mould surfaces include fragments with both concave and convex surfaces and therefore come from both the inner mould (core) and outer mould (cope) of the vessel(s). One fragment probably comes from close to the rim of the vessel and has a coarser outer layer rich in straw inclusions. Copper alloy bells were produced using this method from at least the 10<sup>th</sup> century onwards, continuing throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods. During the 13<sup>th</sup> century the production of domestic vessels – such as ewers, mortars and cauldrons – began and these vessels gradually became the mainstay of bellfounders with the production of bells being a minor but prestigious part of their trade. Given the size of the fragments it is impossible to say for certain what was being cast in this case but if metal could be extracted and analysed from the concretion on the fragment from context 1001 then this might well provide an answer since lead was used in higher quantities in cast vessels and tin in higher quantities in bells, since lead would have dulled the tone of the bell.

## **Iron**

A single nail was recovered from context 2023.

## **Pottery**

### **Medieval**

Thirty-nine fragments of medieval pottery were recovered. Most are small sherds and some are abraded and it is not clear to what extent they have been recycled from earlier deposits or brought onto the site as sherds (Table 1). Two sherds may be examples of York Gritty ware, although both have reduced cores, uncommon in this ware, and have no certain traces of being thrown on a wheel. They may, therefore, be a handmade, more local ware. Sherds of York Glazed ware, Brandsby-type ware and Hambleton-type ware were present. These wares were probably made in the Hambleton Hills about 25 miles to the east of Ripon (although evidence for the production of Hambleton ware at Castle Howard, in the Howardian hills, has recently been found). A few sherds of Tees Valley ware, an oxidized ware with, typically, a thick white slip, were also found. This ware is probably of later 13<sup>th</sup> century and later date and produced somewhere in the Tees valley, about 40 miles to the northeast of Ripon. The majority of the sherds, however, are of unknown types probably made closer to Ripon. They tend to contain coarse fragments of sandstones and in some cases have a white-firing body and in others a red-firing body.

The presence of Hambleton-type ware suggests that the collection extends to the end of the medieval period whilst the York Glazed ware is probably of mid 13<sup>th</sup>-century or earlier date although found in the same deposits as the later wares.

**Table 1**

Context	cname	?	BOWL	JAR	JUG	Grand Total
1002	BRANDSBY				1	1
	HAMBLETON				1	1
	MEDLOC	1	2	5	5	13
	TVW			2	3	5
	YG			1		1
	YORK			1	4	5
1012	BRANDSBY				1	1
	MEDLOC			1	4	5
2011	MEDLOC				2	2
2023	CMW			2		2
	YG			1		1
US	CMW				1	1
	HAMBLETON				1	1
Grand Total		1	2	13	23	39

### Post-medieval

Sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from context 1001. They include a Staffordshire mottled-glaze ware tankard of early 18<sup>th</sup>-century or later date, a Ryedale ware pancheon, a sherd of a Late Humber Ware bowl and three sherds from a slip-trailed vessel. The fine-textured, dark red body with abundant quartz sand inclusions is reminiscent of vessels from the northeast of England, such as Sunderland. The glaze is almost completely colourless which suggests that it was applied as a frit rather than taking its silica (and consequently iron) from the body. The white slip-trailed decoration was enhanced by the use of a light green glaze colourant over a trailed leaf. A later 18<sup>th</sup>-century date is likely for this vessel, and therefore for the deposition date of the context.

## Early Modern

Early modern pottery was recovered from context 2007. It consists mainly of mass-produced factory products such as Pearl ware (PEAR), transfer-printed wares (TPW), and other whitewares (WHITE). There are also, however, two sherds of black-glazed coarseware bowls. Both have a fine-textured calcareous body. The source of these vessels is not known, but they do not occur in York and have not be noted elsewhere in North Yorkshire and so may have been made close to Ripon.

## Assessment

The evaluation at 8, Westgate, indicates that there is likely to have been activity on the site in the later medieval period and perhaps as early as the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century, or earlier. There is evidence for the production of cast copper alloy vessels, or bells, nearby, although these mould fragments were so numerous and bulky that they were used as hardcore and, in the city of London, as road metalling. The foundry may therefore not lie on the site itself. It is interesting that the mould fragments and daub both use straw as filler, although the main material in the moulds is likely to have been horse or donkey dung as recommended in contemporary documents. Whether there is any stronger connection between the moulds and the daub (such as the daub coming from a structure associated with metalworking) is doubtful but worthy of investigation should more work take place on the site.

## Appendix One: List of Finds

Context	class	cname	subfabric	Form	Nosh	NoV	Description	Part	Use
1001	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	ORGANIC TEMPER AND SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	MOULD	2	1	COPPER ALLOY SLAG ON INT	BS	
1001	CERAMICLHUM?			BOWL	1	1		BS	
1001	CERAMICRYEDALE			PANC	1	1		R	
1001	CERAMICSLIP		FINE SANDY REDWARE;LOOKS LIKE SUNDERLAND	TANK	3	1	SLIP-TRAILED DEC WITH LTGR 1GLAZE OVER WHITE LEAF	BS	
1001	CERAMICSTMO			TANK	1	1		BS	
1002	CERAMICBRANDSBY			JUG	1	1	RECT RSD;CUGL	BS	
1002	CERAMICHAMBLETON			JUG	1	1	OVAL HANDLE;THREE DEEP 1GROOVES DOWN BACK;CUGL	H	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		MIGHT BE NYWW BUT A BIT COARSE	JUG	1	1	PLAIN GL EXT	BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		WHITEWARE WITH BLACK CORE AND SST TEMPER	JUG	4	4	PLAIN GL EXT	BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		WHITEWARE WITH BLACK CORE AND SST TEMPER	JAR	1	1	PLAIN GL INT	BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		PINKISH;MICACEOUS WITH SSTMG >3.0MM	JAR	1	1	UNGLAZED	BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		PINKISH;SLIGHTLY MICACEOUS	?	1	1	PLAIN GLAZED INT AND EXT	BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		PINKISH;SLIGHTLY MICACEOUS	BOWL	2	2	INT PLAIN GL	BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		PINKISH;SLIGHTLY MICACEOUS	JAR	2	2		BS	
1002	CERAMICMEDLOC		PINKISH;SLIGHTLY MICACEOUS	JAR	1	1		BS	SOOTED EXT
1002	CERAMICTVW			JUG	2	2		BS	
1002	CERAMICTVW			JAR	2	1		BS	
1002	CERAMICTVW			JUG	1	1	WHITE SLIPPED EXT	BS	
1002	CERAMICYG			JAR	1	1	LOOKS HANDMADE?	BS	SOOTED EXT
1002	CERAMICYORK			JAR	1	1		BS	SOOTED EXT
1002	CERAMICYORK			JUG	1	1		BS	
1002	CERAMICYORK			JUG	1	1	WAVY COMBING;CUGL	BS	
1002	CERAMICYORK			JUG	1	1	RECT RSD;CUGL	BS	
1002	CERAMICYORK			JUG	1	1	ROD HANDLE	BS	
1012	CBM	MTIL	SALT-SURFACED; SA Q, RQ (PYS?), SST	FLAT	1	1		BS	
1012	CERAMICBRANDSBY			JUG	1	1	CUGL	BS	
1012	CERAMICMEDLOC		WHITEWARE;MICACEOUS; SST SAND	JUG	2	2		BS	
1012	CERAMICMEDLOC		PINK BODY	JUG	1	1	CUGL	BS	
1012	CERAMICMEDLOC		STREAKY WHITE/PINK BODY;SSTMG >3.0MM	JUG	1	1		BS	
1012	CERAMICMEDLOC		WHITEWARE;MICACEOUS;SST SAND	JAR	1	1		B	SOOTED EXT
2007	CERAMICBL		PINK CALCAREOUS BODY	BOWL	1	1	INT BLACK GL	BS	

2007	CERAMICENGS		FLAG	2		SPRIGGED LABEL 'N & Co'; '12.' 1STAMPED ON SHOULDER	BS
2007	CERAMICPEAR		PLATE	1	1		BS
2007	CERAMICWHITE		JAR	1		GREEN-GLAZED EXT;ZONE OF HORIZ GROOVES ON 1GIRTH;UNGLAZED INT	BS
2007	CERAMICWHITE		JAR	3		1SPONGED DEC	R;B
2007	CTP	PIPECLAY	PIPE	2		218TH/19TH C BORE	STEM
2011	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	ORGANIC TEMPER AND SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	MOULD	2	2	BS
2011	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	ORGANIC TEMPER AND SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	MOULD	1	1	BS
2011	CERAMICMEDLOC		WHITEWARE;MICACEOUS; SST SAND	JUG	2	2RECT RSD	BS
2012	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	ORGANIC TEMPER AND SILTY MICACEOUS GROUNDMASS	MOULD	2	2	BS
2014	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	STRAW TEMPERED;CALCAREOUS	DAUB?	1	1	BS
2014	CBM	MTIL		FLAT	2	2	BS
2023	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	STRAW TEMPERED;CALCAREOUS	DAUB	1	1 TWO LATH IMPRESSIONS WITH WIDE GAP BETWEEN;EXTERNAL SURFACE BURNT RED INTERNAL PROBABLY HARDLY BURNT AT 1ALL	BS
2023	BURNT CLAY	FCLAY	ORGANIC TEMPER AND CALCAREOUS? GROUNDMASS	MOULD	1	1	BS
2023	CERAMICCMW		RED SST >3.0MM	JAR	1	1	B
2023	CERAMICCMW		RED SST >3.0MM	JAR	1	1	B SOOTED EXT
2023	CERAMICYG		REDUCED CORE;SSTMG >4.0MM	JAR	1	1HANDMADE?	BS
2023	IRON	IRON		NAIL	1	1	BS
US	CERAMICBL		PINK CALCAREOUS	BOWL	1	1	R
US	CERAMICCMW		A SA Q >1.0MM;S SA SST >4.0MM	JUG	1	1	BS
US	CERAMICHAMBLETON		DARK GREY CORE AND INT	JUG	1	1FLAT BALUSTER BASE	B
US	CERAMICTPW			LID	1	1KNOPPED	BS
US	CERAMICTPW			JAR	1	1MARKED 'MEDAL AWA' 'ALADE'	BS